

Daily Current Affairs





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The Hindu



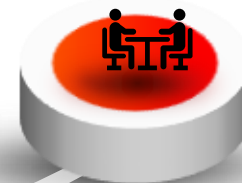
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**PIB, PRS & Other
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1
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State incursion, has been extended to protect the state and public functions of the press.

They have argued that Section 44(3) of the DPB Act, which states that "no person shall be liable for the disclosure of information in the possession of the R.T.I. Act, 2002," is unconstitutional. Initially, the RTI provisions were meant to protect the public from disclosing personal information to an applicant. But the RTI Act has had no relationship to any public activity or if disclosure of information is not a warranted invasion of privacy.

When then, the government had to disclose if public interest outweighs privacy.

One of the petitioners, who filed the 2022 writ, said that the RTI Act threatened to have grave impact on investigative journalism.

"The Act was not granted an exemption to journalists," he said. "If the government is supporting, they would have to seek the consent of the third party. If the government or principal wants to erase the data, they can do it without the consent of the investigative journalist," he said. "The government is not the counselled journalist. The journalist is the one who can be considered a 'special category' with unre-

Pak., Saudi Arabia, Turkiye ink defence deal

The agreement pledges 'collective response' to armed aggression against any member

Deal will strengthen security, promote 'peace and stability in region', says joint statement

Pact is 'a defence-oriented partnership' that does not target any country: Turkish govt.

Stanly Johny

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Turkiye on Friday signed a joint defence agreement in Mecca committing "collective defence" and "collective deterrence", at a time when Saudi Arabia is under attack from Yemen's Houthis and West Asia remains engulfed in the ongoing war against Iran.

The three countries, an oil-rich Persian Gulf kingdom, a South Asian nuclear power and a NATO member, said the pact was aimed at strengthening "collective deterrence" and declared that an armed attack against any one of them would be treated as an attack against them all.

The agreement was signed at the Mecca Al-Mukarramah Summit for Joint Defence, attended by Sau-

di Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

According to a joint announcement issued by the Pakistani Foreign Ministry, the leaders, who met at Al-Safa Palace in Mecca after an invitation from Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz, reviewed bilateral ties among the three countries as well as a range of regional issues before signing what was described as the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement.

It added that the pact reflected their commitment to strengthening collective security while promoting "peace, security, and stability in the region and beyond, in pursuit of a secure and prosperous future."

A Turkish government



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif pose after signing a trilateral defence agreement in Mecca on Friday. REUTERS

source said the agreement is "a defence-oriented partnership" that does not target any country. "It seeks to strengthen commitments to preserving regional and global peace, stability and prosperity through burden-sharing and collective security,"

the official added.

The agreement was signed as West Asia grapples with a months-long security crisis involving multiple actors. The war the U.S. and Israel launched against Iran on February 28 remains unresolved. Over the past five months, all

Arab Gulf countries came under repeated attacks from Iran.

Last month, after an attack on an airport in Yemen, the country's Iran-aligned Houthis (Ansar Allah) launched attacks on Saudi oil facilities and imposed a maritime blockade

on the kingdom's Red Sea ports.

Practical scope

In September 2025, weeks after Israel carried out an attack on Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan signed a Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement, committing themselves to treat any act of aggression against one as an act against both. Since then, Pakistan has clashed several times with Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, while Saudi Arabia has come under repeated attacks from Iran and the Houthis. But neither country has intervened militarily on behalf of the other, raising questions about the practical scope of such mutual defence commitments.

According to the joint statement, the trilateral Mecca agreement provides for "the enhancement of

all aspects of defence cooperation among the three States," suggesting closer military coordination and broader security collaboration.

The participation of Turkiye and Pakistan also underscores the growing strategic alignment among the three Muslim-majority countries. Turkiye has sought a more prominent security role across the wider West Asia, while Pakistan, a nuclear-armed country, has sought to play a bigger role in the region in recent years, both as a security partner and as a mediator (between Iran and the U.S.). In Iran, Ebrahim Rezaei, a member of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission, criticised the deal on X, saying it would not bring security to Saudi Arabia. (With inputs from AP)

Point	Details
Countries involved	Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye
Agreement	Mecca Joint Defence Agreement
Core principle	An armed attack against any one member would be treated as an attack against all three
Main objective	Collective deterrence, defence cooperation, burden-sharing and regional security
Leaders shown	Türkiye President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif
Nature of pact	Turkish government describes it as a “ defence-oriented partnership ”, not directed against any particular country
Why important	Brings together a NATO member (Türkiye) , a nuclear-armed state (Pakistan) , and a major Gulf power (Saudi Arabia)

Areas of cooperation

The joint statement refers to enhancement of “**all aspects of defence cooperation**” among the three

