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C.P. Radhakrishnan elected Vice-President



Maharashtra Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan was elected the 17th Vice-President of India on Tuesday by a margin of 152 votes. The Opposition fell short of its own expected tally, even as 98.2% of the total electorate, comprising members of both Houses of Parliament, cast their ballot. Mr. Radhakrishnan — the ruling National Democratic Alliance's nominee — got 452 first preferential votes against the joint Opposition candidate Justice B. Sudershan Reddy, who got 300 votes. Fifteen votes were found to be invalid and 14 MPs abstained.

It was a telling remark that reflected Mr. Radhakrishnan's image within his party of an affable organisation man who had steered the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the Bharatiya Janata Party through the ideologically challenging terrain in Tamil Nadu. Untainted by corruption and having remained above petty organisational politics, Mr. Radhakrishnan is seen as someone who can steer the Rajya Sabha with a similar reach across both sides of the aisle. Despite the fact that there was no whip in the Vice-Presidential polls, the Opposition managed to get all its members to cast their ballot. The vice-president is the second highest constitutional office in the country, and also the chairperson of the upper house of parliament, known as the Rajya Sabha. The VP also acts as the acting President if the position becomes vacant during the term.



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Goods movement affected as Manipur's Naga council imposes 'trade embargo'

- The United Naga Council (UNC), the apex body of Nagas in Manipur, imposed a "trade embargo" from midnight on Monday, affecting movement of goods-carrying vehicles in Naga-dominated hilly areas of Manipur.
- While shops and business establishments were exempt, trucks and non-passenger commercial vehicles were stranded on major roads, especially National Highway 2 in Naga-inhabited regions.

Reason for Embargo

- The embargo is the UNC's first step of non-cooperation against the government's decision to fence the 1,643-km India-Myanmar border and scrap the Free Movement Regime (FMR).
- The UNC asserts that the fencing will cut familial ties between Nagas living on both sides of the border.

Free Movement Regime (FMR)

- FMR previously allowed cross-border movement of local residents along the International Boundary without travel documents, up to 10 km from the border, except for a small stretch in Manipur.
- The UNC and the Naga community demand free and informed consent for any project affecting their homeland's status.

Wider Unrest

- The Thadou Kuki-dominated Sadar Hills area's Naga Students' Association demanded action after extremists intercepted and seized trucks in Ukhrul district, showing wider community reactions linked to the embargo.
- Meetings between UNC leaders and government officials were held in late August, but issues remain unresolved.

Poor NARI ranking exposes women safety gaps in Delhi

NARI Report Findings

- Thirteen years after the 2012 bus gang rape incident, women in Delhi still face major safety gaps in public life, according to the National Annual Report & Index on Women's Safety (NARI) 2025.
- Delhi ranked 28th out of 31 cities nationwide, making it one of the worst-performing cities in terms of women's safety.
- The survey by the National Commission for Women (NCW) covered over 12,700 women.

Women-Friendly Infrastructure

- 31% of women in Delhi reported that women-friendly infrastructure is minimal or non-existent.
- Poorly lit streets, unsafe public transport, and lack of secure public spaces continue to be major concerns.

Daytime vs. Nighttime Safety

- Safety concerns intensify after dark: only 8% of women felt unsafe during the day, but this number jumped to 35% after dark.
- High rates of harassment were reported in public places in Delhi, compared to the national average.

Harassment and Repeated Incidents

- 61% of Delhi's women reported repeated harassment, particularly in isolated areas, during night travel, and in high-crime spots.
- Neighbourhood areas were frequently sites of harassment, indicating that proximity to home does not guarantee safety.

Recommended Solutions and Comparisons

- 51% of respondents demanded more policing, and 17% called for timely and proper police action.
- Cities with better rankings included Aizawl, Bhubaneswar, Gangtok, Itanagar, and Mumbai.
- The NARI report underscores the urgent need for improvements in women's safety infrastructure in Delhi.



