



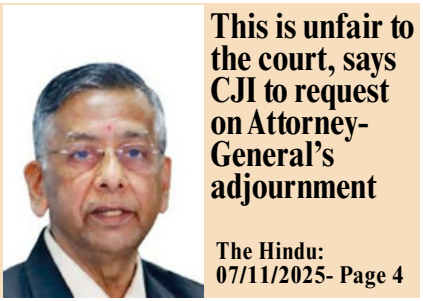
Karnataka's menstrual leave policy: progressive step or symbolic gesture?

The Hindu: 07/11/2025- Page 7



India to question citizens who worked in Myanmar's cyberscam compounds

The Hindu: 07/11/2025- Page 4



This is unfair to the court, says CJI to request on Attorney-General's adjournment

The Hindu: 07/11/2025- Page 4



Talks on with RBI, lenders for big, world class banks, says FM

The Hindu: 07/11/2025- Page 12



US is skipping this year's COP summit

The Indian Express: 07/11/2025- Page 15

Record 64.66% turnout in Bihar phase 1 polls



Bihar recorded its "highest-ever" voter turnout as the first phase of the Assembly election ended on Thursday with 64.66% votes polled. In this phase, 121 Assembly constituencies in 18 districts went to the polls with a total electorate of over 3.75 crore. The Election Commission (EC) said voting was peaceful. The figures better the 62.57% turnout of the 2000 Assembly election. In 2020 election, the voting percentage in the first phase was 57.29. The highest turnout in a Lok Sabha election was 64.6%, in 1998.

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar congratulated the voters for the historic turnout since 1951. He thanked the electors for expressing their faith in the poll body and turning out to vote with enthusiasm. He lauded the election machinery for working with full transparency and dedication. "Bihar has shown the way to the nation. SIR with zero appeals and highest voter turnout since 1951. Purest electoral rolls and enthusiastic participation of electors. Transparent and dedicated election machinery. Democracy wins. It has been an amazing journey for ECI," he said. Earlier, Bihar's Chief Electoral Officer Vinod Singh Gunjyal said voting took place in 45,314 booths. Far from the election campaigns and high-decibel claims of political parties, the first phase of the 2025 Bihar Assembly election on Thursday captured both the grit of voters and the gaps that successive governments have failed to plug. The first phase contests are also crucial for the smaller parties in both coalitions. This phase will also test the electoral appeal of celebrities. There are two diametrically opposite views about Bihar. One, that it was and continues to be a basket case when it comes to economic development. Two, that Bihar's image does not do justice to the economic resurgence it has staged in the recent past.



Oxfam activists wearing masks depicting world leaders stage a 'Sleeping on the Job' protest to criticise the inadequacy of decisions made by the world's largest economies in combating the climate crisis, ahead of the COP30 climate conference in Brazil. World leaders say time is running short for climate action, but heads of biggest polluters absent from UN summit.



Kazakhstan will announce that it is joining the Abraham Accords on Thursday, a senior U.S. official said, in a largely symbolic move as the country already has ties with Israel. U.S. special envoy Steve Witkoff earlier said that a new country would join the accords, under which four Arab nations have normalised ties with Israel. Kazakhstan has diplomatic relations with Israel and has an embassy in Tel Aviv. It is also the second largest energy exporter after Azerbaijan. It is the seventh largest country in the world and has vast reserves of oil and gas.



STATE

Karnataka's menstrual leave policy: progressive step or symbolic gesture?