Saudi–Pakistan background

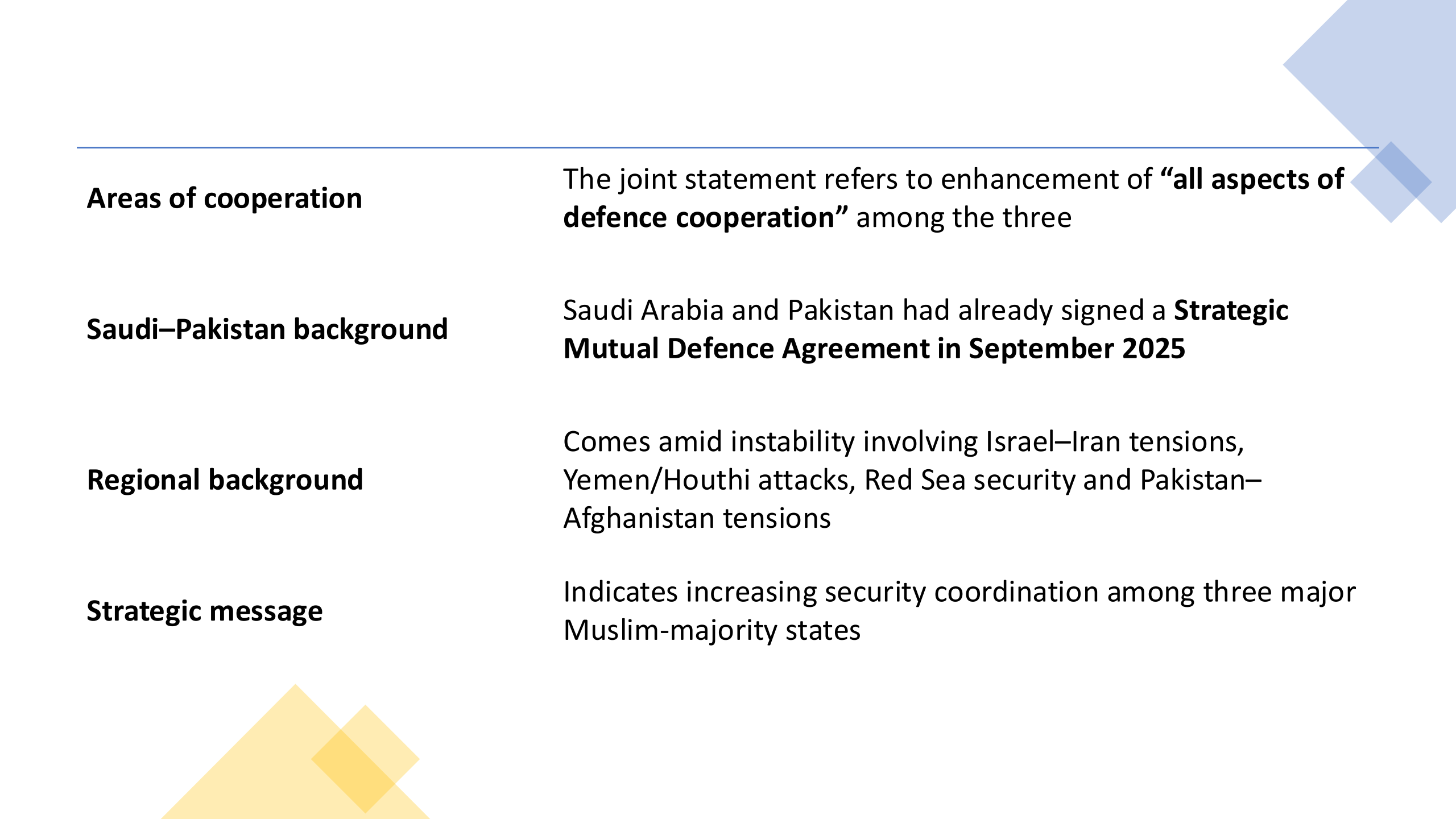
Saudi Arabia and Pakistan had already signed a **Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement in September 2025**

Regional background

Comes amid instability involving Israel–Iran tensions, Yemen/Houthi attacks, Red Sea security and Pakistan–Afghanistan tensions

Strategic message

Indicates increasing security coordination among three major Muslim-majority states



Country

What it brings to the partnership

SA **Saudi Arabia**

Money, energy resources, strategic geography, influence in Arab/Islamic world and very high defence expenditure

PK **Pakistan**

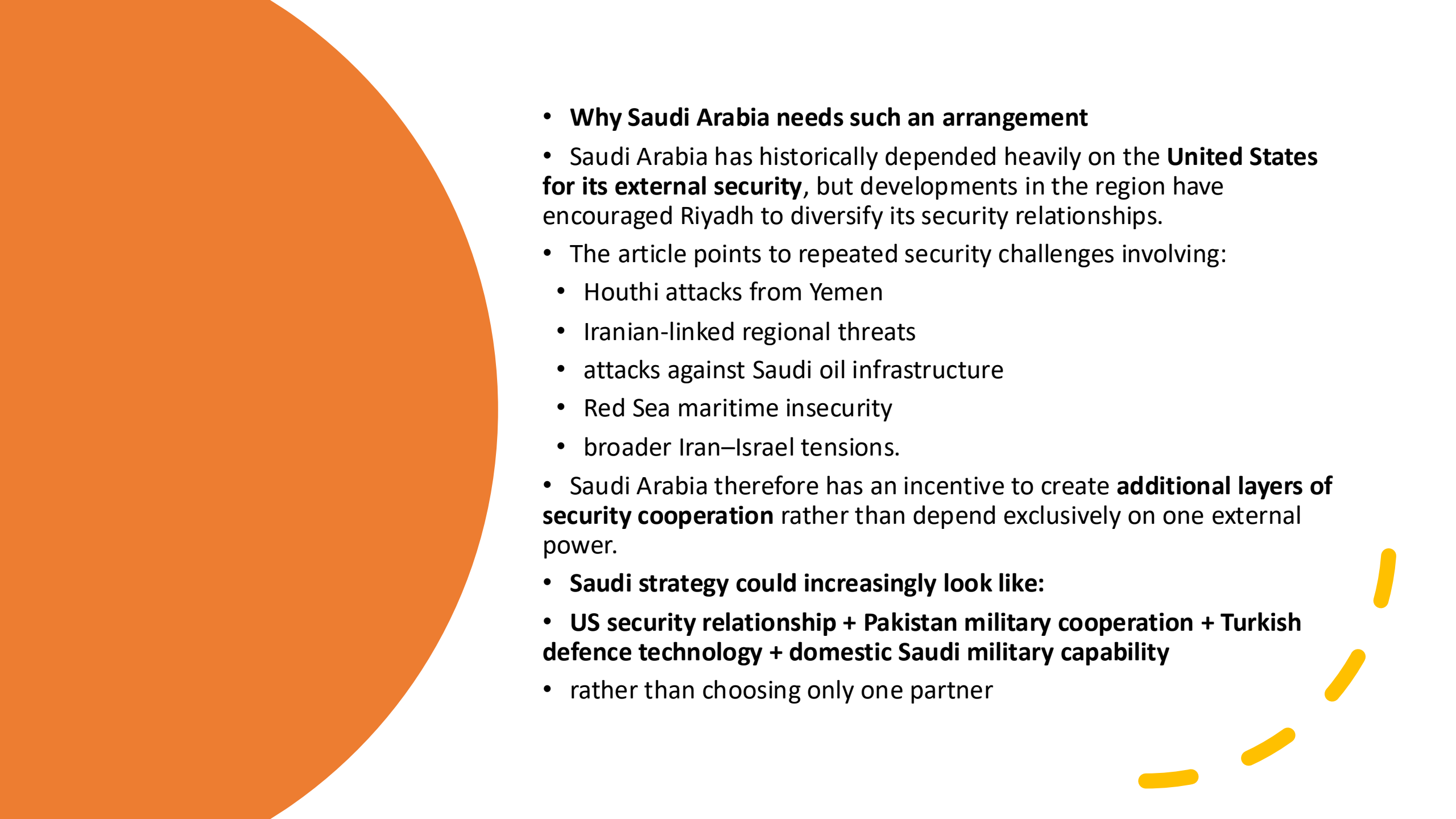
Nuclear weapons, large standing army, missile capability, combat experience and longstanding military relations with Saudi Arabia