What was the Harappan language? Culture Ministry to hold meet on script

- The Ministry of Culture is hosting an international conference in New Delhi from September 11 to 13 to discuss findings on attempts to decipher the Harappan script.
- The event will see participation from archaeologists, academics, an aerospace engineer, and a retired government official.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah are scheduled to attend the conference.
- The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) is organizing the event.

The Script's Mystery

- The Harappan script, discovered at Harappa and Mohenjo Daro in the 1920s, has remained undeciphered, with no credible breakthrough to date.
- Various theories exist about the script's underlying language: some claim it is Sanskrit, others say Dravidian or link it to tribal tongues such as Santali and Gondi.
- Software engineer Bahata Mukhopadhyay, with long-standing research in the field, asserts the script is not spelling-based but encodes rules and information, mainly about taxation and commerce.

Deciphering Challenges

- Deciphering becomes easier with bilingual seals, as seen with Brahmi, but such bilingual objects have not been found for the Harappan script.
- Karuna Shankar Shukla's findings suggest that Indus seals were used for commercial and religious purposes, and some seals bore the names of the Puranas.

Varied Research Approaches

- Retired engineer Prakash N Salame claims to have deciphered 90% of the symbols, using proto-Dravidian language models, with influence from earlier work by Dr. M K Kangali.
- Many conclusions are yet to be presented at the conference, reflecting diverse and, sometimes, conflicting interpretations of the script's origin and meaning.

Governors must act as true guides and philosophers to States, says CJI Gavai

Governors' Role According to CJI Gavai

- Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai emphasized that Governors should act as true guides and philosophers to State governments, advocating for a collaborative relationship between State and central constitutional authorities.
- The Chief Justice supported the Kerala government's view that effective cooperation between Governors and States is essential for smooth governance.

Issues Raised by State Governments

- Non-NDA ruled States like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Punjab, Telangana, and West Bengal have complained about Governors withholding assent for Bills, leading to delays in governance.
- Kerala specifically stated that eight Bills were pending with the Governor for between 7 and 23 months, affecting governance.

Debates on Governor's Powers and Function

- There is concern about Governors acting as adversaries to governments, essentially becoming a parallel authority instead of a constitutional guide.
- Lawyers argued Governors should not operate as parliamentary opposition but work for the welfare of the people by expeditiously considering Bills.

Judicial Perspective on Timelines

- Justice P.S. Narasimha noted that while courts can set deadlines, such orders may increase litigation without necessarily solving underlying issues.
- Suggestions were made to specify clear timelines for Governors to act on Bills, such as three to six months, to increase certainty in governance.
- Constitutional Interpretation and Advisory Jurisdiction
- The Supreme Court discussed weaving due process protections into Articles 200 and 201, potentially safeguarding fundamental rights from government abuse.
- The advisory jurisdiction of the Supreme Court under Article 143 was noted to have broader scope and was not restricted by separation of powers.

Final Observations

- The Supreme Court warned that delays by Governors, State legislatures, and Union governments can impact governance, stressing the need for collaborative and timely actions among all parties.



Centre grants licences to five firms to manufacture its first indigenous malaria vaccine

Indigenous Malaria Vaccine Development

- India's first indigenous multi-stage malaria vaccine developed by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and partners.
- Vaccine name: AdFalcivax.
- Targets the malaria parasite (*Plasmodium falciparum*) before it enters the bloodstream.

Licensing & Manufacturing

Union govt. granted licences to five firms:

- Indian Immunologicals Ltd.
- Techinvention Lifecare Pvt. Ltd.
- Panacea Biotec Ltd.
- Biological E Ltd.
- Zydus Lifesciences Ltd.

Goal: manufacturing and commercialisation for widespread use.

Features of the Vaccine

- Affordable, stable, and scalable.
- Remains effective for over nine months.
- Aims at preventing infection and minimising malaria transmission.

Research & Validation

Pre-clinical validation done by:

- ICMR-National Institute of Malaria Research.
- National Institute of Immunology (NII), New Delhi.
- Collaboration with Department of Biotechnology.

