HAPPY NEW YEAR 2026

SIM BINDING RULE

TAMIL NADU GOVT. VS. GOVERNOR
LANDMARK SUPREME COURT CASE

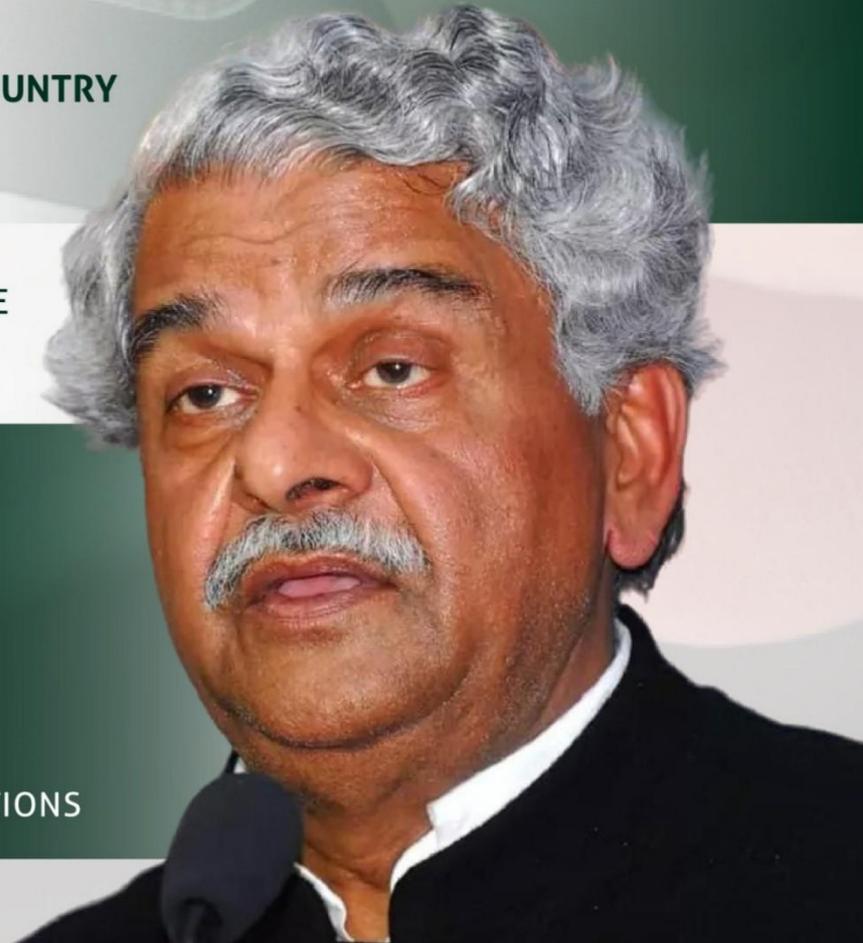## BANGLADESH HIGH COMMISSION
IN **NEW DELHI SUSPENDS**
ALL CONSULAR SERVICES

INDIA
EMERGED AS WORLD'S LEADING COUNTRY
IN DOPING VIOLATIONS

SUPREME COURT PERMITS
SC STATUS BASED ON MOTHER'S CASTE

AUSTRALIA'S
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PARLIAMENT THIS MONTH

PM MODI
CONFERRED ETHIOPIA & OMAN'S
HIGHEST CIVILIAN HONOUR

SANCHAR SAATHI
CONTROVERSY

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Dear Aspirant,

Every time I meet a new batch of aspirants, I'm reminded that the true strength of a nation lies not in its weapons, but in the character of the people who choose to serve it. That belief is the foundation of UC Academy. Yes, we prepare students for CAPF, CDS, AFCAT, and NDA — but our deeper purpose is to shape individuals who can carry responsibility with discipline, empathy, patriotism, and unwavering resolve.

This journey of transformation doesn't happen through textbooks alone. It happens through the culture we build — a culture where students learn to push past limitations, think with clarity, act with integrity, and rise with confidence. And at the heart of this culture is our faculty. Their dedication forms the bridge between potential and achievement, guiding students not just with knowledge, but with the mindset needed to grow into capable officers.

Standing on that bridge, our students grow stronger each day. And to them, I say: let consistency be your anchor and duty your direction. The path will challenge you — and that is exactly why it's worth walking.

To the parents who place their trust in us, thank you. Your support strengthens our mission and reminds us why this work matters.

Recent selections, including notable results in CAPF, reinforce that we're moving in the right direction. With upcoming enhancements in test series, interview training, and physical conditioning, we're preparing to raise the bar even higher.

Our commitment remains simple and steadfast: to shape leaders who will one day shape the nation.

Regards
Shruthi S Thimmaiah
Director
UC ACADEMY

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Business News, Financial News, Economy News, Politics News, India News, Breaking News, Indian Economy, International News, Sports News, and many more topics covered……

NEWS CREDIT

BBC, Reuters, Aljazeera, PIB, PTI, Business Standard, The Hindu, Indian Express, Times of India, Economic Times, Business Line, India Today, Money control And all other leading Newspapers

Appointments

IIFL Finance Appoints Former RBI Deputy Governor B. P. Kanungo as Chairman

IIFL Finance, a leading Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) in India, has appointed Bibhu Prasad (B. P.) Kanungo, former Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), as the Chairman of its Board. The appointment aims to strengthen corporate governance, regulatory compliance and strategic decision-making within the company.

About B. P. Kanungo
➢ Served as Deputy Governor of RBI with responsibility for currency management, payment systems, financial regulation and supervision
➢ Member of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of RBI
➢ Held senior positions such as RBI Regional Director and Banking Ombudsman
➢ Represented India at international financial institutions like the Bank for International Settlements (BIS)

About IIFL Finance
➢ A prominent NBFC providing services such as home loans, gold loans, MSME loans, microfinance and digital lending
➢ Plays a key role in financial inclusion by extending credit to underserved sectors
➢ Regulated by the Reserve Bank of India

José Antonio Kast Elected President of Chile

José Antonio Kast, leader of the Republican Party, has been elected President of Chile, winning the December 2025 presidential runoff with approximately 58% of the vote, defeating left-wing candidate Jeannette Jara. Kast's victory marks a major political shift in Chile, bringing a far-right leader to power for the first time since the return to democracy in 1990.

Background: Who Is José Antonio Kast
➢ Age and Profession: Kast is around 59 years old and a lawyer by training.
➢ Political Career: He served as a member of the Chilean Chamber of Deputies from 2002–2018 and was previously with the Independent Democratic Union (UDI) before founding the Republican Party in 2019.
➢ Presidential Bids: Kast ran for president in 2017 and 2021 before securing victory in 2025.
➢ He is known for ultra-conservative and far-right positions, emphasizing law-and-order and security policies.

Chile:
➢ Capital: Santiago
➢ President: Gabriel Boric
➢ Currency: Chilean peso

Ravi Ranjan Appointed as Managing Director of State Bank of India

The State Bank of India (SBI), India's largest public sector bank, has appointed Ravi Ranjan as its Managing Director (MD). This appointment strengthens SBI's top management to continue its focus on retail banking, corporate banking, and digital transformation.

About State Bank of India (SBI)
➢ Founded: 1 July 1955 (as SBI; predecessor was the Bank of Calcutta, 1806).

➢ Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra.
➢ Chairman: Appointed by the Government of India.
➢ Current chairman: C. Sreenivasulu Setty
➢ SBI is the largest public sector bank in India with a vast network of branches and ATMs.
➢ SBI plays a key role in government schemes, including Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Mudra Yojana, and Digital India initiatives.

SBI Governance Structure
➢ SBI is governed by a Chairman and Managing Directors, who are appointed by the Government of India.
➢ MDs typically handle specific portfolios such as retail banking, corporate banking, risk, operations, treasury, and digital transformation.
➢ The Board of Directors ensures compliance with RBI regulations and corporate governance standards.

Raj Kumar Goyal Assumes Charge as Chief Information Commissioner

Raj Kumar Goyal, a former Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, has taken oath as the Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) of India. The oath of office and secrecy was administered by the President of India. His appointment fills a long-pending vacancy and restores the Central Information Commission to full functional capacity.

About the Central Information Commission (CIC)
The Central Information Commission is a statutory body established under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005.

It consists of:
➢ One Chief Information Commissioner
➢ Up to 10 Information Commissioners
➢ Members are appointed by the President of India on the recommendation of a selection committee.
➢ Selection Committee for CIC
➢ Prime Minister (Chairperson)
➢ Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha

➢ One Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister

Functions and Powers of CIC
Hears second appeals and complaints under the RTI Act. Has powers similar to a civil court, including summoning witnesses and requiring documents. Can order public authorities to disclose information. Submits an annual report on RTI implementation to Parliament. Plays a crucial role in ensuring transparency and accountability in governance.

Additional Useful Facts for Exams
➢ The RTI Act, 2005 applies to Central Government, State Governments, local bodies, and public sector undertakings.
➢ Information denied on grounds of national security, sovereignty, or personal privacy falls under exemptions of the RTI Act.
➢ State Information Commissions function at the state level under the same Act.
➢ Transparency is considered a key pillar of good governance.
➢ The RTI Act empowers citizens as a tool against corruption and maladministration.

Sangeeta Barooah Pisharoty Elected First Woman President of Press Club of India

Senior journalist Sangeeta Barooah Pisharoty has been elected as the first woman President of the Press Club of India (PCI), marking a historic milestone in the country's media landscape. Her election reflects increasing gender representation and leadership in Indian journalism.

About the Press Club of India (PCI)
➢ The Press Club of India is an independent professional body of journalists.
➢ It serves as a forum for journalists to exchange ideas, discuss national and international issues, and uphold press freedom.
➢ The club is based in New Delhi and primarily represents journalists covering Parliament, government, and national institutions.

➤ PCI plays a key role in defending freedom of expression and journalistic rights.

PNB Housing Finance Appoints Ajai Kumar Shukla as MD & CEO

PNB Housing Finance Limited has appointed Ajai Kumar Shukla as its new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, strengthening leadership continuity and corporate governance in one of India's major housing finance companies. PNB Housing Finance Limited is a housing finance company registered with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) as a Housing Finance Company (HFC). The RBI regulates HFCs under the RBI Act, 1934 (after the transfer of regulation from NHB to RBI in 2019).

Punjab National Bank:
➤ Founded: 19 May 1894
➤ Headquarters: Dwarka, Delhi, India
➤ Non-Executive Chairman: K G Ananthakrishnan
➤ MD & CEO: Ashok Chandra

## Venkatesh Prasad elected as the new President of KSCA

Former Indian fast bowler Venkatesh Prasad has been elected President of the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) on 7 December 2025. He defeated rival KN Shanth Kumar by 749 votes to 558 votes out of 1,307 total votes.

Under his leadership, the new KSCA panel, called "Team Game Changers," also filled key positions:
➤ Vice-President: Sujith Somasundar
➤ Secretary: Santosh Menon

➤ Treasurer: BN Madhukar

Asim Munir Appointed as Pakistan's First Chief of Defence Forces (CDF)
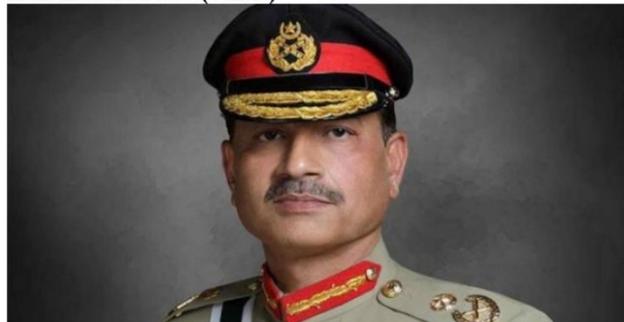
Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari has approved the appointment of General Asim Munir to the newly created post of Chief of Defence Forces (CDF). He will hold this position while continuing as the Chief of Army Staff (COAS). The newly created role grants him unified command over all three defence services for a tenure of five years. The post of CDF was established through the 27th Constitutional Amendment, reflecting a major restructuring of Pakistan's defence leadership framework. The move consolidates military authority at the top level, giving the CDF overarching strategic control over Pakistan's defence apparatus.

About General Asim Munir
Appointed Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff (COAS) in November 2022.

Former roles:
➤ Director-General of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)
➤ Director-General of Military Intelligence (MI)
➤ First COAS to simultaneously hold the newly created CDF post.

About the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF)
Newly created senior-most military position in Pakistan.
➤ Scope: Overall command over
➤ Pakistan Army
➤ Pakistan Navy
➤ Pakistan Air Force
➤ Tenure: 5 years
➤ Created through 27th Constitutional Amendment.

Civil–Military Context in Pakistan
➤ Pakistan has a history of military influence over political institutions.
➤ Previously, the Army Chief was already considered the most powerful position.
➤ Creation of CDF further enhances structural authority of the military.

Key Political Figures

➢ President of Pakistan: Asif Ali Zardari
➢ Prime Minister: Shehbaz Sharif
➢ Pakistan's Defence Structure (Before and After CDF)
➢ Earlier: Each service chief operated independently; Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee had limited operational authority.
➢ Now: CDF centralizes operational command under a single office.
➢ Constitutional Amendments in Pakistan
➢ Require a two-thirds majority in both houses.
➢ 27th Amendment = Creation of the CDF post.

Brendan Nelson Appointed Chairman of HSBC, Succeeding Mark Tucker

HSBC's next chair

HSBC appoints Brendan Nelson as chair after chaotic search.

➢ Background: Why the Appointment Was Needed
➢ HSBC had been searching for a permanent chair for several months following internal upheaval and a period of interim leadership.
➢ The search was described as chaotic — implying there were delays, possibly disagreements or challenges in finding a suitable candidate.

Who is Brendan Nelson

➢ Brendan Nelson is a former partner at KPMG.
➢ Prior to this appointment, Nelson had been serving as interim chair of HSBC since October.

HSBC

➢ Industry: Financial services
➢ Founder: Sir Thomas Sutherland
➢ Headquarters: London, England, United Kingdom
➢ Group Chief Executive: Georges Elhedery

RBI Approves Vikram Sahu as CEO of Bank of America India for Three-Year Term

India's central bank approves Vikram Sahu as CEO of Bank of America N. A. (India)
Background: Appointment Process

Vikram Sahu was initially named by Bank of America in March 2025 to lead its India operations, but his formal appointment as CEO required clearance from Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The approval came via an internal memo reviewed by a major news agency — making the appointment official.

Change in Leadership

Sahu replaces Kaku Nakhate, who had led Bank of America's India operations for 15 years. Following the change, Nakhate will move to the role of "Chair, India" at the firm's securities arm in India.

Bank of America

➢ Founded: 1998
➢ Headquarters: North Carolina, US
➢ Chairman and CEO: Brian Moynihan
➢ Vice chairman: Bruce Thompson

Sipan Garg assumes additional charge as Chairman and Managing Director of THDC India

Sipan Kumar Garg has taken on the role of Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of THDC India, in addition to his current position as Director Finance, following the passing of R K Vishnoi. The CMD post became vacant after R K Vishnoi's demise on November 15, 2025. Garg has been assigned the additional charge for a period of three months, or until a full-time CMD is appointed, whichever is earlier. He officially assumed the charge on November 25, 2025.

About THDC India

A subsidiary of NTPC, Rishikesh-based THDC India is engaged in power generation through solar, hydro, thermal, and pumped storage projects.

Guinea-Bissau general sworn in as transitional president after coup

General Horta Inta-A has been sworn in as the transitional president of Guinea-Bissau following a military coup that deposed President Umaro Sissoco Embalo.

Background of the Coup
The military, referring to themselves as the "High Military Command for the Restoration of Order," announced they had seized power a day after two leading candidates in a tightly contested presidential election claimed victory.

Role of Horta Inta-A
Previously serving as the Chief of Staff of the army, Inta-A was considered close to the deposed President Embalo. He stated that evidence justified the military's actions and stressed the need for urgent measures involving everyone's participation.

Reaction and Situation on Ground
The African Union condemned the coup and called for the unconditional release of Embalo and other detained officials. The capital, Bissau, remained mostly quiet with soldiers on the streets, many residents staying indoors, and businesses and banks closed.

Guinea-Bissau
➤ Capital: Bissau
➤ Currency: West African CFA franc
➤ Continent: Africa

CEC Gyanesh Kumar to Become Chairperson of International IDEA

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar will assume the post of Chairperson of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) for the year 2026. International IDEA is a 35-member intergovernmental organisation founded in 1995, dedicated to strengthening electoral systems, democratic institutions, and governance globally. India is a founding member of the organisation.

Gyanesh Kumar's appointment reflects global recognition of the Election Commission of India (ECI) as one of the world's most credible, transparent, and innovative election management bodies. His role will involve guiding discussions, presiding over all council meetings in 2026, and promoting knowledge-sharing among global Election Management Bodies (EMBs).

About International IDEA
➤ Full Name: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
➤ Established: 1995
➤ Headquarters: Stockholm, Sweden
➤ Members: 35 countries
➤ Observers: United States, Japan

Ramprasad Sridharan Appointed New MD of PUMA India

Global sportswear brand PUMA has appointed Ramprasad Sridharan as the new Managing Director (MD) of PUMA India, effective December 2025. He will report directly to Matthias Bäumer, Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) of PUMA Global. Sridharan replaces Karthik Balagopalan, who served PUMA for nearly 20 years and has now stepped down to pursue other interests. Ramprasad Sridharan brings 25+ years of experience in brand building, retail leadership, digital growth, and commercial strategy across the Asia-Pacific region. He previously served as the CEO & MD of United Colors of Benetton India and has held senior roles at Clarks and Reebok India. His appointment underscores PUMA's focus on strengthening the Indian market, which remains one of the company's fastest-growing global segments.

Polity & Governance

Government to Introduce Bill Against Fake Fertilisers and Pesticides

The Government of India will introduce a bill in Parliament to curb the sale of fake fertilisers, pesticides and unauthorised bio-stimulants, aiming to protect farmers' interests and ensure quality agricultural inputs, as announced by Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

Key Facts:
➢ Announced By: Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare – Shivraj Singh Chouhan
➢ Purpose of the Bill: To prevent production, sale and distribution of fake fertilisers, pesticides and bio-stimulants
➢ Target Issue: Fraudulent and substandard agricultural inputs harming farmers
➢ Parliamentary Action: Introduction of a new bill in the upcoming Parliament session
➢ Approach: Stringent laws and strict penalties against dishonest traders
➢ Beneficiaries: Farmers and the agricultural sector

Objectives of the Proposed Bill
➢ Protect farmers from financial losses caused by fake inputs
➢ Ensure availability of quality fertilisers and pesticides
➢ Improve crop productivity and agricultural sustainability
➢ Strengthen regulatory oversight in the agri-input market

Additional Useful Facts
➢ Fertilisers in India are currently regulated under the Fertiliser Control Order (FCO), 1985.
➢ Pesticides are governed by the Insecticides Act, 1968, which sets quality and safety standards.

Parliament Passes Viksit Bharat – G RAM G Bill, 2025

The Parliament of India has passed the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin): Viksit Bharat – G RAM G Bill, 2025, with approval from both Houses. The Rajya Sabha passed the Bill, following its earlier passage in the Lok Sabha. The legislation seeks to strengthen rural livelihoods in line with the national vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.

Key Provisions of the Bill
The Bill provides a statutory guarantee of 125 days of wage employment per financial year to every rural household whose adult members are willing to undertake unskilled manual work. This marks an increase in guaranteed employment days from 100 to 125, aimed at enhancing income security in rural areas. The fund-sharing pattern between the Centre and States will be:
➢ 60:40 for general states
➢ 90:10 for North-Eastern and Himalayan states
➢ State Governments will continue to bear responsibility for payment of unemployment allowance and compensation.

Government's Stand
Union Minister for Rural Development Shivraj Singh Chouhan stated that rural development is central to national development, emphasising the government's commitment to the "Nation First" approach and welfare of deprived sections. The Bill is positioned as a key step towards inclusive growth and village-centric development.

Debate and Opposition Views
Several opposition members raised concerns regarding:
➢ Insufficient consultation with States and stakeholders
➢ The financial burden on poorer states due to the 60:40 sharing formula
➢ Demands to refer the Bill to a Select Committee for detailed scrutiny
➢ Despite objections, supporters highlighted that nearly 70% of India's population resides in rural areas, and the Bill would strengthen livelihood security and contribute to building a Viksit Bharat.

Additional Key Facts:
➢ The Bill builds upon the legacy of MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005), which first introduced a legal guarantee for wage employment in rural India.
➢ MGNREGA originally guarantees 100 days of wage employment; the new Bill expands this to 125 days.
➢ Rural employment programmes play a critical role in:
➢ Reducing rural poverty and distress migration
➢ Enhancing asset creation and rural infrastructure

➢ Promoting social security and inclusive growth
➢ Employment guarantee schemes are part of Directive Principles of State Policy, especially Article 41, which urges the State to provide the right to work.
➢ Special funding support for North-Eastern and Himalayan states aligns with India's policy of regional equity and balanced development.

Lok Sabha Takes Up Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India Bill, 2025

The Lok Sabha has taken up the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India Bill, 2025 (SHANTI Bill) for consideration and passing. The Bill seeks to modernise India's nuclear energy framework, promote clean and sustainable power generation, and establish a comprehensive regulatory mechanism for the safe use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Key Features of the SHANTI Bill
➢ Aims to promote development, regulation and use of nuclear energy and ionising radiation for electricity generation and non-power applications.
➢ Provides a single, unified legal framework for India's civil nuclear sector by updating existing laws.
➢ Proposes strengthening of nuclear safety and regulatory oversight through statutory backing.
➢ Introduces provisions related to liability and compensation in case of nuclear incidents.
➢ Enables private sector and joint venture participation in nuclear power generation for the first time in India.

Objectives of the Bill
➢ To support India's transition towards clean and low-carbon energy.
➢ To ensure energy security through reliable baseload nuclear power.
➢ To attract investment, advanced technology and innovation in the nuclear sector.
➢ To improve safety, transparency and accountability in nuclear operations.

Additional Facts
1. Nuclear Energy in India
India's nuclear programme began in 1948 with the establishment of the Atomic Energy Commission.
Dr. Homi Jehangir Bhabha is known as the father of India's nuclear programme.
2. Regulatory Framework

The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) oversees nuclear safety in India.
The Bill aims to provide stronger statutory authority to nuclear regulators.
3. Nuclear Power Advantages
Low greenhouse gas emissions
High energy density
Reliable base-load electricity
4. India's Nuclear Fuel Strategy
India follows a three-stage nuclear power programme, focusing on optimal use of uranium and thorium reserves.
5. Liability Framework
Nuclear liability laws ensure compensation to victims in case of accidents while balancing investment concerns.

Rajya Sabha Considers Repealing and Amending Bill, 2025

The Rajya Sabha has taken up the Repealing and Amending Bill, 2025 for consideration during the ongoing session of Parliament. The Bill aims to repeal outdated, obsolete and redundant laws and amend certain existing Acts to remove inconsistencies, update terminology and correct drafting errors. The legislation was earlier passed by the Lok Sabha.

Key Features of the Bill
➢ Proposes to repeal 71 obsolete Acts that are no longer relevant in the present legal and administrative framework.
➢ Seeks to amend 4 existing Acts to update language, remove outdated provisions and correct drafting mistakes.
➢ Certain colonial-era laws and sector-specific Acts that have outlived their utility are included for repeal.
➢ Amendments also focus on modernising legal terminology in line with current governance practices.
➢ A drafting error in the Disaster Management Act, 2005 is proposed to be corrected.

Objectives of the Bill
➢ To declutter the statute book by removing unnecessary laws.
➢ To enhance legal clarity and administrative efficiency.
➢ To improve ease of doing business and ease of living for citizens.
➢ To eliminate obsolete, redundant or discriminatory provisions.

Background and Governance Context
➤ Repealing and Amending Bills are introduced periodically to ensure that the legal framework remains relevant and updated.
➤ Since 2014, the Government has repealed more than 1,500 obsolete laws as part of legal reform initiatives.
➤ Removing outdated legislation helps reduce compliance burden and avoids confusion in interpretation of laws.

Lok Sabha Passes Bill to Raise FDI Limit to 100% in Insurance Sector

The Lok Sabha has passed the Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha (Amendment of Insurance Laws) Bill, 2025, which increases the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit in the Indian insurance sector from 74% to 100%. The reform aims to liberalise the insurance market, attract more foreign capital, enhance competition, and improve insurance penetration across India.

Background and Evolution of FDI in Insurance
➤ 2000: Private and foreign investment allowed, FDI cap at 26%.
➤ 2014: FDI cap raised to 49%.
➤ 2021: FDI limit increased to 74%.
➤ 2025: FDI limit further increased to 100%, enabling fully foreign-owned companies.

Significance for India's Economy
➤ Attracts Global Capital: Encourages international investment and expertise.
➤ Boosts Competition: Drives innovation, better services, and technology adoption.
➤ Improves Insurance Penetration: India's insurance penetration remains below the global average.
➤ Regulatory Strengthening: Supports IRDAI in safeguarding policyholders' interests.
➤ Employment and Market Expansion: Higher foreign participation stimulates employment and financial inclusion.

Additional Useful Facts
➤ FDI (Foreign Direct Investment): Investment by a foreign entity in a domestic company, often involving long-term interest and management control.
➤ IRDAI: The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India regulates and supervises the insurance sector.
➤ Insurance Penetration: Ratio of total insurance premium to GDP.
➤ Insurance Density: Per capita insurance spending.

➤ Liberalisation aligns with India's goal of becoming a global financial hub and improving ease of doing business.

Viksit Bharat Gramin Employment Bill, 2025 Introduced in Lok Sabha

The Viksit Bharat Gramin Employment Bill, 2025 was introduced in the Lok Sabha to strengthen rural employment generation and improve livelihood security in rural areas. The Bill was tabled amid opposition protests, highlighting political debate over rural employment policies.

Key Provisions:
• The Bill aims to enhance employment opportunities in rural India through structured public works and development-oriented activities.
• It seeks to align rural employment with the broader vision of Viksit Bharat (Developed India).
• Focus areas include skill-based work, asset creation, and sustainable rural infrastructure.
• The Bill proposes improved monitoring, transparency, and outcome-based implementation of rural employment programmes.

Significance:
• Addresses rural unemployment and underemployment, a key socio-economic challenge.
• Strengthens income security for rural households.
• Supports inclusive growth and balanced regional development.
• Reflects the government's emphasis on employment-led development.

Rural Employment in India
• Rural employment programmes play a crucial role in poverty alleviation and social security.
• Employment schemes help reduce distress migration from rural to urban areas.
• Asset-creating works improve long-term rural productivity.

Legislative Process
• A Bill must be passed by both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and receive Presidential assent to become an Act.
• Money Bills can only be introduced in the Lok Sabha, while ordinary Bills can be introduced in either House.
• Parliamentary protests are part of legislative functioning but do not halt the formal introduction of a Bill.

Employment & Development Linkage

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• Employment generation is closely linked with infrastructure creation, skill development, and rural demand.
• Rural employment schemes contribute to GDP growth through increased consumption.
• Focus on local employment supports sustainable development goals (SDGs) such as poverty reduction and decent work.

Nuclear Energy Bill Introduced in Lok Sabha

The Government of India has introduced the Nuclear Energy Bill in the Lok Sabha to create a modern and comprehensive legal framework for the development, regulation and safe use of nuclear energy in the country.

Key Objectives of the Bill:
➢ To promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy for power generation, healthcare, industry and research.
➢ To strengthen nuclear safety, security and regulatory oversight.
➢ To provide a clear framework for licensing, supervision and accountability in nuclear activities.
➢ To establish mechanisms for liability and compensation in case of nuclear incidents.

Institutional Provisions:
➢ The Bill provides statutory backing to the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) to enhance its independence and authority.
➢ It proposes the creation of an Atomic Energy Redressal Advisory Council for dispute resolution and grievance redressal.

Parliamentary Developments:
The introduction of the Bill witnessed opposition from some Members of Parliament, indicating concerns related to safety, federal issues and private participation.

Nuclear Energy in India
Nuclear energy is considered a clean and reliable source of base-load power with low carbon emissions. India follows a three-stage nuclear power programme based on thorium utilisation. The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) functions directly under the Prime Minister's Office. India is one of the few countries with significant thorium reserves.

Policy and Strategic Importance
• Nuclear power supports India's energy security and reduces dependence on fossil fuels.
• It contributes to India's climate commitments and long-term clean energy transition.

• The Bill aims to attract investment, innovation and advanced technologies such as Small Modular Reactors (SMRs).

Safety and Regulation
• Nuclear safety in India is governed by strict radiation protection and emergency preparedness norms.
• The Bill reinforces the principle of government responsibility in nuclear safety and liability management.

Additional Facts:
• The Nuclear Energy Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha to modernise India's nuclear energy framework.
• The Bill aims to strengthen nuclear safety, regulation and accountability.
• The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board is the key nuclear safety regulator in India.
• Nuclear energy provides low-carbon base-load electricity.
• India's nuclear programme is based on a three-stage development strategy.
• The Department of Atomic Energy works under the Prime Minister's Office.
• Nuclear power contributes to energy security and climate goals.

Union Cabinet Approves Amendment to Atomic Energy Law

The Union Cabinet has approved a proposal related to amendments in the Atomic Energy legal framework, aimed at strengthening India's nuclear energy sector and enabling greater efficiency, safety, and regulatory clarity. The approval reflects the government's intent to modernise atomic energy governance in line with India's growing clean energy and energy security needs. The move is expected to facilitate smoother implementation of nuclear projects, promote advanced nuclear technologies, and enhance India's ability to meet its climate commitments by increasing the share of low-carbon energy. Atomic energy remains a strategic sector under government control due to its implications for national security and international obligations.

Atomic Energy in India
➢ Atomic energy in India is governed by the Atomic Energy Act, 1962.
➢ The sector is under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), which functions directly under the Prime Minister's Office.
➢ Nuclear power is a key component of India's clean energy transition.

Why Atomic Energy is Important

➤ Nuclear power provides baseload electricity with very low carbon emissions.
➤ Helps reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
➤ Supports India's commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Nuclear Power in India

➤ India operates multiple nuclear power plants, mainly through the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL).
➤ India follows a three-stage nuclear power programme based on thorium utilisation.
➤ India has one of the largest thorium reserves in the world.

Government Approves 'Coalsetu' Policy for Coal Linkage Auctions

The Government of India has approved the Coalsetu Policy, a new framework aimed at improving the allocation and transportation of coal through a transparent coal linkage auction mechanism. The policy seeks to ensure efficient, reliable, and affordable coal supply to various sectors, especially power, steel, and other core industries. Under Coalsetu, coal linkage auctions will be aligned with logistics optimisation, enabling consumers to source coal from mines that are geographically closer, thereby reducing transportation costs, congestion, and carbon emissions. The policy integrates coal supply with railway infrastructure planning, promoting smoother movement of coal from mines to end users.

The initiative supports India's objective of enhancing energy security, improving coal utilisation efficiency, and strengthening domestic coal supply chains while reducing dependency on imports.

What is Coal Linkage?

➤ Coal linkage refers to the allocation of coal from mines to consumers such as power plants and industries.
➤ It ensures assured fuel supply for continuous industrial and electricity production.

Significance of Coalsetu Policy

➤ Promotes market-based allocation of coal through auctions.
➤ Encourages logistics efficiency by linking coal sourcing with transportation routes.
➤ Reduces cost of power generation and industrial production.
➤ Supports environmental sustainability by lowering emissions from long-distance coal transport.

Coal Sector in India

➤ India is among the largest coal producers and consumers globally.
➤ Coal remains a critical component of India's energy mix, especially for thermal power.
➤ Coal mining and distribution are overseen by the Ministry of Coal.

Related Government Initiatives

Commercial coal mining to boost private participation. National Coal Index (NCI) for transparent coal pricing. Coal gasification mission to promote cleaner coal usage.

Health Security & National Security Cess Bill, 2025

The Parliament has passed the Health Security and National Security Cess Bill, 2025. The Rajya Sabha approved the Bill and returned it to the Lok Sabha after discussion.

Key Provisions of the Bill

1. Purpose of the Cess

A cess will be levied on:

➤ Pan masala
➤ Other demerit goods (to be notified by the Central Government)

Revenue generated will fund:

➤ Public health expenditure
➤ National security and defence preparedness

2. Nature of Taxation

➤ Cess will not be levied on essential items.
➤ It targets sin goods that have public health impact.

3. Defence Focus

FM Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted:

➤ Modern defence requires precision weapons, autonomous systems, space assets.
➤ These demand capital-intensive and continuous funding.

4. Health Focus

High incidence of disease due to tobacco:

➤ 13. 5 lakh deaths every year (tobacco-related diseases + cancer)

Cess will help:

➤ Fund preventive healthcare
➤ Reduce consumption of harmful items

5. Federal Aspect

➤ Health is a State subject, therefore:
➤ States will receive a share of the cess revenue.

GST-Related Facts (Very Important for Economy Section)

Under earlier GST regime:

Demerit goods attracted GST + Compensation Cess

Total tax incidence sometimes reached 88%, always above 40%

Under Next-Generation GST:
➢ Compensation Cess phased out
➢ GST alone now has a cap of 40%

About 'Cess'
➢ A cess is a tax imposed for a specific purpose.
➢ Proceeds do NOT go to the Consolidated Fund freely; they must be spent on the intended purpose.
➢ Popular examples: Health cess, Swachh Bharat cess, Infrastructure cess.

Constitutional Provisions
➢ Cesses are allowed under Article 270 (taxes levied and distributed) and Article 271 (cess for Union purposes).
➢ Health is a State list subject – List II of the 7th Schedule.
➢ Public Health Burden of Tobacco in India (Static Data)
➢ India is the 2nd largest consumer of tobacco globally.
➢ Economic burden from tobacco-related diseases is ~1.8% of India's GDP (as per health ministry).
➢ WHO estimates tobacco kills 8 million people annually worldwide.

LS passes Excise Bill 2025 to raise excise duties and cess on tobacco products

The Lok Sabha passed the Central Excise (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to revise excise duties on tobacco products.
The amendment aligns the Central Excise Act, 1944 with post-cess requirements, giving the Centre fiscal space to raise duties once the GST compensation cess ends.

Key Provisions
Excise duties increased on cigarettes, cigars, hookah tobacco, zarda, chewing tobacco, scented tobacco and substitutes.
Existing duty on cigarettes (₹200–₹735 per 1,000 sticks) will rise significantly to ₹2,700–₹11,000 per 1,000 sticks.
Duty increases on major products:
➢ Chewing tobacco: 25% → 100%
➢ Hookah tobacco: 25% → 40%
➢ Smoking mixtures: 60% → 325%

Government's Explanation
Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman clarified:
➢ This is not a new tax and not a cess; excise duty existed even before GST.

➢ Compensation cess rates remained unchanged from 2017 to 2024.
➢ Tobacco duties were increased annually before GST for health reasons.
➢ Total tax incidence on cigarettes is 53% of retail price.
➢ Post-cess, revenue will flow to the Centre and then be devolved to States (41% share).

Health Rationale
➢ Higher taxes aim to reduce tobacco consumption and prevent new users.
➢ Health expenditure rose from 1.13% to 1.84% of GDP (2014–15 to 2021–22).
➢ Under Ayushman Bharat, 55 crore beneficiaries receive financial protection.
➢ Over 9 crore hospital admissions worth ₹1.3 lakh crore recorded.
➢ Mission Indradhanush vaccinated 5.46 crore children and 1.32 crore pregnant women.
➢ Maternal Mortality Ratio declined from 130 to 80 (2014–2020).

Impact on Farmers
➢ Efforts underway to discourage tobacco cultivation.
➢ Under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, 1.12 lakh acres shifted away from tobacco (2018–2021-22).
➢ Crop diversification promoted in 10 major tobacco-growing states.

Objective
The amendment seeks to reduce tobacco consumption, safeguard public health, maintain price stability, and ensure States do not lose revenue after the cessation of compensation cess.

Lok Sabha passes Manipur GST Bill 2025

Purpose of the Bill
The Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Second Amendment) Bill, 2025 was passed to align Manipur's GST rates with the Centre's revised GST slabs. Introduced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the Bill also seeks to replace a previous ordinance promulgated in October 2025.

Key Provisions
Implements decisions of the 56th GST Council, including rationalising GST rates on around 375 items.
Consolidates existing GST slabs into two main rates: 5% and 18%, replacing the earlier 5%, 12%, 18%, and 28% slabs.

Background

Earlier in August 2025, the Lok Sabha passed the Manipur GST (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to replace a prior ordinance. The amendments are part of a nationwide effort to simplify and rationalise GST across states.

Manipur
➢ Capital: Imphal (Executive Branch)
➢ Admission to union: 15 October 1949
➢ As state: 21 January 1972
➢ As union territory: 1 November 1956
➢ Districts: 16
➢ Governor: Ajay Kumar Bhalla
➢ Chief Minister: President's rule

Assam Assembly passes six education bills amid opposition walkout

Bills Cleared Despite Walkout
The Assam Assembly passed six major education-related bills — four amendment bills and two university-related bills. Amendment bills focused on regulating private school fees, provincialisation of teachers and non-teaching staff, and reorganisation of educational institutions. The two university bills included the establishment of new universities and expansion of higher-education infrastructure in the state.

Opposition Walkout
Opposition parties walked out after alleging that their proposed amendments were ignored. Proposed amendments included relaxing cut-off years for institutional provincialisation, reducing minimum enrolment criteria, and including madrassas under relevant acts. The government rejected the amendments citing potential legal issues.

Government's Rationale
The bills aim to streamline teacher and staff management, improve service conditions, and regulate private-school fees. The new university bills are intended to enhance higher-education infrastructure and offerings across Assam.