TR **Türkiye**

NATO experience, advanced defence industry, drones, missiles, naval capability and strategic position connecting Europe—West Asia

Combined advantage

Finance + manpower/nuclear deterrence + defence technology

- 
- **Why Saudi Arabia needs such an arrangement**
 - Saudi Arabia has historically depended heavily on the **United States for its external security**, but developments in the region have encouraged Riyadh to diversify its security relationships.
 - The article points to repeated security challenges involving:
 - Houthi attacks from Yemen
 - Iranian-linked regional threats
 - attacks against Saudi oil infrastructure
 - Red Sea maritime insecurity
 - broader Iran–Israel tensions.
 - Saudi Arabia therefore has an incentive to create **additional layers of security cooperation** rather than depend exclusively on one external power.
 - **Saudi strategy could increasingly look like:**
 - **US security relationship + Pakistan military cooperation + Turkish defence technology + domestic Saudi military capability**
 - rather than choosing only one partner

-
- Türkiye has developed capabilities in areas such as:
 - UAVs and combat drones
 - missiles
 - electronic warfare
 - naval vessels
 - helicopters
 - armoured vehicles
 - air-defence systems.
 - Turkish companies have also become significant defence exporters.
 - Therefore, Türkiye could provide the **technological and defence-industrial component** of the partnership.

6. Saudi Arabia–Pakistan defence relationship already existed

This trilateral arrangement did not emerge from nowhere.

The article says Saudi Arabia and Pakistan signed a **Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement in September 2025**.

Its basic principle was also that:

aggression against one would be considered aggression against both.

Türkiye's participation therefore potentially converts a strong **Saudi–Pakistan bilateral security relationship into a broader trilateral framework**.

Conceptually:

2025

Pakistan ↔ Saudi Arabia

↓

2026

Pakistan ↔ Saudi Arabia ↔ Türkiye

7. Is this an "Islamic NATO"?

This is where caution is necessary.

Similarities

NATO	Pakistan–Saudi–Türkiye arrangement	
Collective defence	Collective defence	
Attack against member has collective consequences	Similar political commitment	
Military cooperation	Defence cooperation	
Deterrence	Collective deterrence	

But important differences remain.

NATO	New trilateral pact
32 members	Only 3 countries
Permanent institutional structure	Not established in article
Integrated military command	Not established
NATO headquarters	No comparable institution mentioned
Article 5 mechanisms developed over decades	Implementation mechanisms remain unclear
Regular integrated planning	Extent unknown
Established interoperability mechanisms	Still developing

The end

8. The biggest unanswered question: what happens during an actual war?

This is perhaps the most important issue raised by the article.

Suppose:

Scenario 1

Saudi Arabia is attacked.

Would Pakistan and Türkiye automatically send troops?

Not necessarily clear.

Scenario 2

Pakistan faces a military conflict.

Would Saudi Arabia and Türkiye automatically participate?

Again, the operational obligation is unclear from the article.

Scenario 3

Türkiye becomes involved in a NATO-related confrontation.

Would Pakistan and Saudi Arabia become involved?

The article does not establish this.

Thus:

"Attack against one = attack against all"

10. What does Pakistan gain?

Pakistan could benefit significantly.

Strategic benefits

1. Greater influence in West Asia

Pakistan becomes more deeply involved in Gulf security.

2. Stronger Saudi relationship

Saudi Arabia has historically been an important economic and diplomatic partner.

3. Turkish defence technology

Pakistan and Türkiye already cooperate in defence projects.

4. Defence exports

Pakistani aircraft, missiles, training and other military systems could gain markets.

5. Diplomatic importance

Pakistan becomes an important bridge between:

China – Gulf – Türkiye – South Asia.

11. What does Saudi Arabia gain?

Saudi Arabia potentially gains access to two powerful security partners.

From Pakistan

- military manpower
- training
- nuclear-armed strategic partner
- missile and aviation expertise.

From Türkiye

- drones
- defence manufacturing
- NATO-standard military experience
- naval technology
- electronic warfare
- advanced weapons development.

Saudi Arabia itself supplies enormous financial and investment capacity.

Therefore, a possible division of strengths is:

Saudi capital + Turkish technology + Pakistani military capacity

12. What does Türkiye gain?

Türkiye has ambitions to become a major independent security actor across:

- Mediterranean
- Middle East
- Central Asia
- Caucasus
- Africa
- Islamic world.

Closer cooperation with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan strengthens Ankara's position.

It could also create a larger market for Turkish defence companies.

18. Why Saudi Arabia would need to balance Pakistan and India

Saudi Arabia has developed increasingly important relations with India involving:

- oil
- petrochemicals
- investment
- infrastructure
- technology
- diaspora
- counterterrorism
- strategic cooperation.

Therefore Saudi policy could simultaneously maintain:

Pakistan → deep military/security relationship

and

India → deep economic/strategic relationship.

These relationships are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Is data protection law crippling RTI, asks SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to examine if the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, can be used to cripple the Right to Information Act by classifying all data as “personal” and, separately, gag investigative journalists.