Significance

- Malaria is still a major health problem in India.
- India accounts for 1.4% of global malaria cases and 66% of cases in Southeast Asia.
- Vaccine seen as a key tool in malaria elimination efforts.

Union govt. seeks 'factual report' on forest rights complaint concerning Nicobar project

Background

- Union govt. seeks a "factual report" from the Andaman & Nicobar Islands administration.
- Concerns raised by the Tribal Council of Little and Great Nicobar over forest rights not being settled before diversion of 13,000 hectares for the ₹81,000 crore Great Nicobar Island project (August 2022).

Complaint by Tribal Council

- Claimed administration issued a false certificate in Aug 2022 saying forest rights had been settled.
- Council said consent was obtained "under pressure" and later withdrew consent.
- Asserted that identification and settlement of rights under the FRA (Forest Rights Act, 2006) has not been initiated.
- Argued that Nicobarese have not consented to diversion of forest land.

Government's Response

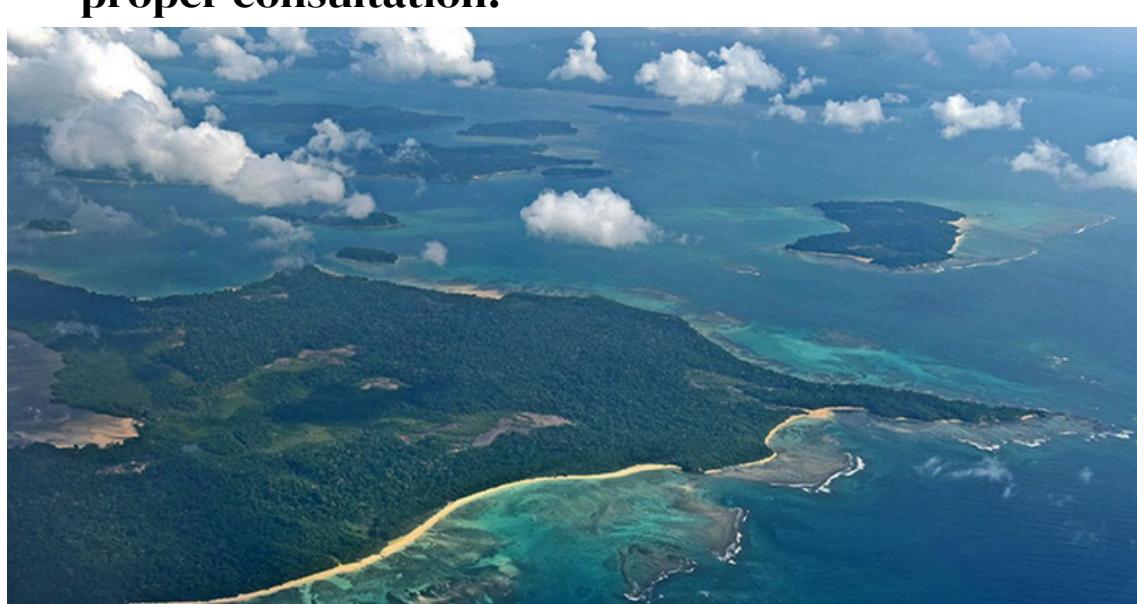
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs asked for a factual report from the administration.
- Certificate by Deputy Commissioner of Nicobar had earlier stated FRA rights were settled, contradicting the Tribal Council's claim.

Political & Legal Concerns

- Tribal Council also wrote to Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi (Aug 26), highlighting lack of dialogue and government's refusal to engage.
- Sonia Gandhi, Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson, called the project a "planned misadventure" in an article.
- Administration maintains FRA does not apply since tribal rights are already protected under the Protection of Aboriginal Tribes Act, 1956.

Current Situation

- Tribal Council insists FRA rights process must be carried out before diversion of land.
- Centre awaits the factual report to verify claims.
- Project remains controversial due to issues of tribal rights, environmental concerns, and lack of proper consultation.