Assam
➢ Capital: Dispur
➢ Bifurcation: 21 January 1972
➢ Formation: 26 January 1950
➢ Governor: Lakshman Acharya
➢ Chief Minister: Himanta Biswa Sarma (BJP)

Short Articles

Child Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation in India: Supreme Court's Human-Centric Judicial Intervention

Child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation remain among the most egregious violations of human rights in India. Recognising the gravity of this crisis, the Supreme Court of India has described child trafficking as a "deeply disturbing reality" that strikes at the core of children's dignity, bodily integrity, and fundamental rights. In a significant judicial intervention, the Court laid down victim-centric guidelines directing courts to treat trafficked children as injured witnesses and to assess their testimony with sensitivity rather than suspicion. This marks a decisive shift from procedural rigidity to compassionate justice.

Supreme Court Guidelines on Child Trafficking Cases
The Supreme Court's directions aim to reform judicial attitudes and ensure trauma-informed adjudication:

Victim's Testimony as Credible Evidence
➢ Trafficked children must be treated as injured witnesses, whose testimony deserves due weight.
➢ Minor inconsistencies should not discredit their statements.
➢ Conviction can be based on the sole testimony of the victim if it is found credible.
➢ Courts should not expect precise details given the complex and layered nature of trafficking operations.

Sensitivity to Vulnerabilities
Judicial appreciation of evidence must consider socio-economic, cultural, and psychological vulnerabilities, especially of children from marginalised communities. A realistic and empathetic approach is essential while evaluating testimony.

Minimising Secondary Victimisation
➢ Legal proceedings should not inflict further trauma on the child.
➢ The dignity, privacy, and mental well-being of victims must be protected throughout investigation and trial.

Avoiding Prejudicial Assumptions
➢ Courts must refrain from drawing adverse inferences from a child's behaviour, such as delayed reporting or lack of resistance, which are often trauma-induced responses.

➤ The Court reaffirmed that child trafficking and sexual exploitation violate Article 21 by undermining the right to life, dignity, and safety.

Understanding Child Trafficking

Child trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of children through coercion, deception, abuse of power, or exploitation of vulnerability for exploitative purposes. These include:

➤ Commercial sexual exploitation
➤ Forced or bonded labour
➤ Begging
➤ Slavery or servitude
➤ Illegal removal of organs

It constitutes a grave violation of child rights, human dignity, and bodily integrity.

Constitutional and Legal Framework in India
Constitutional Provisions

➤ Article 23: Prohibits trafficking in human beings and forced labour.
➤ Article 21: Guarantees the right to life with dignity.

Statutory Framework
Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023:

➤ Sections 143 and 144 provide stringent punishment, including life imprisonment, for human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children.
➤ Beggary is recognised as a form of exploitation.
➤ Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956: Core law addressing commercial sexual exploitation.
➤ POCSO Act, 2012: Ensures child-friendly procedures and strict punishment for sexual offences against children.
➤ Juvenile Justice Act, 2015: Provides institutional and non-institutional care, rehabilitation, and reintegration.
➤ Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013: Broadens the definition of trafficking irrespective of consent.
➤ Allied laws include the Bonded Labour Act, Child Labour Act, Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, and Organ Transplantation Act.

Key Supreme Court Judgments

➤ Vishal Jeet v. Union of India (1990): Advocated a preventive and humanistic approach; directed states to combat child prostitution and Devadasi practices.
➤ MC Mehta v. State of Tamil Nadu (1996): Prohibited child labour in hazardous industries and established a rehabilitation fund.

➤ Bachpan Bachao Andolan v. Union of India (2011): Banned employment of children in circuses and addressed trafficking networks.

International Commitments

India is a signatory to:

➤ UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNCTOC) and its Trafficking Protocol
➤ SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children

Challenges in Preventing Child Trafficking

Entrenched Socio-economic Distress

Poverty, unemployment, migration, disasters, and family breakdown push children into vulnerability. Persistent demand for cheap labour, domestic servitude, begging, and commercial sex sustains trafficking markets.

Invisible and Organised Trafficking Networks

Trafficking chains operate across source, transit, and destination areas, exploiting porous borders such as the India–Nepal border, making detection difficult.

Silence and Stigma

Fear, trauma, and social stigma prevent victims from reporting crimes. Insensitive interrogation often leads to re-traumatisation.

Misuse of Technology

Social media platforms are increasingly used for grooming and recruitment, including fake talent hunts and influencer opportunities.

Data and Monitoring Gaps

Delayed NCRB data, fragmented databases, and poor inter-state coordination weaken early warning and prevention systems.

Sabka Bima, Sabki Raksha Bill, 2025: Liberalising India's Insurance Sector for Inclusive Growth

The passage of the Sabka Bima, Sabki Raksha (Amendment of Insurance Laws) Bill, 2025 by the Lok Sabha marks a watershed moment in India's financial sector reforms. By allowing 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the insurance sector, the government aims to deepen insurance penetration, attract global capital and technology, and advance the long-term vision of "Insurance for All by 2047." While the reform promises growth and innovation, it also raises concerns regarding foreign dominance, rural neglect, and the protection of policyholders' interests.

Key Provisions of the Bill
100% FDI in Insurance

➤ Raises the FDI cap from 74% to 100%, enabling full foreign ownership of insurance companies.

➢ Intended to attract long-term capital, global best practices, and advanced risk management expertise.

Amendment of Core Insurance Laws

Updates the Insurance Act, 1938, LIC Act, 1956, and IRDA Act, 1999 to align with modern regulatory and market requirements.

Reinsurance Liberalisation

➢ Reduces the Net Owned Fund (NOF) requirement for Foreign Reinsurance Branches from ₹5,000 crore to ₹1,000 crore.

➢ Aims to deepen the reinsurance market and position India as a regional reinsurance hub.

Policyholders' Education and Protection Fund

➢ Establishs a dedicated fund to promote insurance awareness and consumer protection.

➢ Mandates collection and protection of policyholder data in compliance with the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023.

Enhanced Powers for IRDAI

➢ Strengthens enforcement authority to investigate violations, curb illegal commissions and rebates, and ensure compliance.

➢ Empowers the IRDAI Chairperson to order searches, inspections, and seizures.

➢ Allows scrutiny of returns, disclosures, and statements to improve transparency.

Greater Autonomy for LIC

Grants LIC operational freedom to open zonal offices without prior government approval, enabling faster expansion.

Eased Compliance Regime

Simplifies procedural requirements to improve ease of doing business while retaining consumer safeguards.

Rationale Behind the Reform

India's insurance penetration remains modest compared to global standards. Expanding insurance coverage is essential not only for financial inclusion but also for risk mitigation, long-term savings mobilisation, and economic resilience. The reform seeks to bridge the protection gap by leveraging private capital and innovation while strengthening regulatory oversight.

Concerns and Limitations

➢ Foreign Dominance of Household Savings: Critics argue that allowing 100% foreign ownership could place citizens' long-term savings under foreign control, raising issues of economic sovereignty.

➢ Urban Bias and Rural Neglect: Profit-driven foreign insurers may prioritise urban and high-income markets over rural and social-sector obligations.

➢ Trust Deficit: Insurance relies heavily on public confidence, traditionally associated with state-backed institutions like LIC.

➢ Changing Role of the State: The reform reflects a shift from direct state provision of social risk protection towards a shared responsibility model, which may dilute welfare objectives if not properly regulated.

Government Initiatives to Promote Insurance Penetration

➢ Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY): ₹5 lakh health coverage per family for secondary and tertiary care.

➢ Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY): Life insurance for individuals aged 18–50 years.

➢ Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY): Accident insurance covering death and disability.

➢ Jan Dhan–Aadhaar–Mobile (JAM) Trinity: Facilitates enrolment, premium payments, and direct benefit transfers.

Current State of the Indian Insurance Sector

Global Position:

➢ 10th largest insurance market globally and 2nd among emerging markets.

➢ Expected to become the 6th largest market by 2032.

Penetration and Density:

➢ Insurance penetration rose from 3.4% (FY16) to 4.0% (FY23).

➢ General insurance density increased from USD 9 (2019) to USD 25 (FY23).

Market Expansion:

➢ Number of insurers increased from 53 (2014–15) to 74 (2024–25).

➢ Total premiums nearly tripled from ₹4.15 lakh crore to ₹11.93 lakh crore.

Life Insurance:

➢ India is the 5th largest life insurance market globally.

➢ LIC retains ~60% market share, though private insurers are growing.

General Insurance:

4th largest market in Asia and 14th globally.

Key Challenges in the Insurance Sector

➢ Low Penetration: General insurance penetration remains around 1% of GDP, far below the global average.

➤ Limited Rural and Informal Coverage: Rural areas, MSMEs, gig workers, and informal sector remain underserved.
➤ Product Mismatch: Complex products poorly aligned with low-income households and emerging risks like climate change and cyber threats.
➤ Mis-selling and Trust Deficit: Delayed claims, opaque terms, and mis-selling erode consumer confidence.
➤ Low Awareness: Insurance is often seen as an expense rather than a risk-management tool.

SHANTI Bill, 2025: Reforming India's Nuclear Energy Governance for a Clean Energy Future

The introduction of the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Bill, 2025 in the Lok Sabha marks a historic shift in India's nuclear energy policy. For the first time since Independence, the Bill seeks to open the nuclear power sector to private and foreign participation in building and operating nuclear power plants. By replacing the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (CLND) Act, 2010, the legislation aims to modernise India's nuclear governance, attract investment, and align nuclear power expansion with India's clean energy and net-zero commitments.

Key Provisions of the SHANTI Bill, 2025
Replacement of Existing Nuclear Laws
➤ Repeals the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 and the CLND Act, 2010, creating a unified legal framework for civil nuclear energy.
➤ Simplifies regulatory, licensing, and liability processes to enhance investor confidence.

Private and Foreign Sector Participation
➤ Allows private Indian firms, joint ventures, and foreign entities to build, own, operate, and decommission nuclear power plants.
➤ Ends the exclusive operational monopoly of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL).

Retention of Strategic State Control
➤ The government retains control over sensitive areas such as nuclear fuel production, heavy water manufacturing, and radioactive waste management.
➤ Ensures national security, non-proliferation, and strategic oversight.

Statutory Status to the Nuclear Regulator
➤ Grants statutory backing to the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) and makes it accountable to Parliament.
➤ Strengthens regulatory independence, transparency, and nuclear safety oversight.

Revised Nuclear Liability Regime
➤ Repeals the CLND Act, 2010 and removes supplier liability, making plant operators solely responsible for compensation.
➤ Caps operator liability based on installed plant capacity, introducing graded liability limits to reduce financial uncertainty.

Atomic Disputes Tribunal
➤ Establishes a dedicated tribunal to adjudicate nuclear-related disputes, improving regulatory certainty and investor protection.

Facilitation of Advanced Nuclear Technologies
➤ Encourages deployment of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and indigenous reactor designs.
➤ Supports India's transition to clean, reliable, low-carbon baseload power.

India's Current Nuclear Energy Landscape
➤ Installed nuclear capacity stands at 8.18 GW (2025), with a target of 100 GW by 2047.
➤ Over 20 operational reactors, all managed by NPCIL, with multiple projects under construction.
➤ Nuclear Energy Mission (Budget 2025–26) focuses on R&D for SMRs.
➤ India aims to develop at least five indigenously designed SMRs by 2033.
➤ Emerging technologies include Bharat Small Reactors (BSRs), Molten Salt Reactors, and High-Temperature Gas-Cooled Reactors.

Rationale for Nuclear Sector Reforms
Ambitious Capacity Expansion
NPCIL alone lacks the capital, manpower, and execution capacity to scale nuclear power from 8.8 GW to 100 GW.

Large Financing Requirement
Achieving the 2047 target requires nearly ₹15 lakh crore, while Budget 2025–26 allocations remain limited, necessitating private investment.

Project Delays and Cost Overruns
Chronic delays in projects such as Kudankulam Units 3–6 highlight the need for private sector efficiency in EPC and project management.

Technology and Innovation Needs
Private participation can accelerate adoption of SMRs and advanced reactors, improving safety, scalability, and cost efficiency.

Fuel Security Challenges

Weak domestic uranium supply and reliance on G2G imports necessitate broader participation in mining, processing, and fuel logistics.

Energy Security and Climate Commitments

Nuclear power provides stable, low-carbon baseload electricity, complementing renewables and supporting net-zero by 2070.

Core Concerns and Criticisms

Dilution of Liability and Accountability

Removal of supplier liability and capping operator liability may weaken accountability in case of nuclear accidents.

Violation of Polluter Pays Principle

Linking liability to plant size rather than actual damage risks shifting accident costs to the State and citizens.

Public Safety and Trust Deficit

India's experience with industrial disasters, notably the Bhopal Gas Tragedy (1984), heightens public apprehensions about weakened safeguards.

Privatisation of Profits, Socialisation of Risks

Critics argue that private firms may benefit commercially while long-term environmental and safety risks are borne by society.

Measures Required to Strengthen Nuclear Governance

Enhancing Regulatory Independence

➢ Transparent appointment processes and financial autonomy for AERB.
➢ Protection from executive interference to ensure credible safety oversight.

Balancing Safety and Investment Incentives

➢ Periodic review and indexing of liability caps to inflation and evolving risk profiles.
➢ Ensuring investor confidence does not undermine public safety.

Building Public Trust through Transparency

Mandatory disclosure of safety audits, emergency preparedness plans, and accident reporting mechanisms.

Strengthening Centre–State Coordination

Clear protocols for coordination during nuclear emergencies involving multiple authorities and private operators.

Robust Waste Management and Decommissioning Norms

Clearly defined, enforceable frameworks for long-term radioactive waste disposal and plant decommissioning.

How New Pilot Safety Rules and Other Factors Led to Major IndiGo Flight Disruptions in India: Explained

In December 2025, India's busiest airline, IndiGo, faced one of the worst operational crises in its history, with hundreds — and even thousands — of flights cancelled, delayed, and disrupted nationwide. This shook the aviation sector, stranded passengers at airports, and raised questions about airline safety rules, staffing planning, and how changes in pilot regulations were handled.

To understand what happened, we need to break it down into three core parts:

➢ What the new pilot safety rules actually are,
➢ Why IndiGo in particular was hit so hard,
➢ Other contributing factors besides the rules,
➢ Responses, temporary fixes, and what lies ahead.

1. What Are the New Pilot Safety Rules?

India's aviation regulator — the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) — updated rules on how long pilots can fly, how much rest they need, and what counts as night flying. These rules are collectively known as Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL).

Here's what changed and why:

Key Safety Changes

➢ Weekly Rest Increase: Pilots must now get at least 48 continuous hours of rest each week (up from 36). This gives pilots more time to recover from fatigue.
➢ Night Flying Definition Expanded: Night time is now counted from midnight to 6 a.m., instead of midnight to 5 a.m. This captures more flights under fatigue-sensitive hours.
➢ Night Landings Reduced: Pilots are now allowed only two landings per roster period between midnight and early morning (down from six). This is important because night landings are more tiring.
➢ Duty Time Caps: Pilots can't fly for more than 10 hours on flights stretching into the night.
➢ Rest Rules Tied to Leave: Pilots can no longer count personal leave as part of the required rest under the weekly rest rule.
➢ Fatigue Reports: Airlines must submit regular reports to DGCA about pilot fatigue management actions.

Purpose of the Rules

The main goal of FDTL rules is to reduce pilot fatigue — tired pilots can be dangerous because fatigue affects judgement and reaction time. The DGCA studied global safety standards and fatigue data before tightening rules.

How the Rules Were Rolled Out

The FDTL changes were not sudden. They were first proposed in early 2024, and DGCA spread implementation in two phases:

➤ Phase 1 started on July 1, 2025 — longer weekly rest was introduced.
➤ Phase 2 took effect on November 1, 2025 — stricter night limits and other parts of the rules.
➤ This phased approach was meant to give airlines time to adjust.

2. Why IndiGo Was Affected So Badly

All Indian airlines are required to follow the same pilot safety rules. But IndiGo — being the biggest airline — was disproportionately affected. Here's why:

➤ Huge Operations and Few Buffer Resources: IndiGo operates over 2,200 flights daily, far more than any other Indian airline. Because its network is huge, even small problems affect many flights.
➤ Lean Crew Planning: Instead of hiring extra pilots as a cushion, IndiGo reportedly ran with a very tight staffing model. This meant there was little slack in crew availability once the new rules took effect — pilots couldn't be scheduled as flexibly as before.
➤ Pilot Shortages When Needed Most: With the weekly rest requirement increasing and night landings capped, many pilots became unavailable for additional flying (even if they wanted to). IndiGo did not recruit or schedule additional pilots fast enough to meet these new requirements. Industry experts say airlines had more than a year's notice to prepare, but IndiGo's planning didn't match the scale of these changes.

3. Other Contributing Factors Beyond Safety Rules

➤ While pilot safety rules were a big trigger, they were not the only cause of cancellations and delays.
➤ Winter Weather and Fog: Northern India often experiences fog in winter. This reduces visibility at airports like Delhi, slowing down flight operations and creating congestion.
➤ Technical Glitches: IndiGo also faced computer system issues at some airports, which slowed departures and added delays that rippled across the network.
➤ Heavy Airport Traffic: During the peak holiday travel season, airports are busier than usual. This means even small delays or cancellations can quickly cascade, causing large-scale disruption.
➤ Aggressive Schedule Growth: IndiGo expanded its winter season flying schedule — meaning slower recovery from delays and less ability to adjust crew rosters on the fly.

4. What Happened Once Chaos Hit?

➤ Mass Flight Cancellations: In early December alone, thousands of flights were cancelled nationwide as crews hit legal duty limits and no replacement crews were available. Most major airports, such as Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai, were affected. At times, on-time performance dropped to extremely low levels — in some airports under 10% of flights were on schedule.
➤ Passengers Stranded: Millions of passengers faced long lines, delays, and uncertainty as flights were abruptly cancelled or rescheduled. Some travelers had to make alternative plans, pay high fares on other carriers, or face overnight waits.
➤ Criticism from Pilots and Flyers: Pilot groups criticised IndyGo for failing to hire enough staff and said the airline's lean manpower strategy was to blame. Some argued the disruption should not be used to weaken safety norms, while others blamed DGCA for poor oversight in planning.

Government and DGCA Response

➤ The DGCA temporarily eased some rules for IndiGo until February 10, 2026. This included relaxing the strict night landing limits and allowing personal leave to count toward rest periods again — but only temporarily.
➤ The DGCA also sent inspectors into IndiGo's offices to monitor operations and crew planning daily as the airline works to stabilise operations.
➤ Regulators required IndiGo to cut its winter schedule by about 5% and submit a revised flight plan to make scheduling more manageable.
➤ The Ministry of Civil Aviation ordered a high-level inquiry into what went wrong.

5. What Happens Next?

➤ Stabilising Operations: IndiGo says it plans to restore stable operations by February 10, 2026, when full compliance with the FDTL norms is expected to resume.
➤ Hiring More Pilots: The airline is expected to speed up pilot hiring and adjust crew rosters to meet the safety rules and avoid future disruptions.
➤ Stronger Planning Ahead: Many aviation experts now argue that improved planning, more buffer staffing, and flexible crew scheduling will be required across the industry — not just at IndiGo — especially during peak travel seasons.

Way Forward:

- ➤ Hire More Pilots and Create Buffers: Airlines must build a larger standby pilot pool so new rules or disruptions don't collapse the schedule.
- ➤ Use Smarter Rostering Systems: Advanced digital tools should predict fatigue, balance duty hours, and avoid last-minute crew shortages.
- ➤ Better DGCA–Airline Coordination: Future rule changes should involve joint planning, impact assessment, and phased trials to prevent sudden chaos.
- ➤ Clear Passenger Contingency Plans: Automatic rebooking, early SMS alerts, and on-ground support should be standard during disruptions.
- ➤ Improve Airport and Air-Traffic Capacity: Better fog-handling systems, more night runway capacity, and tighter slot management will reduce cascading delays.
- ➤ Strengthen Safety Culture: Prioritise pilot rest and fatigue reporting instead of pushing tight rosters to maximise flights.

India's New SIM Binding Rule: What It Means for WhatsApp, Telegram & Other Apps

The Indian government has introduced a new rule that will change how messaging apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal and others work on your phone. This rule — called SIM binding — is part of broader efforts to reduce cyber fraud and misuse of messaging services in India.

What Is SIM Binding?
- ➤ SIM binding means that a messaging app must continuously check that the same SIM card used to register your account is still present in your phone. Under the new rule:
- ➤ If the SIM card used for registration is removed, replaced, or inactive, the app may stop working.
- ➤ This applies not only to the phone app but also to services like WhatsApp Web — the web or desktop version.
- ➤ Right now, when you register on WhatsApp or Telegram, the app checks your phone number only once using an OTP (one-time password). After that, you can use the app even if the SIM isn't present in the device. The new rule changes that.

Which Apps Are Affected?
- ➤ This rule applies to a wide range of messaging platforms that use mobile numbers for identification, including:

- ➤ WhatsApp, Signal, Telegram, Snapchat, ShareChat, JioChat, Arattai, Josh, among others.
- ➤ All these apps must implement SIM binding within 90 days from the government's directive — likely by early 2026.

What Will Change for Users?
1. App Will Stop Without SIM
After this rule comes into effect, your messaging app may stop working if your SIM card is not in the phone — even if you are using Wi-Fi. So you won't be able to use WhatsApp or Telegram without the SIM card that was used to register your number.

2. WhatsApp Web Logging Out
- ➤ For WhatsApp Web and similar web versions of messaging apps, there's a big change:
- ➤ You will be automatically logged out at least every six hours.
- ➤ To log back in, you will have to scan the QR code again using your phone.
- ➤ This is because the app must make sure your SIM card is still present and active.

Why Is the Government Doing This?
The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) says the rule is meant to:
- ➤ Reduce cyber fraud and scams.
- ➤ Prevent criminals from using messaging apps with deactivated numbers or without SIM cards, making it harder to trace them.
- ➤ Improve security and traceability of digital communication.
- ➤ The DoT believes that by tying your messaging account to your SIM card, it becomes harder for fraudsters — often operating from outside the country — to misuse accounts without being traced.
- ➤ Telecom companies like Airtel, Reliance Jio and Vodafone-Idea have supported the rule, saying it strengthens security without harming privacy. They also compare this to other secure systems where regular verification is common.

Concerns and Criticism
- ➤ Not everyone agrees with the rule. Some critics and privacy advocates argue that:
- ➤ It may be inconvenient for users who use messaging apps on devices without SIM cards, like tablets or laptops.
- ➤ It could make it harder for people who switch devices often or travel abroad.
- ➤ There are concerns about user privacy and flexibility, especially for multi-device usage.

In Short

The new SIM-binding rule means:

➢ Messaging apps must check that your registered SIM is still in your phone.
➢ Apps may stop working without the SIM.
➢ WhatsApp Web will force logouts every six hours.
➢ All affected apps must comply within 90 days.
➢ The rule aims to reduce fraud but may inconvenience many users.

What Is the Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025?

The Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025 is a new law passed by the Indian Parliament that allows the government to impose a special cess (a type of tax) on the manufacture of certain products, mainly pan masala — a widely sold chewing tobacco product — with the money raised used for public health and national security needs.

This Bill came at a time when India is reorganising its tax structure on products like tobacco and pan masala because the compensation cess — a temporary tax earlier imposed under the GST system — is due to end. The government wanted to make sure there was no sudden loss of revenue, especially for important sectors like health and defence.

Why Was This Bill Needed?

➢ When India introduced the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in 2017, a compensation cess was also added on "sin goods" — products harmful to health such as tobacco, pan masala, aerated drinks and luxury items — to make up for revenue shortfalls to states.
➢ This tax was temporary and extended several times. It is set to expire by March 31, 2026, which meant revenue from these products could fall. To avoid this, the government introduced two new measures:
➢ A fresh excise duty on tobacco products under a different law,
➢ The Health Security se National Security Cess on pan masala and potential future goods.
➢ The new Bill ensures that the tax burden on these harmful goods stays high, discouraging consumption while also creating a steady stream of funds for health initiatives and national security.

Key Components of the Bill

1. Goods Covered: The Bill initially applies to pan masala, but the government has the power to include other similar goods through notification later.
2. How the Cess Is Calculated: Unlike normal taxes that are based on how much a product is sold, this cess is based on the production capacity of the machines or processes used by manufacturers — that means a company with higher capacity will pay more.
3. Taxable Persons: Anyone who owns, operates or controls machines or processes manufacturing the specified goods is responsible for paying the cess.
4. Revenue Use

Money collected from the cess goes into India's Consolidated Fund and will be used for:

Public health programmes, and
National security requirements — such as defence expenditure.

Portions of the revenue will also be shared with state governments to support health-related schemes.
5. Enforcement and Compliance

The Bill sets up a system for:

Registration and self-declaration by manufacturers,
Monitoring and audits,
Penalties and prosecution for evasion or false records,
A multi-tier appeals process so that disputes can be legally challenged.

Implementation and Timeline

➢ The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha in early December 2025 and promptly passed.
➢ It was then passed by the Rajya Sabha and returned to the Lok Sabha, which indicates Parliament's approval.
➢ Once final procedures are completed, the cess will start to apply, especially as the GST compensation cess phases out by March 2026.

Aftermath and Impact

1. Revenue Stability: The government expects a steady stream of funds to support health programmes and defence. The sharing of revenue with states also aims to strengthen cooperative federalism.
2. Health and Behaviour: By keeping prices of pan masala higher through taxation, the government also hopes to reduce consumption of products linked to health problems.
3. Political and Public Response: While many lawmakers supported the Bill as a responsible fiscal measure, some opposition voices raised concerns about its title and federal impact, calling for deeper scrutiny.

In Summary

The Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025 is a new tax law aimed at maintaining high levies on harmful products like pan masala, ensuring stable revenue for public health and national security, and replacing revenue lost due to the phasing out of the GST compensation cess. It introduces a production-based levy, includes a structured compliance system,

and allows revenue sharing with states while aiming to deter consumption of demerit goods.

Tamil Nadu Govt. vs. Governor: A Landmark Supreme Court Case Explained

The Tamil Nadu government recently moved the Supreme Court of India to challenge the actions of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, R N Ravi, saying he acted against the democratic and constitutional rights of the people and the elected government. This dispute is part of a long-running conflict between the state executive and the Governor over the approval and clearance of bills passed by the state legislature.

What Sparked the Conflict?

➤ In 2023 and onwards, the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly passed several important bills relating to governance, university administration, and other key areas. Instead of giving them assent (approval), the Governor withheld assent to 10 of these bills and sent some bills to the President of India for consideration.

➤ Under the Indian Constitution, once a state legislature passes a bill, the Governor usually has a few choices:

➤ Give his assent to make it law,

➤ Withhold assent and return it for reconsideration, or

➤ Reserve it for the President's consideration in specific situations.

➤ But in this case, the Governor withheld assent for a long time — in some cases for years — without proper reasons and then reserved them for the President without first returning the bills to the assembly, as required by the Constitution.

➤ The Tamil Nadu government argued that this deliberate delay and reservation to the President was unconstitutional and hampered the democratic process. So, it filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court under Article 32 of the Constitution, asking the court to intervene and protect the state's legislative rights.

What the Supreme Court Decided

In April 2025, a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court delivered a landmark judgment on this case. The court held that the Governor's actions were "illegal and erroneous" and violated constitutional norms.

The Supreme Court emphasized these key points:

➤ A Governor cannot sit indefinitely on a bill or unduly delay his decision simply to block it.

➤ If there are issues with a bill, the Governor must either give assent, withhold it and return it for reconsideration, or reserve it for the President's consideration directly under clear constitutional grounds.

➤ The Court held that in this case, the Governor's refusal to act on the bills — even after they were passed again by the assembly — was against the Constitution.

➤ Invoking its extraordinary powers under Article 142, the Supreme Court declared that the 10 bills shall be deemed to have received the Governor's assent from the date they were re-presented to him. This effectively made them laws without the Governor's signature.

Why This Case Matters

This case is more than just about Tamil Nadu. It raises important constitutional questions about federalism and state autonomy in India. The Tamil Nadu government argued that when the Governor — an unelected official — blocks bills passed by the elected legislature, it undermines the people's mandate and disrupts democratic governance.

World Day of the Handicapped

IMPORTANCE
To mark the proclaimation by UNGA in 1992 to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.

INCEPTION: 1992

MOTTO
To increase awareness from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

NOTE
It was originally called "International Day of Disabled Persons" Also known as the International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD).

2025 THEME
Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future.

03 DECEMBER

International Relations & Events

India Re-elected to ICAO Council with Strong Mandate

India has been re-elected to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Council for the 2025–2028 term with one of the highest mandates, reflecting strong international support and confidence in India's role in global civil aviation governance. The election took place during the 42nd ICAO Assembly Session in Montreal, Canada, and India secured more votes compared to the previous election, underlining its growing influence in civil aviation matters.

What is ICAO and Its Council?
➢ International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a specialized UN agency, established in 1944 under the Chicago Convention to promote safe, secure, and sustainable international civil aviation.
➢ ICAO develops Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) to enhance aviation safety, security, and environmental protection.
➢ The ICAO Council is the permanent executive body responsible for adopting SARPs, formulating international aviation policies, and guiding global civil aviation cooperation.
➢ The Council consists of 36 member states elected by the ICAO Assembly for a three-year term.

India's Re-election Details
➢ India was re-elected under Part II of the ICAO Council, which includes states making the largest contribution to international civil air navigation.
➢ The election was held in September 2025 during the ICAO Assembly in Montreal.
➢ India secured more votes than in the 2022 election, showing stronger global confidence in its aviation leadership.
➢ India has been a founding member of ICAO since 1944 and has maintained an uninterrupted presence on the Council.

Chicago Convention
➢ Formally known as the Convention on International Civil Aviation, signed in 1944 by 52 countries to promote safe and orderly international air transport.
➢ Established ICAO and set the framework for global civil aviation agreements.

Role of ICAO Standards

➢ ICAO's SARPs harmonize aviation safety, security, and environmental protocols across member states.
➢ SARPs cover areas like airworthiness, flight operations, air traffic services, aerodromes, and environmental protection.

India's Civil Aviation Context
➢ India is one of the largest and fastest-growing domestic aviation markets globally.
➢ Government initiatives like UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme) enhance connectivity to smaller cities and boost economic growth.
➢ India is promoting green aviation practices in line with ICAO frameworks.

Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi Suspends All Consular Services

The Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi has temporarily suspended all consular services, affecting services such as visa issuance, passport renewal, attestation and immigration clearances. The suspension is due to specific administrative or operational reasons and has implications for travellers, students, workers and expatriates visiting or residing in India.

About Consular Services
Consular services are official functions performed by a country's diplomatic mission abroad to assist its citizens and facilitate travel, legal processes and documentation. Key consular services include:
➢ Visa issuance and renewal
➢ Passport issuance and renewal
➢ Attestation and authentication of civil and educational documents
➢ Consular assistance in emergencies
➢ Notarisation of agreements and affidavits
➢ Assistance to citizens in distress

Background: India–Bangladesh Relations
➢ India and Bangladesh share close historical, cultural, economic and geopolitical ties:
➢ India was one of the first countries to recognise Bangladesh in 1971 after its independence.
➢ The India–Bangladesh Friendship Treaty (1972) laid the foundation for bilateral cooperation.
➢ The two countries share a 4,096-kilometre border, including the India–Bangladesh border fences and fenced enclaves resolved in recent decades.

> Cooperation extends to trade, water sharing, connectivity, security, culture and people-to-people relations.

Australian Government Announces National Gun Buyback Scheme After Bondi Beach Attack

The Australian government, led by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, has announced a national gun buyback scheme following the Bondi Beach mass shooting in Sydney, which killed at least 15 people and injured several others during a Hanukkah celebration. The scheme aims to purchase and destroy surplus, newly banned, and illegal firearms to enhance public safety and prevent future gun violence. The programme is considered the largest gun buyback effort in Australia since the 1996 Port Arthur massacre reforms and will be coordinated between the federal and state/territory governments. It forms part of broader efforts to tighten firearm laws, improve licensing, and strengthen national firearms regulation.

1. Background of the Bondi Beach Attack
The attack occurred during a Hanukkah festival, resulting in multiple fatalities and injuries. It highlighted loopholes in existing gun laws, as one shooter legally possessed multiple firearms.

2. Gun Buyback Scheme
A gun buyback scheme is a policy where the government offers compensation for voluntarily surrendered firearms. It aims to reduce the number of guns in civilian hands and remove illegal or banned weapons.

3. Port Arthur Massacre and Reforms (1996)
The 1996 Port Arthur massacre led to nationwide gun control reforms in Australia. Reforms included a national firearms agreement, stricter licensing, a registry, and a major buyback of semi-automatic and automatic weapons.

4. Australian Gun Laws
Australia already had strict firearm regulations, including background checks, safe storage, and limits on certain weapons. Loopholes and variations between states allowed some individuals to accumulate multiple firearms.

5. National Firearms Register & Licensing
The government plans to establish a National Firearms Register to track all legally owned guns. Proposed reforms include limiting firearms per person, stricter licensing, and possibly requiring citizenship for gun ownership.

6. Public Safety & Hate Crime
The government is also focusing on hate crime laws and anti-hate task forces in response to the attack. A national day of reflection has been declared to honour the victims.

7. Public Debate
Supporters view buybacks as a means to reduce violence, while critics debate effectiveness and the need to address root causes such as extremism and mental health.

IMF Approves Emergency Aid for Sri Lanka After Cyclone Ditwah

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approved USD 206 million in emergency financial assistance to Sri Lanka following the severe impact of Cyclone Ditwah. The support is provided under the Rapid Financing Instrument (RFI) to help the country meet urgent balance-of-payments needs, humanitarian assistance, and reconstruction requirements caused by the natural disaster. The cyclone caused widespread flooding, landslides, infrastructure damage, agricultural losses, and displacement, putting additional pressure on Sri Lanka's already fragile economy.

About IMF Emergency Instruments
Rapid Financing Instrument (RFI) provides quick financial support to IMF member countries facing urgent balance-of-payments needs due to shocks such as natural disasters
RFI involves limited conditionality and focuses on immediate relief rather than long-term reforms.

Extended Fund Facility (EFF) Context
Sri Lanka is under an IMF Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme aimed at fiscal consolidation, debt sustainability, and structural reforms. IMF disaster assistance does not replace reform commitments under EFF but complements recovery efforts.

India Excluded from US-Led 'Pax Silica' Critical Minerals and Technology Initiative

India has been excluded from the newly launched US-led 'Pax Silica' initiative, a strategic grouping aimed at securing global supply chains for critical minerals, silicon, semiconductors, artificial intelligence infrastructure and advanced manufacturing. The initiative brings together select countries with strong capabilities in high-technology production and mineral

processing to reduce strategic dependence on concentrated supply sources, particularly China. Despite ongoing India-US trade and technology cooperation, India was not among the initial participants. Experts believe India's relatively limited critical mineral processing capacity and advanced semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem may have contributed to its exclusion. However, India could potentially be included at a later stage as it scales up domestic capabilities. The development highlights the growing importance of geoeconomics, supply-chain security and technology alliances in global power politics.

Additional Useful Key Facts

➢ Critical minerals are essential for clean energy, defence, electronics, semiconductors, EVs and AI technologies.
➢ China dominates global processing of rare earth elements and several critical minerals, prompting alternative alliances.
➢ The US and allies are creating "trusted supply chain blocs" to ensure technology and economic security.
➢ India has launched the National Critical Mineral Mission to boost exploration, processing and global partnerships.
➢ India is part of the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP) but remains outside some newer technology-centric blocs.
➢ Strengthening mineral refining and semiconductor fabrication is crucial for India's strategic autonomy.
➢ The issue is relevant to GS-II (International Relations) and GS-III (Economy, Science & Technology).

India Sends 700 Tonnes of Relief to Sri Lanka under Operation Sagar Bandhu

India has dispatched 700 tonnes of humanitarian relief material to Sri Lanka as part of Operation Sagar Bandhu, launched to support the country after Cyclone Ditwah caused severe flooding, landslides, and infrastructure destruction. With this shipment, India's total assistance to Sri Lanka under the operation has reached over 1,000 tonnes. The relief consignment includes food supplies, tents, tarpaulins, medicines, hygiene kits, water-purification equipment, and other essential materials. India has also deployed NDRF teams, medical teams, engineering support units, and rescue personnel, along with Bailey bridge

components, to help restore connectivity in disaster-affected districts. The assistance is part of India's commitment to act as a First Responder in the Indian Ocean Region and reflects its Neighbourhood First policy.

About Operation Sagar Bandhu

➢ Launched by India in November 2025 to assist Sri Lanka after Cyclone Ditwah.
➢ The operation includes relief, rescue, medical aid, evacuation, and infrastructure restoration.
➢ Conducted through coordinated efforts of the Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, NDRF, medical teams, and engineering units.

About Cyclone Ditwah

A severe tropical cyclone that caused:
➢ Widespread floods
➢ Landslides
➢ Destruction of roads and bridges
➢ Displacement of thousands
➢ Major affected areas include eastern and southern districts of Sri Lanka.

Why This Operation Is Important

➢ Strengthens India–Sri Lanka bilateral relationship.
➢ Enhances India's role as a regional humanitarian leader.
➢ Demonstrates India's ability to deliver multidimensional disaster response.
➢ Supports regional stability and cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Relevant Government Schemes & Policies

➢ Neighbourhood First Policy: India's priority assistance to neighbouring countries.
➢ HADR (Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief): India's doctrine to respond to regional disasters.
➢ SAGAR Vision (Security and Growth for All in the Region): India's maritime cooperation framework.

US drops South Africa from 2026 G20, invites Poland to join

The United States, which assumed the G20 presidency on December 1, has announced that South Africa will not be invited to the 2026 G20 Leaders' Summit in Miami. Washington accused the ANC-led government of sabotage, hostility toward the US, and promoting agendas that undermine the forum's economic focus.