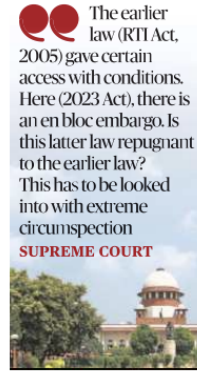
“The earlier law (RTI Act, 2005) gave certain access with conditions. Here (2023 Act), there is an *en bloc* embargo. Is this latter law repugnant to the earlier law? This has to be looked into with extreme circumspection. After all, both are Central laws. There is a need to harmonise these two,” Justice Joy-malya Bagchi remarked.

Different domain

He said the RTI law operated on a “much larger domain” than the DPDP Act. It covered all forms of data, while the DPDP law was only concerned with data in a digital form. The court said this even though acknowledging that the data was now overwhelmingly in the digital format.

The judge said the court would examine if this restrictive or “cautionary approach” to sharing data under the DPDP Act worked to repeal earlier transparency laws.

The court was hearing multiple petitions challenging provisions of the DPDP Act, primarily Section 44(3), which had amended the RTI Act to facilitate public authorities to blankly refuse information on the ground that the details sought were of a “personal” nature. The petitioners submitted that the provision has turned the fundamental right to privacy on its head. The right, meant to protect ordinary citizens against



State incursion, has been extended to protect the State and public functionaries from RTI disclosures.

They have argued that Section 44(3) of the DPDP Act has amended Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act. Originally, the RTI provision had exempted authorities from disclosing personal information to an applicant if the details sought had no relationship to any public activity or if disclosure would amount to unwarranted invasion of privacy.

Even then, the government had to disclose if public interest outweighed privacy.

One of the petitioners pointed out that the 2023 Act threatened to have a grave impact on investigative journalism.

“The Act was not granting an exemption to journalists. If a journalist is reporting, they would have to seek the consent of the data principal. If the data principal wants to erase the data, they can do it. This has a direct effect on investigative journalism,” the counsel submitted. The court said journalists cannot be considered a “special category” with unserved access to data.

What did the original RTI provision do?

Section 8 of the RTI Act contains exemptions from disclosure.

Earlier, Section 8(1)(j) broadly protected personal information when disclosure:

- had no relationship to public activity or public interest, or
- would cause an unwarranted invasion of privacy.

But importantly, there was a balancing consideration concerning **larger public interest**.

Example

Suppose an RTI applicant asks for extremely private details of an ordinary government employee.

There may be little legitimate public interest → **privacy should prevail**.

But suppose information is sought concerning alleged misuse of public money by a senior official.

Then the argument becomes:

Public accountability > privacy interest

and disclosure could potentially be justified depending on the circumstances.

The petitioners fear that the DPDP amendment makes this second category harder to access.



The Supreme Court has agreed to examine whether the **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023** has weakened the **Right to Information Act, 2005**, particularly by expanding the protection available to "personal information."



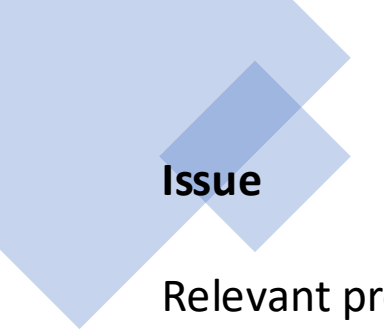
The central issue is a conflict between two fundamental democratic interests:



Citizen's right to know / transparency ↔ Individual's right to privacy



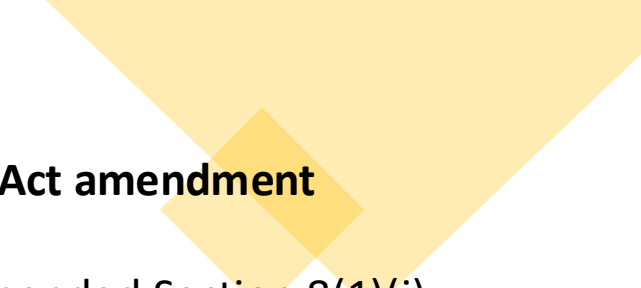
The Court's concern, as reported in the article, is whether the newer DPDP framework has effectively imposed an **"en bloc embargo"** on disclosure of personal information that previously could sometimes be disclosed under RTI.



Issue

Earlier RTI Act framework

After DPDP Act amendment



Relevant provision

Section 8(1)(j), RTI Act

DPDP Act amended Section 8(1)(j)

Personal information

Exempt, but subject to qualifications/exceptions

Petitioners argue exemption has become much broader

Public-interest test

Important safeguard permitting disclosure in appropriate cases

Concern that this balancing mechanism has been weakened

Privacy

Protected

Stronger protection

Transparency

Greater scope for disclosure

Critics fear significantly reduced access

Investigative journalism

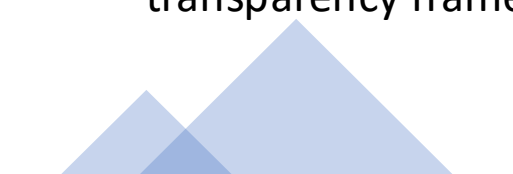
RTI could sometimes help obtain information involving officials/public activity

Journalists fear refusal merely because information is "personal"

Court's question

—

Has the new law effectively repealed/undermined the earlier transparency framework?



Why did Parliament change it?

The underlying rationale comes from the growing constitutional importance of **privacy**.

The Supreme Court's landmark **K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017)** judgment recognised:

Right to Privacy = Fundamental Right under Article 21

India subsequently enacted the DPDP Act to create a framework for protecting personal digital data.

The difficulty is that India now has two important rights operating simultaneously:

Constitutional/Democratic interest	Foundation	
Right to privacy	Article 21	
Right to information	Connected to freedom of speech/expression under Article 19(1)(a)	
Government transparency	Democratic accountability	
Personal-data protection	Privacy and informational autonomy	

The Supreme Court therefore needs to determine how these should coexist.