Lessons for India: how Kerala is tackling rapid urbanisation



Kerala Urban Policy Commission (KUPC)

- First State-level urban commission in India, set up in December 2023.
- Tasked with designing a 2-year urban roadmap to address issues like floods, landslides, coastal erosion, and climate-sensitive ecosystems.
- Its report (March 2025) proposed a data revolution, governance recalibration, identity revival, and finance empowerment.

Need for the Commission

- Kerala experiencing rapid urbanisation: about 47% population urban by 2050.
- Urbanisation often unplanned, causing environmental hazards and disaster risks.
- State's "urban tapestry" = villages + towns + highways blending into a seamless sprawl.
- Required a shift from reactive to systemic planning.

Recommendations of the Report

- Comprehensive research: 33 studies on land use, water systems, finance, and health.
- Key proposals:
 - Climate & risk-aware zoning: safer land use planning.
 - Green-blue economy: focus on rivers, wetlands, coasts.
 - Finance innovations:
 - Municipal and pooled bonds.
 - New municipal boards for major cities (Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Kozhikode).
- Governance reforms:
 - Replace bureaucracy with elected municipal cabinets.
 - "Janapath" program to recruit technical experts.
- Place-based economic revival:
 - Sectoral hubs: Thrissur (cultural), Palakkad (industrial), Kasargod (marine).
 - Commons, culture & creative industries: new narratives to revive ecosystems and livelihoods.

Importance of Report

- Marks systemic thinking in tackling urbanisation.
- Seeks inclusive governance: involving NGOs, trade unions, professionals, panchayats.
- Calls for integration of municipal bonds, green levies, digital finance tools into urban planning.

Broader Lessons for India

- Offers a scalable template for other states:
 - Strong data-driven governance.
 - Empowered municipalities beyond bureaucracies.
 - Localised financing (bonds, green levies).
 - Focus on resilient urban ecosystems.
- Provides a model for sustainable urbanisation combining environmental, cultural, and social perspectives.

PRELIMS CORNER :

1. Ahir community have been demanding an Ahir regiment in the Indian Army. The Ahirwal region is in

- (a) Jammu and Kashmir
- (b) Madhya Pradesh
- (c) Haryana
- (d) Jharkhand

2. Inflation and Unemployment have an inverse relationship. The given statement can be best explained by which of the following curves?

- (a) Laffer curve
- (b) Phillips curve
- (c) Kuznets curve
- (d) Lorenz curve

3. Which of the following is not caused due to gravitational force of Earth?

- (a) River flow
- (b) Landslide
- (c) Tides
- (d) Lahar flow

4. Zmiinyi island was in the news due to the ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia. On which of the below sea is this island located?

- (a) Caspian Sea
- (b) Dead Sea
- (c) Black Sea
- (d) Azov Sea

Tariff-hit diamond, jewellery exporters look to West Asia

U.S. Tariffs Impact

- Indian diamond and jewellery exporters hit by high U.S. tariffs are seeking new markets.
- U.S. remains a big market (30% of exports), but exporters want to diversify risk.

Shift to West Asia

- Exporters are turning to West Asia, especially Saudi Arabia, UAE, Hong Kong, and Lebanon.
- The Saudi Arabia Jewellery Expo (SAJEX) 2025 will be the first large-scale B2B jewellery show in Jeddah, from Sept. 11-13.
- Over 100 exhibitors from India and abroad, with 200+ booths, will showcase jewellery.

India's Role

- India is the largest exporter of cut and polished diamonds, handling 14 of every 15 diamonds globally.
- Jewellery exports include:
- Coloured gemstone jewellery.
- Platinum jewellery.
- Diamond jewellery.
- Plain gold jewellery.
- New business lines like jewellery technology.