US Priorities for the 2026 Presidency

Secretary of State Marco Rubio outlined Washington's vision for the 2026 cycle, emphasizing a return to core economic themes:

➢ Economic growth as the central focus
➢ Innovation, entrepreneurship, perseverance
➢ Removing regulatory barriers
➢ Securing affordable and resilient energy supply chains
➢ Advancing new technologies
➢ These themes align with America's 250th anniversary year, which the US plans to highlight during its G20 leadership.

Schedule of G20 Events
➢ First Sherpa and Finance Track Meetings: December 15–16, 2026, in Washington
➢ Leaders' Summit: December 2026 in Miami

Poland to Be Invited
Rubio said the US will invite "friends, neighbors, and partners," specifically naming Poland, now considered among the world's 20 largest economies. He praised Poland's economic reforms and future-oriented growth trajectory.

Washington's Critique of South Africa
Rubio issued a detailed criticism of South Africa's ANC-led government, accusing it of:
➢ Abandoning reconciliation post-Mandela
➢ Adopting redistributionist policies discouraging investment
➢ Promoting racial quotas that hinder private sector performance
➢ Allowing corruption to weaken the state
➢ Losing its position among major industrialized economies
➢ He alleged targeting of minorities and the US, tolerance for violence against Afrikaners, and alignment with adversarial nations such as Iran and groups like Hamas.

Accusations Regarding South Africa's 2023 G20 Presidency
Rubio claimed South Africa:
➢ Damaged the G20's reputation
➢ Prioritized "radical agendas" on climate, diversity, and aid
➢ Ignored objections from the US and other countries
➢ Blocked Washington's input
➢ "Doxed" US officials engaged in negotiations
➢ As a result, he said the US "will not extend an invitation to the South African government," though it supports the people of South Africa.

Historical and Institutional Context
➢ The G20, created in 1999 and elevated to leaders' level in 2008, combines advanced and major emerging economies that shape global growth.

➢ The US last hosted the G20 in 2009 in Pittsburgh during the financial crisis response.

What is G20?
G20 (Group of Twenty) is an international forum of major advanced and emerging economies that together represent:
➢ Around 85% of global GDP
➢ Nearly 75% of global trade
➢ About two-thirds of the world's population

Canada concludes negotiations to join EU's Security Action for Europe

Agreement & Announcement
Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney announced the successful conclusion of negotiations for Canada's participation in the EU's Security Action for Europe (SAFE). Canada and the European Union plan to swiftly ratify the bilateral agreement, aiming to officially launch Canada's participation.

Significance for Canada
➢ Canada will be the only non-European country with preferential access to the SAFE framework.
➢ Participation provides the Canadian defense industry with expanded access to the European market.
➢ Attracts reliable suppliers for the Canadian Armed Forces and encourages private investment in Canada.

About SAFE
Approved by the EU Council in May, SAFE provides €150 billion in financial support for member states.
The fund allows procurement of security and defence equipment through long-term loans with preferential interest rates, strengthening Europe's defense capabilities.

Canada
➢ Capital: Ottawa
➢ Monarch: Charles III
➢ Currency: Canadian dollar ($) (CAD)
➢ Governor General: Mary Simon
➢ Prime Minister: Mark Carney

India invited for first time to chair International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

Historic Invitation for India
India has been invited for the first time to chair the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA).

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar will assume the Chairship in Stockholm, Sweden.

Significance for India

CEC Gyanesh Kumar stated that India's track record of conducting free, fair and transparent elections is internationally recognised.

He termed the Chairship a moment of pride for citizens and election officials.

About International IDEA

➢ Established: 1995
➢ Type: Inter-governmental organisation
➢ Membership: 37 countries
➢ Observers: United States and Japan
➢ UN Status: Observer at UN General Assembly since 2003

India's Role in IDEA

➢ India is a founding member.
➢ Actively contributes to governance processes, electoral research, capacity building and training initiatives.

India Sign Three MoUs During Prime Minister's Visit to Addis Ababa

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official visit to Addis Ababa, India and Ethiopia signed three Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) to strengthen bilateral cooperation in key strategic and developmental areas. The agreements were signed in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali, reflecting the growing partnership between the two countries.

Key MoUs Signed

Cooperation in United Nations Peacekeeping Training: Enhances joint training, capacity building and exchange of best practices for UN peacekeeping missions.

Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters:

Facilitates cooperation, information sharing and support to prevent smuggling and improve trade facilitation.

India and Liberia Sign MoU on Pharmacopoeia to Enhance Shared Quality Standards

India and Liberia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at establishing cooperation in pharmacopoeia, with the objective of promoting shared quality standards, harmonising drug

regulations, and strengthening mutual collaboration in the pharmaceutical sector. The MoU was signed in the presence of the Ambassador of India to Liberia, Manoj Bihari Verma, and Liberia's Health Minister, Dr. Louise M. Kpoto. According to India's Health Ministry, this agreement will help improve access to safe, effective, and affordable medicines in both countries and facilitate deeper regulatory coordination. The partnership is expected to promote standardisation of pharmaceuticals, enhance drug quality control, and boost pharma trade under globally accepted norms.

About Pharmacopoeia

A pharmacopoeia is an official publication containing drug quality standards, specifications, and testing methods.

India's official pharmacopoeia is the Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP), published by:

Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC), Ghaziabad.

➢ Pharmacopoeias help ensure safety, efficacy, and quality of medicines.
➢ India's Pharmaceutical Strength
➢ India is known as the "Pharmacy of the World."
➢ Majority of the world's generic medicines are supplied by India.

Major agencies:

➢ CDSCO – Central Drugs Standard Control Organization
➢ DCGI – Drugs Controller General of India

About Liberia

➢ Capital: Monrovia
➢ Currency: Liberian Dollar
➢ President: Joseph Boakai
➢ Region: West Africa

India–Australia Strengthen Partnership in Skills & Mobility

India and Australia have renewed their commitment to enhance cooperation in skills development, workforce mobility, and emerging sectors during the 3rd Australia-India Education and Skills Council (AIESC) Meeting held in New Delhi.

The meeting was co-chaired by:

➢ Jayant Chaudhary, Minister for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (India)
➢ Andrew Giles, Minister for Skills & Training (Australia)

1. Fast-Tracking Mutual Recognition of Qualifications (MRQs)

➢ Both countries agreed to accelerate the Mutual Recognition of Qualifications, enabling:

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➤ Indian skilled workers' qualifications to be accepted in Australia
➤ Australian qualifications to be recognized in India
➤ This improves international employability of Indian professionals.

2. Joint Bridge Courses for Skilled Mobility
➤ India & Australia will co-design bridge courses.
➤ Aim: Support smooth mobility of professionals between the two countries, ensuring skill-matching and industry standards.

3. Collaboration Linked to Major Sporting Events
India's bid for the 2030 Commonwealth Games
Australia's preparations for the 2032 Brisbane Olympics
→ These provide major opportunities in:
➤ Event management
➤ Hospitality & tourism
➤ Infrastructure & logistics
➤ Sports technology and training

4. Sports & Physical Wellness as Emerging Sector
Both nations identified sports, fitness, and physical wellness as high-growth sectors with significant employment potential.
Collaboration expected in:
➤ Sports coaching
➤ Sports science
➤ High-performance training
➤ Sports management

Global Recognition Efforts
India is working with multiple countries (UK, Australia, UAE, Germany) on:
➤ Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs)
➤ Increasing student and worker mobility

India–UAE Agree to Enhance Visa & Legal Cooperation

➤ India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) agreed to strengthen cooperation in consular services, visa facilitation, and legal matters.
➤ The discussions took place during the 6th Meeting of the India-UAE Joint Committee on Consular Affairs in Abu Dhabi.
➤ The Indian delegation was led by Arun Kumar Chatterjee, Secretary (Consular, Passport, Visa & Overseas Indian Affairs), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).
➤ Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring the safety, dignity, welfare, and rights of their citizens residing in each other's countries.

➤ India acknowledged the UAE's strong support for the 3. 5+ million Indian diaspora, the largest expatriate community in the UAE.

About India–UAE Relations
➤ UAE is India's third-largest trading partner after the U. S. and China.
➤ India and UAE are partners in the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), signed in 2022, aimed at increasing bilateral trade to USD 100 billion.
➤ UAE is a member of the I2U2 Group (India, Israel, USA, UAE) focused on food security, energy, and technology.
➤ UAE joined the BRICS group in 2024.

Japan to Restart World's Largest Nuclear Plant, 15 Years After Fukushima Disaster

Japan is set to restart the world's largest nuclear power plant, the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa facility, nearly 15 years after the Fukushima disaster, to strengthen energy security and reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

Objectives of the Restart Decision
➤ Energy Security: Reduce Japan's reliance on imported fossil fuels
➤ Electricity Supply: Restarting one reactor can increase power supply to Tokyo region by about 2%
➤ Decarbonisation: Helps achieve climate goals by increasing clean energy share
➤ Economic Considerations: Stabilises electricity prices and lowers fuel import bills

Additional Facts
➤ Fukushima Disaster (2011): Triggered core meltdowns, mass evacuations, and shutdown of all reactors
➤ Nuclear Regulatory Framework: Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority (NRA) now enforces stricter safety standards for reactor operations
➤ Clean Energy Target: Japan aims for nuclear power to contribute about 20% of its energy mix by 2040
➤ Public Opinion: Local communities remain concerned about safety and environmental risks
➤ Economic Impact: Nuclear restarts reduce reliance on costly imported fossil fuels, supporting energy affordability

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) Report: Israel Again Registers Highest Journalist Death Toll Worldwide in 2025

According to RSF's 2025 report, Israel killed more journalists than any other country this year. Worldwide, 67 journalists were killed over the past 12 months — one more than in 2024. Israeli forces, mainly in Gaza, were responsible for the deaths of 29 Palestinian reporters, accounting for 43% of global journalist fatalities. RSF described Israel as "the worst enemy of journalists," emphasizing that these deaths were deliberate — not accidental or collateral.

Key Details & Broader Trends

The deadliest single incident this year was a "double-tap" strike on a hospital in south Gaza on 25 August, which killed five journalists — including correspondents working for major international agencies. Apart from Israel, other dangerous countries for journalists in 2025 included Mexico (9 killed), Ukraine (3 killed) and Sudan (4 killed). RSF also reported that as of December 1, 2025, around 503 journalists are detained globally for their work, while 135 are missing and 20 are held hostage in 37 countries.

RSF's Warning & Global Concern

RSF warned that the pattern of killings reflects a breakdown in protection for journalists worldwide — especially in conflict zones. They asserted that many governments and international institutions have failed to safeguard press freedom, allowing the targeting of media workers with impunity.

Rank	Country / Region	Journalists Killed (2025)	Key Remark
1	Israel (including Gaza / war zones)	29	Accounted for 43% of all confirmed journalist killings globally
2	Mexico	9	Second-highest number of journalist killings in 2025
3	Sudan	4	Among the most dangerous countries for media workers
4	Ukraine	3	Placed among top high-risk countries for journalists
5	—	—	No consistent fifth position; top four accounted for highest confirmed deaths in 2025

Short Article

Global Recognition of India's Leadership: International Honours Conferred on Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Over the past decade, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emerged as one of the most internationally recognised political leaders. Numerous countries across continents have conferred their highest civilian honours upon him. These awards are not merely personal accolades but reflect India's rising global stature, its expanding diplomatic footprint, and the success of its foreign policy rooted in strategic autonomy, development partnership, and cultural diplomacy.

Complete List of International Honours Conferred on PM Narendra Modi

S. No.	Awarding Country /Body	Award /Honour	Year of Conferment
1	Saudi Arabia	Order of King Abdulaziz	2016
2	Afghanistan	State Order of Ghazi Amir Amanullah Khan	2016
3	Palestine	Grand Collar of the State of Palestine	2018
4	United Nations	UN Champion of the Earth Award	2018
5	United Arab Emirates	Order of Zayed	2019
6	Russia	Order of St. Andrew the Apostle	2019
7	Maldives	Order of the Distinguished Rule of Izzuddeen	2019
8	Bahrain	King Hamad Order of the Renaissance	2019

9	USA	Legion of Merit (Chief Commander)	2020
10	Bhutan	Order of the Druk Gyalpo (Dragon King)	2021
11	Papua New Guinea	Order of Logohu	2023
12	Papua New Guinea	Ebakl Award	2023
13	Fiji	Companion of the Order of Fiji	2023
14	Egypt	Order of the Nile	2023
15	France	Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour	2023
16	Greece	Grand Cross of the Order of Honour	2023
17	Barbados	Honorary Order of Freedom of Barbados	2024
18	Guyana	Order of Excellence	2024
19	Nigeria	Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger	2024
20	Dominica	Dominica Award of Honour	2024
21	Kuwait	Order of Mubarak Al-Kabeer	2024
22	Mauritius	Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean	2025
23	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka Mitra Vibhushana	2025
24	Cyprus	Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III	2025

25	Ghana	Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana	2025
26	Trinidad & Tobago	Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago	2025
27	Brazil	Grand Collar of the National Order of the Southern Cross	2025
28	Namibia	Order of the Most Ancient Welwitschia Mirabilis	2025
29	Oman	The First Class of the Order of Oman	2025
30	Ethiopia	The Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia	2025

Record-Breaking Achievement

PM Narendra Modi is the most internationally awarded Indian Prime Minister. He has received 30+ foreign honours (as of 2025), surpassing all previous Indian leaders.

Nature of These Honours

Most awards are:

➢ Highest civilian or state honours of the awarding country
➢ Conferred on foreign heads of government
➢ These honours are usually awarded for:
➢ Strengthening bilateral relations
➢ Contribution to global peace, development, and diplomacy
➢ Leadership during crises (COVID-19 assistance, climate action, disaster relief)

Constitutional & Diplomatic Aspect

➢ Under Article 18(2) of the Indian Constitution, Indian citizens cannot accept foreign titles without President's approval.
➢ PMs and Presidents receive state honours, not "titles", hence constitutionally valid.
➢ Such honours are part of symbolic diplomacy and soft power projection.

Soft Power & India's Global Image

These awards reflect:

➢ India's rise as a global diplomatic power
➢ Strengthening of Global South leadership

- ➤ Recognition of India's role in:
- ➤ Climate action (LiFE Mission)
- ➤ Disaster resilience
- ➤ Vaccine diplomacy (Vaccine Maitri)
- ➤ Counter-terrorism cooperation

5Regional Spread

PM Modi has received top honours from:
- ➤ Middle East: Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait
- ➤ Europe: France, Russia, Greece, Cyprus
- ➤ Africa: Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Namibia
- ➤ Indo-Pacific: Maldives, Fiji, Papua New Guinea
- ➤ Americas & Caribbean: USA, Brazil, Barbados, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago
- ➤ South Asia: Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan

Shows balanced foreign policy outreach.
- ➤ UN & Multilateral Recognition
- ➤ UN Champion of the Earth Award (2018)

For initiatives like:
- ➤ International Solar Alliance (ISA)
- ➤ Climate leadership
- ➤ Environmental governance

Link with India's Foreign Policy Doctrines
Awards align with India's key diplomatic approaches:
- ➤ Neighbourhood First
- ➤ Act East Policy
- ➤ Think West Policy
- ➤ Africa Outreach
- ➤ SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)

Strategic Timing of Honours

Many awards were conferred:
- ➤ During bilateral visits
- ➤ After signing strategic agreements
- ➤ During crises cooperation (COVID-19, evacuations, humanitarian aid)

Indicates awards are often linked to concrete diplomatic outcomes.

Comparison with Past Leaders

Earlier Indian PMs received:
- ➤ Fewer honours
- ➤ Mostly from limited regions
- ➤ Current trend reflects:
- ➤ India's enhanced geopolitical relevance
- ➤ Leadership role in G20, Quad, BRICS, SCO
- ➤ Possible Criticism

Critics argue:

Awards are symbolic, not substantive
Should not replace economic or security outcomes

Counter-view:

- ➤ Symbolic recognition boosts negotiating power and international legitimacy

Australia's New Social Media Ban for Under-16s: What It Means and Why It Matters

Australia has made history by becoming the first country in the world to ban most children under the age of 16 from using major social media platforms. This new law — known as the Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024 — took effect on December 10, 2025 after the Australian Parliament passed it in 2024.

What the Law Says

Children under 16 are not allowed to create or keep accounts on many popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, Reddit, Twitch, Threads, Kick and others. Platforms must take "reasonable steps" to stop under-16s from having accounts or face fines up to A$49.5 million (about $33 million). The ban is enforced on companies, not children or families — kids and their parents will not be fined if they break the rule. This means that if a child under 16 tries to use social media with a profile, the platform must block or deactivate it.

Why Australia Did This

The main reason behind the ban is child safety. The government says social media can be harmful to young people's mental health and emotional development. Specific concerns include:
- ➤ Cyberbullying and online harassment,
- ➤ Addictive design and screen time,
- ➤ Exposure to inappropriate or harmful content,
- ➤ Grooming and online exploitation.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and online safety officials have spoken about this as a cultural shift, encouraging young people to spend more time offline with real-world activities like hobbies, reading, sports, and face-to-face interaction.

How It Works in Practice

Platforms must identify and block under-16 users. Some companies have already started this:
- ➤ Meta (the company that owns Facebook and Instagram) began removing accounts of users it believes are under 16 ahead of the December 10 start date.
- ➤ TikTok and Snapchat plan to use age-verification tools like automated "age assurance" systems to estimate age and prevent access.

> Children will still be able to view public content on some platforms (like watching videos) without an account if the site allows it, but they will not be able to post, comment, or engage as a logged-in user.

Support and Criticism

The ban has both supporters and critics:

Supporters say:

> It protects children from harmful effects of social media,
> It aligns with other age limits like alcohol and driving restrictions,
> It gives parents and schools an easier boundary to enforce.

Critics say:

> Some young people could feel isolated if they lose social connections online.
> The law may be difficult to enforce perfectly, as children might find loopholes like using VPNs or adult accounts.
> There are privacy concerns with age verification methods.

Global Interest

Australia's decision is now being closely watched around the world. Countries like Denmark and Malaysia are considering similar age-based social media rules, and many other governments are debating how best to protect children online.

IMPORTANCE
This day is observed in the memory of those who have lost their lives in the Bhopal Gas tragedy on 2nd December, 1984.

National Pollution Control Day

INCEPTION: 1984
EDITION: 41st

MOTTO
To control the Industrial disaster and to reduce the level of pollution.

BHOPAL GAS TRAGEDY
A gas leak incident on the night of 2–3 December 1984 at the Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) pesticide plant in Bhopal(M.P), India. Considered among the world's worst industrial disasters.

DEATHS
Over 16,000 claimed

NON-FATAL INJURIES
At least 558,125

CAUSING AGENT
Methyl isocyanate

02 DECEMBER

IMPORTANCE
To mark adoption of the declaration by UNGA for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others(Dated 2 December 1949).

International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

INCEPTION: 2004
EDITION: 21st

MOTTO
To highlight the importance of eradicating contemporary forms of slavery including trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, child labour, forced marriage, etc.

NOTE
According to the UN, an estimated 40.3 million people are in modern slavery, including 24.9 in forced labour and 15.4 million in forced marriage.

ORGANISATION INVOLVED
ILO

02 DECEMBER

Economy & Trade

RBI imposes ₹61. 95 lakh penalty on Kotak Mahindra Bank for regulatory non-compliance

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of ₹61. 95 lakh on Kotak Mahindra Bank for failing to comply with certain regulatory rules and RBI directions on banking services, business correspondent activities and credit information reporting.

Why it matters:
The penalty highlights the RBI's continued focus on ensuring strict regulatory compliance in the banking sector and reinforces standards for customer account practices, the role of business correspondents and accurate credit data reporting.

Key details:
➢ The penalty is based on findings from a statutory inspection (ISE 2024) reviewing the bank's operations up to March 31, 2024.
➢ RBI found the bank had opened multiple Basic Savings Bank Deposit (BSBD) accounts for customers already holding one, contrary to RBI guidelines.
➢ Kotak Mahindra Bank also entered into arrangements with business correspondents for activities beyond the permitted scope.
➢ The bank reported inaccurate information to Credit Information Companies (CICs), violating CIC Rules.

Regulatory context:
The RBI's action is part of its supervisory role to ensure banks adhere to defined standards of access to banking services, correct use of BC networks and accurate credit reporting, and does not affect the validity of customer transactions.

Kotak Mahindra Bank
➢ Industry: Financial services
➢ Founded: 1985
➢ Founders: Uday Kotak
➢ Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
➢ Non-executive director: Uday Kotak
➢ MD & CEO: Ashok Vaswani

HDFC Bank Receives RBI Approval for Up to 95% Stake in IndusInd Bank

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted one-year approval to HDFC Bank to acquire up to 95% stake in IndusInd Bank. This approval is part of HDFC Bank's strategic expansion plan to consolidate its presence in the Indian banking sector and strengthen its retail and corporate banking portfolio.

About HDFC Bank
➢ Founded: August 1994
➢ Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra
➢ Chairman: Atanu Chakraborty
➢ CEO: Sashidhar Jagdishan
➢ One of India's largest private sector banks by assets, market capitalization, and customer base.
➢ Core services include retail banking, wholesale banking, treasury, and digital banking solutions.

About IndusInd Bank
➢ Founded: 1994
➢ Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra
➢ Managing Director & CEO: Rajiv Anand
➢ Provides retail, corporate, and commercial banking services.
➢ Known for innovative banking solutions, digital products, and diverse customer base.

RBI and Regulatory Approval
➢ RBI approval is mandatory for any acquisition of a significant stake (usually >10%) in banks.
➢ The approval ensures financial stability, governance standards, and regulatory compliance.
➢ RBI evaluates the acquirer's financial soundness, managerial competence, and risk management systems before granting approval.

Private Banking Sector Consolidation in India
➢ Consolidation allows banks to increase scale, improve risk management, reduce operational costs, and enhance competitiveness.
➢ Major recent mergers include HDFC Ltd and HDFC Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank expansions, and ICICI Bank growth strategies.
➢ Encourages stronger banks capable of supporting large-scale credit and digital banking initiatives.

India Signs Loans Worth Over $2. 2 Billion with Asian Development Bank

The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed loan agreements totaling over USD 2. 2 billion to fund five major development projects in India. The projects span skills development, renewable energy, healthcare, metro rail infrastructure, and sustainable livelihoods.

Key Projects Covered:
➤ Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation Programme: Modernisation of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and skill development institutes.
➤ Affordable Rooftop Solar Systems Programme: Promotes clean energy adoption across India.
➤ Assam State Tertiary Health Care Augmentation Project: Strengthens healthcare infrastructure and services in Assam.
➤ Chennai Metro Rail Expansion (Tranche 2): Supports the growth of metro rail networks.
➤ Ecotourism and Sustainable Agri-based Livelihood Development in Meghalaya: Promotes sustainable livelihoods and tourism.

About the Asian Development Bank (ADB)
➤ Established in 1966, ADB is a regional development bank promoting economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific.
➤ It has 68 member countries and provides sovereign loans, non-sovereign loans, technical assistance, and grants.
➤ India is one of the largest borrowers of ADB funding for infrastructure, energy, healthcare, and education.

SEBI to Ban Use of Live Market Data for Investor Education

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) will soon amend its regulations to prohibit the use of live/current market data during investor education activities. Only past/historical market data will be permitted. This announcement was made by SEBI Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey at an event held at the National Stock Exchange (NSE), Mumbai.

Key Points

1. Purpose of the New Rule
➤ To prevent misuse of live market data in investor education workshops, webinars, or training sessions.
➤ To ensure such platforms are not used for real-time trading tips, stock recommendations, or market manipulation.

2. Clarification by SEBI Chief
➤ SEBI rules already prohibit giving stock tips or investment advice without registration.
➤ Misunderstanding exists due to perceived inconsistencies in older SEBI circulars.
➤ SEBI will now issue a clear, unified circular to remove ambiguity.

3. Context of Recent Enforcement
Action was recently taken against financial influencer (Finfluencer) Avdhoot Sathe.

SEBI imposed:
➤ ₹546 crore in disgorgement and penalties
➤ For engaging in unregistered investment advisory and misleading activities.

4. Regulatory Objective
Protect retail investors from:
➤ Mis-selling
➤ Stock manipulation
➤ Unregistered advisory services
➤ Strengthen market integrity and investor protection.

About SEBI
➤ Established: 1992 (SEBI Act, 1992).
➤ Headquarters: Mumbai.
➤ Objective: Regulate securities markets + protect investor interests.
➤ SEBI is a statutory body.

Fino becomes first payments bank to get RBI's nod to convert into SFB

Fino Payments Bank becomes the first payments bank in India to receive RBI's in-principle approval to convert into a Small Finance Bank (SFB).

What the Approval Means
Once converted into an SFB, Fino will be allowed to accept larger deposits, provide loans and other credit facilities to customers — services it could not offer as a payments bank. The approval expands Fino's permissible service scope — enabling it to evolve from just payments and remittance services to full banking operations.

Regulatory Background & Eligibility
Under RBI's "on-tap" licensing guidelines for private sector SFBs, existing payments banks controlled by Indian residents and with at least five years of operations are eligible to apply for conversion.
Fino began operations as a payments bank in 2017; meeting the five-year criterion made it eligible.

Next Steps & Timeline
The "in-principle" approval gives Fino time to meet RBI's conditions for final licensing and conversion.
Fino may begin its lending business within one year of getting the final license, subject to regulatory compliance and readiness preparations.

Significance of the Transition

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➤ The conversion allows Fino to broaden its customer base — especially individuals and small businesses seeking banking and credit services.

➤ This step is viewed as a major milestone in India's banking sector — representing a shift for payments banks toward more inclusive banking services and credit access.

Fino Payments Bank

➤ Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra

➤ Tagline: "Qadar Aapki, Kadam Hamare"

➤ MD & CEO: Rishi Gupta

➤ Established: 11 April 2017

RBI cuts repo rate by 25 basis points to 5. 25 per cent to spur growth

RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra announced a 25 bps repo rate cut, bringing the rate down from 5. 5% to 5. 25%. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decided unanimously on the reduction.

Liquidity Measures

RBI to inject liquidity by purchasing ₹1 lakh crore worth of government securities through Open Market Operations (OMOs). A $5 billion dollar-rupee swap arrangement will also be activated to support forex liquidity.

Macroeconomic Conditions Enabling the Cut

➤ India recorded 8. 2% GDP growth in Q2 of the current financial year.

➤ Inflation fell sharply to 1. 7%, creating a rare "Goldilocks period" — strong growth + low inflation.

➤ These conditions gave the RBI "headroom" to ease rates without risking price instability.

➤ Note: A Goldilocks situation means the economy is neither overheating nor slowing down excessively. Low inflation + strong growth encourages monetary easing.

Revised Forecasts

RBI raised its full-year GDP growth projection to 7. 3%, up from 6. 8%.

Policy Stance

➤ RBI continues with a neutral stance.

➤ A neutral stance neither tightens nor loosens liquidity significantly; it aims for balance between growth support and inflation control.

➤ RBI maintained this stance as the impact of earlier rate cuts and global trade changes is still unfolding.

Forex Reserves Position

➤ India's foreign exchange reserves reached $686 billion, offering 11 months of import cover.

➤ This strengthens the country's external stability.

Risks Flagged

Governor Malhotra warned that global geopolitical tensions and trade uncertainties remain downside risks to India's growth outlook.

Recent Monetary Policy Path

Repo rate was held steady in August and October reviews to keep inflation under control. Before that, RBI had reduced the repo rate by 100 bps (6. 5% → 5. 5%) between February and June. Transmission of these cuts into the economy is still in progress.

Note: Transmission refers to how effectively banks pass on policy rate changes to borrowers. Faster transmission means more immediate impact on consumption and investment.

Impact on Borrowers and Economy

Lower repo rate and additional liquidity typically lead to lower lending rates. Cheaper loans encourage consumer spending and business investment, boosting economic activity. Effectiveness depends on how quickly commercial banks pass on the rate cuts.

Policy Rates at a glance

➤ Policy Repo Rate: 5. 25%

➤ Standing Deposit Facility Rate: 5. 00%

➤ Marginal Standing Facility Rate: 5. 50%

➤ Bank Rate: 5. 50%

➤ Fixed Reverse Repo Rate: 3. 35%

➤ CRR: 3. 00%

➤ SLR: 18. 00%

BHIM Introduces 'UPI Circle – Full Delegation' Feature

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), through NPCI BHIM Services Ltd (NBSL), has launched a new UPI feature called 'UPI Circle – Full Delegation' on the BHIM App. The feature allows a primary bank account holder to authorize a trusted secondary user (family member/staff/dependent) to make limited UPI payments directly from the primary account. This aims to improve digital payment accessibility for senior citizens, dependents, and digitally inexperienced users.

Delegation System

➤ Primary user authorizes a secondary user to make UPI payments directly from their bank account.

➤ No need for the secondary user to have a bank-linked UPI ID.

➤ Monthly spending limit: Up to ₹15,000.

➤ Validity period: 1 month to 5 years.

➢ Primary user can track all transactions for transparency.

About NPCI
➢ Full form: National Payments Corporation of India.
➢ Established: 2008.
➢ NPCI is an initiative of: RBI + IBA (Indian Banks' Association).

IMF Approves USD 1. 2 Billion for Pakistan as Economic Stabilisation Progresses

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approved a USD 1. 2 billion disbursement to Pakistan. This includes USD 1. 0 billion under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and USD 0. 2 billion under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF). With this tranche, Pakistan's total IMF disbursement under the current programme rises to USD 3. 3 billion. IMF noted that Pakistan has shown "strong programme implementation", helping stabilise its economy amid inflation, external financing gaps and flood-related economic damage.

Reforms supported by the IMF focus on:
➢ rebuilding foreign exchange reserves
➢ increasing tax revenue (broadening tax base)
➢ reforming State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs)
➢ improving energy-sector financial viability
➢ enhancing competitiveness
➢ ensuring climate-risk disclosure and adaptation measures (under RSF)

Why This Funding Matters
➢ Pakistan has faced severe macroeconomic stress due to high external debt, currency depreciation, energy price shocks and climate-related disasters.
➢ IMF funds will support economic stabilisation, flood recovery, and structural reforms.
➢ Pakistan achieved a primary fiscal surplus of 1. 3% of GDP in FY25, meeting IMF expectations.
Foreign exchange reserves reportedly improved to USD 14. 5 billion, compared to USD 9. 4 billion a year earlier.

IMF Conditions / Expectations
➢ Continued tight monetary policy to control inflation.
➢ Fiscal consolidation to reduce deficits.
➢ Exchange rate flexibility and better foreign-exchange market development.
➢ Stronger financial-sector oversight.

Deep reforms in:
➢ Energy distribution and pricing
➢ Loss-making SOEs

➢ Business climate and investment environment
➢ Climate-resilient infrastructure planning

About the IMF Programme
➢ Pakistan is under a 37-month EFF programme supporting long-term structural reforms.
➢ RSF focuses on climate adaptation, green policies, and disaster resilience.
➢ Pakistan has historically relied heavily on IMF packages due to persistent balance-of-payments crises, making this assistance part of a recurring pattern.

Trump slaps Mexico with 5 percent tariff over violations of water treaty

The US will impose a 5% tariff on Mexican goods after accusing Mexico of violating the long-standing 1944 United States–Mexico Water Treaty, which governs shared water resources from the Rio Grande, Colorado and Tijuana rivers. Trump claims Mexico owes over 800,000 acre-feet of water to the US for failing to meet its obligations over the past five years. He has demanded that Mexico immediately release at least 200,000 acre-feet by December 31, warning that tariffs will begin without delay if the demand is not met.

Key Details & Significance

Issue	Details
Treaty in question	1944 Water Treaty regulating US–Mexico water sharing through the Rio Grande, Colorado, and Tijuana rivers
Alleged shortfall	Mexico reportedly failed to deliver required water over the last five years; US claims a deficit of about 800,000 acre-feet
U.S. demand	Immediate delivery of 200,000 acre-feet by December 31, with the remaining water expected soon after
Tariff action	5% tariff imposed on Mexican imports, effective immediately unless water is delivered
Impact cited by U.S.	Water shortage has seriously harmed Texas crops and livestock, according to Donald Trump

Why It Matters
➢ The move risks escalation of a bilateral water-sharing conflict into a trade dispute, affecting Mexico's exports to the US.
➢ It adds pressure on Mexico to meet its treaty obligations despite drought and water scarcity

concerns, raising tensions over climate-driven resource shortages.

➤ The action sets a precedent of using trade tools to force compliance on environmental and resource-sharing agreements, with implications for other transboundary disputes.

India–Russia Deepen Strategic Partnership Across Labour, Energy, Trade, Maritime and Institutional Cooperation

Overview:
India and Russia have signed a wide-ranging set of agreements and MoUs covering labour mobility, visa facilitation, energy, health, maritime cooperation, industry, customs, postal services, and institutional business collaboration, marking a significant expansion of bilateral engagement.

Labour Mobility & Migration
Labour Mobility and Migration Framework Agreement signed, enabling temporary legal employment of citizens in each other's territories. Separate pact to combat irregular migration, strengthening safe and regulated labour movement.
Provides legal protections and pathways for skilled and semi-skilled workers.

Visa Facilitation
Introduction of 30-day e-Tourist Visas, issued free of cost (gratis) for citizens of both countries. Aimed at boosting tourism and people-to-people contacts.

Energy Cooperation
Agreements to deepen collaboration in fuel and oil supply and broader energy-sector cooperation. Supports India's energy security and provides stable long-term markets for Russia.

Health Sector Cooperation
Pact signed to enhance bilateral cooperation in healthcare and medical fields, paving the way for future joint initiatives.

Maritime & Arctic Cooperation
➤ MoU between India's Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Russia's Ministry of Transport for training specialists for polar ship operations.
➤ Another MoU with Russia's Maritime Board to improve maritime logistics, operations and connectivity.

Industrial & Scientific Cooperation
Indian firms signed an agreement with Russia's URALCHEM to establish a urea fertiliser plant in Russia.

Additional MoUs in:
➤ Food safety (including FSSAI)
➤ Medical sciences
➤ Consumer protection
➤ Ship operations and maritime training

Trade, Customs & Logistics
➤ Protocol between India's CBIC and Russia's Federal Customs Service to exchange pre-arrival information for goods and vehicles, improving trade efficiency.
➤ Postal Services Agreement between India Post and Russian Post to strengthen cross-border postal connectivity and e-commerce support.

Defence, Economy, Education & Culture
Part of a broader package of 16 agreements spanning:
➤ Defence
➤ Trade and economy
➤ Education and research
➤ Culture and media
➤ Institutional Business Cooperation

ASSOCHAM (India) and Roscongress Foundation (Russia) signed an MoU to:
➤ Promote joint ventures and innovation
➤ Facilitate investments and technology exchange
➤ Enhance dialogue among businesses, experts and policymakers
➤ Support cooperation via forums, exhibitions and business delegations

Strategic Significance
➤ Reflects a diversification of India–Russia ties beyond defence and energy into labour, health, logistics and institutional collaboration.
➤ Labour mobility can boost employment opportunities and remittances.
➤ Energy and industrial pacts reinforce long-term economic and strategic trust amid evolving global geopolitics.

India and New Zealand Conclude Free Trade Agreement

India and New Zealand have concluded a landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to deepen bilateral trade, promote investment, and aim to double trade over the next five years.

Key Facts
➤ Aims: Increase trade, expand market access, promote investment, and strengthen economic cooperation
➤ Trade Target: Double bilateral trade within five years

- Investment Commitment: New Zealand to invest USD 20 billion in India over 15 years under the FTA
- Tariff Changes: Tariffs on about 95% of New Zealand exports to India to be reduced or eliminated
- Implementation: Deal to be signed and implemented after legal and parliamentary processes in both countries
- Historical Context: Negotiations began earlier in 2025 and concluded in record time, reflecting strong political will

Additional Facts:
- FTA Definition: A Free Trade Agreement reduces or eliminates customs duties, quotas, and other trade barriers to promote freer movement of goods and services.
- Strategic Importance: Supports India's strategy to diversify trade partners and integrate into global supply chains.

India Becomes the World's Third-Largest Domestic Aviation Market

India has emerged as the third-largest domestic civil aviation market globally, after the United States and China. The country's aviation sector has witnessed rapid expansion over the last decade, driven by rising passenger demand, fleet expansion, and supportive government policies. Domestic air travel has recorded strong growth, reflecting improved affordability, regional connectivity, and infrastructure development.

Aviation Governance & Regulation
- Ministry of Civil Aviation is the nodal ministry for policy formulation.
- DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) is responsible for aviation safety, licensing, and regulation.
- AAI (Airports Authority of India) manages and develops civil aviation infrastructure.

Government Schemes & Initiatives
- UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik) scheme aims to enhance regional air connectivity by making flying affordable.
- National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP), 2016 focuses on affordability, connectivity, and sustainability.
- India aims to develop hundreds of operational airports by 2047 under long-term aviation planning.

AAI:
- Founded: 1 April 1995
- Headquarters: New Delhi, India
- chairman: Vipin Kumar
- DGCA: Vikram Dev Dutt

Ministry of Civil Aviation (India):
- Union Cabinet Minister: Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu
- Minister of State: Murlidhar Kisan Mohol

Singapore's Changi Airport Declared World's Best Airport 2025

Singapore's Changi Airport has been named the World's Best Airport for the year 2025, reaffirming its global leadership in aviation infrastructure, passenger services and overall travel experience. The recognition is based on international passenger surveys evaluating airports across multiple performance parameters.

About Singapore Changi Airport
- Changi Airport is the primary international airport of Singapore.
- It serves as a major global aviation hub, connecting Asia with Europe, Africa, the Americas and Oceania.
- The airport is famous for its indoor gardens, entertainment zones, transit hotels, shopping complexes and dining options.
- It is considered one of the most awarded airports in aviation history.