- **Supreme Court's key challenge**
- The Court essentially has three interests to reconcile:
- **Privacy**
- 
- **Transparency**
- 
- **Public interest**
- The Court could potentially interpret the laws harmoniously rather than treating one as completely overriding the other.
- This is why the Court reportedly observed that the two laws need to be **harmonised**.
-

ISLAMABAD

Voting for most seats for August 10 polls put off indefinitely in Pak



Voting for seven of the 11 seats in the third phase of polls in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir that were scheduled for August 10 have been postponed for an indefinite period due to "concerns over the law-and-order situation," PNC Election Commission said on Friday. There are a total of 45 seats on which polls are being held. **PI**

SAN FRANCISCO

U.S. court fines Meta \$567 mn for endangering young users online



A U.S. state court has ordered Meta to pay \$567 million and limit some features for children on its Facebook and Instagram platforms, saying the social media giant had created a "judicial nuisance" that endangered young users. The ruling in New Mexico adds to a previous fine of \$175 mn in the same case in March. **AP**

TORONTO

U.S. trade talks 'nasty', says Carney as Trump slams Canada leadership



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said on Thursday that trade negotiations with the U.S. had turned "nasty" after President Donald Trump decided America's neighbour and its leadership while threatening to suspend tariffs. Mr. Carney said Canada remained engaged in the negotiations despite Mr. Trump's comments. **AP**

WASHINGTON

NASA astronauts Anil Menon, Meir undertake spacewalk outside ISS



NASA astronauts Anil Menon and Jessica Meir on Friday concluded their spacewalk outside International Space Station to assemble a modification kit for its power channel, to allow the addition of solar arrays. The spacewalk, both for Mr. Menon and first for Ms. Meir, concluded at 12.30 a.m. IST on Friday. **PI**

U.S. Senate passes sweeping Russia sanctions Bill with huge support

The Bill would penalise countries that keep buying Russian oil, gas, and other exports; a key feature lets Trump impose tariffs on top five purchasers of Russian oil, including India; push for Bill was championed by late Senator Lindsey Graham

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

The Senate overwhelmingly approved a punishing Russian sanctions package on Friday, the result of a year-long campaign by the late Senator Lindsey Graham to reinforce U.S. support for Ukraine and try to force President Vladimir Putin's hand as the grinding war drags on.



Show of force: The Bill provides exceptions for countries that import less than 15% of their natural gas from Russia. **REUTERS**

The bipartisan legislation, which passed the Senate 86-11, would penalise countries that continue to buy Russian oil, gas and other exports seeking to deprive Mr. Putin of revenues fuelling the war. It comes after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited the Capitol hours after Graham's funeral.

Mr. Putin's hand as the grinding war drags on. The bipartisan legislation, which passed the Senate 86-11, would penalise countries that continue to buy Russian oil, gas and other exports seeking to deprive Mr. Putin of revenues fuelling the war. It comes after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited the Capitol hours after Graham's funeral.

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Greek Mayor among three charged over wildfire near Athens

Agence France-Presse
ATHENS

Greek authorities on Friday charged a town Mayor and two others with arson over a wildfire that ravaged large areas near Athens last week.

Investigators believe the blaze started on July 19 with a spark from power cables at a wind farm near Agios Vasileios, a village 85 kilometres northwest of Athens.

Fields of fear



Risky passage: A Syrian Army mine-clearing vehicle detonates anti-personnel mines as it drives through a minefield during an operation to clear explosives left behind during the war in Qana, in the Damascus countryside of Syria on Friday. **AP**

Bangladeshi cricketer Shakib, Hasina ally, says he is ready to return home, face trial

Reuters
NEW DELHI

Bangladeshi cricketer Shakib Al Hasan, an ally of ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, said he is ready to return from a two-year exile, face trial on charges including murder and play a farewell series if the government guarantees his safety.



Shakib Al Hasan

Mr. Shakib, a former lawmaker for Mr. Hasina's Awami League, has been living in the United States since her government was toppled in a deadly student-led uprising in August 2024. The player, who has not yet returned from inter-

scores of her allies facing criminal charges and unable to return to Bangladesh. His return would test whether Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's government will accommodate figures from the former ruling party - an open question as Mr. Hasina herself has announced plans to go back in December despite having been given a death sentence there.

"I know I haven't done anything," he said, giving the most detailed account yet of his two years abroad. Mr. Hasina, who has been living in India, was sentenced to death in absentia over the crackdown on the Bangladesh protests that killed about 1,400 people, according to the United Nations.

Three inmates killed, over 20 injured in fresh clashes in two prisons in Sri Lanka

Press Trust of India
COLOMBO

Three inmates were killed and 23 others injured in separate clashes at two prisons in Sri Lanka over the past 24 hours, officials said on Friday.



Out of control: Protesting inmates at the Pallanasa open prison seen from outside during a stand-off with their guards on Friday. **AP**

The clashes were the latest in a series of incidents of prison unrest in the island nation over the past month, which Public Security Minister Anura Kumara Dissanayake has attributed to an organised plot.

At the Kariakulam prison, two inmates were killed and 15 others injured after a violent situation, officials said. "The immediate trigger for the unrest appears to have been the detention of a package containing narcotics and the subsequent arrest. It is evident that this was a response to the government's anti-narcotics drive," Justice Minister Harshana Nanayakkara told presspersons.

Despite ruling, Trump signs orders to curtail birthright citizenship

Reuters
WASHINGTON

United States President Donald Trump signed two executive orders on Thursday in a new but narrower attempt to curtail birthright citizenship, once again challenging a provision of the U.S. Constitution even though the Supreme Court rejected his previous effort.



Donald Trump

Limiting birthright citizenship has been one of the top priorities in the Republican President's crackdown on immigration, with the White House taking particular aim at what it calls "birth tourism," in which pregnant foreigners travel to U.S. to give birth.

The administration argues the new directive falls outside the purview of the Supreme Court ruling, as it seeks to reinterpret the narrow, historical exceptions to citizenship at birth and expand who is ineligible.