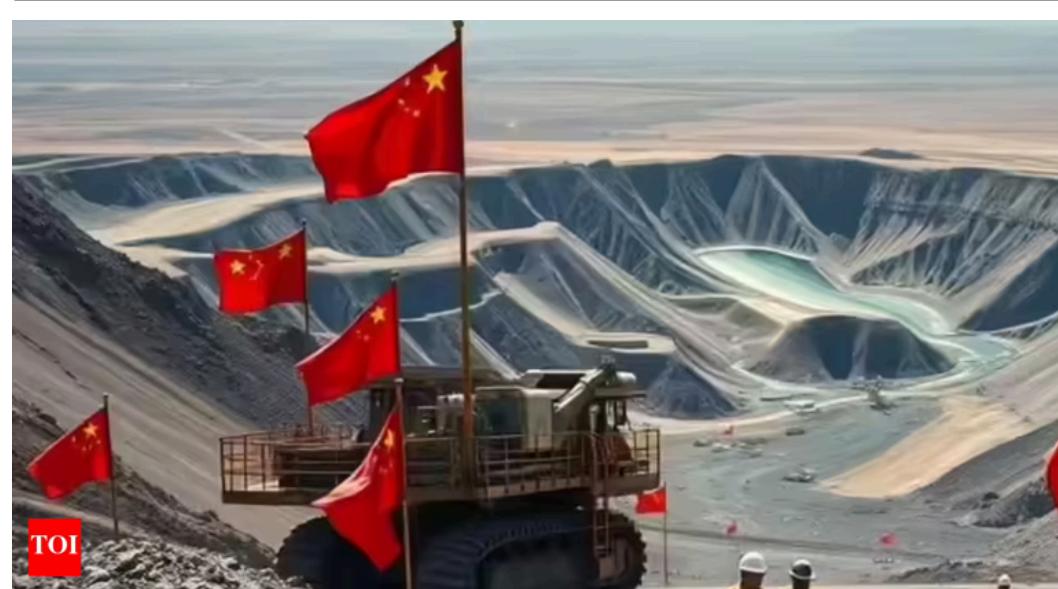
Market Potential

- Saudi Arabia's jewellery market:
- Valued at \$4.56 billion (2024).
- Projected to reach \$8.34 billion (2030).
- Young, high-income population is driving demand for modern and innovative designs.

Industry Outlook

- Indian exporters see West Asia as business-friendly due to trade agreements.
- Exporters stress that long-term presence is key; success will not come overnight.
- The move aligns with India's strategy of expanding beyond traditional U.S. and European markets.





China digs in on 'rare earth', commands global market

China's Dominance in Rare Earths

- China is the largest producer of rare earths, contributing over 60% of global production.
- Holds about 49% of global reserves (U.S. Geological Survey 2023).
- Other major reserves: Brazil (23.3%), India (7.7%), Australia (6.3%), Russia (6.2%).

Importance of Rare Earths

- Rare earth elements (REEs) are critical in high-tech applications: magnets, electronics, clean energy, defense, aerospace.
- Divided into light REEs (cerium, lanthanum, etc.) and heavy REEs (yttrium, terbium, dysprosium, etc.).
- Crucial for wind turbines, EV motors, missiles, displays, ceramics, phosphors.

China's Export Policies

- China introduced export restrictions on seven rare earth elements in 2024.
- Aimed at maintaining control over supply chains and advancing its strategic advantage.
- This follows earlier bans like the 2002 ban on exporting rare earth separation/refining technologies.

Impact on Global Trade

- U.S. and allies seek alternatives, but remain dependent on China.
- U.S. is the second-largest importer, followed by Japan and others.
- India imports 75% of its rare earth needs from China.

Global Supply & Export Market

- Major exporters of rare earths:
 - China – 28.9%
 - Malaysia – 21.7%
 - U.S. – 13.9%
- Major importers of China's rare earths:
 - Japan – 26.8%
 - U.S. – 25.1%
 - Netherlands – 11.9%

Strategic Concerns

- China's restrictions escalate U.S.-China trade tensions.
- Control over rare earths provides leverage in geopolitical and economic competition.
- Countries are increasing investments in alternative sources and domestic production.