Here's the Top 5 list of the World's Best Airports 2025 (Skytrax World Airport Awards):

Rank	Airport Name	Country
1	Singapore Changi Airport	Singapore
2	Hamad International Airport	Qatar
3	Tokyo Haneda Airport	Japan
4	Incheon International Airport	South Korea
5	Narita International Airport	Japan

How World's Best Airports Are Ranked
Rankings are based on global passenger feedback collected from travelers of different nationalities.

Parameters include:
- Check-in and immigration efficiency
- Cleanliness and safety
- Passenger comfort and amenities
- Retail and food services
- Accessibility and transit experience

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India is now the world's fourth-largest tea exporter

Government Support for Tea Industry
A ₹1,000-crore package and initiatives like the Chai Sahyog app have been launched for labour welfare.
The government aims to strengthen testing facilities to make tea a key contributor to Viksit Bharat 2047.

Top Tea Exporting Countries (2024–25)

Rank	Country	Approx. Export Value (US$) / Status
1	China	~ US$ 1. 42 billion
2	Sri Lanka	~ US$ 1. 41 billion
3	Kenya	~ US$ 1. 41 billion
4	India	~ US$ 817 million
5	Poland	~ US$ 265 million

Short Article

India's Renewed Push for Free Trade Agreements: From Trade Liberalisation to Strategic Statecraft

India is accelerating negotiations on Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with countries such as New Zealand, Russia, and Oman, despite mixed outcomes from earlier trade pacts. This renewed momentum reflects a strategic recalibration: FTAs are no longer viewed merely as instruments to expand exports, but as tools of geopolitical alignment, supply-chain resilience, and strategic insurance in an increasingly fragmented global order. As multilateral trade mechanisms weaken, India is repositioning FTAs as pillars of its foreign and economic policy.

Why is India Renewing Its Emphasis on FTAs?
1. Strategic Realignment in a Multipolar World
The transition from a unipolar to a multipolar global order—marked by US–China rivalry and rising geopolitical fragmentation—has elevated FTAs into instruments of strategic engagement. India is using FTAs to strengthen political partnerships across the Indo-Pacific, West Asia, and Africa, where economic ties reinforce diplomatic alignment. Agreements such as the India–Australia ECTA and India–UAE CEPA function as "political safety nets," deepening trust and long-term cooperation.

2. Decline of Multilateralism

The stagnation of WTO negotiations, particularly the Doha Round, and the growing use of unilateral protectionist measures have reduced the efficacy of multilateral trade forums. FTAs provide India with a flexible platform to pursue WTO-plus commitments in areas like services, digital trade, investment, and regulatory cooperation. The India–EFTA TEPA, which includes a binding commitment of USD 100 billion in FDI over 15 years, exemplifies this approach.

3. Diversification of Trade and Supply Chains
India seeks to reduce overdependence on traditional markets such as the US, EU, and China. FTAs enable access to new markets, facilitate supply-chain diversification, and secure critical inputs like energy and minerals. Increasingly, FTAs are instruments to operationalise the "China Plus One" strategy, ensuring resilience in upstream supply chains.

4. Unlocking Services and Investment Potential
India holds a strong comparative advantage in services such as IT, healthcare, education, and fintech, which earlier FTAs inadequately leveraged. New-generation agreements, including the UAE–India CEPA, focus more on services liberalisation, investment protection, and professional mobility.

5. Integration with Domestic Industrial Strategy
FTAs are now aligned with initiatives like Make in India, Atmanirbhar Bharat, and Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes. Strategic trade agreements can attract FDI, facilitate technology transfers, and integrate Indian manufacturing into global value chains.

6. Correcting Past Imbalances
India's experience with earlier FTAs—particularly with ASEAN, Japan, and South Korea—revealed asymmetric gains. Export shares rose marginally or even declined, while imports surged, indicating that many FTAs merely codified existing trade patterns. Learning from this, India now seeks balanced, services-focused agreements with stronger safeguards for domestic industry.

Understanding Free Trade Agreements
A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is a negotiated arrangement between two or more countries to reduce or eliminate trade barriers. FTAs typically cover:
➢ Tariffs and customs duties
➢ Rules of Origin

➢ Non-Tariff Barriers (TBT and SPS measures)
➢ Trade in goods and services
➢ Investment, IPRs, government procurement, and competition policy

Types of Trade Agreements include bilateral, plurilateral, and multilateral arrangements. According to the WTO, India has signed 20 FTAs, including the recent India–UK CETA and India–EFTA TEPA, and is negotiating with the US, EU, Canada, and SACU.

Concerns with India's Expanding FTA Network
1. Trade Deficits and Asymmetric Outcomes

Many FTAs have not generated commensurate export growth. For instance, between FY 2009 and FY 2023, India's imports from ASEAN grew significantly faster than exports, widening the trade deficit.

2. Non-Tariff Barriers and Low Utilisation

Developed economies often impose stringent standards related to IPRs, sanitary measures, and data protection, diluting tariff concessions. India's FTA utilisation rate remains low at around 25%, compared to 70–80% in developed countries.

3. Pressure on Domestic Sectors

MSMEs, farmers, and labour-intensive industries struggle to compete with cheaper imports. FTAs sometimes exacerbate the inverted duty structure, where finished goods face lower tariffs than raw materials, discouraging domestic manufacturing and undermining Atmanirbhar Bharat goals.

4. Risks of Import Surge via Third Countries

Weak Rules of Origin allow non-FTA countries to route goods through partner nations, undermining domestic industry and eroding the intended benefits of FTAs.

Policy Approach to Enhance FTA Effectiveness

➢ Strengthen Domestic Competitiveness: Invest in infrastructure, R&D, skills, and MSME capacity building to ensure readiness for global competition.
➢ Focus on WTO-Plus Areas: Prioritise services, digital trade, green energy, and emerging technologies in future FTAs.
➢ Incorporate Robust Safeguards: Enforce strong Rules of Origin, safeguard duties, and anti-dumping provisions.
➢ Institutional Coordination: Improve alignment between the Ministry of Commerce, MEA, and NITI Aayog to integrate strategic and economic objectives.
➢ Improve Dispute Resolution: Include binding timelines and independent panels to ensure timely resolution of trade disputes.
➢ Periodic Review and Course Correction: Establish mechanisms for regular impact assessment and stakeholder consultation.
➢ Promote Inclusive and Sustainable Trade: Integrate labour and environmental standards without compromising developmental flexibility..

IMPORTANCE
To show support for people living with HIV, and to commemorate those who have died from an AIDS-related illness.

World AIDS Day

INCEPTION: 1987
1st OBSERVED: 1988

MOTTO
To raise awareness of the AIDS pandemic caused by the spread of HIV infection and mourning those who have died of the disease.

NOTE
World AIDS Day was the first ever international day for global health.

2025 THEME
Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response.

BY
James W. Bunn and Thomas Netter

01 DECEMBER

Defence & Security

Indian Navy Receives Third Indigenous ASW Shallow Water Craft 'Anjadip'

The Indian Navy has inducted 'Anjadip', the third Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC) in a series of eight vessels being built indigenously. The vessel has been constructed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd, marking another milestone in India's efforts towards self-reliance in defence manufacturing and strengthening coastal maritime security.

Role and Features of ASW Shallow Water Craft

- Designed for anti-submarine operations in shallow and coastal waters
- Equipped with advanced sonar systems, lightweight torpedoes and anti-submarine rockets
- Uses water-jet propulsion for high manoeuvrability
- Capable of low-intensity maritime operations, mine-laying and patrol missions
- Suitable for littoral warfare, where conventional large warships face limitations

Strategic Importance

- Enhances India's capability to detect and neutralise underwater threats near its coastline
- Strengthens security of ports, harbours and coastal infrastructure
- Contributes to India's maritime doctrine focused on the Indian Ocean Region
- Supports national initiatives such as Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India

India's OPTEL Limited Signs Agreement with Safran to Manufacture Combat-Proven Systems in India

India's OPTEL Limited, a defence public sector enterprise, has signed a strategic agreement with Safran, a leading global aerospace and defence company, to manufacture two combat-proven airborne systems in India. This collaboration supports the Government of India's goals of defence self-reliance (Atmanirbhar Bharat) and indigenisation of critical defence technologies.

About OPTEL Limited

- OPTEL Limited is a Government of India enterprise under the Ministry of Defence, specialising in electronics, optronics and avionics systems for defence applications.
- The company develops and manufactures products such as flight control systems, navigation equipment, targeting systems and sensor suites.
- OPTEL plays a key role in indigenisation of defence technologies, aligning with national priorities.

About Safran

- Safran is a major French aerospace, defence and security company, known for its high-technology products in aircraft engines, avionics, sensors and defence systems.
- Safran's systems are widely used globally in military aircraft, helicopters and drones.
- Collaboration with Safran brings global technology expertise to India's defence industry.

India's Defence Industry Landscape

- Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs): Entities like HAL, BEL, BDL, OPTEL, BEML play crucial roles in India's defence production.
- Defence Production Corridor: The government has promoted defence industrial corridors in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu to boost private sector participation.
- Strategic Partnerships: India is increasingly engaging in joint ventures and technology collaborations with global defence companies to enhance capability and indigenisation.

India Signs ₹7,900 Crore Deal with US for MH-60R Navy Helicopter Support

India's Defence Ministry has signed Letters of Offer and Acceptance (LOAs) with the United States to procure long-term sustainment support for the Indian Navy's MH-60R multi-role helicopters.

Deal Value and Framework

- The agreement is valued at over ₹7,900 crore.
- It was finalised in New Delhi under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programme.

MH-60R multi-role helicopters
General Overview

- Name: MH-60R Seahawk
- Type: Multi-role naval helicopter
- Manufacturer: Sikorsky Aircraft (Lockheed Martin)

➤ Role: Anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASuW), search and rescue (SAR), surveillance, logistics support

Weapons:
➤ Torpedoes (MK 46/54)
➤ Hellfire missiles (air-to-surface)
➤ Machine guns (door-mounted)

Roles and Capabilities
➤ Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW): Can detect, track, and engage submarines using sonar and torpedoes.
➤ Anti-Surface Warfare (ASuW): Capable of targeting ships with Hellfire missiles.
➤ Search and Rescue (SAR): Equipped for medical evacuation and emergency rescues.
➤ Maritime Patrol & Surveillance: Monitors sea lanes, tracks vessels, and provides reconnaissance.
➤ Logistics Support: Transport of supplies, personnel, and equipment between ships and shore.

US Approves $686 Million F-16 Upgrade and Support Package for Pakistan

The United States has approved a $686 million defence sale and upgrade package for Pakistan's F-16 fighter jet fleet. The US Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) notified the US Congress, initiating a 30-day review period before final approval. The package includes advanced avionics, Link-16 tactical data links, secure communication devices, navigation systems, mission-planning software upgrades, training, spare parts, and long-term technical support. These upgrades are expected to extend the operational life of Pakistan's Block-52 and Mid-Life Upgrade F-16 jets up to 2040 and improve interoperability with US and allied forces.

Donald Trump signs defence law backing deeper India-US ties, Quad

What happened:
US President Donald Trump has signed the National Defence Authorisation Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2026 into law, a key annual defence policy bill that emphasises strengthened engagement with India, including through the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad).

Key features:
The law underlines expanded cooperation with India and other Quad members to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific region.
It calls for broader defence engagement, including military exercises, defence trade, humanitarian assistance and maritime security cooperation. The Act provides for a joint consultative mechanism between the US and India to assess nuclear liability rules and advance bilateral strategic cooperation.

Why it matters:
The legislation institutionalises deeper strategic and defence ties between the US and India, reinforcing partnerships not only in bilateral military cooperation but also within the Quad framework alongside Japan and Australia to address regional security challenges, particularly China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific.

Strategic significance:
By codifying expanded engagement with India into US law, the NDAA signals a legislative commitment to strengthening defence alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific, aligning long-term strategic interests of both countries amid evolving global security dynamics.

Defence Exercises of the Month

Harimau Shakti 2025

India and Malaysia have conducted the joint military exercise 'Harimau Shakti 2025' in Rajasthan, reaffirming their commitment to strengthening bilateral defence cooperation. The exercise aims to enhance interoperability, tactical coordination, and operational preparedness between the armies of the two countries.
The joint drill focuses on counter-insurgency operations, jungle and semi-desert warfare, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief operations. Troops from both nations participated in joint training modules, field exercises, and tactical discussions, enabling them to share best practices and operational experiences. The exercise reflects the growing strategic partnership between India and Malaysia and supports India's broader Act East Policy, which seeks deeper defence and security engagement with Southeast Asian nations.

EKUVERIN

Exercise Overview
The 14th edition of the annual India-Maldives bilateral exercise EKUVERIN held in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. Conducted between the Indian Army and the Maldives National Defence Forces, the exercise strengthens military cooperation and mutual understanding.

Objectives
➤ Enhance interoperability in counterinsurgency and counter-terrorism operations across semi-urban, jungle, and coastal terrains.
➤ Integrate niche technologies to improve coordination and efficiency.
➤ Share best practices, reflecting India and Maldives' commitment to regional peace and security.

Significance
➤ "Ekuverin" means 'Friends', symbolizing the close ties between the two nations.
➤ It is a bilateral annual exercise, conducted alternately in India and Maldives.

Ekuverin is one of three major joint exercises between India and Maldives, alongside:
➤ Ekatha (bilateral)
➤ Dosti (trilateral with Sri Lanka)

SURYAKIRAN XIX – 2025

The 19th edition of the annual India–Nepal Joint Military Exercise SURYAKIRAN XIX – 2025 held at Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand. The exercise is a key component of the defence cooperation framework between the two neighbouring nations.

Objectives of the Exercise
Rehearsal of Sub-Conventional Operations under Chapter VII of the UN Mandate, relating to international peace and security.

Strengthen battalion-level interoperability in:
➤ Jungle warfare
➤ Counter-terrorism in mountainous terrain
➤ HADR (Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief)
➤ Medical response
➤ Environmental conservation
➤ Integrated ground–aviation operations

Special Technological Focus (2025 Edition)
This year's exercise places a major emphasis on niche and emerging defence technologies, including:
➤ UAS (Unmanned Aerial Systems)
➤ Drone-based ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance)
➤ AI-enabled decision support systems
➤ Unmanned logistic vehicles
➤ Armoured protection platforms
➤ These will help both armies refine Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) for counter-terror operations in line with evolving global dynamics.

About Exercise SURYAKIRAN
➤ Annual bilateral exercise conducted alternately in India and Nepal.
➤ One of India's largest military exercises with any SAARC country.

First edition was conducted in 2011 after combining two previous exercises:
➤ Surya Kiran (by India)
➤ Pratikar (by Nepal)

India–Nepal Defence Relations
➤ Gurkha soldiers have served in the Indian Army for over 200 years.
➤ Nepal is a major contributor to UN peacekeeping missions.
➤ India provides training, equipment and disaster relief support to Nepalese forces.

UN Chapter VII
➤ Deals with Actions with Respect to Threats to Peace, Breaches of Peace, and Acts of Aggression.
➤ Authorises use of force for maintaining or restoring international peace and security.

About Pithoragarh
A strategic border district in Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, close to India–Nepal boundary. Ideal for mountain warfare and counter-terror training.

Social Issues & Schemes

NCW Launches 'Shakti Scholars Fellowship' for Young Researchers

The National Commission for Women (NCW) has launched the 'Shakti Scholars Fellowship', a new initiative aimed at encouraging young researchers to undertake research on women-centric issues. The fellowship seeks to promote evidence-based policymaking and strengthen academic research related to women's rights, gender equality and social justice in India.

Objectives of the Shakti Scholars Fellowship
➢ To promote high-quality research on women-related issues.
➢ To encourage youth participation in gender studies and public policy research.
➢ To provide research-based inputs for improving laws, schemes and institutional mechanisms related to women.
➢ To create a pool of gender-sensitive researchers and policy thinkers.

About National Commission for Women (NCW)
➢ The NCW is a statutory body established under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990.
➢ It was constituted in 1992.
➢ NCW works under the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Government Launches Bharat Taxi – A Driver-Owned Ride-Hailing Initiative

The Government of India has launched Bharat Taxi, a driver-owned, cooperative-based ride-hailing platform aimed at ensuring fair income, transparency, and welfare of drivers in the gig economy. The initiative provides an indigenous alternative to private ride-hailing aggregators by placing ownership and decision-making power directly in the hands of drivers.

Institutional & Administrative Aspects
➢ The initiative is supported by the Ministry of Cooperation.
➢ It is developed with technical support from the National e-Governance Division (NeGD).
➢ The cooperative is registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act.

Cooperative Model
➢ Drivers are members and owners, not just service providers.
➢ Profits are shared among driver-members, unlike commission-based models.
➢ Drivers participate in decision-making and governance.

Operational Features
➢ Promotes low or zero commission, improving driver earnings.
➢ Ensures transparent fares and minimal surge pricing.
➢ Services include cars, auto-rickshaws, and bike taxis.

Economic & Social Significance
➢ Strengthens the gig economy with social security and dignity of labour.
➢ Encourages cooperative entrepreneurship and self-reliance.
➢ Provides a domestic alternative to foreign-owned ride-hailing platforms.

Nandini Krishak Samriddhi Yojana

The Nandini Krishak Samriddhi Yojana is a flagship dairy development scheme of the Uttar Pradesh Government, launched under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The scheme aims to increase farmers' income, promote indigenous cattle breeds, and strengthen the rural dairy economy.

Key Features of the Scheme
➢ The scheme operates under the Nand Baba Mission, which focuses on cow conservation, welfare, and dairy-based livelihoods.
➢ Beneficiaries are selected through a transparent e-lottery system.
➢ The government provides 50% financial assistance (subsidy) for setting up modern dairy units.
➢ Financial support covers infrastructure, cattle purchase, and related dairy activities.
➢ The scheme encourages the rearing of indigenous cow breeds such as Gir, Sahiwal, Tharparkar, and Gangatiri.
➢ Advanced breeding support such as sex-sorted semen and artificial insemination is promoted to improve productivity.

Rare Earth Magnet Manufacturing Scheme and Key Infrastructure Approval

1. Cabinet Approves Scheme for Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnet Manufacturing

The Union Cabinet has approved a ₹7,280 crore scheme to promote the manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM) in India. This is India's first-ever integrated REPM manufacturing initiative, aimed at reducing import dependence and strengthening strategic sectors.

Key Features of the Scheme
- Target Capacity: 6,000 metric tonnes per annum.
- Project Duration: 7 years
- 2-year gestation period for setting up facilities.
- Beneficiaries: 5 companies selected through global competitive bidding.

Process Covered:
- Rare earth oxides → metals
- Metals → alloys
- Alloys → finished magnets
- Importance of Rare Earth Permanent Magnets
- Among the strongest permanent magnets.

Key sectors:
- Electric vehicles (EVs)
- Renewable energy (wind turbines)
- Aerospace and defence
- Consumer electronics

India's REPM consumption is expected to double by 2030.

Currently, India is heavily import-dependent, primarily on China.

Expected Outcomes
- Boost to Atmanirbhar Bharat in critical materials.
- Support India's Net Zero 2070 commitments.
- Major employment generation in advanced manufacturing.
- Strengthen India's global position in critical minerals and green transition technologies.

2. Cabinet Approves Pune Metro Rail Project Phase-2

The government has cleared Line 4 (Kharadi–Hadapsar–Swargate–Khadakwasla) and Line 4A (Nal Stop–Warje–Manik Baug) under Pune Metro Phase-2.

Project Highlights
- Cost: ₹9,857 crore
- Completion Timeline: 5 years
- Expansion will take Pune Metro's network beyond 100 km, boosting sustainable urban mobility.

Benefits
- Reduced traffic congestion.
- Enhanced last-mile connectivity.
- Boost to economic activity and intra-city travel.

3. CCEA Approves Two Key Railway Projects Worth ₹2,781 Crore

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved two major railway projects:

(A) Devbhumi Dwarka (Okha) – Kanalus Rail Line
Cost: ₹1,457 crore
Will improve connectivity to Dwarkadhish Temple, boosting religious tourism and regional development in Saurashtra.

(B) Badlapur – Karjat 3rd & 4th Line Project (Maharashtra)
Cost: ₹1,324 crore
Part of Mumbai Suburban Corridor; will ease congestion and improve connectivity to Southern India.

Common Outcomes
- Total network addition: 224 km across Gujarat & Maharashtra.
- Improved passenger movement & freight efficiency.

About Rare Earth Elements (REEs)
- India has an estimated 6% of the world's rare earth reserves, mainly in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Kerala, Tamil Nadu.
- IMC (Indian Rare Earths Ltd.) and KMML are major Indian players in rare earth processing.
- China controls ~85–90% of global REPM production.

Importance for EV Mission
- REPMs (especially NdFeB magnets) are used in EV motors; crucial for India's FAME-II and EV30@30 goals.
- Metro Projects in India
- India now has over 20 operational metro systems.
- Pune Metro is implemented by MahaMetro (MAHA-METRO), a joint venture of GoI & GoM.

Railway Expansion
- India aims for 100% electrification, with ~70,000+ route km already electrified.
- Mumbai suburban network is one of the world's busiest commuter networks (~7 million daily riders).

Tex-RAMPS Scheme approved by Govt

The Government of India has approved the Textiles-Focused Research, Assessment, Monitoring, Planning and Start-up Scheme (Tex-RAMPS) to strengthen India's textile innovation ecosystem.

- Announced by Union Textiles Minister: Giriraj Singh
- Type of Scheme: Central Sector Scheme
- Total Outlay: ₹305 crore
- Duration: FY 2025-26 to 2030-31 (aligned with the upcoming Finance Commission cycle)

About India's Textile Sector
- Contributes ~2. 3% to India's GDP.
- Provides over 45 million direct jobs (second-largest employer after agriculture).
- India is the 2nd largest textile and clothing exporter globally.
- Major textile hubs: Surat, Tiruppur, Ludhiana, Panipat, Varanasi, Bhilwara.

Related Government Schemes
- PM MITRA Parks Scheme – 7 integrated mega textile parks.
- PLI Scheme for Textiles – Focus on MMF Apparel & Technical Textiles.
- National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM) – Promotes innovation in technical textiles.
- SAMARTH Scheme – Skill development in the textile sector.

Finance Commission Cycle Importance
Tex-RAMPS aligned with FC cycle to ensure long-term, stable funding.

Short Article

Sanchar Saathi Explained: What It Is, What It Does, and Why It Became Controversial

India has launched a government-led initiative called Sanchar Saathi to help mobile phone users protect themselves from fraud, theft, scams and misuse of their telecom connections. The name literally means communication friend, and the idea is to give every user a single place where they can check and manage their mobile identity securely. Recently, Sanchar Saathi became the centre of a big debate in India because of a government directive that would have made its mobile app automatically installed on all new smartphones sold in the country. This sparked a major discussion about privacy, security, user choice and how far the government can go in mandating digital tools.

What Is Sanchar Saathi?
Sanchar Saathi started as a web portal run by India's Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in May 2023. It was built to help ordinary mobile users protect themselves against common problems like phone loss, fraud, SIM misuse, and identity theft. Later, in January 2025, the government also launched the Sanchar Saathi mobile app for Android and iOS, making these services easier to access from a smartphone.

So, there are two ways users can benefit from Sanchar Saathi:
Through the web portal — accessible on any browser,
Through the mobile app — downloadable on phones.

What Are the Main Features of Sanchar Saathi?
The Sanchar Saathi platform offers several useful tools all in one place:
1. Check All Mobile Numbers in Your Name: You can see all SIM cards registered using your identity. This helps you detect if someone has taken a phone number or SIM in your name without consent.
2. Block Lost or Stolen Phones: If your phone is lost or stolen, Sanchar Saathi lets you block that device's IMEI number (a unique 15-digit identifier). Once blocked, the device won't work on any network in India.
3. Report Fraudulent Calls and Messages: The app has a feature called Chakshu, which lets users report suspicious calls, SMS, WhatsApp messages, phishing links and other telecom scams. This helps authorities spot patterns of fraud.
4. Verify Mobile Authenticity: Before buying a second-hand phone, users can use Sanchar Saathi to check whether that device is genuine or has been lost/stolen.
5. Report Spam and Malicious Links: Users can report spam calls, unwanted commercial calls, and malicious web links that appear in messages.
These tools make Sanchar Saathi a one-stop security platform for mobile users, especially in an era when phone scams and frauds are increasing rapidly.

Why Did the Government Want to Pre-Install the App on Every Phone?
In late November 2025, the Telecom Ministry issued a directive asking all smartphone manufacturers — such as Apple, Samsung, Xiaomi and others — to pre-install the Sanchar Saathi app on all new phones sold in India. The plan also said the app should not be removable by users.

The idea behind this was simple:
With so many mobile scams happening, the government argued that every user should have protective tools built into their device from day one.

According to official data, the Sanchar Saathi platform had already helped:

➢ Block millions of lost/stolen phones,
➢ Terminate tens of millions of fraudulent SIM connections,
➢ Help many users report suspicious activities through the portal.

So the government said pre-installing the app would make mobile security stronger across India — especially in a country with more than 1.2 billion mobile users.

Why Did This Move Cause Controversy?

Despite the security goals, the proposal to force-install the app on new phones and make it undeletable triggered a major public debate and backlash from different groups:

1. Privacy Concerns: Critics, digital rights activists and privacy advocates argued that forcing a government app on every device could violate people's privacy and give too much power to the state. They said users should always have the choice to decide what is on their phones.

2. Opposition from Phone Makers: Some smartphone companies — especially Apple — stated that their company policies do not allow outside apps to be installed by default in ways that users cannot remove. This conflict between global tech rules and Indian regulations became a sticking point.

3. Public Uproar: Many users also criticised the idea online, saying that mandatory installation felt like government surveillance, even if that was not the stated intention. Critics compared it to controversial software policies in other countries.

What Happened Next? The Government Backed Down

➢ Due to the strong backlash, the government rolled back the mandatory pre-installation order in early December 2025. Officials clarified that:
➢ The Sanchar Saathi app would not be compulsory on new devices,
➢ Users could delete or uninstall it if they wanted to,
➢ And companies did not have to make it undeletable.
➢ Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia personally stated that the app was intended for cybersecurity and not for surveillance or spying.

Final Thoughts: Safety vs Choice

➢ Sanchar Saathi itself remains a useful tool to protect mobile users from fraud, theft, and scams, offering several important security features at no cost.
➢ However, the controversy highlights a key tension in digital India — how to balance national cybersecurity goals with individual privacy and user freedom. The government says the app is meant to keep citizens safe, while critics worry about consent and control over personal devices.
➢ In the end, the decision to make the Sanchar Saathi app optional rather than compulsory may help preserve both user choice and mobile security awareness going forward.

A Step Toward Equality: Supreme Court Permits SC Status Based on Mother's Caste

In a significant development on December 8, 2025, the Supreme Court of India allowed a minor girl from Puducherry to obtain a Scheduled Caste (SC) certificate based on her mother's caste, even though her father did not belong to an SC community. This move may impact how caste certificates are issued in future, especially for children born in inter-caste marriages.

What Happened in the Case?

A bench led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi confirmed that the girl could get her SC certificate using her mother's Adi Dravida identity, instead of relying only on the father's caste. The Supreme Court did not reverse the law entirely, but it refused to interfere with the High Court's decision that had granted the certificate to the girl.

During the hearing, the CJI asked a simple yet powerful question:

"With changing times, why should caste not follow the mother?"

This signalled a possible shift from traditional assumptions about caste inheritance.

What Does the Law Currently Say?

India's Constitution allows affirmative action (like reservation of seats in education and jobs) for SC/ST communities under Articles 15 and 16. But who qualifies as SC or ST is defined through Presidential Orders under Articles 341 and 342, and these lists are specific for each state.

Historically, governments and courts have used a simple rule:

➢ A child generally inherits the caste of the father.

➤ This was partly based on tradition and old legal opinions, including a 2003 Supreme Court judgment (Punit Rai) that said, in the absence of any statutory law, caste would normally follow the father.

➤ However, the Court also said that this is only a presumption, not a hard and fast rule. That means it can be challenged if evidence shows different social realities.

Why Is This Important?

➤ In past cases like Rameshbhai vs State of Gujarat, courts ruled that caste benefits should not be treated like inherited property but should address social disadvantage and lived experience — whether a person endured the same disadvantages faced by members of the SC community.

➤ Under those principles, if a child is brought up within the SC community, experiences its social challenges, and is accepted as part of that community, then they may be eligible for reservation benefits — even if the father is from another caste.

How Will This Be Implemented?

The Supreme Court's order in this particular case allows the certificate for the girl while the larger constitutional question remains unsettled. That means:

Courts and authorities will still presume children take their father's caste unless strong evidence suggests otherwise.

But in exceptional circumstances, children can obtain SC certificates based on their mother's caste, especially when the evidence shows they were raised in that community's environment.

Local authorities — like Tehsildars and certificate validity committees — will now likely assess evidence such as:

➤ Proof of upbringing in the mother's community,

➤ Social and educational disadvantages faced,

➤ Community acceptance and real lived experiences.

Aftermath and Wider Impact

➤ The Court's decision does not immediately change all caste laws, but it opens the door for more cases where maternal caste could be considered. This is especially relevant for children from inter-caste marriages and for single mothers who struggle to secure caste certificates for their children under the old rule.

➤ Legal experts say this case signals a move toward equity and gender equality in caste determination.

However, the ultimate legal test will depend on how lower courts and certificate authorities interpret the decision in future applications.

In short:

➤ Father's caste is still the default rule,

➤ But the rule is a presumption, not absolute,

➤ And under special conditions, a child may now get an SC certificate through the mother's caste.

IMPORTANCE
To commemorate the Operation Trident on 4 Dec 1971, in which Indian Navy attacked Karachi harbour during 1971's Indo-Pakistan war.

Indian Navy Day

MOTTO
To recognize the achievements and role of the Indian Navy to the country.

INDIAN NAVY FACTS
- President is the Commander-in-Chief of Indian Navy.
- Chhatrapati Shivaji Bhosle is considered as the "Father of the Indian Navy".
- Navy Day does not commemorate the day the Indian Navy was founded.
- Ezhimala Naval Academy in Kerala is the largest naval academy in Asia.
- INS Viraat was the navy's 1st aircraft as well as carrier and the oldest aircraft carrier in the world.

04 DECEMBER

"
Education is supposed to juice your curiosity, not diminish or sate it.

Walter Isaacson

Environment & Ecology

Indian Coast Guard Inducts First Pollution Control Vessel

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has inducted its first indigenously designed and built Pollution Control Vessel (PCV) at Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL). The induction marks a major step towards strengthening marine pollution response, environmental protection, and maritime security.

Key Features of the Pollution Control Vessel
- Specially designed to detect, control, and mitigate marine pollution such as oil spills
- Equipped with modern pollution response equipment and advanced navigation systems
- Capable of supporting search and rescue, disaster response, and maritime law enforcement operations
- Designed for operations in India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

Strategic Significance
- Enhances India's preparedness against marine pollution incidents
- Strengthens coastal security architecture
- Supports sustainable use and protection of marine ecosystems
- Acts as a force multiplier for the Indian Coast Guard

Indian Coast Guard
- Established in 1978
- Director General: Paramesh Sivamani
- Operates under the Ministry of Defence
- Responsible for maritime safety, security, environmental protection, and search and rescue

Pollution Control Vessels (PCVs)
- PCVs are specialised ships designed to handle oil and chemical spill response
- Important for compliance with international maritime pollution conventions
- Essential for countries with long coastlines and large EEZs

Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL)
- A public sector shipyard under the Ministry of Defence
- Plays a key role in indigenous shipbuilding for the Navy and Coast Guard
- Supports India's self-reliance in defence production
- Founded: 1957 as Estaleiros Navais de Goa
- Chairman & MD: Brajesh Kumar Upadhyay

Nauradehi (Veerangana Durgavati) Tiger Reserve to Become Third Cheetah Habitat in Madhya Pradesh

The Madhya Pradesh Government has decided to develop the Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve, earlier known as Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary, as the third cheetah habitat in the state. This step strengthens India's ongoing cheetah reintroduction and conservation programme.

Existing Cheetah Habitats in Madhya Pradesh
- Kuno National Park – India's first cheetah reintroduction site.
- Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary – second notified cheetah habitat.
- Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve – proposed third habitat.

About Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve
- Formerly known as Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary.
- It is the largest wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh.
- Spread across multiple districts including Sagar, Damoh, Narsinghpur, and Raisen.
- Features grasslands and dry deciduous forests, suitable for cheetahs.
- Recently notified as a tiger reserve, strengthening protection status.

Project Cheetah – Background
- Project Cheetah aims to reintroduce cheetahs into India after their extinction in the 1950s.
- Cheetahs are being translocated from African countries to establish a viable population.
- The project focuses on habitat restoration, prey base management, and community involvement.
- India is the only country attempting intercontinental reintroduction of cheetahs.

Additional Facts:
- Cheetahs prefer open grasslands and savannah-type ecosystems.
- They are listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- Grasslands are among the most threatened ecosystems in India.

Science & Technology

President Droupadi Murmu Confers Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar 2025

President Droupadi Murmu presented the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar 2025 to 24 eminent scientists and innovators at a ceremony in Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. The awards recognise outstanding contributions to scientific research, technology, and innovation across multiple disciplines.

About the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar

➢ The Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar (RVP) is a national science award instituted by the Government of India to honour excellence in science and technology.
➢ The awards aim to foster a culture of research, innovation, and scientific excellence in the country.
➢ It recognises contributions across diverse scientific fields and is a restructured framework replacing older standalone science awards.

Categories of Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar 2025

Vigyan Ratna Puraskar:
Highest honour for lifetime achievement in science and technology.
In 2025, awarded posthumously to Prof. Jayant Vishnu Narlikar, renowned astrophysicist and science populariser.

Vigyan Shri Puraskar:
Recognises distinguished contributions in specific scientific disciplines such as agriculture, atomic energy, biological sciences, chemistry, engineering, environmental science, mathematics & computer science, space science, and technology.

Vigyan Yuva Puraskar:
Awarded to young scientists for exceptional research achievements across various scientific fields.

Vigyan Team Puraskar:
Given to teams of scientists/innovators for collaborative contributions with significant impact.
In 2025, awarded to the CSIR-Aroma Mission team, credited with advancing aromatic crop cultivation and related innovations.

Additional Useful Key Facts:

Prof. Jayant Vishnu Narlikar
➢ Eminent Indian astrophysicist known for his work in cosmology.
➢ Contributed to alternative theories of cosmology and science popularisation.

CSIR-Aroma Mission
➢ Focused on aromatic crop cultivation, especially lavender in Himalayan regions.
➢ Promotes agri-entrepreneurship and enhances rural livelihoods.
➢ Demonstrates how scientific research can drive socio-economic development.

Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar 2025 – Awardees

➢ Vigyan Ratna (Highest honour for lifetime achievement)
➢ Prof. Jayant Vishnu Narlikar (Posthumously) – Physics

Vigyan Shri (Distinguished scientific contributions)
➢ Dr. Gyanendra Pratap Singh – Agricultural Science
➢ Dr. Yusuf Mohammad Seikh – Atomic Energy
➢ Dr. K Thangaraj – Biological Sciences
➢ Prof. Pradeep Thalappil – Chemistry
➢ Prof. Aniruddha Bhalchandra Pandit – Engineering Sciences
➢ Dr. S Venkata Mohan – Environmental Science
➢ Prof. Mahan Mj – Mathematics & Computer Science
➢ Shri Jayan N – Space Science & Technology

Vigyan Yuva – Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Category (Young scientists)
➢ Prof. Amit Kumar Agarwal – Physics
➢ Prof. Surhud Shrikant More – Physics
➢ Dr. Jagdis Gupta Kapuganti – Agricultural Science
➢ Dr. Satendra Kumar Mangrauthia – Agricultural Science
➢ Dr. Deepa Agashe – Biological Sciences
➢ Shri Debarka Sengupta – Biological Sciences
➢ Dr. Dibyendu Das – Chemistry
➢ Dr. Waliur Rahaman – Earth Science
➢ Prof. Arkaprava Basu – Engineering Sciences
➢ Prof. Sabyasachi Mukherjee – Mathematics & Computer Science
➢ Prof. Shweta Prem Agrawal – Mathematics & Computer Science
➢ Dr. Suresh Kumar – Medicine
➢ Shri Ankur Garg – Space Science and Technology

➢ Prof. Mohanasankar Sivaprakasam – Technology and Innovation

Vigyan Team Puraskar (Team award)
Team – Aroma Mission, CSIR – Agricultural Science

US Approves Novo Nordisk's Oral Weight-Loss Pill

The United States Food and Drug Administration (US FDA) has approved an oral weight-loss pill developed by Danish pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk, marking a major breakthrough in obesity treatment. The pill contains semaglutide, a drug earlier available mainly in injectable form, and offers a tablet-based alternative for long-term weight management.

Why This Approval Is Important

➢ Improved accessibility: Oral tablets are easier to administer than injections, improving patient compliance

➢ Public health relevance: Obesity is a leading risk factor for non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular disorders

➢ Pharmaceutical innovation: Reflects progress in drug delivery systems and chronic disease management

➢ Global market impact: Strengthens Novo Nordisk's position in the rapidly expanding obesity-care market

How the Drug Works

➢ Semaglutide belongs to the GLP-1 receptor agonist class

➢ It suppresses appetite, increases feelings of fullness and slows digestion

➢ Originally developed for Type-2 diabetes management

Obesity Definition:

➢ Body Mass Index (BMI) $\geq 30 \rightarrow$ Obesity

➢ BMI 25–29.9 $\rightarrow$ Overweight

Regulatory Bodies:

➢ US FDA: Approves drugs and medical products in the United States

➢ India's Drug Regulator: Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)

ISRO to Launch Communication Satellite BlueBird Block-2

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will launch the BlueBird Block-2 communication satellite into Low Earth Orbit using the LVM3 launch vehicle under a commercial agreement, aimed at providing direct satellite-to-smartphone broadband connectivity.