U.S. Senate passes sweeping Russia sanctions Bill with huge support

The Bill would penalise countries that keep buying Russian oil, gas, and other exports; a key feature lets Trump impose tariffs on top five purchasers of Russian oil, including India; push for Bill was championed by late Senator Lindsey Graham

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Show of force: The Bill provides exceptions for countries that import less than 15% of their natural gas from Russia. REUTERS

eral, met with senators from both parties and watched from the gallery as the Senate took the first procedural votes last week on the sweeping legislation.

"Today, President Zelenskyy is watching from Ukraine – and Putin is

watching from Moscow," said Senator Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., who had worked with the late South Carolina senator on the package.

"I would like to think Lindsey Graham is watching, too," he said. "Today we say to the people of Uk-

raine: You are not alone. And today we say to Vladimir Putin: You will not conquer Ukraine."

The sweeping show of force from the Senate is the most substantial move yet during President Donald Trump's second term to shift the dynamic of the more than four-year war, which has now churned longer than the First World War. Congress has struggled to ensure U.S. funding and munitions flows to Ukraine, but Mr. Trump has given a nod to the sanctions package, putting pressure for the House to take it up for a vote and send it to the White House for his signature.

Graham and Mr. Blumenthal had announced a deal with the White House on the sanctions legislation

on July 10 after more than a year of negotiations with the White House. Graham, who had just returned from Ukraine, died suddenly the next day, likely from an aortic tear.

The bipartisan package that carries Graham's name allows the President to impose tariffs on the world's top five purchasers of Russian oil or natural gas, including China and India. It provides exceptions for countries that import less than 15% of their natural gas from Russia and are taking steps to reduce those imports.

The legislation also includes sanctions on Mr. Putin, senior Russian political and military leaders, Russian financial institutions and Russian energy projects.

What does the legislation seek to do?

The central objective is straightforward:

Russia sells:

Oil + Gas + other exports



earns foreign exchange



which helps sustain the Russian economy



US lawmakers want to reduce this revenue

Therefore, rather than sanctioning only Russia, the bill seeks to create pressure on **countries continuing to purchase major quantities of Russian energy.**

That is why India becomes important.

Why India and China matter

Since the Ukraine war and Western sanctions, Asian buyers—particularly **China and India**—have become crucial markets for Russian energy.

The article says the legislation allows the US President to impose tariffs on the world's **top five purchasers of Russian oil or natural gas**, specifically mentioning **China and India**.

That introduces the idea of **secondary economic pressure**:

Russia is the primary target.

But countries doing substantial business with Russia can themselves face economic consequences.

The 15% exemption is important

According to the article, the legislation provides exceptions for countries that:

import less than 15% of their natural gas from Russia

and

are taking steps to reduce those imports.

This suggests the legislation is designed not merely to punish Russia itself but also to encourage third countries to **reduce their dependence on Russian energy**.

Why could this matter for India?

This creates a difficult strategic calculation.

India purchases Russian crude because it can offer:

- competitive pricing,
- diversification of energy supplies,
- large available volumes,
- commercial benefits for Indian refiners.

But India also has an enormous economic relationship with the United States.

So India could face competing interests:

Russia

Cheap/competitive energy + defence relationship + historical strategic partnership

versus

United States

Trade + investment + technology + strategic partnership + diaspora + defence cooperation

India therefore has an incentive to preserve relationships with **both**.

Bill vs law vs actual tariff

Students should understand the US legislative process.

Senate passes bill



House of Representatives considers/passes compatible legislation



differences, if any, reconciled



President signs



becomes law



executive authorities implement provisions

Therefore:

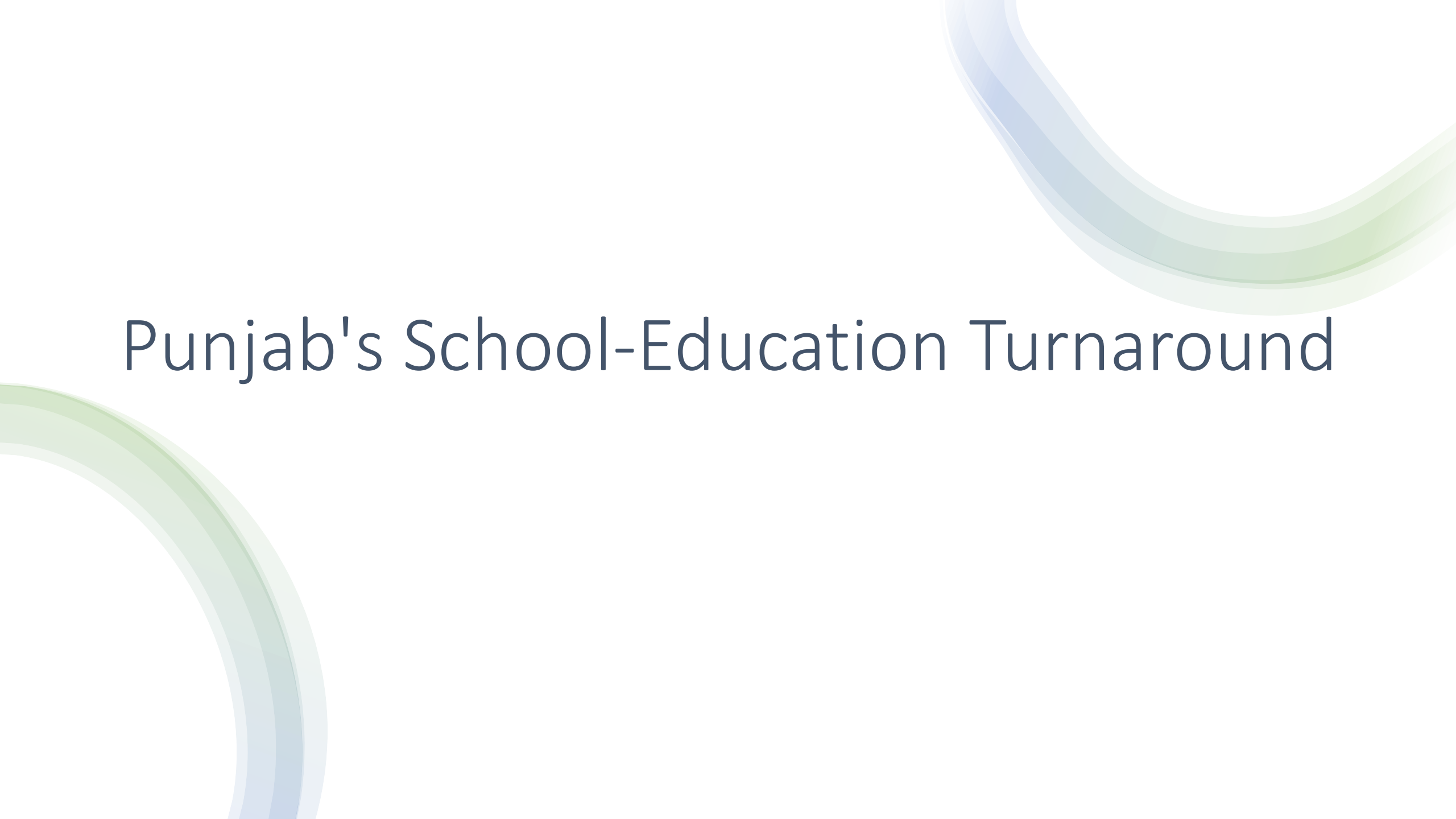
Senate passage ≠ immediate tariff on India.