Violence reveals the deep structural failures of Nepal's democratic experiment

Background of the Crisis

- Protests in Kathmandu led to violence, with government buildings, ministerial residences, and media offices attacked.
- Trigger: restrictions on digital platforms, but protests reflect deeper anger at corruption, nepotism, inequality, and elite lifestyles.
- Protesters included young Nepalis (Gen Z) frustrated with limited opportunities and systemic failures.
- Structural Failures of Democracy in Nepal
- Current crisis reflects long-standing weaknesses in Nepal's political institutions.
- Comparisons drawn with past democratic movements (1990, 2006) that had clear leadership and objectives, unlike today's protests.

Institutional dysfunction:

- Weak governance.
- Rampant corruption.
- Inability to deliver development and services.
- Disconnect between elites and people.
- Dangerous Precedents
- Violence against the state raises concerns about erosion of democratic norms.
- Security forces' harsh response (shootings, curfew) risks worsening the crisis.
- Echoes earlier authoritarian tendencies seen in Nepal's political history.

Regional & Comparative Context

- Nepal's unrest mirrors similar political crises in South Asia:
- Bangladesh: student-led protests against autocratic rule.
- Sri Lanka: economic crisis leading to massive protests.
- Points to a larger regional challenge of weak democratic institutions.

Current Political Dynamics

- Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli's resignation highlights leadership failures.
- Competing political figures:
- Rabi Lamichhane (charismatic populist, former media figure).
- Sher Bahadur Deuba (established politician).
- Shah, a popular mayor admired for grassroots appeal.
- Rising authoritarian tendencies and nostalgia for monarchy among some sections.

Outlook

- Nepal's democracy is fragile, unstable, and prone to violent breakdowns.
- Structural reforms in governance and accountability are urgently needed.
- Without meaningful change, cycles of unrest and authoritarian regression may persist.