Key Facts

➢ Launching Agency: Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)

➢ Satellite Name: BlueBird Block-2

➢ Type of Satellite: Communication satellite

➢ Orbit: Low Earth Orbit (LEO)

➢ Launch Vehicle: Launch Vehicle Mark-III (LVM3)

➢ Launch Site: Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota

➢ Mission Nature: Commercial launch mission

➢ Commercial Partner: AST SpaceMobile (USA)

➢ Indian Commercial Arm: NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)

Objective of the Mission

➢ To enable direct satellite-to-mobile phone connectivity without specialised ground equipment.

➢ To support voice, data, and broadband services in remote and underserved regions.

➢ To strengthen India's position in the global commercial satellite launch market.

Significance of the Mission

➢ Demonstrates ISRO's capability in heavy-lift commercial launches

➢ Highlights growing international collaboration in space technology.

➢ Supports expansion of next-generation space-based cellular broadband networks.

➢ Contributes to bridging the digital divide worldwide.

US–Russia Joint Mission: Soyuz MS-28 Launch

A three-member US–Russian crew has successfully launched to the International Space Station (ISS) aboard the Soyuz MS-28 spacecraft.

➢ Launch Vehicle: Soyuz booster rocket

➢ Launch Site: Baikonur Cosmodrome, Kazakhstan

Crew Members:

➢ Chris Williams (NASA astronaut) – First spaceflight

➢ Sergei Mikaev (Roscosmos) – First spaceflight

➢ Sergei Kud-Sverchkov (Roscosmos) – Second spaceflight

➢ Mission Duration: ~8 months aboard the ISS

This mission highlights ongoing US–Russia cooperation in space exploration despite geopolitical tensions. The crew will support scientific research,

maintenance tasks, and technology demonstrations on the ISS.

About Soyuz Spacecraft
➤ Operated by Roscosmos (Russia's space agency).
➤ Known for high reliability and used since 1960s.
➤ Can carry 3 astronauts.
➤ Launch site: Baikonur Cosmodrome, leased by Russia from Kazakhstan.

About the ISS
➤ A joint project of NASA (USA), Roscosmos (Russia), ESA (Europe), JAXA (Japan), and CSA (Canada).
➤ First module launched in 1998.
➤ Orbits Earth at about 400 km altitude.
➤ Completes ~16 orbits per day.

PM inaugurates Skyroot's Infinity Campus and unveils India's private orbital rocket Vikram-I

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate Skyroot Aerospace's Infinity Campus, a major facility dedicated to private-sector space innovation. The PM will also unveil Vikram-I, Skyroot's first orbital-class launch vehicle, capable of deploying satellites into Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

1. About Skyroot's Infinity Campus
➤ Location: Hyderabad, Telangana
➤ Production Capacity: Ability to manufacture 1 orbital rocket per month — a first for India's private space industry.
➤ This facility marks a major step towards boosting India's private space manufacturing ecosystem.

2. About Vikram-I Orbital Rocket
➤ Type: First orbital launch vehicle by an Indian private company.
➤ Developed by: Skyroot Aerospace
➤ Capability: Designed to carry multiple small satellites into LEO.
➤ Significance: Enhances India's presence in the global small-satellite launch market.

3. About Skyroot Aerospace
➤ Founders: Pawan Chandana & Bharath Daka
➤ Founded: 2018

Gavi & UNICEF Sign New Agreement to Expand Access to R21/Matrix-M Malaria Vaccine

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and UNICEF have jointly announced a new procurement agreement aimed at making the R21/Matrix-M malaria vaccine more affordable and accessible, especially for malaria-endemic countries. The initiative is expected to significantly strengthen global malaria prevention programmes.

About R21/Matrix-M & RTS,S/AS01 Vaccines
WHO Prequalification
WHO has prequalified two malaria vaccines:
➤ R21/Matrix-M – Developed by University of Oxford and Serum Institute of India (SII), using Novavax's Matrix-M adjuvant.
➤ RTS,S/AS01 – Developed by GSK, PATH, and partners.

Efficacy (Phase 3 Trials)
Both vaccines:
➤ Reduce malaria cases by over 50% in the first year.
➤ Offer ~75% protection when used seasonally in high-transmission areas.
➤ A fourth booster dose in second year prolongs protection.

Role of Gavi & UNICEF
Gavi's Role
➤ Supports procurement, logistics, and market shaping.
➤ Integrates malaria vaccines into national immunisation programmes.
➤ Over 40 million doses already supplied across 24 African countries, covering over 70% of global malaria burden.

UNICEF's Role
➤ World's largest vaccine buyer, delivering 3 billion+ doses annually.
➤ Engages with vaccine manufacturers to secure best pricing and ensure supply stability.

Global Health Significance
➤ Malaria kills nearly 500,000 children annually, mostly in Africa (WHO).
➤ Introduction of affordable malaria vaccines is a turning point in malaria elimination strategy.
➤ Supports progress toward UN Sustainable Development Goal 3: Good Health & Well-being.

About R21 Malaria Vaccine
➤ Manufactured at scale by Serum Institute of India, the world's largest vaccine producer.
➤ Achieves higher production capacity than earlier malaria vaccines, helping meet global demand.

Culture & History

India–Nepal Cultural Festival Begins in Lumbini

The 3rd India–Nepal Cultural Festival began in Lumbini, Nepal, jointly organised by:
➢ Embassy of India (Kathmandu)
➢ Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)
➢ Lumbini Buddhist University

The festival highlights the shared Buddhist heritage between India and Nepal, reinforcing people-to-people connect and cultural diplomacy. Lumbini—the birthplace of Gautama Buddha—is a key symbol of the civilisational bond between both nations.

1. Cultural Festival Significance
➢ This is the 3rd edition of the India–Nepal Cultural Festival.
➢ Venue: Lumbini, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
➢ Purpose: Promote shared Buddhist heritage, academic exchange, and cultural ties.

2. Key Organisers
➢ Embassy of India in Kathmandu
➢ ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) – under the Ministry of External Affairs
➢ Lumbini Buddhist University, Nepal

3. Symposium Highlights
A special symposium focuses on:
➢ Buddhist values: Metta (loving-kindness), Shanti (peace), Karuna (compassion), Dharma (righteousness)
➢ Academic and cultural exchange
➢ Strengthening India–Nepal friendship through Buddhist diplomacy

4. Broader Cultural Context
➢ India's Buddhist circuit includes:
➢ Bodh Gaya (Enlightenment)
➢ Sarnath (First Sermon)
➢ Kushinagar (Mahaparinirvana)
➢ Lumbini (Nepal) complements this as the birthplace of Buddha, reinforcing cross-border Buddhist tourism.

Major Buddhist sites outside India:
➢ Lumbini (Nepal)
➢ Anuradhapura (Sri Lanka)
➢ Bamiyan (Afghanistan)

ICCR – Static Facts
➢ Established: 1950
➢ Headquarters: New Delhi
➢ Works under: Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)
➢ Purpose: Cultural diplomacy, scholarships, cultural exchanges, festivals abroad.
➢ Lumbini Buddhist University
➢ Established: 2004
➢ Focus: Buddhist studies, monastic education, heritage research.

PM Modi Conferred with Order of Oman: Strengthening India–Oman Strategic Partnership

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred with the 'Order of Oman', the highest civilian honour of Oman, by Sultan Haitham bin Tarik in recognition of his visionary leadership and outstanding contribution to strengthening India–Oman bilateral relations. The award was presented during the Prime Minister's official visit to Muscat, underscoring the deep-rooted friendship between the two nations. The visit assumed special significance as India and Oman are commemorating 70 years of establishment of diplomatic relations, reflecting a long-standing civilisational, cultural, and economic partnership. The Prime Minister dedicated the honour to the historic ties and people-to-people bonds between the two countries.

India–Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)
➢ A major outcome of the visit was the signing of the India–Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), marking a milestone in bilateral economic cooperation.
➢ The agreement aims to enhance trade, investment, labour mobility, and supply chain integration.
➢ CEPA is Oman's second bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) after a gap of nearly 20 years, highlighting India's strategic importance.
➢ It is expected to generate employment opportunities, improve market access, and promote predictable trade regulations.
➢ The agreement was signed by Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Oman's Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, Qais Al Yousef, in the presence of both leaders.

Oman:
➤ Capital: Muscat
➤ Currency: Omani Rial
➤ Maritime Cooperation: Oman hosts Indian naval access at Duqm Port, enhancing India's maritime security outreach

PM Narendra Modi Conferred Ethiopia's Highest Civilian Honour

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred Ethiopia's highest civilian award, the "Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia", during his first bilateral visit to Ethiopia. The honour was presented by Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali in Addis Ababa in recognition of PM Modi's contribution to strengthening India–Ethiopia bilateral relations and his global leadership.

India–Ethiopia Relations:
➤ India and Ethiopia share long-standing historical and civilisational ties.
➤ India is one of the largest sources of foreign investment in Ethiopia.
➤ Cooperation spans trade, agriculture, health, education, capacity building, and technology.
➤ India provides development assistance, Lines of Credit, and training programmes to Ethiopia.
➤ Addis Ababa is a major diplomatic hub in Africa.

Ethiopia:
➤ Capital: Addis Ababa
➤ President: Taye Atske Selassie
➤ Prime Minister: Abiy Ahmed
➤ Currency: Birr

Anant Ambani Receives Global Humanitarian Award for Wildlife Conservation

Anant Ambani has been honoured with the Global Humanitarian Award for Animal Welfare by the Global Humane Society, becoming the youngest and the first Asian to receive this prestigious recognition. He received the award for his leadership in establishing Vantara, a large-scale wildlife rescue, rehabilitation and conservation initiative located in Jamnagar, Gujarat. Vantara has gained international attention for its scientific approach to animal welfare, ecosystem restoration, and endangered species care. The model integrates modern veterinary practices, habitat restoration techniques, and long-term rehabilitation frameworks, positioning India as a rising global leader in wildlife conservation. The award highlights the global relevance of India's conservation efforts and the increasing role of private-sector initiatives in supporting national biodiversity goals.

Additional Useful Key Facts
Global Humane Society is the international division of the American Humane Society, one of the world's oldest animal-welfare bodies founded in 1877.

It functions on a dual conservation approach:
➤ Ex-situ care – rescue, treatment, rehabilitation, artificial habitats.
➤ In-situ conservation support – species protection, rewilding, ecosystem revival.
➤ Vantara's elephant welfare initiatives (through the Radhe Krishna Temple Elephant Welfare Trust) earlier received India's national Prani Mitra Award in the corporate category.
➤ The award marks a milestone for Indian conservation leadership, encouraging more scientific, large-scale biodiversity initiatives in line with global standards.

National Handicrafts Awards 2023 & 2024 Conferred by President Droupadi Murmu

President Droupadi Murmu conferred the National Handicrafts Awards 2023 & 2024 in New Delhi, recognising India's finest master craftspersons. The awards aim to promote, preserve, and rejuvenate India's traditional handicraft heritage while supporting artisans' livelihoods. The President emphasised that the handicraft sector is a key driver of rural employment, providing work to over 32 lakh people, with 68% being women, making the sector significant for women's empowerment. A total of 12 artisans received the Shilp Guru Awards and 36 artisans received the National Awards for the years 2023 and 2024. The government recently reduced GST on handicrafts from 18% to 5%, aiding affordability and boosting global competitiveness. The Ministry of Textiles has also set an export target of ₹1 lakh crore by 2031–32 for handicraft products.

Key Awardees
Shilp Guru Awards 2023
Ajit Kumar Das (West Bengal) – Hand-painted textiles
D. Sivamma (Andhra Pradesh) – Leather puppet craft
National Awards 2023

- Hirabai Jhareka Baghel (Chhattisgarh) – Metal craft
- Imtiyaz Ahamad (Uttar Pradesh) – Handmade carpet
- Roshan Chhipa (Rajasthan) – Artistic textiles

Shilp Guru Awards 2024
- Subhash Arora (Haryana) – Metal craft
- Mohammad Dilshad (Uttar Pradesh) – Wood carving

National Awards 2024
- T. Baskaran (Tamil Nadu) – Stone carving
- Rupban Chitrakar (West Bengal) – Painting
- Baldev Baghmare (Madhya Pradesh) – Tribal craft

Additionally, three master craftspersons from Manipur—Laishram Memicha, Yengkhom Ongbi Indira Devi, and A. Bimola Devi—are to be honoured by the Ministry of Textiles.

About the National Handicrafts Awards
- Instituted in 1965 by the Ministry of Textiles.
- Categories: Shilp Guru, National Awards, National Merit Awards.
- Objective: Preserve crafts, recognise master artisans, encourage next-gen craftsmanship.
- Organized by: Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts).

Armand Duplantis, McLaughlin-Levrone named World Athletics' athletes of year

Armand Duplantis (Sweden) and Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone (USA) were honoured as the World Athletes of the Year at the 2025 World Athletics Awards.

Duplantis' Record-Breaking Season
- Broke the men's pole vault world record four times in 2025. Remained undefeated in all 16 competitions, winning both indoor and outdoor world titles.
- Became the first male pole vaulter in modern athletics to stay unbeaten in a single event for two straight years.
- Also named Men's Field Athlete of the Year.

McLaughlin-Levrone's Historic Achievement
- Won the women's 400m title in Tokyo with 47.78 seconds, breaking a 42-year-old World Championships record.
- Became the first athlete ever to win world titles in both the 400m flat and 400m hurdles.
- Awarded Women's Track Athlete of the Year.

Other Major Award Winners
Out-of-Stadium Athletes of the Year:
- Maria Perez (Spain) – Racewalking
- Sabastian Sawe (Kenya) – Long-distance running

Men's Track Athlete of the Year:
- Emmanuel Wanyonyi (Kenya) – 800m
- Women's Field Athlete of the Year:
- Nicola Olyslagers (Australia) – High jump

Rising Star Awards
- Edmund Serem (Kenya)
- Zhang Jiale (China)
- Both recognized for their world medal-winning performances.

56th IFFI Concludes in Goa; 'Skin of Youth' Wins Golden Peacock for Best Feature Film

The 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) ended with a grand closing ceremony at Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium, Goa.

Tributes & Special Felicitations
- Tribute paid to Dharmendra for his legacy.
- Rajinikanth was honored for completing 50 years in Indian cinema.
- Ranveer Singh made a surprise, high-energy appearance.

Major Awards
- Golden & Silver Peacock Awards
- Golden Peacock (Best Feature Film): Skin of Youth (Dir: Ashleigh Mayfair)
- Silver Peacock (Best Director): Santosh Davakhar for Gondhal
- Special Jury Award: Akinola Davies Junior for My Father's Shadow

Acting Awards
- Best Actor (Male): Ubeimar Rios
- Best Actor (Female): Jara Sofija Ostan for Little TroubleGirls

Debut Awards
- Silver Peacock for Best Debut Feature Film:
- My Daughter's Hair (Hesam Farahmand)
- Fränk (Tõnis Pil)
- Best Debut Director – Indian Feature Film: Karan Singh Tyagi for Kesari 2

Special Recognitions
- ICFT-UNESCO Gandhi Medal: Safe House (Dir: Eirik Svensson)
- OTT Best Indian Panorama: Bandish Bandit 2

Sports

East Bengal FC Clinch SAFF Women's Club Championship Title

East Bengal FC won the SAFF Women's Club Championship title after defeating their opponents 3–0 in the final, marking a significant achievement for Indian women's club football at the regional level.

SAFF:

SAFF stands for South Asian Football Federation, the regional body governing football in South Asia.

SAFF tournaments aim to promote football development and competition among South Asian nations.

➢ Formation: 1997
➢ Headquarters: Dhaka, Bangladesh
➢ President: Kazi Salahuddin
➢ Vice President: Sundar Narshing Joshi
➢ General Secretary: Purushottam Kattel

Pakistan Defeat India to Win U-19 Asia Cup Title

Pakistan's Under-19 cricket team defeated India in the final to clinch the U-19 Asia Cup title, delivering a dominant performance in the championship match held in Dubai.

➢ Notable Performer: Sameer Minhas (Pakistan)

Highlights

➢ Sameer Minhas played a record-breaking innings of 172 runs.
➢ Indian team was bowled out for a low total while chasing.
➢ Pakistan secured its second U-19 Asia Cup title.

Additional Facts :

➢ The U-19 Asia Cup is organised by the Asian Cricket Council (ACC).
➢ The tournament serves as a talent pipeline for future international cricketers.
➢ Several senior international players began their careers through U-19 tournaments.
➢ India and Pakistan matches attract special attention due to historic sporting rivalry.
➢ Youth cricket tournaments play a crucial role in long-term national team development.

National Shooting Championships: Indian Shooters Shine Across Events

Indian shooters delivered strong performances at the 68th National Shooting Championships, reaffirming India's growing depth and competitiveness in shooting sports.

Key Winners & Achievements

➢ Anantjeet Singh Naruka & Darshna Rathore won Gold in the Senior Skeet Mixed Team event, underlining India's strength in shotgun disciplines.
➢ Manu Bhaker and Simranpreet Kaur Brar clinched Gold medals in their respective events, continuing their dominance on the national circuit.
➢ Raiza Dhillon secured Double Gold in shotgun shooting events, showcasing consistency and elite performance.

National Rifle Association of India (NRAI)

➢ Founded: 1951
➢ Headquarters: New Delhi
➢ President: Kalikesh Narayan Singh

International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF)

➢ Founded: 17 July 1907
➢ Headquarters: Munich, Germany
➢ President: Luciano RossiIndia Wins First-Ever Bronze at 2025 FIH Junior Men's Hockey World Cup

India won its first bronze medal at the 2025 FIH Junior Men's Hockey World Cup.

India created history by winning their first-ever bronze medal at the 2025 FIH Junior Men's Hockey World Cup held in Chennai. In a thrilling match, India defeated Argentina 4–2, staging a remarkable comeback by scoring four goals within 11 minutes after trailing by two goals. Goal scorers for India included Ankit Pal, Manmeet Singh, Shardanand Tiwari, and Anmol Ekka, while Argentina initially led through goals by Nicolas Rodriguez and Santiago Fernandez.

This marks a major milestone for India's junior hockey program and strengthens the country's standing in global age-group hockey competitions.

About the FIH Junior Men's Hockey World Cup

➢ Organized by International Hockey Federation (FIH).
➢ Age category: Under-21.

UC ACADEMY
CAPF/CDS/AFCAT/NDA में सबसे भरोसेमंद नाम

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➢ India has earlier won gold medals in 2001 and 2016.
➢ The 2025 edition was hosted by India (Chennai).
➢ Previous edition winners (2021): Argentina.

About Indian Hockey
➢ India has 8 Olympic gold medals in men's hockey.
➢ Major national tournaments: Hockey India League, National Championships.
➢ Governing body: Hockey India.
➢ Current focus: Youth development, Khelo India program, grassroots training.

Sarwagya Singh Kushwaha Becomes World's Youngest Rated Chess Player

Sarwagya Singh Kushwaha, a 3-year-old boy from Madhya Pradesh, has become the youngest rated chess player in history, after receiving an official FIDE rating. He achieved this milestone by participating in multiple rated tournaments and securing the minimum performance required for a FIDE classical rating. This achievement places India once again in the global spotlight for producing extraordinary young chess talents. This recognition makes Sarwagya younger than the previous record holders and further strengthens India's reputation as a global chess powerhouse, following the rise of players such as R Praggnanandhaa, D Gukesh, and Nihal Sarin. His early success reflects increasing interest in chess in India after the COVID-era online chess boom, introduction of Chess Olympiad 2022 in Chennai, and government-supported initiatives like the "Khelo India" programme promoting mind sports.

About FIDE (International Chess Federation)
➢ Founded: 1924
➢ Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland
➢ India joined FIDE: 1947
➢ President: Arkady Dvorkovich

Arjun Erigaisi Wins Jerusalem Masters 2025, Defeats Viswanathan Anand in Final

Indian Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi has won the Jerusalem Masters 2025 title, defeating former World Champion Viswanathan Anand in an all-Indian final. The championship concluded with a blitz tie-break, after both players drew their rapid games.

About Jerusalem Masters
➢ Annual elite invitational chess event
➢ Played in formats: Rapid + Blitz
➢ Hosted in Jerusalem to promote global chess culture
➢ Features top-ranked international players

Indian Women's Hockey Team chief coach Harendra Singh steps down

What Happened
Harendra Singh has stepped down from his role as head coach of the India women's hockey team, citing personal reasons. He expressed gratitude for the opportunity and pledged to continue supporting efforts to promote Indian hockey.

Context of Tenure
➢ Singh had taken charge of the women's team in April 2024.
➢ Under his guidance, the team won the Asian Champions Trophy in 2024 — a notable success.
➢ However, the 2024-25 season was disappointing: India finished last in the 2024-25 FIH Pro League and were relegated, with just 2 wins in 16 matches.

India women's national field hockey team
➢ Nickname(s): Women in Blue
➢ Association : Hockey India (2008–present); Indian Hockey Federation (1925–2008)
➢ Confederation: Asian Hockey Federation
➢ Captain: Salima Tete
➢ Most caps: Vandana Katariya (320)
➢ Top scorer: Rani Rampal (120)

Sultan Azlan Shah Cup: Indian team settles for Silver medal

Belgium defeated India 1-0 in a tightly-contested final to win the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup 2025 in Malaysia. The match was decided by Thibeau Stockbroekx's 34th-minute strike, earning Belgium their first-ever title in just their second appearance.

Sultan Azlan Shah Cup
➢ Sport: Field hockey
➢ Founded: 1983
➢ No. of teams: 6
➢ Most recent champion: Belgium (1st title) (2025)
➢ Most titles: Australia (10 titles)

Javokhir Sindarov Becomes Youngest-Ever FIDE World Cup Champion

Uzbek Grandmaster Javokhir Sindarov, aged 19, became the youngest-ever FIDE World Cup champion

after defeating China's Wei Yi in the rapid tiebreaks of the 2025 FIDE World Cup held in Goa, India. After two draws in classical games, Sindarov showcased exceptional endgame skill in the tiebreaks, winning the final rapid game in 60 moves. Sindarov, who became a GM at just 12 years old, entered the event as the 16th seed and advanced through a turbulent knockout field, defeating compatriot Nodirbek Yakubboev in the semifinals — also via tiebreaks. Both Sindarov and Wei Yi have qualified for the 2026 Candidates Tournament, the final qualifying event for the World Chess Championship cycle.

India Tops Global Doping List

India has emerged as the world's leading country in doping violations for the third consecutive year, as per data released by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). In 2024, 260 Indian athletes tested positive for banned performance-enhancing substances, making India the only country with more than 200 positive cases globally. This raises serious concerns about the integrity of Indian sports and could adversely affect India's international sporting reputation, including its ambition to host the 2036 Olympic Games.

Global Doping List 2025

Top 5 Countries (Highest Doping Violations in 2024)

Rank	Country	Adverse / Positive Doping Cases
1	India	260 positive cases (highest)
2	France	~91 positive cases
3	Italy	~85 positive cases
4	Russia	~76 positive cases
5	United States	~76 positive cases

Bottom 5 Countries (Lowest Doping Violations among Major Testing Nations)

Rank	Country	Doping Status / Positivity Trend
1	Japan	Very low positivity; single-digit positives despite thousands of tests
2	China	Low number of positive cases relative to high testing volume
3	United Kingdom	Modest number of positives compared with tests conducted
4	Australia	Very low doping positivity rate reported
5	Canada	Minimal positive findings relative to overall testing rates

Reasons Behind High Doping Cases
➢ Pressure to perform: Government jobs, incentives, medals and social mobility linked to sports success
➢ Lack of awareness: Inadequate education about banned substances, supplements and long-term health effects
➢ Coaching and support gaps: Poor guidance at grassroots and junior levels
➢ Early exposure: Doping cases increasingly reported in junior, university and state-level competitions

Implications for India
Threat to Olympic ambitions: Poor anti-doping record may weaken India's credibility in the eyes of the International Olympic Committee
➢ Reputational damage: Repeated violations harm India's image as a fair sporting nation
➢ Athlete consequences: Doping leads to suspensions, bans, loss of medals and mental distress

Steps Taken to Address the Issue
➢ National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) has intensified testing and education programmes
➢ Focus on athlete awareness campaigns, especially at grassroots level
➢ Early 2025 data indicates a reduction in positivity rate to around 1.5%, showing initial improvement

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA):
➢ Established in 1999
➢ Oversees global anti-doping efforts and issues the World Anti-Doping Code
➢ Headquarters: Montreal, Quebec, Canada
➢ President: Witold Bańka

National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA):
➢ India's apex body to enforce anti-doping rules
➢ Conducts testing, awareness and disciplinary actions
➢ Director General: Ashish Bhargava

Armand Duplantis, McLaughlin-Levrone named World Athletics' athletes of year

Armand Duplantis (Sweden) and Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone (USA) were honoured as the World Athletes of the Year at the 2025 World Athletics Awards.

Duplantis' Record-Breaking Season
- Broke the men's pole vault world record four times in 2025. Remained undefeated in all 16 competitions, winning both indoor and outdoor world titles.
- Became the first male pole vaulter in modern athletics to stay unbeaten in a single event for two straight years.
- Also named Men's Field Athlete of the Year.

McLaughlin-Levrone's Historic Achievement
- Won the women's 400m title in Tokyo with 47.78 seconds, breaking a 42-year-old World Championships record.
- Became the first athlete ever to win world titles in both the 400m flat and 400m hurdles.
- Awarded Women's Track Athlete of the Year.

Other Major Award Winners
Out-of-Stadium Athletes of the Year:
- Maria Perez (Spain) – Racewalking
- Sabastian Sawe (Kenya) – Long-distance running

Men's Track Athlete of the Year:
- Emmanuel Wanyonyi (Kenya) – 800m
- Women's Field Athlete of the Year:
- Nicola Olyslagers (Australia) – High jump

Rising Star Awards
- Edmund Serem (Kenya)
- Zhang Jiale (China)
- Both recognized for their world medal-winning performances.

IMPORTANCE
To honor the martyrs and the men in uniform who valiantly fought on our borders to safeguard the country's honor.

Armed Forces Flag Day

INCEPTION: 1949
EDITION: 77th

MOTTO
To collect funds from people for the betterment of the Armed Forces staff just by selling Indian flags, batches, stickers, and other items.

ARMED FORCES FLAG DAY FUND
Funds for war victims, Kendriya Sainik Board Fund, Ex-servicemen's welfare fund, and other units were united to make a single Armed Forces Flag Day fund in the year 1993 by the Defense Ministry of India.

MANAGED BY
Local arms of the Kendriya Sainik Board in India

ESTABLISHED
Committee of Defense Minister

07 DECEMBER

IMPORTANCE
To mark the birth anniversary of H.M. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, King of Thailand, who was one of the main proponents of this initiative.

World Soil Day

EDITION: 11th
1st OBSERVED: 5 December 2014

MOTTO
To raise awareness of the importance of sustaining healthy ecosystems and human well-being.

ORGANISATION INVOLVED
FAO & United Nation

NOTE
The FAO unanimously endorsed World Soil Day in June 2013 and requested its official adoption. But in December 2013, UNGA responded by designating 5 December 2014 as the first official World Soil Day.

2025 THEME
Healthy Soils for Healthy Cities

05 DECEMBER

Obituaries

Renowned Litterateur Vinod Kumar Shukla Passes Away

Eminent Hindi writer and litterateur Vinod Kumar Shukla passed away in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. He was one of the most distinctive voices in modern Hindi literature and made significant contributions through poetry, novels, and short stories.

About Vinod Kumar Shukla
➢ Renowned Hindi poet, novelist, and short-story writer
➢ Known for simplicity, sensitivity, and subtle surrealism in writing
➢ His works often depict everyday life and inner human experiences
➢ Associated with modern Hindi literature

Major Literary Works
➢ Naukar Ki Kameez – acclaimed novel later adapted into a film
➢ Deewar Mein Ek Khidki Rehti Thi – award-winning novel
➢ Lagbhag Jai Hind – first poetry collection
➢ Khilega To Dekhenge and Ek Chuppi Jagah – notable works

Awards and Honours
➢ Jnanpith Award – India's highest literary honour: First writer from Chhattisgarh to receive this award
➢ Sahitya Akademi Award: Awarded for Deewar Mein Ek Khidki Rehti Thi
➢ Recipient of international literary recognition for his contribution to world literature

Sreenivasan, sharp satirist who reshaped Malayalam cinema, passes away at 69

Veteran Malayalam film personality Sreenivasan died at the age of 69 after a prolonged illness in Kochi, marking a significant loss for Indian cinema. Acted in over 200 films, becoming one of the most recognizable faces in Malayalam films. Wrote and directed many memorable movies that became cultural touchstones. Known for his ability to balance humour with serious commentary on society.

Pulitzer Prize–Winning War Correspondent Peter Arnett Passes Away

Veteran war journalist Peter Arnett, a Pulitzer Prize winner and one of the most influential foreign correspondents of the 20th century, has passed away at the age of 91 in California, USA. Born in Riverton, New Zealand (1934), Arnett later became a naturalised American citizen and had a journalism career spanning over five decades, covering some of the world's most significant conflicts. Arnett won the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting in 1966 for his courageous and ground-level reporting of the Vietnam War while working with the Associated Press (AP). He reported from Vietnam between 1962 and 1975, often accompanying soldiers on active combat missions, providing first-hand accounts of warfare. In 1981, Arnett joined CNN, where he rose to global prominence during the First Gulf War (1990–91). He became a household name for reporting live from Baghdad, making him one of the few Western journalists to remain in Iraq during intense US-led air strikes. His broadcasts, sometimes interrupted by missile explosions and air-raid sirens, marked a turning point in 24-hour live war reporting. Arnett conducted

high-profile interviews with key global figures, including Iraqi President Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War and Osama bin Laden in 1997 in Afghanistan, making him the first Western journalist to interview the al-Qaeda leader years before the 9/11 attacks. Later in his career, Arnett worked with NBC, but was dismissed after giving an interview to Iraqi state television during the Iraq War, where his comments were perceived as critical of US military strategy. He maintained that his duty was to report facts objectively from the ground.

He passed away while receiving hospice care for prostate cancer, surrounded by family.

War Journalism Significance:

Peter Arnett is regarded as a pioneer of embedded and live battlefield reporting, shaping modern conflict journalism.

Renowned Sculptor Ram Vanji Sutar Passes Away at 100
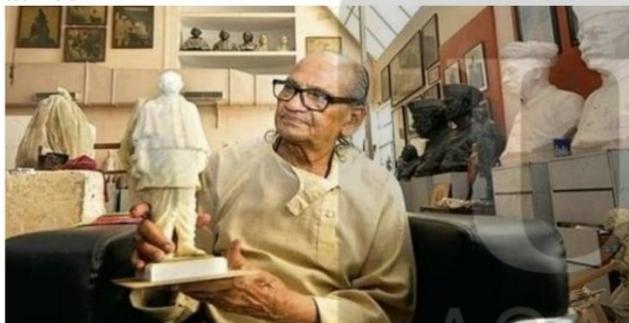
Eminent Indian sculptor Ram Vanji Sutar, one of the most celebrated figures in modern Indian art and architecture, passed away at the age of 100 at his residence in Noida, Uttar Pradesh. He was widely acclaimed for designing the Statue of Unity in Gujarat, the world's tallest statue, dedicated to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Born in 1925 in Dhule district (now in Maharashtra), Ram Vanji Sutar was a gold medallist from the Sir JJ School of Art, Mumbai, one of India's premier institutions for fine arts. His artistic legacy is closely associated with monumental public sculptures that blend realism with national symbolism.

Major Contributions and Achievements

Statue of Unity

➤ Height: 182 metres
➤ Location: Kevadia, Gujarat, on the Narmada River
➤ Dedicated to: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
➤ Inaugurated: 2018
➤ Recognised as the world's tallest statue

Parliament Complex Sculptures

➤ Statue of Mahatma Gandhi in a seated, meditative posture
➤ Equestrian statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

Awards and Honours

➤ Padma Shri – 1999
➤ Padma Bhushan – 2016
➤ Maharashtra Bhushan Puraskar – State's highest civilian award

Former Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil Passes Away at 91

Former Union Home Minister and veteran Congress leader Shivraj Patil passed away at the age of 91 in Latur, Maharashtra, after prolonged illness.

Shivraj Patil had a distinguished political career spanning several decades. He served in multiple high-level positions including:

➤ Union Home Minister (2004–2008)
➤ Speaker of the Lok Sabha (1991–1996)

Member of Lok Sabha from Latur—won seven times

Veteran actor Kalyan Chattopadhyay passes away at 82
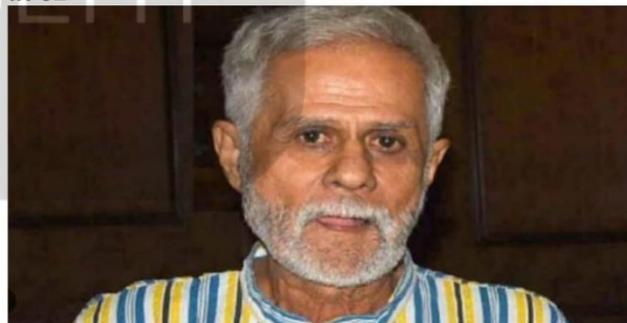
Veteran Bengali film and theatre actor Kalyan Chattopadhyay, known for his versatile performances, has passed away at the age of 82. Born in 1942 in Berhampore, Murshidabad (West Bengal), he was an alumnus of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune. He made his film debut in 1968 with Tapan Sinha's "Apanjan", a landmark film that won the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Bengali (1969). Chattopadhyay worked with renowned directors such as Satyajit Ray, Tarun Majumdar, and Tapan Sinha, with memorable roles in films like:

➤ Pratidwandi (Satyajit Ray)

> Sagina Mahato (Tapan Sinha)
> Dhanni Meye (Tarun Majumdar)
> Safed Haathi (Children's film)
> Paar (National Award-winning film)
> Kahani (2012 Hindi film)

Throughout his career, he appeared in over 400 films, multiple TV serials, and OTT projects. His demise has been widely mourned by the Indian film industry.

Renowned Architect Frank Gehry Passes Away
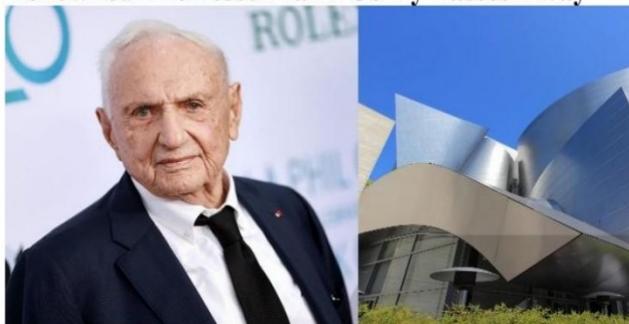
Renowned Architect Frank Gehry died at 96 at his Santa Monica home after a brief respiratory illness.

Legacy and Iconic Works

> Guggenheim Museum Bilbao – Famous for its sculptural, curving forms and global acclaim.
> Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles – Celebrated for its innovative design and acoustics.
> DZ Bank Building, Berlin – Noted for its distinctive architectural style.
> Silicon Valley Influence – Designed Facebook headquarters expansion at Mark Zuckerberg's request.

Former Mizoram Governor Swaraj Kaushal Passes Away at 73
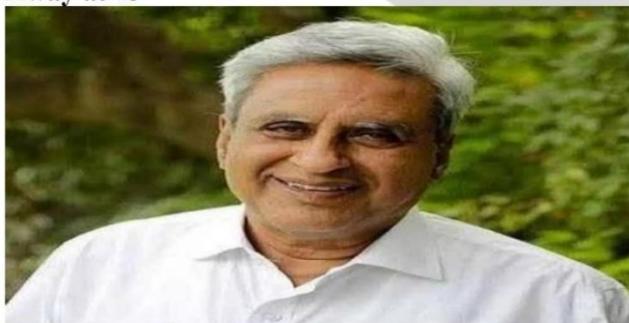
Former Mizoram Governor, senior advocate, and noted constitutional expert Swaraj Kaushal passed away at the age of 73. He was the husband of former Union Minister Sushma Swaraj and father of BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj. Born on 12 July 1952 in Solan, Himachal Pradesh, Kaushal served as Governor of Mizoram from 1990 to 1993 and was a Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) from Haryana (1998–2004). A distinguished lawyer and expert on Northeast affairs, he played a crucial role in the 1986 Mizoram Peace Accord, which brought an end to insurgency in the state. He later became the first Advocate General of Mizoram in 1987.

About Mizoram Peace Accord (1986)

> Signed between: Government of India & Mizo National Front (MNF).
> Key signatories: Laldenga (MNF), Rajiv Gandhi government.
> Ended two decades of insurgency in Mizoram.
> Led to formation of Mizoram as a full-fledged state in 1987.
> Swaraj Kaushal was a major negotiator in the peace process.

Key Offices Held

> Governor of Mizoram: 1990–1993
> Rajya Sabha MP (Haryana): 1998–2004
> First Advocate General of Mizoram: 1987
> Additional Solicitor General of India: 1987–1990

Former Union minister Sriprakash Jaiswal passes away at 81

Senior Congress leader and former Union minister Sriprakash Jaiswal passed away at the age of 81.

Political Journey and Legacy

Jaiswal served as a three-time Member of Parliament from Kanpur (1999–2014).

In the central government during the UPA era, he held key portfolios, including Minister of State in the Home Affairs Ministry and later Minister of Coal / Steel. Earlier in his career, he had served as the President of the Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (2000–2002).