The article itself says the Senate action increases pressure on the House to take up the legislation and send it to the White House.

The background of the image features a series of concentric, overlapping circles in shades of blue, green, and white, creating a sense of depth and movement. The text "Niti Ayog Index" is centered within this graphic.

Niti Ayog Index

Index Name	Launch Year	Key Partners	Core Parameters / Indicators	Top Performer (Latest Edition)
SDG India Index	2018	United Nations	16 SDGs, 113 indicators	Kerala & Uttarakhand (Joint 1st)
Investment Friendliness Index	2026	CRISIL	8 pillars, 84 indicators	Gujarat (Large States), Uttarakhand (Hilly)
Export Preparedness Index	2020	Institute for Competitiveness	4 pillars, 70 indicators	Maharashtra (Large States)
National Multidimensional Poverty Index	2021	UNDP, OPHI	3 dimensions, 12 indicators	Bihar (Highest poverty rate)
State Energy and Climate Index	2022	Ministry of Power, MNRE	6 pillars, 27 indicators	Gujarat (Large States), Goa (Small States)
State Health Index	2018	World Bank, MoHFW	3 domains, 24 indicators	Kerala (Overall), Uttar Pradesh (Incremental)
School Education Quality Index	2019	World Bank, Ministry of Education	2 categories, 30 indicators	Punjab (Large States)
India Innovation Index	2019	Institute for Competitiveness	7 pillars (Enablers & Performance)	Karnataka (Major States)

The background features two large, stylized, curved lines. One line, in shades of blue and green, curves from the top right towards the center. Another line, in shades of green and blue, curves from the bottom left towards the center. These lines are layered and have a soft, glowing effect.

Punjab's School-Education Turnaround

Indicator	Punjab	Kerala / Comparison
Class III – Language proficiency	82%	Kerala: 75%
Class III – Mathematics proficiency	78%	Kerala: 70%
Class IX – Mathematics proficiency	52%	Kerala: 45%
Govt schools with electricity	99.9%	Nearly universal
Govt schools with functional computers	99%	—
Schools with smart classrooms	80%+	Haryana reported at 50.3%
Schools with internet connectivity	88.9%	Haryana reported at 78.9%
Student–teacher ratio	22:1	Improved
Class X → XI transition	90%+	Indicates relatively low dropout at this transition
Schools of Eminence	118	Major state initiative
Govt-school students clearing JEE Main	786 reported	—
Govt-school students qualifying NEET	1,284 reported	—
Teachers/staff recruited	13,000+ reported	—

How did Punjab improve?

A major factor highlighted in reporting is **Mission Samarth**, focused on recovering learning losses and strengthening foundational skills. The approach emphasised identifying students' actual learning levels and teaching accordingly rather than assuming every child in a grade has the same competency.

 Indian Mastermin... +1

Another flagship intervention is the **Schools of Eminence** programme. Punjab established 118 such schools, aiming to create higher-quality government institutions with better infrastructure and academic opportunities.  The Times of India

Teacher development has also received attention. Punjab sent educators/administrators for training programmes including in **Singapore and Finland**, alongside domestic capacity-building. The underlying idea is that improving buildings alone does not improve learning unless teacher quality and school leadership improve simultaneously.  The Times of India

Infrastructure investment is visible in the reported figures: 99.9% electricity coverage, 99% functional computer availability and more than 80% smart-classroom coverage in government schools.  mint +1

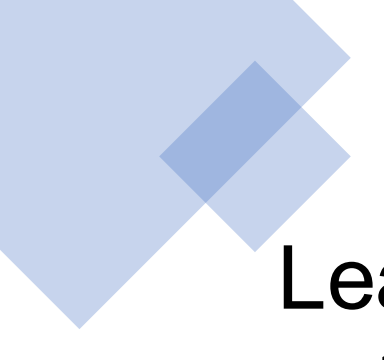
A useful way to understand the Punjab model

The reported transformation isn't simply:

Build better schools → better results.

It is closer to:

Infrastructure + teacher recruitment + teacher training + school leadership + foundational learning + technology + student retention → better learning outcomes.