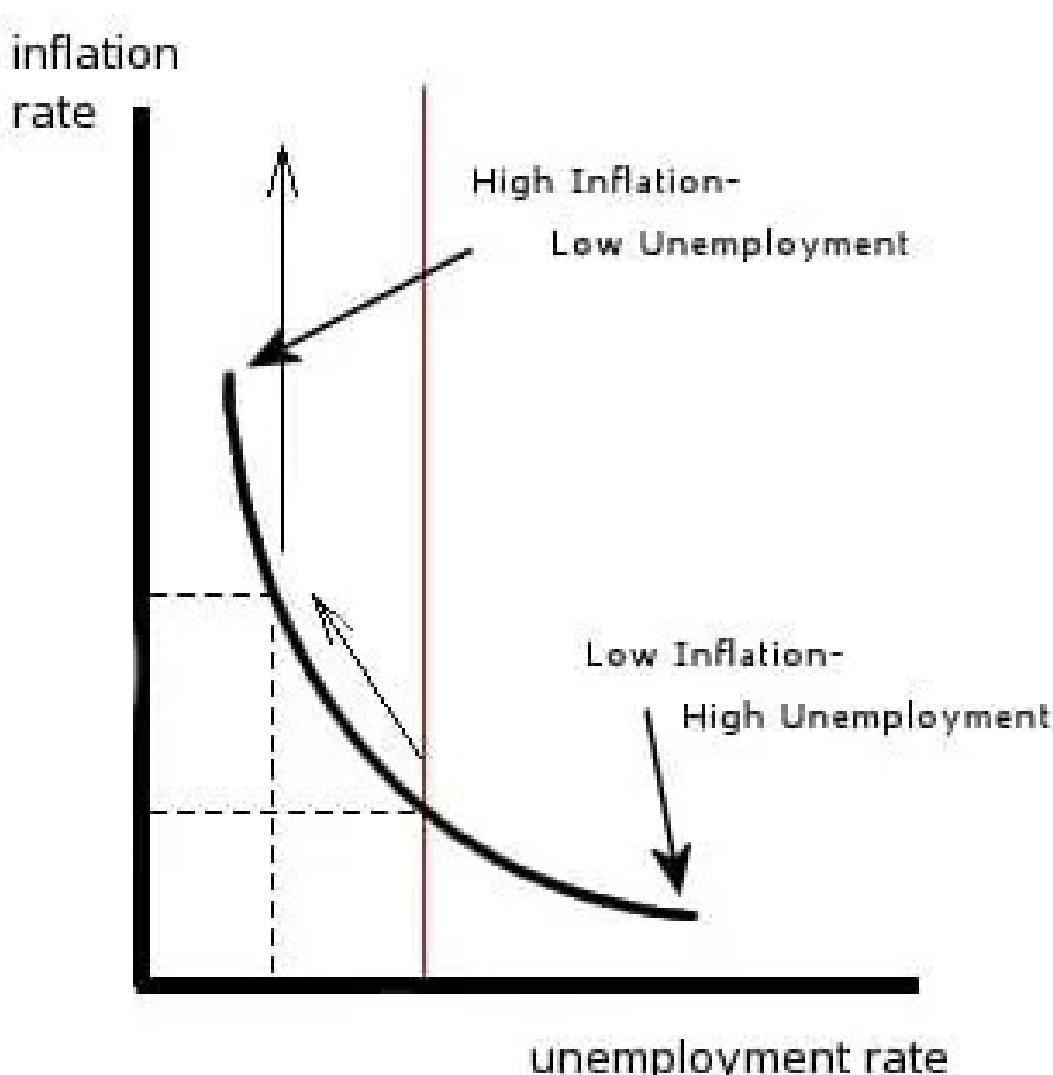
Prelims Corner: Explanations

Q1. Ans **c**

Ahirwal is a region spanning parts of southern Haryana, north-eastern Rajasthan, and South Western New Delhi. Members of the Ahir community demanded a separate regiment in the Indian Army for the Ahir community. The protests are being organised under the banner of 'Sanyukt Ahir Regiment Morcha,' a group comprising Ahir community leaders from south Haryana.

Q2. Ans **b**

The Phillips curve shows the relationship between the rate of inflation and the unemployment rate in an inverse manner. The relationship is negative and not linear. If levels of unemployment decrease, inflation increases.



Q3. Ans **c**

Tides are caused due to the pulling effect of the Sun and moon, where the role of Earth's Gravitational Pull could be ruled out. Tides are defined as the periodic rise and fall of the sea level once or twice a day, mainly due to the attraction of the sun and the moon. The moon's gravitational pull, to a great extent and a lesser extent, the sun's gravitational pull, are the major causes of tides' occurrence.

Q4. Ans **c**

Zmiinyi Island, also known as Snake or Serpent Island, is a small piece of rock less than 700 meters from end to end that has been described as being "X-shaped." It is located 35 km from the coast of the Black Sea, to the east of the mouth of the Danube, and roughly southwest of the port city of Odesa and belongs to Ukraine.