Political History:

> Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha: 1999–2014
> Minister of Coal Government of India: 19 January 2011 – 26 May 2014
> Minister of State in Ministry of Home Affairs Government of India: 23 May 2004 – 22 May 2009
> President of Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee: 4 December 2000 – 3 July 2002

Important Days of the Month

Date	Observed As	Importance/Motto
January 1	Global Family Day	To promote the idea that the Earth is one Global family and we should live in peace
January 4	World Braille Day	To mark the birth anniversary of Louis Braille.
January 9	NRI Day	To mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community towards the development of India.
January 10	World Hindi Day	To mark the birth anniversary of first World Hindi Conference which was held in 1975.
January 12	National Youth Day	To mark the birth anniversary of the Swami Vivekananda.
January 15	Army day	Field Marshal K. M. Cariappa became the first Indian Army Chief of Independent India on 15 January 1949.
January 24	National Girl Child Day	To increase awareness among the people and ensure every girl gets equal importance as their counterparts.
January 25	National Voters day	To mark the foundation day of the Election Commission of India (ECI)
January 26	India's Republic Day	To mark the Declaration of Indian Independence that was proclaimed by the Indian National Congress.
January 27	International Holocaust Remembrance Day	To commemorate the tragedy of the Holocaust that occurred during the Second World War.
January 30	Martyrs' Day	To mark the assassination of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi Ji.

Books & Authors
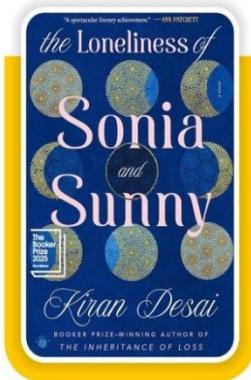
Book
The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny
....
Author
Kiran Desai
....
About
This book tells a deep and engaging story that shows the emotional ups and downs of modern life across different places and generations.
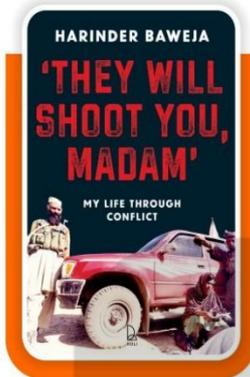
Book
They Will Shoot You, Madam: My Life Through Conflict
....
Author
Harinder Baweja
....
About
Here the author shares stories from over 40 years of reporting in India and conflict zones abroad, offering a brief, honest look into the risks and moral challenges of war journalism.
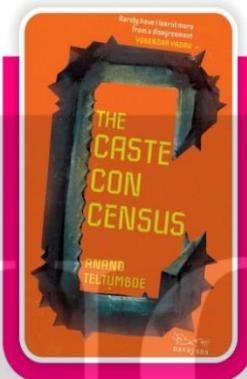
Book
The Caste Con Census
....
Author
Anand Teltumbde
....
About
This book examines the debate around caste-based data in India, explaining why caste census matters, the politics behind it, and its social and policy implications.
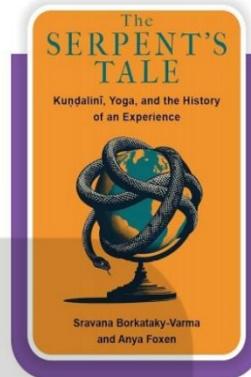
Book
The Serpent's Tale: Kundalini, Yoga, and the History of an Experience
....
Editor
Sravana Borkataky-Varma & Anya Foxen
....
About
This book explores the idea of Kundalini, tracing its roots in yoga and spiritual traditions and how it has been understood over time.
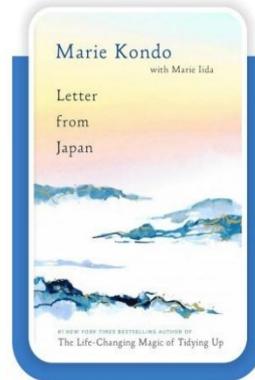
Book
Letter from Japan
....
Author
Marie Kondo with Marie Iida
....
About
This book offers personal reflections on Japanese society and culture, capturing everyday life, values, and quiet observations through a reflective narrative.

Books & Authors
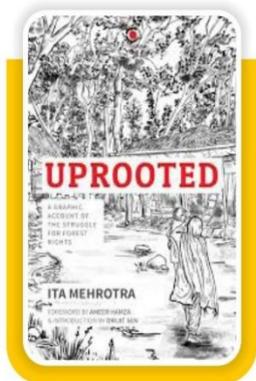
Uprooted

Book
Uprooted: A Graphic Account of the Struggle for Forest Rights
....
Author
Ita Mehrotra
....
About
This book tells the story of tribal and forest communities fighting for land, livelihood, and legal recognition of their rights.
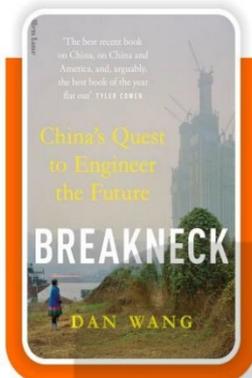
Breakneck

Book
Breakneck: China's Quest to Engineer the Future
....
Author
Dan Wang
....
About
This book examines how China is rapidly reshaping technology, infrastructure, and society to secure its global future.
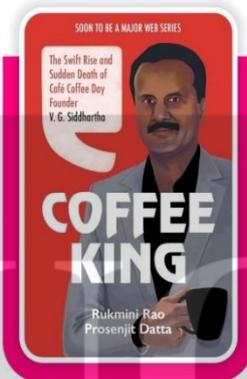
Coffee King

Book
Coffee King: The Swift Rise and Sudden Death of Cafe Coffee Day Founder V G Siddhartha
....
Author
Rukmini Rao and Prosenjit Datta
....
About
This book traces the rapid rise of V G Siddhartha, founder of Café Coffee Day, and the pressures and challenges that led to his sudden
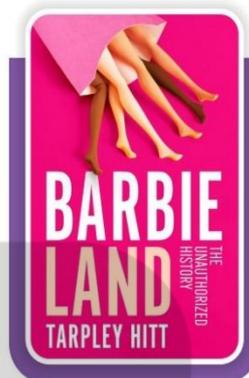
Barbieland

Book
BARBIELAND: The Unauthorized History
....
Author
Tarpley Hitt
....
About
This book explores the cultural impact, controversies, and hidden history behind the Barbie brand and its global influence.

Mafia Queens of India
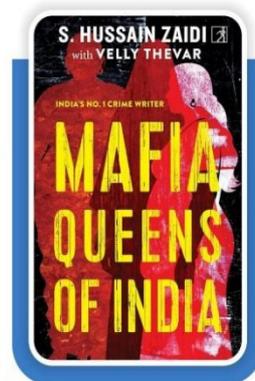
Book
Mafia Queens of India
....
Author
S Hussain Zaidi with Velly Thevar
....
About
This book tells real-life stories of women who rose to power in India's criminal underworld, challenging traditional ideas of crime and gender.

Question Bank for Practice

Statement- Based

1. Recently, the UK Drug Regulator sanctioned a gene therapy called Casgevy heralded as a significant breakthrough for treating sickle cell disease and thalassaemia.
Consider the following statements -
(1) Sickle cell disease is a genetic blood disorder characterized by an abnormality in platelets.
(2) Sickle cell disease causes red blood cells to adopt a sickle or crescent shape.
(3) Hemoglobin is the protein responsible for carrying oxygen in red blood cells.
Which of the above is/are correct?
(A) Only (1) and (3)   (B) Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   (D) None of the above

Ans: (C)

Exp: Sickle cell disease is a genetic blood disorder characterized by an abnormality in hemoglobin, the protein responsible for carrying oxygen in red blood cells.
It causes red blood cells to adopt a sickle or crescent shape, hindering their movement through vessels, leading to potential complications like severe pain, infections, anaemia, and strokes.
In India alone, an estimated 30,000-40,000 children are born with sickle cell disease annually.

2. Recently, the Madhya Pradesh political parties filed a complaint with the state Chief Electoral Officer, accusing manipulation of postal ballots.
Consider the following statements -
(1) The Election Commission of India is a three-member body.
(2) The Union Ministry of Home Affairs decides the election schedule for the conduct of both general elections and bye-elections.
(3) Election Commission resolves the disputes relating to splits/mergers of recognised political parties.
Which of the above is/are correct?
(A) Only (1) and (3)   (B) Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   (D) None of the above

Ans: (A)

Exp: The Election Commission of India is an autonomous constitutional body responsible for administering Union and State election processes in India.
The election commission has three election commissioners, one Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners.
Election commission decides the election schedule for the conduct of both general elections and bye-elections.
It also decides the disputes relating to splits/mergers of recognized political parties.

3. Recently, Global Energy Monitor (GEM) has released its quarterly update of GEM's Global Coal Plant Tracker.
Consider the following statements -
(1) Coal sector was nationalized by the Government of India under Indira Gandhi.
(2) Now, coal blocks are allocated on lottery basis.
(3) Till recently, India imported coal to meet the shortages of domestic supply, but now India is self-sufficient in coal production.
Which of the above is/are correct?
(A) Only (1)   (B) Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2)   (D) None of the above

Ans: (A)

Exp: Coal sector was nationalised in two phases under Indira Gandhi Government in 1972.
The coal blocks are allocated through auctions and not on a lottery basis.
The coal sector is the monopolistic sector in India. India holds 5th biggest coal reserves in the world, but due to the incapacity of coal production by monopolistic firms, it imports coal to meet the shortages of domestic supply.

4. Supreme Court Bars Dissolution of Central Empowered Committee, Stresses Approval Needed.
Consider the following statements about the Central Empowered Committee (CEC):
(1) The CEC was created in 2002 by a Supreme Court order in the T.N. Godavarman case.
(2) It was given statutory status in 2023 through a MoEFCC notification.

(3) The CEC is responsible for passing environmental legislation in India.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3)　(B) Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3)　(D) None of the above

Ans: (B)

Exp: Statement 1: Correct

The Central Empowered Committee (CEC) was indeed set up by the Supreme Court in 2002 as part of its efforts to ensure enforcement of its orders in the landmark T.N. Godavarman Thirumulpad case (1995), which dealt with forest conservation and protection of wildlife in India. The committee's role was to monitor compliance and provide independent reports to the Court.

Statement 2: Correct

Although the CEC existed since 2002 as a body under the Supreme Court, it was formally given statutory recognition in 2023 through a notification by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), following directions from the Supreme Court. This formalized its powers and operational framework.

Statement 1: Incorrect

The CEC does not have the authority to make laws. Its function is judicial and advisory—monitoring compliance with Supreme Court orders, conducting inspections, and submitting fact-finding reports. Law-making is the prerogative of Parliament and State Legislatures, not the CEC.

5. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule's Death Anniversary Observed on 28 November, Celebrating His Legacy in Social Reform and Education.

Consider the following statements about Mahatma Jyotiba Phule:

(1) He founded the Satyashodhak Samaj in 1873 to fight caste discrimination and Brahminical dominance.

(2) He established India's first school for girls in Pune in 1848 along with Savitribai Phule.

(3) He supported the 1857 Revolt as a national movement led by the masses.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3)　(B) Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3)　(D) None of the above

Ans: (B)

Exp: Statement 1: Correct

This statement highlights that Mahatma Jyotiba Phule established the Satyashodhak Samaj (Society of Truth Seekers) in 1873. The primary objective of this organisation was to challenge the caste-based social hierarchy and oppose the unjust dominance of upper-caste elites, particularly the Brahminical system. It worked for social equality and aimed to uplift the marginalized and oppressed communities.

Statement 2: Correct

This statement refers to Phule's revolutionary contribution to women's education. In 1848, Jyotiba Phule and his wife Savitribai Phule opened the first ever girls' school in Bhide Wada, Pune. This historic effort paved the way for women's empowerment at a time when education for girls was looked down upon, making Phule a pioneer in female education in India.

Statement 3: Incorrect

This statement indicates Jyotiba Phule's interpretation of the Revolt of 1857. Unlike some contemporary leaders who saw it differently, Phule viewed the uprising as a people's struggle involving common masses against oppression. He believed that it reflected the aspirations of ordinary Indians and was a significant event in the fight against colonial rule.

6. President Pays Tribute to 26/11 Martyrs, Calls for Renewed Resolve Against Terrorism.

Consider the following statements regarding major reforms introduced in India's counter-terrorism framework after the 26/11 Mumbai attacks:

(1) After 26/11, the National Security Guard (NSG) was kept only in Delhi to ensure centralised control and prevent decentralisation of rapid-response forces.

(2) The National Investigation Agency (NIA) was established under the NIA Act, 2008 to investigate terror-related offences at the national level.

(3) The National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID), launched in 2010, was designed to enable real-time information sharing among security agencies through access to integrated databases.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3)　(B) Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3)　(D) None of the above

Ans: (C)

Exp: Statement 1:correct

After the 26/11 Mumbai attacks exposed weaknesses in inter-state coordination and intelligence sharing, the Government enacted the NIA Act, 2008, which led to the creation of the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

NIA functions as a federal counter-terrorism investigation agency with the power to take over cases from state police when they involve terrorism, illegal arms smuggling, cross-border infiltration, counterfeit currency, and other national security threats. It ensures uniformity and efficiency in terrorism-related investigations across India.

Statement 2: correct

NATGRID is a technology-based intelligence platform created to integrate and analyze data from multiple agencies to track terror suspects.

It links information from 21 major databases, including immigration records, bank transactions, rail/air travel, PAN records and more. This provides real-time data access to authorized security agencies like NIA, IB, RAW and NSG, supporting coordinated and faster responses to threats.

Statement 3: incorrect.

During the 26/11 attack, NSG commandos took nearly 8 hours to reach Mumbai because they were stationed only in Delhi. To rectify this delay, the government decentralized NSG deployment and established four regional hubs in: Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata

This enhanced India's capability for rapid nationwide counter-terrorism response, the opposite of centralizing forces in Delhi.

7. The Red Sea experienced 'one of the most extreme environmental events on Earth' 6 million years ago.

Consider the following statements -

(1) Red Sea is an inlet of the Indian Ocean between Africa and Asia.

(2) Bordering Countries: Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Sudan, Eritrea and Djibouti.

(3) It occupies a part of the Ethiopian Highlands (Afro-Arabian Highlands).

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3)   **(B)** Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(B)**

Exp: Red Sea: It is an inlet of the Indian Ocean between Africa and Asia.

An inlet is a narrow strip of water that goes from a sea or lake into the land or between islands

Bordering Countries: Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Sudan, Eritrea and Djibouti.

Red Sea, connected to the Indian Ocean in the south through the Bab el Mandeb strait and the Gulf of Aden.

The northern Red Sea features the Sinai Peninsula, the Gulf of Aqaba, and the Gulf of Suez, which leads to the Suez Canal.

It occupies a part of the Great Rift Valley (Afro-Arabian Rift Valley).

8. Recently, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) imposed a penalty of Rs 213.14 crore on Meta.

Consider the following statements regarding Competition Commission of India -

(1) CCI is a constitutional body of the GoI responsible for enforcing the Competition Act, 2002.

(2) It was duly constituted in March 2009.

(3) The Commission consists of one Chairperson and six Members who shall be appointed by the Central Government.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3)   **(B)** Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(C)**

Exp: Competition Commission of India (CCI) is a statutory body of the Government of India responsible for enforcing the Competition Act, 2002, it was duly constituted in March 2009.

The Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969 (MRTP Act) was repealed and replaced by the Competition Act, 2002, on the recommendations of the Raghavan committee.

The Commission consists of one Chairperson and six Members who shall be appointed by the Central Government.

The commission is a quasi-judicial body which gives opinions to statutory authorities and also deals with other cases. The Chairperson and other Members shall be whole-time Members.

9. A recent Nature study found that moiré materials made from semiconductors can also be superconducting.

Consider the following statements -

(1) Superconductive materials has high energy loss when they are cooled below a critical temperature (Tc).

(2) Superconductivity is the property of certain materials to conduct alternate current (DC) electricity without energy loss.

(3) Superconductivity was discovered in 1911 by Heike Kamerlingh-Onnes.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) **(B)** Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: Superconductivity is the property of certain materials to conduct direct current (DC) electricity without energy loss when they are cooled below a critical temperature (Tc).

These materials also expel magnetic fields as they transition to the superconducting state.

Superconductivity was discovered in 1911 by Heike Kamerlingh-Onnes. For this discovery, he won the 1913 Nobel Prize in Physics.

E. g., MRI machines use an alloy of niobium and titanium.

10. World AIDS Day 2025 was observed 1st December.

Consider the following statements:

(1) HIV primarily attacks the immune system by destroying CD4 cells, weakening the body's defense against infections and cancers.

(2) HIV can be transmitted through casual contact, such as hugging or sharing utensils with an infected person.

(3) Lifelong Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) effectively controls the virus, although there is currently no cure.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) **(B)** Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: Statement 1: Correct

HIV targets CD4 cells, a type of white blood cell crucial for coordinating the immune response. As these cells are destroyed, the immune system becomes progressively weaker, leaving the body vulnerable to opportunistic infections (like tuberculosis) and certain cancers (such as lymphoma). This immune suppression is the hallmark of HIV infection.

Statement 2: Incorrect

This statement is incorrect. HIV is not transmitted through casual contact. The virus spreads only through direct exposure to infected bodily fluids, including blood, semen, vaginal fluids, and breast milk. Everyday social interactions like hugging, shaking hands, or sharing food or utensils do not pose a risk of transmission.

Statement 3: Correct

While there is no permanent cure for HIV, ART can suppress viral replication, maintain immune function, and prevent progression to AIDS. Patients on consistent ART can live long, healthy lives and have a significantly reduced risk of transmitting the virus to others. Treatment must be taken lifelong to remain effective.

11. Supreme Court Rebukes Kerala Governor for Ignoring Committee Recommendations on Vice-Chancellor Appointments.

Consider the following statements:

(1) The Sarkaria Commission (1988) recommended that Article 356 should be used sparingly with state assembly dissolution requiring Parliament's approval.

(2) The Venkatachaliah Commission (2002) stated that Governors can be removed at any time without consulting the Chief Minister.

(3) The Punchhi Commission (2010) suggested that the Governor's role as Chancellor should be limited to constitutional duties.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) **(B)** Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: Statement 1: Correct

The Sarkaria Commission was set up to review center-state relations and suggested that disputes between the Union and the states should be resolved through dialogue in an intergovernmental council rather than unilateral action. It also emphasized cautious use of Article 356, which allows President's Rule, and recommended that the state assembly should be dissolved only with Parliament's approval, to prevent misuse of central power.

Statement 2: Incorrect

The Venkatachaliah Commission actually recommended that Governors should complete their five-year term, and early removal should

only occur after consultation with the Chief Minister. This was intended to ensure impartiality and prevent arbitrary dismissals by the central government.

Statement 3: Correct

The Punchhi Commission recommended that the Governor's powers as Chancellor of universities should be limited to constitutional or formal functions to prevent interference in university administration. It also proposed that reserved Bills should be acted upon within six months, and stronger safeguards should be in place to prevent arbitrary use of Article 356, strengthening federal balance.

12. CJI Surya Kant Advocates National Judicial Policy and Signals Review of NJAC Plea Challenging Collegium System.

Consider the following statements:

(1) The NJAC was created through the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2014 to replace the Collegium system.

(2) The Supreme Court struck down the NJAC in 2015 because it gave the executive and non-judicial members veto power.

(3) Under the NJAC system, the Prime Minister alone was responsible for selecting the two eminent persons to the commission without consultation.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3)   **(B)** Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(B)**

Exp: Statement 1:

Explanation:

The National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) was established by the 99th Constitutional Amendment in 2014 to reform the process of judicial appointments. Its main objective was to replace the Collegium system, which was entirely managed by judges, with a commission including executive and eminent members, aiming for a more participatory and transparent selection process for Supreme Court and High Court judges.

Statement 2:

Explanation:

In 2015 (Fourth Judges Case), the Supreme Court ruled the NJAC unconstitutional. The Court held that giving the executive (Union Law Minister) and non-judicial members veto power

in judicial appointments compromised judicial independence, which is part of the Constitution's basic structure. It stressed that the judiciary must maintain primacy in selecting judges to safeguard impartiality.

Statement 3:

Explanation:

This statement is incorrect. Under NJAC, the two eminent persons were to be selected by a committee consisting of the Prime Minister, Chief Justice of India, and the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, not solely by the Prime Minister. This arrangement was intended to balance executive influence with judicial and parliamentary input, although the Supreme Court ultimately found the process flawed in safeguarding independence.

13. Indian Researchers Discover 'Alaknanda' — A Well-Structured Spiral Galaxy Formed 1.5 Billion Years After the Big Bang.

Consider the following statements about Galaxies:

(1) Galaxies are massive systems of stars, planets, gas, and dust bound together by gravity.

(2) All galaxies contain a supermassive black hole at their center.

(3) The Milky Way Galaxy is part of the Local Group, which belongs to the Laniakea Supercluster.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3)   **(B)** Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: Statement 1:

Explanation:

Galaxies are enormous cosmic structures containing billions or even trillions of stars, along with planets, nebulae, gases, and interstellar dust. The gravitational force acts as the binding mechanism that holds all these components together. They vary in size from small dwarf galaxies to giant ones extending over millions of light-years. Thus, the statement is correct because it accurately defines what a galaxy consists of.

Statement 2:

Explanation:

While most large galaxies (including the Milky Way) are known to host supermassive black holes in their centers, this is not yet confirmed

for every galaxy in the universe. Some smaller dwarf galaxies or irregular galaxies may not have detectable black holes, or evidence remains inconclusive. Therefore, the statement is too absolute and scientifically inaccurate. It is considered incorrect because saying "all" galaxies have them is not proven.

Statement 3:

Explanation:

The Milky Way is a member of the Local Group, a cluster of more than 50 galaxies including the Andromeda Galaxy and several dwarf galaxies. This Local Group is positioned on the edge of the Virgo Cluster and forms part of the much larger Laniakea Supercluster, a massive structure in the cosmic web. Thus, this statement is correct based on current astronomical classification. It accurately reflects the Milky Way's location in large-scale cosmic structure.

14. PM Urges Police Reforms to Strengthen Public Confidence During Raipur Security Summit.

Consider the following statements regarding Police Reforms in India:

(1) The National Police Commission (1977) proposed fixed tenures for senior police officers.

(2) The Supreme Court's Prakash Singh judgment (2006) issued directives including the creation of a State Security Commission.

(3) The Malimath Committee (2003) recommended replacing the Indian Police Act, 1861 with a new Model Police Act.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (B)

Exp: Statement 1 – Correct:

The National Police Commission (1977–81) recommended separating investigation from law and order, ensuring fixed tenures for key positions and drafting a Model Police Act to replace the outdated Police Act, 1861.

Statement 2 – Correct:

The Supreme Court in Prakash Singh judgment (2006) issued seven directives, including establishing State Security Commissions, Police Complaints Authorities, fixed tenure for DGP, SPs, SHOs, and separating investigation and law-and-order.

Statement 3 – Incorrect:

The Malimath Committee (2003) was concerned with reforming the criminal justice system, improving forensic and investigative capabilities, and proposing witness protection, not primarily

15. India Re-elected to IMO Council in Category B for 2026–27 with 154 Votes.

Consider the following statements about the International Maritime Organization (IMO):

(1) IMO is a specialized agency of the United Nations established to regulate global shipping.

(2) IMO directly enforces its regulations and policies on member states.

(3) India has been a member of IMO since 1959.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (A)

Exp: Statement 1:

Explanation:

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is indeed a specialized agency of the United Nations. It was originally established in 1948 as the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization and renamed IMO in 1982. Its primary purpose is to regulate international shipping, set global safety and environmental standards, and provide a fair and universally accepted regulatory framework for the shipping industry. This statement is correct.

Statement 2:

Explanation:

This statement is incorrect.

The IMO itself does not have enforcement powers; it can formulate policies, conventions, and guidelines, but implementation and compliance are the responsibility of each member state. Countries adopt IMO conventions into their national laws and ensure that ships under their flag comply with these regulations.

Statement 3:

Explanation:

This statement is correct.

India became a member of IMO in 1959 and has since actively participated in its decision-making, policy formulation, and maritime safety initiatives. India's membership allows it to contribute to international shipping standards, maritime security, and environmental protection measures.

16. US Firm Clean Core Thorium Energy to Introduce Next-Gen ANEEL Fuel for India's PHWRs.

Consider the following statements about thorium-based nuclear reactors:

(1) Thorium (Th-232) is fissile and can sustain a nuclear chain reaction on its own.

(2) Thorium-based reactors generate significantly less long-lived nuclear waste compared to conventional uranium reactors.

(3) India holds a substantial portion of the world's thorium reserves and integrates thorium in its 3-stage nuclear program.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) **(B)** Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3) **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(C)**

Exp: Statement 1:

Explanation: This statement is incorrect. Thorium-232 is fertile, not fissile. This means it cannot sustain a chain reaction by itself. It needs to absorb a neutron from an external source and convert into uranium-233 (U-233), which is fissile and can sustain a chain reaction. Therefore, thorium always requires a "driver" fissile material like U-235, U-233, or plutonium to initiate and maintain the reaction.

Statement 2:

Explanation: This statement is correct. Thorium fuel cycles produce fewer long-lived transuranic isotopes, which are highly radioactive and difficult to manage. For example, U-233 produced in the thorium cycle is contaminated with U-232, which emits strong gamma radiation. This makes the waste less suitable for weapons production and easier to detect and manage, improving overall proliferation resistance and waste profile compared to conventional uranium reactors.

Statement 3:

Explanation: This statement is correct. India possesses approximately 25% of the world's thorium reserves, mainly in monazite sands along its coastline. Thorium is a central part of India's 3-stage nuclear program, which aims to first use natural uranium in PHWRs, then plutonium in fast breeder reactors, and finally thorium in advanced reactors to achieve long-term energy independence and efficient utilization of indigenous resources.

17. Indian Navy Unveils Maritime Doctrine 2025 on Navy Day to Align with Strategic Vision.

Consider the following statements about the Indian Navy:

(1) The Indian Navy's modern roots trace back to the Royal Indian Navy (RIN) established during British rule.

(2) The Maratha Navy under Kanhoji Angre successfully resisted European powers along India's west coast.

(3) India's maritime tradition began only after European naval powers arrived in the late 15th century.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) **(B)** Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3) **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(B)**

Exp: Statement 1:

Explanation: This statement is correct. The modern Indian Navy evolved from the Royal Indian Navy (RIN), which was formed under British colonial rule. After India became a republic in 1950, the "Royal" prefix was dropped, and it was officially renamed the Indian Navy. The RIN provided the foundation for India's modern naval organization, training, and operational doctrines.

Statement 2:

Explanation: This statement is correct. The Maratha Navy, led by Admiral Kanhoji Angre, was a significant maritime force during the 17th–18th centuries. It effectively challenged Portuguese, Dutch, and British naval forces along the western coast of India, protecting Maratha interests and coastal trade routes. Kanhoji Angre is remembered as one of India's foremost naval strategists of the pre-modern era.

Statement 3:

Explanation: This statement is incorrect. India's maritime tradition dates back over 4,000 years, long before European arrival. Ancient civilizations like Harappa, Mohenjodaro, and Lothal were engaged in extensive sea trade with Africa, Arabia, and Mesopotamia. Indian traders and scholars also spread culture to Southeast Asia by the 1st century CE. European powers arrived much later, in 1498, introducing blue-water navies but not initiating India's maritime activities.

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18. US Plans to Deploy Small Nuclear Reactor on Moon by Early 2030s Under Lunar Fission Project.
Consider the following statements about Small Modular Reactors (SMRs):
(1) SMRs are compact nuclear reactors with capacities up to 300 MW(e) and can be factory-built and transported for installation.
(2) SMRs require refueling more frequently than conventional nuclear reactors, typically every 1–2 years.
(3) India aims to develop at least 5 indigenously designed and operational SMRs by 2033 under its Nuclear Energy Mission.
Which of the above is/are correct?
(A) Only (1) and (3)   (B) Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   (D) None of the above
Ans: (A)
Exp: Statement 1:
Explanation: This statement is correct. Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) are compact and modular, meaning they can be manufactured in factories and then transported to the site for assembly. Their capacity is up to 300 MW(e), which is about one-third of conventional nuclear reactors. This makes them ideal for remote areas, urban grids, or space-constrained locations where large reactors are impractical.
Statement 2:
Explanation: This statement is incorrect. SMRs actually have longer refueling intervals, usually every 3–7 years, compared to conventional reactors that need refueling every 1–2 years. The extended refueling period improves operational efficiency and reduces maintenance interruptions.
Statement 3:
Explanation: This statement is correct. Under the Nuclear Energy Mission 2025–26, India plans to develop at least 5 indigenously designed SMRs by 2033. These SMRs will support energy decarbonization, supplement renewable energy, and provide reliable electricity to industrial clusters and remote areas.

19. Five Thalassemia Children in Jharkhand Test HIV-Positive After Contaminated Blood Transfusions.
Consider the following statements about Thalassemia:
(1) Thalassemia is a genetic disorder caused by insufficient production of hemoglobin.

(2) e-RaktKosh helps patients by providing information on blood availability and blood banks.
(3) Alpha Thalassemia is caused by a reduced or absent production of the beta chain of hemoglobin.
Which of the above is/are correct?
(A) Only (1) and (3)   (B) Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   (D) None of the above
Ans: (B)
Exp: Statement 1:
Thalassemia is an inherited disorder, meaning it is passed down from parents to children through genes. It occurs when the body cannot produce enough hemoglobin, the protein in red blood cells responsible for carrying oxygen to body tissues. This results in anemia, fatigue, weakness, shortness of breath, and poorly functioning red blood cells.
Statement 2:
e-RaktKosh is an online blood management system implemented by the Indian government. It allows patients, including those with thalassemia who need frequent blood transfusions, to check the availability of blood in nearby blood banks. This system improves accessibility and efficiency of blood supply, helping in timely treatment.
Statement 3:
This statement is incorrect. Alpha Thalassemia is actually caused by reduced or absent production of the alpha chain of hemoglobin, not the beta chain. Deficiency in alpha chains leads to abnormal hemoglobin formation, causing anemia of varying severity depending on how many alpha genes are affected.

20. Antarctic Ozone Hole Closes Early in 2025, Signaling Strong Recovery of Ozone Layer.
Consider the following statements about ozone:
(1) Stratospheric ozone, also called "good ozone," forms naturally 15–30 km above Earth.
(2) Tropospheric ozone forms near the ground due to chemical reactions and contributes to smog.
(3) Ozone depletion is mainly caused by nitrogen oxides released from vehicles.
Which of the above is/are correct?
(A) Only (1) and (3)   (B) Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   (D) None of the above
Ans: (B)

Exp: Statement 1:

The Montreal Protocol (1987) regulates the phase-out of ozone-depleting substances and achieved universal ratification in 2009. The Montreal Protocol is an international treaty designed to eliminate substances that deplete the ozone layer, such as CFCs, halons, and HCFCs. It is considered one of the most successful environmental treaties, achieving universal ratification by all UN member countries in 2009, meaning every country agreed to its provisions. This treaty has significantly reduced the emission of ozone-depleting chemicals and contributed to the gradual recovery of the ozone layer.

Statement 2:

Many ozone-depleting substances (ODS), like CFCs and HCFCs, are also potent greenhouse gases. By reducing their use, the Montreal Protocol has not only helped restore the ozone layer but also mitigated global warming, potentially avoiding 0.5–1°C of temperature rise by mid-century. Thus, ozone protection and climate action are closely linked.

Statement 3:

This statement is incorrect. The Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol actually targets HFCs (hydrofluorocarbons), which do not deplete the ozone layer but are powerful greenhouse gases. Its goal is to phase down HFCs globally, helping to further reduce climate change impacts while complementing ozone recovery efforts.

21. The Government of India appointed Mrs Vijaya Rahatkar as the 9th chairperson of the National Commission for Women.

Consider the following statements regarding National Commission for Women -

(1) The National Commission for Women is a constitutional body setup in January 1990.

(2) Ms. Jayanti Patnaik was the first chairperson (03 February 1992- 30 January 1995) of National Commission for Women.

(3) The National Commission for Women consists of a chairperson, five members and a member secretary.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) **(B)** Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(C)**

Exp: The National Commission for Women (NCW) is a statutory organization established by the Government of India in January 1992, following the provisions of the National Commission for Women Act, 1990.

The NCW operates under the administrative jurisdiction of the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development and has its head office located in New Delhi.

The NCW comprises a chairperson, five members, and a member secretary. Key points about its composition include:

One member must belong to the Scheduled Castes, and another member must represent Scheduled Tribes.

Ms. Jayanti Patnaik was the first chairperson of National Commission for Women.

Her tenure was from 03 February 1992 to 30 January 1995.

22. ED Issues Show-Cause Notices to Kerala CM and Former Finance Minister Over Masala Bonds Violation.

Consider the following statements:

(1) Masala Bonds are rupee-denominated bonds issued to foreign investors.

(2) The currency exchange risk in Masala Bonds is borne by the Indian issuer.

(3) Masala Bonds help Indian entities raise foreign capital without forex risk.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) **(B)** Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: Masala Bonds are issued in Indian Rupees (INR), unlike most foreign bonds which are denominated in the investor's currency.

These bonds are sold to overseas investors, allowing Indian entities to raise capital from international markets while keeping the bond denominated in Indian currency.

This structure helps internationalize the Indian Rupee and attracts foreign investment into India.

This statement is incorrect. In Masala Bonds, the currency exchange risk is borne by the foreign investor, not the Indian issuer.

If the Indian Rupee depreciates against the investor's home currency, the investor bears the loss.

This protects Indian borrowers from foreign exchange volatility, which is a key feature of Masala Bonds.

Because the bond is rupee-denominated and the foreign investor assumes the currency risk, Indian issuers can raise capital from global investors without worrying about fluctuations in exchange rates.

This makes Masala Bonds an effective tool for financing infrastructure, affordable housing, and corporate working capital in India.

23. Recently, 70th Mahaparinirvan Diwas was observed on December 6 to commemorate the death anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar.

Consider the following statements regarding Dr. B.R. Ambedkar -

(1) He termed Article 19 as the "soul of the Constitution".
(2) He was posthumously awarded by Bharat Ratna in 1990.
(3) The Poona Pact (1932) was signed between him and MK Gandhi in the Yerwada Central Jail.

Which of the above is/are correct?
(A) Only (1) and (3)   **(B)** Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(C)**

Exp: Mahaparinirvan Diwas of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, honors his legacy, emphasizing his transformative impact on social reform, justice, and equality.

The term "Mahaparinirvan" stems from Buddhist philosophy, symbolizing liberation from the cycle of birth and death, marking the most sacred day in the Buddhist calendar.

Chairman of the Drafting Committee: As the Chairman of the Drafting Committee appointed in 1947, Dr. Ambedkar oversaw the meticulous process of crafting the world's largest written Constitution.

Poona Pact (1932): Played a pivotal role in negotiating the Poona Pact, which replaced separate electorates for Dalits with reserved seats, paving the way for their political representation.

Bharat Ratna Award: Dr. Ambedkar was posthumously awarded India's highest civilian honor, the Bharat Ratna, in 1990.

Article 32: Termed as the "soul of the Constitution", Article 32 empowers citizens to approach the Supreme Court/ High Court for enforcement of fundamental rights.

24. The Akal Takht imposed religious punishment (Tankha) on Sukhbir Singh Badal, President of the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD).

Consider the following statements regarding Sikh Takhts -

(1) Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib: Located in the Siwalik foothills, Himachal Pradesh.
(2) Takhat Sri Harimandir Ji Patna Sahib: Located in Nanded, Maharashtra.
(3) Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib: Located in Talwandi Sabo, Punjab.

Which of the above is/are correct?
(A) Only (1) and (3)   **(B)** Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib: Located in the Siwalik foothills, Himachal Pradesh, it is a historical site linked to Guru Gobind Singh and the foundation of the Khalsa.

Takhat Sri Harimandir Ji Patna Sahib: Located in Patna, Bihar, it is the birthplace of Guru Gobind Singh.

Takhat Sachkhand Shri Hazur Abchalnagar Sahib: Located in Nanded, Maharashtra, it is the site of Guru Gobind Singh's cremation in 1708.

Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib: Located in Talwandi Sabo, Punjab, it was recognized as the place where Guru Gobind Singh finalized the Sikh scriptures(Guru Granth Sahib).

25. India's Retail CBDC Records 120 Million Transactions Worth ₹28,000 Crore as RBI Pushes Programmability and Cross-Border Potential.

Consider the following statements regarding Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC):

(1) CBDCs are issued by central banks and function alongside physical cash.
(2) CBDCs are currently operational in all G20 countries as of 2024.
(3) CBDCs does not function with cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin.

Which of the above is/are correct?
(A) Only (1) and (3)   **(B)** Only (1) and (2)
(C) Only (2) and (3)   **(D)** None of the above

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: Statement 1:
This statement is correct.
Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) is a digital form of a country's official currency

issued only by the central bank, not by private companies.

CBDCs are designed to coexist with physical cash, meaning they are an additional medium of payment and do not replace traditional currency entirely.

Example: India's Retail CBDC and China's Digital Renminbi function alongside banknotes and coins.

Statement 2:

Explanation:

This statement is incorrect.

As of 2024, only a few countries such as the Bahamas, Jamaica, and Nigeria have officially launched operational CBDCs.

Other countries, including many G20 nations, are still researching, piloting, or designing their own CBDCs.

Hence, it is wrong to say that all G20 countries have operational CBDCs.

Statement 3:

Explanation:

This statement is correct.

CBDCs are state-issued and regulated digital currencies, while cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin are private, decentralized, and unregulated.

CBDCs and cryptocurrencies operate separately; CBDCs are not pegged or linked to cryptocurrencies and do not require them to function.

The distinction ensures CBDCs maintain financial stability and government control over digital money.