Learning
outcome

Punjab

Kerala



Punjab
advantage

Class III
Language

82%

75%

+7 percentage
points

Class III
Mathematics

78%

70%

+8 pp

Class IX
Mathematics

52%

45%

+7 pp





Bhawana Kanth becomes
India's first woman Fighter
Combat Leader



- Squadron Leader **Bhawana Kanth** became the **first woman pilot** in the **Indian Air Force (IAF)** to successfully complete the **Fighter Combat Leader (FCL)** course at the **Tactics and Air Combat Development Establishment (TACDE), Gwalio**



Point

Officer

Service

Achievement

Date

Training institution

Location

Course duration reported

Purpose

Significance

Details

Squadron Leader Bhawana Kanth

Indian Air Force

First Indian woman to complete the **Fighter Combat Leader course**

6 August 2026

TACDE

Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

20 weeks

Advanced air-combat tactics and leadership

Opens another elite operational leadership role to women fighter pilots

TACDE	Remember
Full form	Tactics and Air Combat Development Establishment
Service	Indian Air Force
Current location associated with the course	Gwalior
Function	Advanced fighter tactics and air-combat training
FCL	Fighter Combat Leader
Importance	Produces highly trained tactical leaders/instructors

Fighter pilot

Importance

Bhawana Kanth

First batch of women fighter pilots; now first woman FCL

Avani Chaturvedi

First batch

Mohana Singh

First batch

Ladakh to introduce India's first High-Altitude Wildlife Safari



Point

Initiative

Location

Type

Major attraction

Flagship animal

Other focus

Operating model

Important feature

Larger objective

Details

India's first High-Altitude Wildlife Safari

Ladakh

Wildlife/ecotourism initiative

High-altitude Himalayan/trans-Himalayan wildlife

Snow leopard

Bird watching and high-altitude biodiversity

Guided wildlife experiences

Local-community participation

Conservation + livelihood + responsible tourism

What makes it different from a normal safari?

When Indians think of a wildlife safari, they usually think of places such as:

Ranthambore → Tiger

Gir → Asiatic Lion

Kaziranga → One-horned Rhinoceros

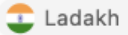
But Ladakh presents a completely different ecosystem.

It is a:

Cold desert + extremely high altitude + sparse vegetation + fragile Trans-Himalayan ecosystem

Therefore, wildlife viewing is fundamentally different.

Instead of dense forests, tourists may experience vast open landscapes and specialised high-altitude species.

The official initiative is intended to regulate such tourism rather than simply allow uncontrolled wildlife-tourism expansion.  Ladakh

Species

 **Snow leopard**

Kiang

Tibetan wolf

Blue sheep/Bharal

ibex

Black-necked crane

**Himalayan/other high-altitude
birds**

Importance

Flagship high-altitude predator

Tibetan wild ass

High-altitude predator

Important snow-leopard prey

Mountain ungulate

Iconic high-altitude bird

Important for bird tourism

- 
- **Why Ladakh needs controlled tourism**
 - Tourism creates income, but Ladakh's environment is exceptionally fragile.
 - Major concerns include:
 - **Water scarcity**
 - **Waste generation**
 - **Vehicle pressure**
 - **Disturbance of wildlife**
 - **Habitat fragmentation**
 - **Grazing pressure**
 - **Human-wildlife conflict**
 - **Climate change**
 - The Ladakh Forest, Ecology & Environment Department itself identifies balancing **tourism, grazing pressure and fragile ecosystems—particularly Changthang—as a challenge.**
 - So a wildlife safari can only be considered successful if tourism is **regulated and low-impact.**

Risk

Too many vehicles

Off-road driving

Tourist crowding

Waste

Water demand

Wildlife chasing

Excess construction

Unequal revenue distribution

Why important

Wildlife disturbance

Damages fragile vegetation

Stress on species

High-altitude ecosystems recover slowly

Ladakh is water-stressed

Ethical/conservation problem

Habitat fragmentation

Communities may not receive benefits

Protected area

Hemis National Park

Changthang High-Altitude Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary

Karakoram (Nubra–Shayok) Wildlife Sanctuary

Important association

Famous snow-leopard landscape

Kiang, snow leopard, black-necked crane

High-altitude wildlife ecosystem

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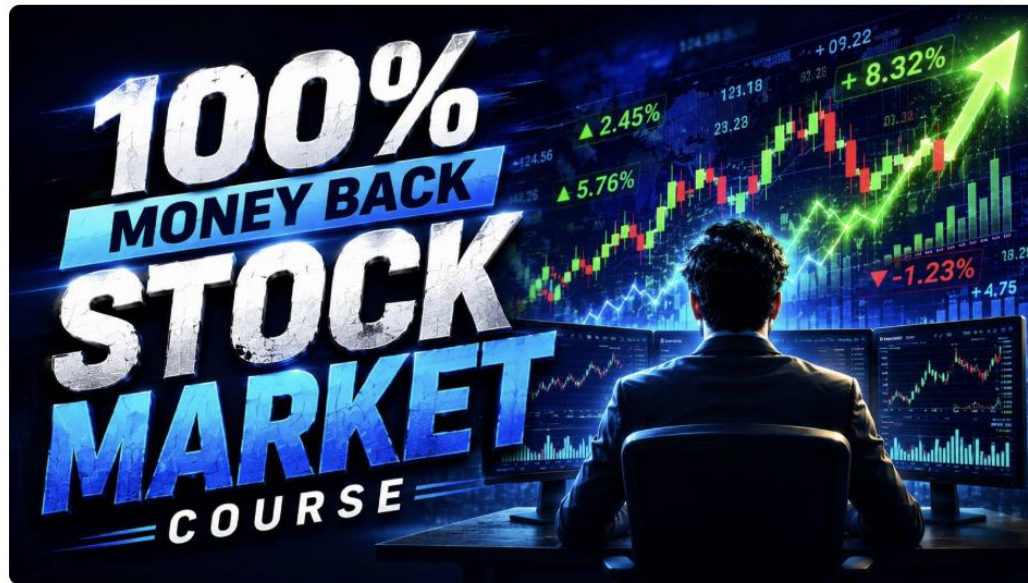


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Course Information

Instructor: Dilkhush Kumar

Start Date: 10 August, 2026

Duration: 45 days

Validity: 6 months

Course level:

Language:

Word of the day

Encomium:

a formal expression of praise

Synonyms: tribute, commendation,
homage

Usage:

The teacher gave an encomium to the student for her hard work.

Pronunciation: newsth.live/encomium

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ɪnkəʊmiəm/





Thank you 😊