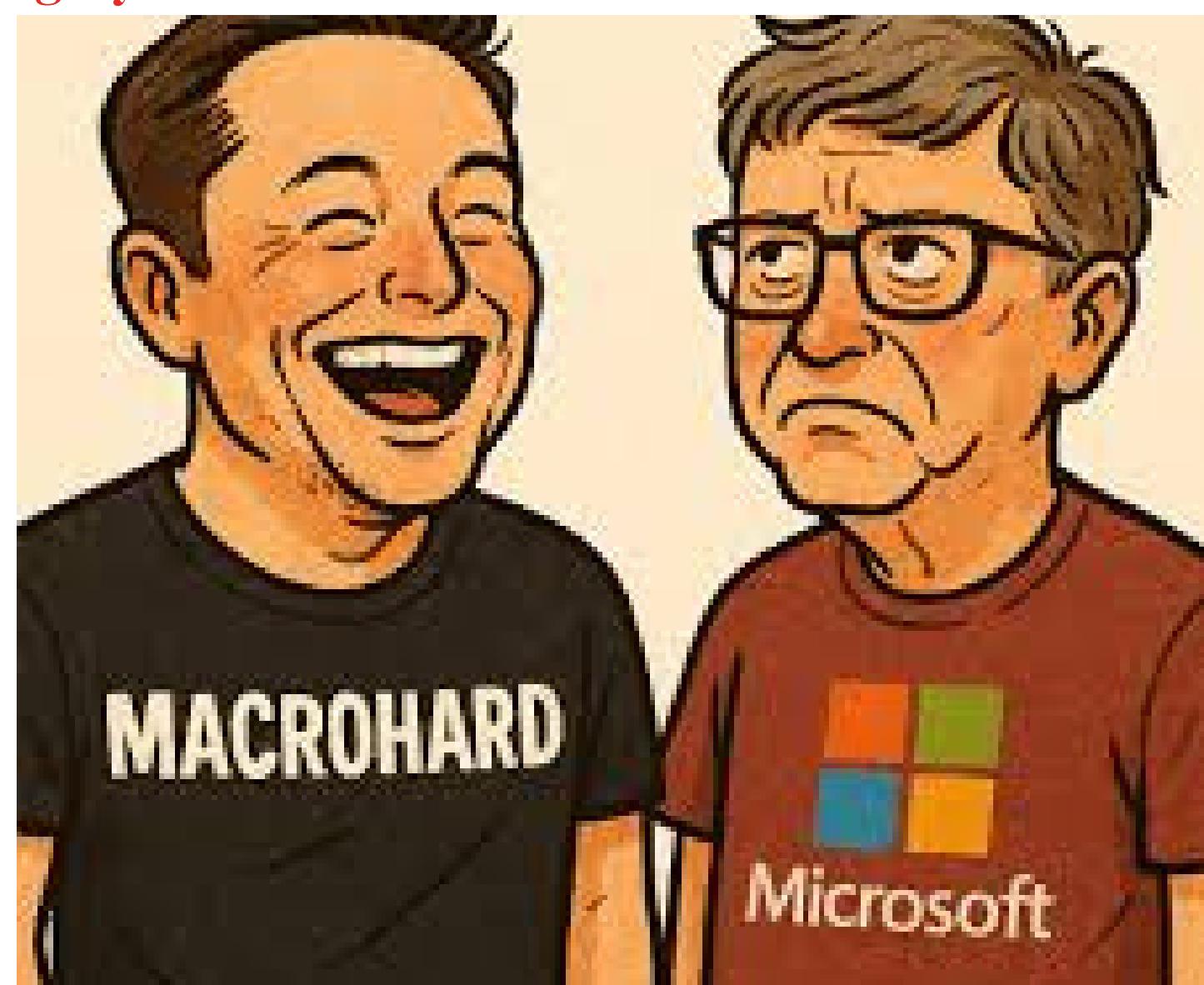


Case Study:



Anjana Krishna, IPS officer who stood firm against Ajit Pawar, is no stranger to overcoming setbacks. Maharashtra-cadre IPS officer Anjana Krishna V S, who was in the news for being “reprimanded” by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar while taking action over alleged illegal mining, grew up on the outskirts of an area of Kerala’s Thiruvananthapuram district that has become notorious for the illegal granite mining. She is familiar with the mining issue. Mukkunimala, where extensive illegal quarrying had taken place over the years. In the video that went viral on Thursday, Pawar calls on a local NCP worker’s phone to talk to Anjana Krishna, the Karnala Sub-Divisional Police Officer, while she is in Solapur’s Kurdu village to investigate a complaint of illegal excavation of ‘murrum’ soil that is used in road construction. Anjana Krishna, posted recently to Maharashtra, doesn’t recognise his voice and asks him to call on her mobile phone instead. “What is the proof that it is the Deputy CM talking?” she says. It was not an easy journey, though, and in her first three attempts, Anjana did not clear the prelims. However, in the fourth attempt, she cracked the exam in 2022 and secured rank 355.

Elon Musk has launched a new artificial intelligence (AI) venture under his xAI initiative, taking on the mighty Microsoft called MACROHARD



ISRO has been conducting simulation missions – known as 'analog' experiments for Gaganyaan programme



During which selected astronauts are spending several days in confined spacecraft-like conditions. The only thing missing in these Gaganyaan Analog Experiments, or Gyanex, is the absence of gravity.