26. Consider the following statements regarding to Ryotwari System:
1. In this method, the farmer had to pay between 20% and 30% to the renting company.
2. In 1792 AD, Captain Reid introduced the Ryotwari System first in Baramhal district of Tamil Nadu.
Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?
(A) 1 only   (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2   (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (D)

Exp: In Ryotwari System, the farmer had to pay between 33% and 55% to the renting company. This system was reformed after 1836 AD by Winger and Goldsmith.

27. Consider the following statements:
1. The Rashtrakutas considered themselves descendants of Satyaki.
2. The Kailash Temple at Ellora was built by the Rashtrakuta King Krishna I.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(A) 1 only   (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2   (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (C)

Exp: Krishna I also defeated Vishnuvardhana of Vengi and the Ganga king of Mysore. The Kailash Temple at Ellora was built by the Rashtrakuta King Krishna I. The Rashtrakutas considered themselves descendants of Satyaki.

28. Consider the following statements:
1. The Harappan culture was distinguished by its system of town planning.
2. The Indus people were the earliest people to produce cotton.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(A) 1 only   (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2   (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (C)

Exp: The Harappa villages, mostly situated near the flood plains, produced sufficient foodgrains. The Indus people were the earliest people to produce cotton. The Harappan culture was distinguished by its system of town planning.

29. Consider the following statements:
1. Rigveda is the oldest religious text in the world. It contains 1028 hymns and is classified into 10 mandalas.
2. Yajur Veda deals with charms, spells and magic and is a good source to study the Kingdom of Magadha.
Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?
(A) 1 only   (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2   (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (B)

Exp: Rig Veda was composed during the Early Vedic Age. The other three were written in the Later Vedic Age. Atharva Veda deals with charms, spells and magic and is a good source to study the Kingdom of Magadha.

30. Consider the following correct statements.

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1. The Green Revolution started in 1965 with the first introduction of High Yielding Variety (HYV) seeds in Indian agriculture.
2. The term green revolution was coined by an official at the U.S. State Department, Norman Borlaug in 1968.
(A) only 1   (B) Only 2
(C) both 1 and 2   (D) none of these
Ans: (A)
Exp: The Green Revolution in India refers to a period when Indian agriculture was converted into an industrial system due to the adoption of modern methods and technology It was mainly found by M.S. Swaminathan.
The term green revolution was coined by an official at the U.S. State Department, William Gaud in 1968.

31. Consider the following correct statements.
1. Deccan Plateau is the peninsular tableland lying to the south of the Tropic of Cancer. Its outer boundary is marked by the 300 m contour line, with Vindhya-Kaimur watersheds in the north.
2. The Deccan plateau is located between two mountain ranges, the Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats,
(A) only 1   (B) Only 2
(C) both 1 and 2   (D) none of these
Ans: (C)
Exp: The Deccan plateau is located between two mountain ranges, the Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats, Deccan Plateau is the peninsular tableland lying to the south of the Tropic of Cancer. Its outer boundary is marked by the 300 m contour line, with Vindhya-Kaimur watersheds in the north. and north-western part of the plateau is made up of lava flows or igneous rocks known as the Deccan Traps. The north-western part of the plateau is made up of lava flows or igneous rocks known as the Deccan Traps

32. Consider the following correct statements.
1. The Irupu Falls are located in the Brahmagiri Range in the Kodagu district of Karnataka,
2. Jog Fall located at southern state of Karnataka is India's highest waterfall. it is on the Sharavathi River
(A) only 1   (B) only 2
(C) both 1 and 2   (D) none of these
Ans: (C)

Exp: Jog Falls located near Jog Village. located in Siddapur, Uttara Kannada Jog Falls is also known as Gerusoppe falls, The Irupu Falls are located in the Brahmagiri Range in the Kodagu district of Karnataka, India, bordering the Wayanad district of Kerala.

33. Consider the following correct statements.
1. Lipu Lekh is located in Sikkim, this pass is an important border post for trade with China, the pilgrims for Manasarovar travel through this pass.
2. Shipki La (Pass)-It is in Himachal Pradesh, Satluj River flows through this pass.
(A) only 1   (B) only 2
(C) both 1 and 2   (D) none of these
Ans: (B)
Exp: Lipulekh pass in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand, Lipulekh pass connects the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand with the old trading town of Taklakot in Tibet. The pass is first Indian border post to be opened for trade with China in 1992.

34. Consider the following statements:
1. The salaries and allowances of the Speaker of Legislative Assembly and Chairman of Legislative Council shall be determined by the State Legislature.
2. The emoluments, allowances and privileges of the Governor shall be determined by the State Legislature.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(A) 1 only   (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2   (D) Neither 1 nor 2
Ans: (A)
Exp: The salaries and allowances of the Speaker of Legislative Assembly and Chairman of Legislative Council shall be determined by the State Legislature.
The Governor shall be entitled to the use of his official residence without payment of rent and shall also be entitled to such emoluments, allowances and privileges as may be prescribed by Parliament.

35. Consider the following statements:
1. The District Judges and Magistrate of the Civil Courts shall be appointed by the Governor.
2. The Guwahati High Court has territorial jurisdiction over five number of States.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

(A) 1 only   (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2   (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (B)

Exp: Magistrates of district judges and civil courts are appointed by the governor on the advice of the Chief Justice of the state.
The Guwahati High Court has territorial authority over 4 states such as Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland.

36. Consider the following statements:
1. Article 243 D provides that seats shall be reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
2. The aim of Panchayati Raj is to develop local self-governments in districts, zones and villages.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(A) 1 only   (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2   (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (C)

Exp: Article 243 D provides that seats shall be reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. The aim of Panchayati Raj is to develop local self-governments in districts, zones and villages.

37. Consider the following statements:
1. President has powers to nominated 2 members from Anglo-Indian community if the President feels that their community is not adequately represented.
2. According to Article 80, there will be a Parliament for the Union, consisting of the President and two Houses - Rajya Sabha, Lok Sabha.
Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

(A) 1 only   (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2   (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (B)

Exp: According to Article 71, the Parliament shall be constituted for the Union in which the President and the two Houses shall be known as the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) and the Lok Sabha respectively.

38. Which of the following statements is true?

I. Current assets represent some assets of a company.
II. An asset is a resource with economic value.
Select the correct option.

(A) Only I   (B) Only II
(C) Both I & II   (D) Neither I nor II

Ans: (B)

Exp: An asset is a resource with economic value that an individual, corporation, or country owns or controls with the expectation that it will provide a future benefit. Assets are reported on a company's balance sheet and are bought or created to increase a firm's value or benefit the firm's operations. An asset can be thought of as something that, in the future, can generate cash flow, reduce expenses, or improve sales, regardless of whether it's manufacturing equipment or a patent.
Current assets represent all the assets of a company that are expected to be conveniently sold, consumed, used, or exhausted through standard business operations with one year. Current assets appear on a company's balance sheet, one of the required financial statements that must be completed each year.

39. Which of the following statements is true?
I. Copyright law gives creators of original material the exclusive right.
II. Brand identity is the non-visible elements of a brand.
Select the correct option.

(A) Only I   (B) Only II
(C) Both I & II   (D) Neither I nor II

Ans: (A)

Exp: Copyright refers to the legal right of the owner of intellectual property. In simpler terms, copyright is the right to copy. This means that the original creators of products and anyone they give authorization to are the only ones with the exclusive right to reproduce the work.
Copyright law gives creators of original material the exclusive right to further use and duplicate that material for a given amount of time, at which point the copyrighted item becomes public domain.
Brand identity is the visible elements of a brand, such as color, design, and logo, that identify and distinguish the brand in consumers' minds. Brand identity is distinct from brand image. The former corresponds to the intent behind the branding and the way a company does the following—all to cultivate a certain image in consumers' minds:

Chooses its name

Designs its logo

Uses colors, shapes, and other visual elements in its products and promotions.

40. Which of the following statements is true?
I. The NITI Aayog is a policy think tank of the Government of India,
II. A bond is a fixed income instrument that represents a debt.
Select the correct option.
(A) Only I   (B) Only II
(C) Both I & II   (D) Neither I nor II

Ans: (C)

Exp: NITI Aayog, the National Institution for Transforming India is a Government of India policy, established to replace the Planning Commission.
The aim of NITI Aayog is to encourage involvement and participation in the economic policy-making process, with emphasis towards making the country a cooperative federalism.
A bond is a fixed income instrument that represents a loan made by an investor to a borrower (typically corporate or governmental). A bond could be thought of as an I.O.U. between the lender and borrower that includes the details of the loan and its payments. Bonds are used by companies, municipalities, states, and sovereign governments to finance projects and operations. Owners of bonds are debtholders, or creditors, of the issuer. Bond details include the end date when the principal of the loan is due to be paid to the bond owner and usually includes the terms for variable or fixed interest payments made by the borrower.

41. Which of the following statements is true?
I. A fixed-income security is an investment that provides a return.
II. A coupon or coupon payment is the annual interest rate paid on a bond,
Select the correct option.
(A) Only I   (B) Only II
(C) Both I & II   (D) Neither I nor II

Ans: (C)

Exp: A fixed-income security is an investment that provides a return in the form of fixed periodic interest payments and the eventual return of principal at maturity. Unlike variable-income securities, where payments change based on some underlying measure—such as short-term interest rates—the payments of a fixed-income security are known in advance.
A coupon or coupon payment is the annual interest rate paid on a bond, expressed as a percentage of the face value and paid from issue date until maturity. Coupons are usually referred to in terms of the coupon rate.

42. Which of the following statement (s) is true?
I. Higgs boson is also known as Man particle.
II. Electromagnetism is the study of the electromagnetic force
Select the correct option
(A) Only I   (B) Only II
(C) Both I & II   (D) Neither I nor II

Ans: (B)

Exp: The Higgs boson (or Higgs particle) is a particle in the Standard Model of physics. In the 1960s Peter Higgs was the first person to suggest that this particle might exist. On 14 March 2013, scientists at CERN tentatively confirmed that they had found a Higgs particle.
The Higgs particle is one of the 17 particles in the Standard Model, the model of physics which describes all known basic particles. The Higgs particle is a boson.
Electromagnetism is a branch of physics involving the study of the electromagnetic force, a type of physical interaction that occurs between electrically charged particles. ... At high energy the weak force and electromagnetic force are unified as a single electroweak force.

43. Which of the following statement (s) is true?
I. Coulomb force, also called electrostatic force or Coulomb interaction, attraction or repulsion of particles or objects because of their electric charge.
II. Polarisation phenomena shows the particle nature of light.
Select the correct option.
(A) Only I   (B) Only II
(C) Both I & II   (D) Neither I nor II

Ans: (A)

Exp: Coulomb force, also called electrostatic force or Coulomb interaction, attraction or repulsion of particles or objects because of their electric charge. One of the basic physical forces, the electric force is named for a French physicist, Charles-Augustin de Coulomb, who in 1785

published the results of an experimental investigation into the correct quantitative description of this force. Two like electric charges, both positive or both negative, repel each other along a straight line between their centres. Photoelectric effect, phenomenon in which electrically charged particles are released from or within a material when it absorbs electromagnetic radiation. The effect is often defined as the ejection of electrons from a metal plate when light falls on it. In a broader definition, the radiant energy may be infrared, visible, or ultraviolet light, X rays, or gamma rays; the material may be a solid, liquid, or gas; and the released particles may be ions (electrically charged atoms or molecules) as well as electrons.

44. Which of the following statement (s) is true?
I. Archimedes' principle, physical law of buoyancy
II. Buoyancy the ability of an object to float in water or air is intimately related to specific gravity.
Select the correct option.
(A) Only I   (B) Only II
(C) Both I & II   (D) Neither I nor II

Ans: (C)

Exp: Archimedes' principle, physical law of buoyancy, discovered by the ancient Greek mathematician and inventor Archimedes, stating that any body completely or partially submerged in a fluid (gas or liquid) at rest is acted upon by an upward, or buoyant, force the magnitude of which is equal to the weight of the fluid displaced by the body. The volume of displaced fluid is equivalent to the volume of an object fully immersed in a fluid or to that fraction of the volume below the surface for an object partially submerged in a liquid. Buoyancy (the ability of an object to float in water or air) is intimately related to specific gravity. If a substance has specific gravity less than that of a fluid, it will float on that fluid: helium-filled balloons will rise in air, oil will form a slick on water, and lead will float on mercury. Buoyancy

45. Consider the following statements.
1. Lithium metal is isolated electrolytically from a mixture of lithium chloride and potassium chloride.
2. Lithium can float on the lightest hydrocarbon oils and is one of only three metals that can float

on water, the other two being sodium and potassium.
Which is/are correct statement?
(A) Only I   (B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2   (D) None of these

Ans: (C)

Exp: Lithium is a chemical element with the symbol Li and atomic number 3. It is the lightest metal and lightest solid element and is easily cut with a knife.

46. Which of the following statements is true?
I. Sodium cyanate is the chemical compound with the formula NaSCN.
II. Methyl isocyanate (MIC) is an organic compound with the molecular formula CH3NCO.
Select the correct option.
(A) Only I   (B) Only II
(C) Both I & II   (D) Neither I nor II

Ans: (B)

Exp: Methyl isocyanate (MIC) is an organic compound with the molecular formula CH3NCO. Synonyms are isocyanatomethane, methyl carbylamine and MIC. Methyl isocyanate is an intermediate chemical in the production of carbamate pesticides (such as carbaryl, carbofuran, methomyl, and aldicarb). It has also been used in the production of rubbers and adhesives. As a highly toxic and irritating material, it is extremely hazardous to human health. It was the principal toxicant involved in the Bhopal disaster, which killed 3,787 people initially and officially 19,787 people in total.
Sodium thiocyanate (sometimes called sodium sulphocyanide) is the chemical compound with the formula NaSCN. This colorless deliquescent salt is one of the main sources of the thiocyanate anion. As such, it is used as a precursor for the synthesis of pharmaceuticals and other specialty chemicals. Thiocyanate salts are typically prepared by the reaction of cyanide with elemental sulfur.

47. Which of the following statements is true?
I. Cryollite is an ore of aluminium.
II. Galena is an ore of aluminium.
Select the correct option.
(A) Only I   (B) Only II
(C) Both I & II   (D) Neither I nor II

Ans: (A)

Exp: Cryolite, colourless to white halide mineral, sodium aluminum fluoride (Na3AlF6). It occurs in

a large deposit at, Greenland, and in small amounts in Spain, Colorado, U.S., and elsewhere. It is used as a solvent for bauxite in the electrolytic production of aluminum and has various other metallurgical applications, and it is used in the glass and enamel industries, in bonded abrasives as a filler, and in the manufacture of insecticides Galena, also called lead glance, is the natural mineral form of lead sulfide (PbS). It is the most important ore of lead and an important source of silver.

Galena is one of the most abundant and widely distributed sulfide minerals.

48. Which of the following statements is/are true?
I. Hydrogen bomb is based on the principle of nuclear fission.
II. The law which states that the amount of gas dissolved in a liquid is proportional to its partial pressure is Henry's law.
Select the correct option.
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I & II
(D) Neither I nor II

Ans: (C)

Exp: Nuclear fission, subdivision of a heavy atomic nucleus, such as that of uranium or plutonium, into two fragments of roughly equal mass. The process is accompanied by the release of a large amount of energy. In nuclear fission the nucleus of an atom breaks up into two lighter nuclei. The process may take place spontaneously in some cases or be induced by the excitation of the nucleus with a variety of particles (e.g., neutrons, protons, deuterons, or alpha particles) or with electromagnetic radiation in the form of gamma rays. In the fission process, a large quantity of energy is released, radioactive products are formed, and several neutrons are emitted.

Henry's law, statement that the weight of a gas dissolved by a liquid is proportional to the pressure of the gas upon the liquid. The law, which was first formulated in 1803 by the English physician and chemist William Henry.

49. Consider the following statements:
1. The term plastid was first used by Schimper.
2. The functional unit of Photosynthesis is Chloroplast.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(A) 1 only
(B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (C)

Exp: The plastid is a membrane-bound organelle found in the cells of plants, algae, and some other eukaryotic organisms. Plastids were discovered and named by Ernst Haeckel, but A. F. W. Schimper was the first to provide a clear definition.

Chloroplasts are organelles that conduct photosynthesis, where the photosynthetic pigment chlorophyll captures the energy from sunlight, converts it, and stores it in the energy-storage molecules ATP and NADPH.

50. Consider the following correct statements.
1. Human Growth Hormone (HGH): Responsible for the growth and repair of all cells in the body.
2. Adrenocorticotropic Hormone (ACTH): Influences the adrenal gland to release of Cortisol or the "stress hormone". ACTH is also known as corticotropin.
(A) only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (C)

Exp: pituitary gland, is an endocrine gland, about the size of a pea and weighing 0.5 grams (0.018 oz) in humAns: It is a protrusion off the bottom of the hypothalamus at the base of the brain.

Human Growth Hormone (HGH): Responsible for the growth and repair of all cells in the body.
Adrenocorticotropic Hormone (ACTH): Influences the adrenal gland to release of Cortisol or the "stress hormone". ACTH is also known as corticotropin.

Match The Following

1. Match the following missiles -

(a) Agni III	1- 3500 to 5000 Km
(b) Agni IV	2- 5000 to 8000 Km
(c) Agni V	3- 3000 to 4000 Km
(d) Agni VI	4- 8000 to 12000 Km

Options-
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: **(D)**
Exp: Agni III - 3500 to 5000 Km
Agni IV - 3000 to 4000 Km
Agni V - 5000 to 8000 Km
Agni VI - 8000 to 12000 Km

2. Match the following Bird Sanctuary of India -

(a) Haryana	1- Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary
(b) Karnataka	2- Ghataprabha Bird Sanctuary
(c) Kerala	3- Kadalundi Bird Sanctuary

Options
(A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Haryana - Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary
Karnataka - Ghataprabha Bird Sanctuary
Kerala - Kadalundi Bird Sanctuary

3. Match the following Gardens in India -

(a) Chashme Shahi	1- Srinagar, J & K
(b) Chaubatia Garden	2- Kota, Rajasthan
(c) Chambal Garden	3- Chaubatia, Uttrakhand
(d) Law garden	4- Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Options-
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: **(D)**
Exp: Chashme Shahi - Srinagar, J & K
Chaubatia Garden - Chaubatia, Uttrakhand
Chambal Garden - Kota, Rajasthan
Law garden - Ahmedabad, Gujarat

4. Match the following committees related to Banking sector reforms -

(a) The first Narasimhan Committee	1- 1991
(b) The Verma Committee	2- 1996
(c) The Khan Committee	3- 1997

Options
(A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: The first Narasimhan Committee – 1991
The Verma Committee – 1996
The Khan Committee – 1997

5. Match the following electric components with their corresponding functions or characteristics:

Electric Part	Function/Characteristic
1. Diode	a. Converts AC to DC
2. Capacitor	b. Stores electric charge temporarily
3. Transistor	c. Amplifies or switches electronic signals
4. Resistor	d. Limits the flow of current
5. LED (Light Emitting Diode)	e. Emits light when current passes through

Options:
1-a, 2-c, 3-b, 4-e, 5-d
1-a, 2-b, 3-c, 4-d, 5-e
1-b, 2-a, 3-d, 4-c, 5-e
1-d, 2-b, 3-a, 4-e, 5-c

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Diode: Allows current to flow in one direction and is used in rectification (AC to DC).
Capacitor: Temporarily stores electrical energy in an electric field.
Transistor: Acts as an amplifier or a switch for electronic signals.
Resistor: Limits or regulates the flow of electrical current.
LED: Emits light when an electric current passes through it.

6. Match the following tribes with their respective regions or characteristics:

Tribe	Region/Characteristic
1. Santhal	a. Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha
2. Bhil	b. Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh
3. Gond	c. Central India, primarily Madhya Pradesh
4. Toda	d. Nilgiri Hills, Tamil Nadu
5. Apatani	e. Arunachal Pradesh

Options:
(A) 1-b, 2-a, 3-d, 4-e, 5-c
(B) 1-c, 2-d, 3-a, 4-b, 5-e
(C) 1-a, 2-b, 3-c, 4-d, 5-e
(D) 1-a, 2-c, 3-e, 4-b, 5-d

Ans: **(C)**

Exp: Santhal: Primarily found in Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Odisha.
Bhil: One of the largest tribal groups in India, mainly residing in Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh.
Gond: Inhabits the central regions of India, especially in Madhya Pradesh.
Toda: A small pastoral tribe living in the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu.
Apatani: Indigenous to the Ziro Valley in Arunachal Pradesh.

7. Match the following Observances: -

(a) 4th January	1- World Braille Day
(b) 21st March	2- World Down Syndrome Day
(c) 2nd April	3- Human Rights Day
(d) 10th December	4- World Autism Day

Options-
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: **(C)**
Exp: 4th January: World Braille Day
21st March: World Down Syndrome Day
2nd April: World Autism Day
10th December: Human Rights Day

8. Match the following schemes with their launch year -

(a) Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme	1- 2003
(b) Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana	2- 2016
(c) Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojna	3- 2015

Options
(A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: **(D)**
Exp: Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme - 2003
Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana - 2015
Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojna - 2016

9. Match the following Gardens with their locations -

(a) Brindhavan Garden	1- Mysore
(b) Chambal Garden	2- Srinagar
(c) Chashme Shahi	3- Kota
(d) Hanging Garden	4- Mumbai

Options-
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: **(D)**
Exp: Brindhavan Garden - Mysore
Chambal Garden - Kota
Chashme Shahi - Srinagar
Hanging Garden - Mumbai

10. Match the following rivers with their ending point: -

(a) Nile	1- Mediterranean Sea
(b) Amazon	2- Atlantic Ocean
(c) Yangtze	3- East China Sea

Options
(A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Nile - Mediterranean Sea
Amazon - Atlantic Ocean
Yangtze - East China Sea

11. Match the following famous caves in India -

(a) Tamil Nadu	1- Sittanavasal
(b) Kerala	2- Undavalli
(c) Bihar	3- Sudama
(d) Andhra Pradesh	4- Kottukal

Options-
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Tamil Nadu – Sittanavasal
Kerala – Kottukal
Bihar – Sudama
Andhra Pradesh – Undavalli

12. Match the following Tiger Reserves in India -

(a) Jharkhand	1- Palamau Tiger Reserve
(b) Karnataka	2- Bandipur Tiger Reserve
(c) Kerala	3- Periyar Tiger Reserve

Options
(A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Jharkhand - Palamau Tiger Reserve
Karnataka - Bandipur Tiger Reserve
Kerala - Periyar Tiger Reserve

13. Match the Following -

Socio-Religious Movement	Founder/Leader
A) Brahmo Samaj	1) Swami Vivekananda
B) Arya Samaj	2) Raja Ram Mohan Roy
C) Ramakrishna Mission	3) Dayananda Saraswati
D) Theosophical Society	4) Annie Besant
E) Aligarh Movement	5) Sir Syed Ahmad Khan

Options:
(A) A-1, B-3, C-2, D-4, E-5
(B) A-2, B-1, C-3, D-5, E-4
(C) A-3, B-1, C-2, D-5, E-4
(D) A-2, B-3, C-1, D-4, E-5

Ans: **(D)**
Exp: A) Brahmo Samaj was founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

B) Arya Samaj was established by Dayananda Saraswati.
C) Ramakrishna Mission was founded by Swami Vivekananda.
D) Theosophical Society was associated with Annie Besant.
E) Aligarh Movement was led by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.

14. Match the Following -

Vice President	Term
A) Dr. Zakir Husain	1) 2007 - 2012
B) Hamid Ansari	2) 1997 - 2002
C) M. Venkaiah Naidu	3) 1967 - 1969
D) Shankar Dayal Sharma	4) 2017 - 2022
E) Dr. R. Venkataraman	5) 1987 - 1992

Options:
(A) A-1, B-4, C-3, D-5, E-2
(B) A-3, B-2, C-4, D-5, E-1
(C) A-2, B-1, C-4, D-5, E-3
(D) A-3, B-1, C-4, D-2, E-5

Ans: **(B)**
Exp: A) Dr. Zakir Husain served as Vice President from 1967 to 1969.
B) Hamid Ansari held office from 2007 to 2012.
C) M. Venkaiah Naidu served from 2017 to 2022.
D) Shankar Dayal Sharma was Vice President from 1987 to 1992.
E) Dr. R. Venkataraman served from 1992 to 1997.

15. Match the architectural elements of Sanchi Stupa and Dhamek Stupa with their symbolic meanings:

Column A	Column B
1. Hemispherical dome (Anda)	A. Symbolizes the universe
2. Pillar inscriptions	B. Contain Ashoka's Schism Edict
3. Torans (Gateways)	C. Depict scenes from Buddha's life
4. Relic chamber (Taberna)	D. Holds Lord Buddha's relics
5. Chattra	E. Represents protection and spiritual enlightenment

Options:
(A) 1-A, 2-B, 3-C, 4-D, 5-E
(B) 1-C, 2-E, 3-B, 4-A, 5-D

(C) 1-D, 2-A, 3-E, 4-C, 5-B

(D) 1-E, 2-C, 3-A, 4-B, 5-D

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: 1-A: The hemispherical dome symbolizes the universe.

2-B: Pillar inscriptions contain Ashoka's Schism Edict.

3-C: Torans depict scenes from Buddha's life.

4-D: The relic chamber holds Lord Buddha's relics.

5-E: The Chattra represents protection and spiritual enlightenment.

16. Match the following Sikh Gurus with their contributions or events:

Column A	Column B
1. Guru Nanak Dev Ji	A. Founded the Khalsa Panth
2. Guru Angad Dev Ji	B. Standardized the Gurmukhi script
3. Guru Arjan Dev Ji	C. Compiled the Adi Granth
4. Guru Gobind Singh Ji	D. Established the principles of Langar
5. Guru Har Gobind Ji	E. Introduced the concept of Miri and Piri

Options:

(A) 1-B, 2-C, 3-D, 4-E, 5-A

(B) 1-C, 2-A, 3-E, 4-B, 5-D

(C) 1-D, 2-B, 3-C, 4-A, 5-E

(D) 1-E, 2-D, 3-B, 4-C, 5-A

Ans: **(C)**

Exp: 1-D: Guru Nanak Dev Ji established the principles of Langar (community kitchen).

2-B: Guru Angad Dev Ji standardized the Gurmukhi script.

3-C: Guru Arjan Dev Ji compiled the Adi Granth, the sacred scripture of Sikhs.

4-A: Guru Gobind Singh Ji founded the Khalsa Panth in 1699.

5-E: Guru Har Gobind Ji introduced the concept of Miri and Piri (spiritual and temporal authority).

17. Match the Following: Five-Year Plans in India

Column A (Five-Year Plan)	Column B (Objective/Focus Area)
1. First Five-Year Plan (1951-1956)	A. Green Revolution
2. Second Five-Year Plan (1956-1961)	B. Self-reliance in technology
3. Third Five-Year Plan (1961-1966)	C. Agricultural development
4. Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969-1974)	D. Industrial growth and infrastructure
5. Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-1979)	E. Poverty alleviation and employment

Options:

(A) 1-C, 2-D, 3-A, 4-B, 5-E

(B) 1-C, 2-B, 3-D, 4-E, 5-A

(C) 1-C, 2-D, 3-B, 4-A, 5-E

(D) 1-A, 2-E, 3-D, 4-C, 5-B

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: First Five-Year Plan (1951-1956) focused on agricultural development to address food shortages.

Second Five-Year Plan (1956-1961) emphasized industrial growth and infrastructure, inspired by the Mahalanobis model.

Third Five-Year Plan (1961-1966) aimed for the Green Revolution to improve food grain production.

Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969-1974) focused on self-reliance in technology and reducing dependency on imports.

Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-1979) targeted poverty alleviation and employment through schemes like Garibi Hatao.

18. Match the Following: Types of Plastics and Their Applications

Column A (Type of Plastic)	Column B (Application)
1. Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET)	A. Electrical insulation
2. Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC)	B. Bottles and food containers
3. Low-Density Polyethylene (LDPE)	C. Pipes and plumbing
4. Polystyrene (PS)	D. Packaging films and plastic bags
5. Polycarbonate (PC)	E. CDs, DVDs, and optical lenses

Options:

(A) 1-B, 2-C, 3-D, 4-E, 5-A

(B) 1-E, 2-A, 3-B, 4-C, 5-D

(C) 1-B, 2-C, 3-D, 4-A, 5-E
(D) 1-B, 2-C, 3-D, 4-A, 5-E
Ans: **(C)**
Exp: Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) is commonly used for bottles and food containers due to its lightweight and strength.
Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) is used in pipes and plumbing because of its durability and resistance to corrosion.
Low-Density Polyethylene (LDPE) is utilized in packaging films and plastic bags because of its flexibility and moisture resistance.
Polystyrene (PS) serves as electrical insulation and is also used in disposable cutlery and packaging.
Polycarbonate (PC) is used in CDs, DVDs, and optical lenses due to its high impact resistance and transparency.

19. Match the following important days -

(a) 17 April	1- World Haemophilia Day
(b) 5 June	2- National Sports Day
(c) 6 July	3- World Zoonoses Day
(d) 29 August	4- World Environment Day

Options-
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4
Ans: **(A)**
Exp: 17 April - World Haemophilia Day
5 June - World Environment Day
6 July - World Zoonoses Day
29 August - National Sports Day

20. Match the following books and authors -

(a) Girish Karnad	1- Tughlaq
(b) Goethe	2- Faust
(c) Gopinath Mohanty	3- Paraja

Options
(A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2
Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Girish Karnad - Tughlaq
Goethe - Faust
Gopinath Mohanty - Paraja

21. Match the following -

(a) Scorpion	1- Archinida scorpionida
(b) Sea Horse	2- Rodentia sciurus
(c) Squirrel	3- Hippocampus syngnathidae
(d) Zebra	4- Equidae burcheli

Options-
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4
Ans: **(C)**
Exp: Scorpion - Archinida scorpionida
Sea Horse - Hippocampus syngnathidae
Squirrel - Rodentia sciurus
Zebra - Equidae burcheli

22. Match the following UN organizations with their foudation years -

(a) World Health Organization	1- 1948
(b) UN High Commissioner for Refugees	2- 1950
(c) UN World Food Program	3- 1961

Options
(A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2
Ans: **(A)**
Exp: World Health Organization - 1948
UN High Commissioner for Refugees - 1950
UN World Food Program - 1961

23. Match the following Temples in India -

(a) Angrabadi Temple	1- Jharkhand
(b) Badrinath Temple	2- Karnataka
(c) Brihadeeswara Temple	3- Tamil Nadu
(d) Chennakesava Temple	4- Uttarakhand

Options-
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4
Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Angrabadi Temple - Jharkhand
Badrinath Temple - Uttarakhand
Brihadeeswara Temple - Tamil Nadu
Chennakesava Temple - Karnataka

24. Match the following Stadiums in India -

(a) Nehru Stadium	1- Pune

(b) Keenan Stadium	2- Jamshedpur
(c) Moti Bagh Stadium	3- Vadodara

Options
(A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Nehru Stadium - Pune
Keenan Stadium - Jamshedpur
Moti Bagh Stadium - Vadodara

25. Match the Following: Glaciers

Glacier / Feature	Description
(a) Siachen Glacier	1 – Largest glacier in the Garhwal Himalaya region
(b) Milam Glacier	2 – Largest glacier in the Karakoram range
(c) Gangotri Glacier	3 – Origin point of the river Ganga (Bhagirathi)
(d) Zemu Glacier	4 – Largest glacier in Sikkim, near Kanchenjunga

Options:
(A) a-2, b-1, c-3, d-4
(B) a-4, b-3, c-1, d-2
(C) a-1, b-4, c-2, d-3
(D) a-3, b-2, c-4, d-1

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: (a) Siachen Glacier is India's largest and highest glacier, located in the Karakoram Range. It is known for its extreme cold, high altitude, and strategic importance.
(b) Milam Glacier is the largest glacier in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand. It lies in the Pithoragarh district and is a major source of rivers in the area.
(c) Gangotri Glacier is the origin of the Bhagirathi River, which later becomes the Ganga. It is one of the most important and sacred glaciers in India.
(d) Zemu Glacier is the largest glacier in Sikkim and is located near Mount Kangchenjunga. It significantly contributes to the river systems of the region.

26. Match the Following – Volcanoes

Volcano	Description

(a) Mount Vesuvius	1 – Located in the Philippines; one of the most active volcanoes.
(b) Mauna Loa	2 – Famous shield volcano in Hawaii; among the largest on Earth.
(c) Mount Etna	3 – Italy's most active volcano on the island of Sicily.
(d) Mount Pinatubo	4 – Known for AD 79 eruption that destroyed Pompeii.

Options:
(A) a-4, b-2, c-3, d-1
(B) a-1, b-3, c-4, d-2
(C) a-3, b-4, c-1, d-2
(D) a-2, b-1, c-3, d-4

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: (a) Mount Vesuvius – 4
It is located in Italy and is famous for its AD 79 eruption, which buried the Roman cities Pompeii and Herculaneum.
(b) Mauna Loa – 2
It is a shield volcano in Hawaii and is one of the largest and most active volcanoes on Earth.
(c) Mount Etna – 3
Situated in Sicily (Italy), it is Europe's most active volcano.
(d) Mount Pinatubo – 1
Located in the Philippines, it erupted massively in 1991, affecting global temperatures.

27. Match the Following: Dams and Their Rivers

Dam	River
(a) Kulekhani Dam	1 – Indravati River
(b) Rihand Dam	2 – Rihand River
(c) Upper Kol Dam	3 – Kulekhani River
(d) Balimela Dam	4 – Sileru River

Options:
(A) a-3, b-2, c-1, d-4
(B) a-1, b-4, c-2, d-3
(C) a-3, b-4, c-2, d-1
(D) a-2, b-3, c-4, d-1

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: (a) Kulekhani Dam → 3 – Kulekhani River
(b) Rihand Dam → 2 – Rihand River
(c) Upper Kol Dam → 1 – Indravati River
(d) Balimela Dam → 4 – Sileru River

28. Match the Following: Chemical Compounds and Their Uses

Chemical Compound	Usage / Application

(a) Sodium Borohydride ($NaBH_4$)	1 – Rocket fuel additive / high-energy propellant
(b) Nitroglycerin	2 – Reducing agent in organic synthesis
(c) Lithium Aluminium Hydride ($LiAlH_4$)	3 – Explosive in dynamites and detonators
(d) Hydrazine (N_2H_4)	4 – Strong reducing agent in laboratory reactions

Options:
(A) a-2, b-3, c-4, d-1
(B) a-4, b-3, c-2, d-1
(C) a-2, b-1, c-4, d-3
(D) a-3, b-2, c-1, d-4

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: (a) Sodium Borohydride → 2 – Reducing agent in organic synthesis
(b) Nitroglycerin → 3 – Explosive in dynamites and detonators
(c) Lithium Aluminium Hydride → 4 – Strong reducing agent in laboratory reactions
(d) Hydrazine → 1 – Rocket fuel additive / high-energy propellant

29. Match the following - Forests in India

Forest Region	Key Feature / Description
(a) Saranda Forest (Jharkhand)	1 – Asia's largest Sal forest
(b) Silent Valley (Kerala)	2 – Last remaining habitat of lion-tailed macaque
(c) Bhitarkanika (Odisha)	3 – India's second-largest mangrove ecosystem
(d) Dandakaranya (Chhattisgarh–Odisha region)	4 – Historically associated with tribal settlements in epics

Options:
(A) a-4, b-1, c-3, d-2
(B) a-3, b-2, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Simlipal National Park → 2: Tigers, elephants, and ironwood trees; a major tiger reserve in Odisha.

Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve → 4: Alpine meadows, high-altitude forests, and rare Himalayan flora.
Nokrek Biosphere Reserve → 1: Cloud forests with endemic citrus species in Meghalaya.
Dibru-Saikhowa → 3: Freshwater swamp forests in Assam with feral horses.

30. Match the Following – Valleys of India

Valley / Region	Unique Feature / Characteristic
(a) Spiti Valley (Himachal Pradesh)	1 – Cold desert valley, famous for monasteries and high-altitude landscapes
(b) Ziro Valley (Arunachal Pradesh)	2 – Rice terraces and Apatani tribal culture
(c) Nubra Valley (Ladakh, J&K)	3 – Confluence of Shyok and Nubra rivers; known for sand dunes and Bactrian camels
(d) Kullu Valley (Himachal Pradesh)	4 – Lush green valley along Beas River; famous for apple orchards and temples

Options
(A) a-4, b-3, c-2, d-1
(B) a-2, b-1, c-4, d-3
(C) a-3, b-4, c-1, d-2
(D) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4

Ans: **(D)**
Exp: Spiti Valley → 1: Cold desert in Himachal Pradesh; famous for Buddhist monasteries like Key Monastery and high-altitude terrain.
Ziro Valley → 2: Known for paddy terraces, dense forests, and Apatani tribal culture in Arunachal Pradesh.
Nubra Valley → 3: Formed by the confluence of Shyok and Nubra rivers; famous for sand dunes, Bactrian camels, and scenic landscapes.
Kullu Valley → 4: Along Beas River, lush green, known for apple orchards, temples, and adventure tourism.

31. Match the following -

Strait	Details
(a) Bab-el-Mandeb Strait	1- Separates Sumatra and Java, connects Java Sea with Indian Ocean

(b) Kerch Strait	2- Links the Black Sea and Sea of Azov, between Crimea and Russia
(c) Tsugaru Strait	3- Separates Honshu and Hokkaido in Japan
(d) Sunda Strait	4- Connects Red Sea to Gulf of Aden, between Yemen and Djibouti/Eritrea

Options:
(A) a-4, b-2, c-3, d-1
(B) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4
(C) a-4, b-1, c-2, d-3
(D) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Bab-el-Mandeb: Connects Red Sea to Gulf of Aden, between Yemen and Djibouti/Eritrea.
Kerch Strait: Connects Black Sea to Sea of Azov, between Crimea and Russia.
Tsugaru Strait: Lies between Honshu and Hokkaido, northern Japan.
Sunda Strait: Between Sumatra and Java, connects Java Sea to the Indian Ocean.

32. Match the following -

Product	State/Region
(a) Channapatna Toys	1- West Bengal
(b) Malabar Pepper	2- Karnataka
(c) Darjeeling Handicrafts	3- Kerala
(d) Santiniketan Leather Goods	4- West Bengal

Options:
(A) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(B) a-2, b-3, c-4, d-1
(C) a-2, b-3, c-4, d-4
(D) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
Ans: **(D)**
Channapatna Toys: Traditional wooden toys and dolls from Karnataka.
Malabar Pepper: Premium black pepper from Kerala, exported worldwide.
Darjeeling Handicrafts: Includes various craft items from Darjeeling, West Bengal.
Santiniketan Leather Goods: Handicrafts made in Santiniketan, West Bengal, known for quality and design.

34. Match the following -

Dance Form	State
(a) Sattriya	1- Manipur
(b) Chhau	2- Assam
(c) Ghumura	3- Odisha
(d) Yakshagana	4- Karnataka

Options:
(A) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(B) a-2, b-1, c-3, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-3, b-4, c-2, d-1
Ans: **(B)**
Exp: Sattriya is a classical dance from Assam.
Chhau is performed in Odisha, Jharkhand, and West Bengal; here Odisha is used.
Ghumura is a traditional folk dance of Kalahandi, Odisha.
Yakshagana is a dance-drama form from Karnataka.

35. Match the following -

Physics Law / Principle	Description / Area
(a) Stefan-Boltzmann Law	1- Relation between pressure and volume of gases
(b) Joule-Thomson Effect	2- Thermal radiation and total energy emitted
(c) Poiseuille's Law	3- Flow of viscous fluid through a pipe
(d) Boyle's Law	4- Temperature change during gas expansion/compression

Options:
(A) a-2, b-4, c-3, d-1
(B) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4
(C) a-4, b-3, c-1, d-2
(D) a-2, b-3, c-4, d-1
Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Stefan-Boltzmann Law: Total energy radiated by a black body is proportional to the fourth power of its temperature.
Joule-Thomson Effect: Temperature change occurs when a gas expands or is compressed without heat exchange.
Poiseuille's Law: Describes the flow rate of viscous fluids through a pipe.
Boyle's Law: Pressure of a gas is inversely proportional to its volume at constant temperature.

35. Match the Following: Organic Chemical Compounds and Their Uses

Organic Compound	Use / Application
(a) Ethanol	1 – Used as an antiseptic and disinfectant
(b) Acetic acid	2 – Used in food preservation (pickling)
(c) Methanol	3 – Used as an industrial solvent and antifreeze
(d) Urea	4 – Used as a nitrogen-rich fertilizer

Options:
(A) a-1, b-3, c-4, d-2
(B) a-2, b-1, c-3, d-4
(C) a-1, b-4, c-2, d-3
(D) a-3, b-2, c-1, d-4

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: (a) Ethanol → 1 (Used as an antiseptic and disinfectant)
(b) Acetic acid → 3 (Used as an industrial solvent and antifreeze)
(c) Methanol → 4 (Used as a nitrogen-rich fertilizer)
(d) Urea → 2 (Used in food preservation/pickling)

36. Match the Following: Diseases and Their Vaccines

Disease	Vaccine Name
(a) Measles	1 – RotaTeq
(b) Hepatitis B	2 – MMR
(c) Rotavirus infection	3 – Varivax
(d) Chickenpox	4 – Engerix-B

Options:
(A) a-3, b-1, c-4, d-2
(B) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4
(C) a-2, b-4, c-1, d-3
(D) a-2, b-3, c-4, d-1

Ans: **(C)**

Exp: (a) Measles → 2 (MMR Vaccine)
Explanation:
The MMR vaccine protects against Measles, Mumps, and Rubella. It is the globally recommended vaccine for measles control and is part of routine childhood immunization programmes.
(b) Hepatitis B → 4 (Engerix-B)
Explanation:
Engerix-B is a widely used vaccine that provides immunity against Hepatitis B virus. It contains

recombinant HBsAg antigen and is given in multiple doses to ensure long-term protection.
(c) Rotavirus Infection → 1 (RotaTeq)
Explanation:
RotaTeq is an oral vaccine that prevents rotavirus-induced diarrhoea, which is a major cause of dehydration in infants and children. It is part of many national immunization programmes.
(d) Chickenpox → 3 (Varivax)
Explanation:
Varivax is a vaccine that protects against Varicella-zoster virus, which causes chickenpox. It is given to children and adults who are not immune to prevent severe disease and complications.

37. Match the Following: Women Freedom Fighters & Their Contributions

(a) Rani Gaidinliu	1 – Led the Abor Rebellion against British rule
(b) Bhikaji Cama	2 – Hoisted the first version of India's national flag in Europe
(c) Matangini Hazra	3 – Led the Naga spiritual resistance movement against British rule
(d) Rani Rupa Devi (Assam)	4 – Martyred during Quit India Movement while leading a procession

Options:
(A) a-3, b-2, c-4, d-1
(B) a-2, b-4, c-3, d-1
(C) a-4, b-3, c-1, d-2
(D) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: Rani Gaidinliu led the Heraka/Naga resistance → 3
Bhikaji Cama unfurled the first Indian flag in Stuttgart, Germany (1907) → 2
Matangini Hazra was shot while leading a procession during Quit India Movement (1942) → 4
Rani Rupa Devi played a key role in the Abor Rebellion (Assam region) → 1

38. Match the following: Bharat Ratna Awardees and the Year

(a) Mother Teresa	1 – 1980
(b) Lata Mangeshkar	2 – 2001

| (c) Atal Bihari Vajpayee | 3 – 2015 |
| (d) C. N. R. Rao | 4 – 2014 |

Options:
(A) a-2, b-4, c-1, d-3
(B) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(C) a-3, b-1, c-2, d-4
(D) a-4, b-3, c-1, d-2

Ans: **(B)**
Exp: Mother Teresa → 1980 (1)
Lata Mangeshkar → 2001 (2)
C. N. R. Rao → 2014 (4)
Atal Bihari Vajpayee → 2015 (3)

39. Match the following articles of Part XXI -
(a) Article 371 A   1-
Special provision with respect to the State of Nagaland.
(b) Article 371 B   2-
Special provision with respect to the State of Manipur.
(c) Article 371 C   3-
Special provision with respect to the State of Assam.
(d) Article 371 D   4-
Special provisions with respect to the State of Andhra Pradesh and the State of Telangana.
Options-
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: **(D)**
Exp: Article 371 A - Special provision with respect to the State of Nagaland.
Article 371 B - Special provision with respect to the State of Assam .
Article 371 C - Special provision with respect to the State of Manipur.
Article 371 D - Special provisions with respect to the State of Andhra Pradesh and the State of Telangana.

40. Match the Following: Inflation Types and Definitions -

Types of Inflation	Definitions
1. Demand-pull Inflation	a. Rise in prices due to increased production costs
2. Cost-push Inflation	b. Extremely high and accelerating price levels
3. Hyperinflation	c. Sustained increase in general price levels
4. Core Inflation	d. Excludes volatile items like food and energy
5. General Inflation	e. Rise in prices due to excessive demand

Options:
(A) 1-e, 2-a, 3-b, 4-d, 5-c
(B) 1-a, 2-e, 3-d, 4-b, 5-c
(C) 1-e, 2-d, 3-a, 4-c, 5-b
(D) 1-a, 2-b, 3-e, 4-c, 5-d

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Demand-pull Inflation: Prices rise due to high demand exceeding supply (e).
Cost-push Inflation: Prices increase because of higher production costs (a).
Hyperinflation: Extremely high and uncontrolled price levels (b).
Core Inflation: Inflation excluding volatile items like food and energy (d).
General Inflation: Overall increase in price levels in the economy (c).

41. Match the following aspects related to the United States with their correct descriptions -

Column A	Column B
1. Louisiana Purchase	a. The first ten amendments to the US Constitution
2. Manhattan Project	b. Acquisition of territory from France in 1803
3. Emancipation Proclamation	c. Secret World War II project for atomic bombs
4. Bill of Rights	d. Abolishment of slavery in Confederate states
5. Missouri Compromise	e. Agreement balancing free and slave states in 1820

Options:
(A) 1-b, 2-c, 3-d, 4-a, 5-e
(B) 1-d, 2-b, 3-c, 4-a, 5-e
(C) 1-e, 2-c, 3-b, 4-a, 5-d
(D) 1-b, 2-e, 3-d, 4-c, 5-a

Ans: **(A)**
Exp: Louisiana Purchase refers to the acquisition of territory from France in 1803.
Manhattan Project was a secret WWII initiative to develop atomic bombs.
Emancipation Proclamation declared the abolishment of slavery in Confederate states.
Bill of Rights comprises the first ten amendments to the US Constitution.
Missouri Compromise was an agreement in 1820 to balance free and slave states.

42. Match the following -

Column A	Column B
1. Young India	a. Jawaharlal Nehru
2. The Hindu	b. Subhas Chandra Bose
3. Harijan	c. B.G. Tilak
4. The Quest	d. Mahatma Gandhi
5. Forward	

e. C. Rajagopalachari

Options:
(A) 1-d, 2-c, 3-b, 4-a, 5-e
(B) 1-d, 2-c, 3-a, 4-b, 5-e
(C) 1-b, 2-c, 3-d, 4-e, 5-a
(D) 1-d, 2-e, 3-c, 4-b, 5-a

Ans: **(D)**

Exp: Young India was launched by Mahatma Gandhi as a journal for spreading his ideas.

The Hindu was associated with C. Rajagopalachari, a prominent leader who contributed significantly to Indian journalism.

Harijan was a journal founded by B.G. Tilak, aimed at uplifting the untouchables.

The Quest was started by Subhas Chandra Bose as a periodical for revolutionary ideas.

Forward was launched by Jawaharlal Nehru to represent progressive views.

43. Match the following Folk Dances of India -

(a) Assam	1- Bagurumba
(b) Bihar	2- Panwariya
(c) Gujarat	3- Gugga
(d) Haryana	4- Bhavai

Options-
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: **(C)**

Exp: Assam – Bagurumba
Bihar – Panwariya
Gujarat – Bhavai
Haryana – Gugga

44. Match the following Bird Sanctuary of India -

(a) Haryana	1- Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary
(b) Karnataka	2- Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary
(c) Maharashtra	3- Mayani Bird Sanctuary

Options
(A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: Haryana - Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary
Karnataka - Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary
Maharashtra - Mayani Bird Sanctuary

45. Match the following cities on river banks -

(a) Kurnool	1- Tungabhadra
(b) Cuttack	2- Mahanadi
(c) Dibrugarh	3- Satluj
(d) Ferozpur	4- Brahmaputra

Options-
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: **(C)**

Exp: Kurnool - Tungabhadra
Cuttack - Mahanadi
Dibrugarh - Brahmaputra
Ferozpur - Satluj

46. Match the following Biosphere Reserves in India -

(a) Simlipal Biosphere Reserve	1- Odisha
(b) Achanakmar - Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve	2- Chhattisgarh
(c) Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve	3- Kerala and Tamil Nadu

Options
(A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: **(A)**

Exp: Simlipal Biosphere Reserve - Odisha
Achanakmar - Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve - Chhattisgarh
Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve - Kerala and Tamil Nadu

47. Match the following -

Provision	Details
(A) Normal Fault	1- Caused by tensional forces; hanging wall moves down
(B) Reverse Fault	2- Caused by compressional forces; hanging wall moves up
(C) Strike-Slip Fault	3- Horizontal movement along the fault plane

(D) Thrust Fault	4- Low-angle reverse fault

Options:
(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-3, b-1, c-4, d-2
(D) a-4, b-2, c-3, d-1

Ans: (A)

Exp: (A) Normal Fault: Formed by tensional forces, where the crust is stretched, and the hanging wall moves downward relative to the footwall.
(B) Reverse Fault: Occurs due to compressional forces that push the crust together, causing the hanging wall to move upward.
(C) Strike-Slip Fault: Characterized by horizontal displacement, typically seen in regions with lateral shearing forces.
(D) Thrust Fault: A type of reverse fault with a low-angle fault plane, often associated with mountain-building processes.

48. Match the following -

Provision	Details
(A) Article 324	1- Power to supervise elections to Parliament, State Legislatures, and local bodies
(B) Article 325	2- Provides for uniformity in voter eligibility
(C) Article 326	3- Provides for direct elections to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies
(D) Article 327	4- Empowers Parliament to make laws on the conduct of elections

Options:
(A) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4
(B) a-4, b-1, c-3, d-2
(C) a-2, b-4, c-1, d-3
(D) a-3, b-2, c-4, d-1

Ans: (A)

Exp: Article 324 (a-1): Gives the Election Commission the power to supervise elections to Parliament, State Legislatures, and local bodies.
Article 325 (b-3): Ensures uniformity in voter eligibility, stating that there should be no discrimination in voting rights based on religion, race, caste, or any other factors.
Article 326 (c-2): Provides for direct elections to the Lok Sabha (House of the People) and State Legislative Assemblies, ensuring that elections are held on the basis of adult suffrage.
Article 327 (d-4): Empowers Parliament to make laws concerning the conduct of elections, ensuring

that election laws are in place for proper functioning.

49. Match the following on Proteins:

Protein	Function/Characteristic
(A) Hemoglobin	1- Oxygen transport in the blood
(B) Insulin	2- Regulation of blood sugar levels
(C) Keratin	3- Structural protein in hair and nails
(D) Immunoglobulins	4- Defense against pathogens

Options:
(A) a-1, b-3, c-4, d-2
(B) a-4, b-2, c-1, d-3
(C) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4
(D) a-3, b-4, c-2, d-1

Ans: (A)

Exp: Hemoglobin: Facilitates oxygen transport in the blood.
Insulin: Regulates blood sugar levels.
Keratin: Provides structural support in hair and nails.
Immunoglobulins: Serve as antibodies defending against pathogens.

50. Match the following -

Prime Minister	Term
(A) Indira Gandhi	1- 1971 to 1977
(B) Morarji Desai	2- 1977 to 1979
(C) Charan Singh	3- 1979 to 1980
(D) Rajiv Gandhi	4- 1984 to 1989

Options:
(A) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4
(B) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(C) a-4, b-1, c-3, d-2
(D) a-2, b-4, c-1, d-3

Ans: (A)

Exp: Indira Gandhi: Held the Prime Minister's office from 1971 to 1977.
Morarji Desai: Served from 1977 to 1979 as India's first non-Congress PM.
Charan Singh: Briefly held office from 1979 to 1980.
Rajiv Gandhi: Served as Prime Minister from 1984 to 1989 after Indira Gandhi's assassination.

Quick Bytes

- India ranks 8th in debut World Skills Asia, earning 1 Silver, 2 Bronze and 3 Medallions for Excellence.
- Dr. Kenichi Iga honoured for pioneering development and practical application of Vertical-Cavity Surface-Emitting Laser (VCSEL).
- Hansa-3 NG Trainer Aircraft Unveiled & SARAS Mk-2 Aircraft Reviewed
- RITES Wins CEAI Award for USBRL Engineering Innovation
- Vice Adm. Sanjay Sadhu Assumes Charge as CWP&A
- SIM-Linking Now Mandatory for Messaging Apps: DoT Tightens Cybersecurity Norms
- India Re-Elected to IMO Council with Highest Votes
- India and ADB Seal $800 Million Loan Deal to Power Various Projects
- Crisil Revises India's FY26 GDP Growth Forecast to 7%
- Paschal Donohoe Appointed MD and CKO of the World Bank Group
- Indian Navy Receives 'Taragiri': Fourth Nilgiri-Class (Project 17A) Stealth Frigate
- Vice Admiral Sanjay Sadhu Assumes Charge as Controller of Warship Production & Acquisition
- Andre Russell Retires from IPL, Joins KKR Support Staff
- Virat Kohli Surpasses Sachin Tendulkar With Record-Breaking 52nd ODI Century
- Oscar-Winning British Playwright Tom Stoppard Dies at 88
- Andhra Pradesh Renames Raj Bhavan as Lok Bhavan
- Aparna Garg Assumes Charge as Railway Board Member (Finance)
- India–Maldives Joint Exercise 'Ekuverin' Begins in Kerala
- India to Chair International IDEA for the First Time
- R. Chander Takes Over as LIC Managing Director
- Former England Cricketer Robin Smith Passes Away at 62
- Lok Sabha Passes Central Excise (Amendment) Bill 2025

- Government Withdraws Mandatory Pre-Installation of Sanchar Saathi App
- Bharat Taxi, a driver-owned cooperative ride-hailing platform, has launched pilot operations in Delhi and Gujarat under the Sahakar Se Samriddhi initiative.
- Haryana's Lado Lakshmi Yojana to Offer Financial Aid Quarterly from December 2025
- SEBI Launches SWAGAT-FI to Simplify Access for Low-Risk Foreign Investors in India
- India's Insolvency Regime Upgraded to Group B by S&P
- Brendan Nelson Appointed Chairman of HSBC, Succeeding Mark Tucker
- RBI Approves Vikram Sahu as CEO of Bank of America India for Three-Year Term
- Jeyandran Venugopal Appointed as President & CEO of Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd
- Armand Duplantis and Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone Named World Athletes of the Year 2025
- MEITY & MEA Enable Paperless Passport Verification via DigiLocker
- Australia's Victoria University to Open First India Campus in Gurugram by 2026
- Asim Munir Formally Appointed Pakistan's First Chief of Defence Forces
- Fitch Ups India's FY26 Growth Forecast to 7.4% Amid Strong Consumer Demand
- Sunil Narine Makes T20 History With 600-Wicket Milestone
- Swaraj Kaushal, Former Mizoram Governor Passes Away at 73
- Veteran Producer AVM Saravanan Passes Away
- Dr. Shardul S. Shroff Wins ACES 2025 Lifetime Honour
- Prateek Madhav Wins National Individual Excellence Award
- Netflix to Acquire Warner Bros Discovery Studios and Streaming Business for $72 Billion
- RBI Raises India's FY26 GDP Growth Forecast to 7.3%
- Dr Renuka Iyer Appointed Chief Medical Officer of NCCN
- Roman Gofman Appointed as Next Mossad Chief

- Cristiano Ronaldo Joins Perplexity AI as Investor and Brand Ambassador
- Microsoft Store Awards 2025: ChatGPT, Perplexity, Notion Among Top App Winners
- Donald Trump Awarded First FIFA Peace Prize at 2026 World Cup Draw Ceremony
- India–Malaysia Launch 5th Edition of Exercise Harimau Shakti in Rajasthan
- Simone Tata: The Visionary Behind Lakmé and Westside Passes Away at 95
- India Opens World's Highest War Memorial at Galwan
- Rajasthan Becomes First to Fully Digitise Voter Rolls
- Mission Watershed PUNARUTTHAN Launched in Nagaland
- Tata Electronics and Intel Sign MoU to Explore Chip Manufacturing and Packaging in India
- Anant Ambani Becomes Youngest Recipient of Global Humane Society's Animal Welfare Award
- Tata–Lockheed Martin to Build New MRO Facility for C-130J Super Hercules in India
- Veteran Bengali Actor Kalyan Chatterjee Passes Away at 81
- Veteran Social Activist Baba Adhav Passes Away at 95
- Right to Disconnect Bill 2025 Introduced in Parliament: A Step Towards Work-Life Balance
- DHRUVA: India's Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address Launched
- Rohit Sharma Became 4th Indian To Enter 20000 Runs Scored Club
- Lando Norris Wins 2025 Formula 1 World Championship in Dramatic Abu Dhabi Finale
- Frank Gehry, Iconic Architect Behind Guggenheim Bilbao, Dies at 96
- Dr. Renuka Iyer Appointed CMO of National Comprehensive Cancer Network
- Fino Becomes First Payments Bank to Get SFB Approval
- Deepavali Enters UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List, Boosting India's Global Presence
- Lithuania Declares State of Emergency Over Balloon Incursions From Belarus
- Andrej Babis Sworn In as Czech Republic's New Prime Minister

- Indian-Origin Neal Mohan Named TIME's 2025 CEO of the Year
- A'ja Wilson Named TIME's 2025 Athlete of the Year
- Leonardo DiCaprio Named TIME's 2025 Entertainer of the Year
- Indian-Origin Arkin Gupta Named in Forbes Under-30 List for Financial Innovation
- Jasprit Bumrah made history on 9 December 2025 by becoming the first Indian bowler to claim 100 wickets in all three formats—Tests, ODIs, and T20Is—reaching the milestone during the 1st T20I vs South Africa in Cuttack.
- India to Host 1st Commonwealth Kho Kho Championship (2026)
- BMW Names Milan Nedeljković as New CEO
- Author Sophie Kinsella Passes Away at 55
- Kohli Climbs to No.2 in ODI Rankings, Rohit Sharms Retains Top Spot
- Cipla Launches Tirzepatide-Based Obesity & Diabetes Drug
- Sujalam Bharat App for Real-Time Rural Water Data
- IOA & Italy's Italian National Olympic Committee signed an MoU to enhance bilateral sports cooperation with emphasis on training, infrastructure access & sports science.
- Amul Extends Sponsorship with Argentina Football Team
- Veteran Socialist Leader Baba Adhav Passes Away at 95
- Plan for Conducting Census of India 2027 Approved By Union Cabinet
- Cabinet Nod to Atomic Energy Bill Unlocks Opportunities for Private Nuclear Projects
- Insurance Amendment Bill 2025: Cabinet Approves 100% FDI in Indian Insurance Firms
- PNB Housing Finance Appoints Ajai Kumar Shukla as New MD & CEO
- MSME Ministry Signs MoU with Amazon For Vishwakarma Artisans
- Department of Posts and BSE Sign MoU to Expand Mutual Fund Access Across India
- Sikkim Opens Cho La & Dok La for Border Tourism
- Maharashtra Launches a Project Mahadev for Football Talent
- Innoviti Wins Hurun Future Unicorn SaaS Award

- Raj Kumar Goyal Sworn in as Chief Information Commissioner
- C-DOT Wins IEEE SA Corporate Award 2025
- Former MP Ram Vilas Das Vedanti Passes Away
- India Wins Historic WSF Squash World Cup 2025
- National Makhana Board Launched with ₹476 Cr Development Scheme
- Google's Project Suncatcher to Build Solar AI Data Centres in Space
- Cabinet Clears Insurance Amendment Bill Allowing 100% FDI
- ˜Ponduru Khadiâ Awarded Geographical Indication (GI) Tag
- Right-Wing Leader José Antonio Kast Becomes Chile's President
- Google Launches Its First-Ever Credit Card in India on RuPay
- Government Extends Tenure of SBI MD Ashwini Kumar Tewari by Two Years
- PM Modi Becomes First World Leader to Receive Ethiopia's Top Award
- India's Homebound Enters Oscar 2026 Shortlist for Best International Feature
- Italy Becomes First Country to Get UNESCO Recognition for Its National Cuisine
- Ravi Ranjan Takes Charge As SBI New Managing Director (MD)
- HDFC Bank Gets RBI Nod to Acquire Up to 9.5% Stake in IndusInd Bank
- Ex-Justice Secretary Raj Kumar Goyal Appointed Chief Information Commissioner
- B. Sairam Appointed Chairman-cum-Managing Director of Coal India
- Suresh Goyal Appointed as NCAER Director General
- Miyana Railway Station Receives National Energy Conservation Award 2025
- India and Brazil Sign Tripartite MoU on Maintenance of Scorpene Submarines
- Shafali Verma Wins ICC Women's Player of the Month for November
- Simon Harmer Named ICC Men's Player of the Month for November 2025
- India Launches Its First 1.0 GHz, 64-bit Dual-Core Indigenous Microprocessor DHRUV64'
- India and Saudi Arabia Sign Visa Waiver Agreement to Facilitate Official Travel
- Air India Bags Best Domestic Airline Title at Travel + Leisure Awards 2025
- Singapore Changi Airport Wins World's Best Airport Title 2025
- José Antonio Kast Elected President of Chile
- Nvidia Tops Hurun Global 1000 as World's Most Valuable Company
- Viksit Bharat G RAM G Bill Passed in Lok Sabha
- Parliament Passes SHANTI Bill, AERB Gets Statutory Status
- India to Get Its First Forest University in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh
- Jharkhand Clears Landmark Law for Gig Workers Welfare
- India & Oman CEPA Signed to Boost Trade and Investment
- Brazil Hands Over BRICS Presidency to India
- Shashwat Sharma Appointed As MD & CEO of Airtel India
- Exercise Desert Cyclone II Begins: India&U.A.E. Joint Military Exercise
- Deepinder Goyal Tops Hurun Rich List 2025 for India's Self-Made Entrepreneurs
- Jharkhand Clinched The Maiden Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy 2025
- India&UAE Joint Military Exercise Desert Cyclone
- India and Oman signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement in Muscat during PM Narendra Modi's visit to deepen trade, investment and services cooperation.
- Indian Navy Commissions INAS 335 MH-60R Squadron
- Veteran War Correspondent Peter Arnett Dies at 91
- Statue of Unity Sculptor Ram Vanji Sutar Dies at 100
- India and the Netherlands Set Up Joint Trade and Investment Committee (JTIC)
- Operation Hawkeye: US and Jordan Strike ISIS Sites in Syria
- RBI Slaps ₹62 Lakh Penalty on Kotak Mahindra Bank
- Scottish artist Nnena Kalu has become the first artist with a learning disability to win the prestigious Turner Prize, making history in British art.

- PGIMER Chandigarh Retains Top Spot as India's Best Health Technology Assessment Institute
- Michaela Benthaus to Make History as First Wheelchair User in Space
- RITES Ltd. Signs MoU with Botswana for Transport Modernisation
- PM Inaugurates First Global Aircraft Engine MRO Facility in Hyderabad
- World Bank Approves $776 Million for Reforms in Punjab and Maharashtra
- MapmyIndia Partners with Zoho CRM to Power India's First Indigenous Location Intelligence
- PUMA Appoints Ramprasad Sridharan as New Managing Director for India
- CEC Gyanesh Kumar to Chair International IDEA in 2026
- Javokhir Sindarov Crowned 2025 FIDE World Cup Champion
- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Bust Unveiled at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on Constitution Day
- Assam Passes Strict Anti Polygamy Bill, 2025 â€" Major Legal Shift in Marriage Laws
- Jakarta Becomes World's Most Populous City, Surpassing Tokyo: UN Report 2025
- Asian Paints Becomes Team India's Official Colour Partner in 3-Year BCCI Deal
- Camikara Becomes First Indian Rum to Win â€˜Global Brand of the Year
- India's Economy to Grow at 6.6% in 2025-26, Says IMF
- CBDT Unveils 'NUDGE' Campaign: A Push for Voluntary Tax Compliance
- Government Approves Tex-RAMPS to Boost Innovation & Data in India's Textile Sector
- 10-Year-Old Giovanna de Sequeira Wins Bronze for India at World Jiu-Jitsu Championship
- Indian Scientists Develop â€˜OncoMark' AI Framework for Personalised Cancer Therapy
- PM Modi Unveils 77 FT Statue Of Rama & Inaugurates Ramayana Theme Park in Goa
- Operation Sagar Bandhu — India's Aid Mission to Sri Lanka After Cyclone Ditwah

- India to Lead Emerging Market Growth with 7% GDP Rise in 2025: Moody's
- Sipan Garg Takes Additional Charge as CMD of THDC India Ltd
- Temasek Appoints Former DBS CEO Piyush Gupta as India Chairman
- Jay Shah Honoured with "Indian of the Year 2025"
- India Signs ₹7,900 Crore Deal with US for MH-60R Navy Helicopter Support

Kisan Diwas

IMPORTANCE
To mark the birth anniversary of Chaudharicharan singh on 23 Dec 1902, Who was the 5th PM of India.

INCEPTION: 2001
EDITION: 24th

MOTTO
To improve the lives of the Indian farmers.

FACT
Chaudhary Charan Singh never visited the Lok Sabha.

OTHER WORLD WIDE CELEBRATIONS
Ghana: 1st Friday of Dec.
Pakistan: 18 Dec
USA: 12 Oct
Zambia: 1st Monday of Aug

23 DECEMBER

Infographics

Sudan Has by Far the Most Internally Displaced Persons

Countries with the largest estimated number of internally displaced persons in 2024, by reason (in million)

Country	Value
Sudan	11.8
Syria	7.4
Colombia	7.4
Dem. Rep. Congo	7.0
Yemen	5.3
Afghanistan	5.2
Nigeria	4.6
Myanmar	4.0
Ukraine	3.7

■ Conflict and violence
■ Natural disasters
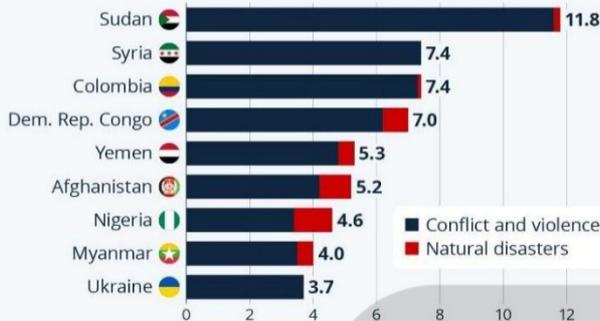
As of December 2024
Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Center

Refugees Hotspots Around The World

Number of refugees registered with UNHCR in selected refugee camps/regions as of November 2025

■ Bangladesh ■ Chad ■ Ethiopia ■ Kenya ■ Palestine ■ Sudan ■ Uganda

- Gaza strip refugee camps*
- Cox's Bazar refugee camps**
- Gambella refugee camps*
- Dadaab refugee complex
- White Nile refugee camps*
- Melkadida refugee camps*
- Kakuma refugee camp
- Nakivale refugee settlement
- Adre refugee camp

(0, 200K, 400K, 600K, 800K, 1.0M, 1.2M, 1.4M, 1.6M)
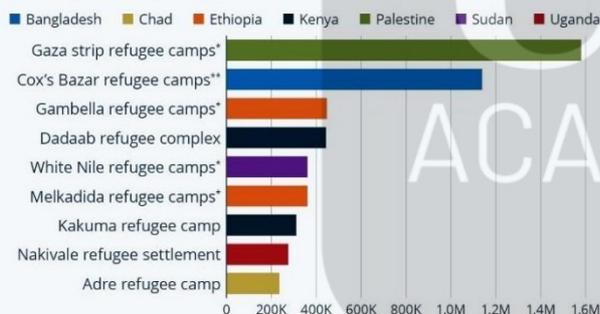
* Gaza: 6 camps (refugees registered with UNRWA), White Nile: 10 camps, Melkadida & Gambella districts: 6 & 7 camps
** Cox's Bazar: 33 camps (each between 10k-66k people) spread across the city's district
Sources: UNHCR, UNRWA

The Countries With the Best Healthcare Coverage

UHC service coverage index in 2023, by country (100=best possible score)*

Country	Score
Canada	92
Iceland	90
Norway	89
New Zealand	89
Australia	89
South Korea	88
Singapore	88
United Kingdom	88
United States	88

Where China Has the Biggest Trade Surpluses and Deficits

Countries/regional economies with the biggest trade surpluses/deficits with China in October 2025

Imports from China surpassing exports to China by ...

Country	Value
Hong Kong	$27.3B
United States	$24.8B
India	$8.6B
Vietnam	$7.1B
Mexico	$5.7B

Exports to China surpassing imports from China by ...

Country	Value
Taiwan	$13.1B
South Korea	$5.5B
Brazil	$4.5B
Australia	$3.5B
Russia	$2.5B

Source: China Customs Administration

The world's leading tourism growth cities

Change in the number of flight bookings in 2024 compared to 2019

Americas
- 141% San Salvador
- 40% Punta Cana
- 12% Cancun

MENA
- 85% Riyadh
- 65% Abu Dhabi
- 61% Jedda
- 17% Cairo
- 11% Dubai

Europe
- 165% Tirana
- 56% Anatalya
- 24% Athens
- 9% Paris

Asia
- 70% Fukuoka
- 32% Tokyo
- 22% Osaka
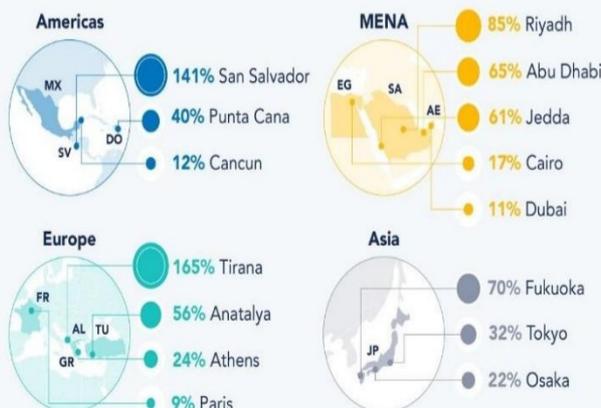
Note: Cities depicted represent the top 15 growth cities in terms of net passenger growth from 2019 to 2024
Source: OAG, Mastercard Economics Institute

India's Aircraft Fleet Is Expanding Rapidly

Airlines that ordered the most commercial jets from Boeing and Airbus in 2023 and 2024

Airline	Jets ordered
Air India	570
IndiGo	540
American Airlines	170
Emirates	166
Southwest Airlines	156
Ryanair	150
Pegasus	136

How Are Airlines Staffed Relative to Their Fleet Size?

Number of pilots/co-pilots employed and number of aircrafts in service for selected major airlines

- Pilots employed
- Aircrafts in service
- Average number of pilots per aircraft in service

Airline	Average number of pilots per aircraft
IndiGo	14
Air India Express	15
United Airlines	18
China Southern Airlines	18
Delta Air Lines	19
Lufthansa	20
Ryanair	21
Air France	22
Air India	36

0 1,000   5,000   10,000   15,000   20,000
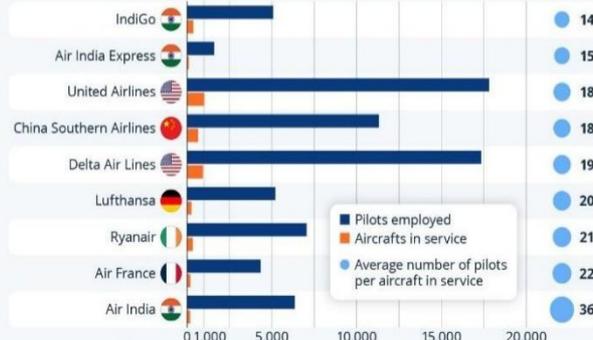
Venezuela Sits on a Fifth of the World's Oil

Countries with the largest proven crude oil reserves in 2024 (in billion barrels)

Share of global reserves (in percent)

	VE	SA	IR	IQ	AE	KW	RU	LY	US
Share of global reserves (%)	19.4	17.1	13.3	9.3	7.2	6.5	5.1	3.1	2.9
Billion barrels	303	267	209	145	113	102	80	48	45
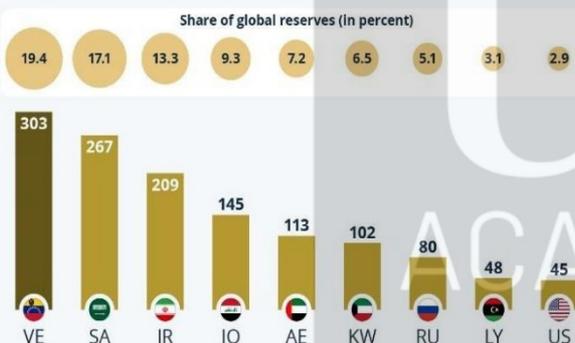
Who's Glued to the TV?

Share of respondents who watch TV* for at least 11 hours per week in selected countries (in percent)

Country	Percent
United Kingdom	32
France	29
Germany	28
United States	23
South Korea	23
South Africa	23
Brazil	21
China	16

Warner Deal Supercharges Netflix's Content Library

Selected TV/movie franchises owned by Netflix and Warner Bros. Discovery

NETFLIX
- Stranger Things
- Squid Game
- KPop Demon Hunters
- The Witcher
- Bridgerton
- The Crown
- Adolescence
- Money Heist
- Orange Is the New Black
- Wednesday
- House of Cards
- The Diplomat
- Monster

WARNER BROS. DISCOVERY
- Harry Potter
- The Lord of the Rings
- Game of Thrones
- The Sopranos
- DC Universe
- The Big Bang Theory
- Friends
- The Wire
- Casablanca
- The Wizard of Oz
- Looney Tunes
- Scooby-Doo
- Tom and Jerry

The World's Leading AI Investment Hubs

Cities/regions where AI companies received more than 10 percent of local VC funding in 2023 and 2024

Rank	City/Region	Percent
1	Beijing	66.2%
2	Silicon Valley	62.4%
3	Toronto-Waterloo	50.3%
4	Paris	43.2%
5	Shanghai	21.5%
6	Singapore	17.1%
7	Tokyo	16.2%
8	Amsterdam Delta	15.6%
9	Seattle	14.8%
10	New York City	14.2%
11	Washington DC	13.4%
12	Boston	11.6%
13	Atlanta	10.5%
14	Bangalore-Karnataka	10.1%

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2026 TO EVERYONE

2026

January

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December

su	mo	tu	we	th	fr	sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Monthly CURRENT AFFAIRS

BY- UC ACADEMY

Keeping up with current affairs is vital for success in both academics and professional life. It broadens understanding, sharpens analytical skills, and offers a competitive edge in exams and interviews. Staying aware of global developments reflects curiosity and adaptability, while also fostering personal growth, confidence, and fresh opportunities. Individuals who remain informed are better equipped to comprehend the world around them and contribute positively to society.