- **Progressive Move:** Karnataka has become the first state in India to approve one day of paid menstrual leave per month for all women employees, across both government and private sectors, including educational institutions. This is considered a landmark step towards gender equity in workplaces.
- **Precedents Cited:** This refers to similar policies in the Indian states of Odisha and Bihar (only for government employees), as well as comparable international policies in countries like Finland and Japan.
- **Scope and Implementation:** The leave applies to women in government offices, educational institutions, and private organizations. Implementation details and how it will be executed, particularly in the private sector, are still anticipated.
- **Ongoing Debate:** The move has sparked discussions on:
 - Whether a single day of leave per month is sufficient given the diversity of menstrual experiences.
 - Whether the policy will meet its stated goals or remain largely symbolic.
- **Expert Opinions:**
 - **Support for Inclusivity:** Advocates highlight its symbolic and practical value in recognizing women's health needs in policy frameworks and acknowledging issues around menstruation that often remain taboo.
 - **Concerns over Effectiveness:** Some doctors and activists stress that not all women experience severe symptoms; thus, for many, the policy might have limited direct impact. Others worry it could reinforce negative stereotypes or workplace stigma, potentially affecting women's career progression or reinforcing biases against hiring female staff.
 - **Calls for Comprehensive Support:** Experts urge that attention should also go towards better management of menstrual discomfort, awareness building, and broader healthcare support—not just leave.
- **Historical Context:** The concept of menstrual leave is not new in India, with cultural references to "menstrual rest" practices in certain communities. This also mentions that some critics see formal policies as a step backwards in integrating women into the workforce, while others see it as overdue recognition of a biological reality.
- **Practical Challenges:** Implementation may face hurdles such as privacy concerns (women may not wish to disclose reasons for leave), misuse, or administrative ambiguities over paperwork and eligibility.
- **Recommendations by Healthcare Providers:** Doctors recommend menstrual health support should be comprehensive, including access to pain therapy, counseling, and adjustments in work/study expectations—not just leave.
- **Awareness Needs:** For women with specific conditions (like endometriosis or PCOS), sick leave provisions may still fall short of support needed.

Airlines report 'severe' GPS spoofing over Delhi for 7 days

- Aircraft flying over Delhi have reported "severe" GPS spoofing incidents for a week, causing false navigation data, incorrect aircraft positions, and misleading terrain warnings.
- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is investigating these disturbances after they were discussed in a meeting with civil aviation officials and the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- GPS spoofing was reported within a 60-nautical-mile radius around Delhi, requiring air traffic controllers to provide direct navigation guidance to pilots.
- Pilots encountered false terrain warnings and navigation errors, including receiving alerts of obstacles where none existed while approaching Delhi airport.

Specific Details of the Spoofing Episodes

- Pilots described these incidents as distinctly unusual for Delhi, which does not commonly experience GPS spoofing compared to border regions near Pakistan.
- No advisory was issued to alert pilots to possible military exercises causing the spoofing, indicating the unexplained nature of the incident.
- Disruptions required manual intervention and reliance on cockpit crew and alternative navigation systems for safe operation.

Cyberattack and Aviation Risks

- GPS spoofing involves transmitting false GPS signals to mislead navigation and poses significant risks to aviation safety, as highlighted by IATA and International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).
- This also refers to a December 2024 incident where an Embraer 190 flight over Azerbaijan was struck by a missile, which is attributed in reports to GPS spoofing.
- Data shows GPS spoofing cases in India have surged 220% between 2021 and 2024, per IATA.

Government and Regulatory Response

- The DGCA is working with airlines to establish standardized operational procedures and will report bi-monthly updates on GPS spoofing events.
- Parliament was informed in March that India saw 465 GPS interference and spoofing cases in the northwest (Amritsar, Jammu, etc.) in recent years.

Practical Impact and Mitigation

- While GPS spoofing is serious, redundancy in aircraft navigation systems generally allows them to continue operation safely even if GPS signals are compromised.
- Procedures, such as using the Inertial Reference System, ensure flight safety despite primary GPS disruption.



India to question citizens who worked in Myanmar's cyberscam compounds

- Indian citizens who worked in Myanmar cyberscam compounds will be questioned by authorities regarding their activities during their employment period.
- The investigation comes as India brought back around 270 nationals who had fled Myanmar's scam centres, taking refuge in Thailand before being repatriated.
- Myanmar's military conducted operations against these scam centres in October, prompting the evacuation of many Indians.

Rescue and Repatriation Efforts

- On Thursday evening, India used two special Air Force flights to bring back 270 citizens, including 26 from Chiang Mai in Thailand and the rest from Uttar Pradesh in India.
- These flights followed extensive interviews and coordination with Thai authorities to ensure the safe departure of people who had escaped the scams.
- Most of those brought back will not return home immediately, as security agencies require further inquiry into their past employment and movements.

Rationale Behind Questioning

- The focus is not only on how they ended up in the scam centres and what activities they participated in, but also how these scam networks recruit and operate transnationally.
- Officials aim to identify connections and accomplices within these criminal networks and discern the methods used to lure young Indians into working in cyberscam outfits.
- The Indian embassy in Bangkok emphasized its commitment to dismantling these networks and ensuring that repatriated individuals are not involved in criminal activity.

Objectives of the Investigation

- Authorities want to prevent Indians from joining such networks in the future, requiring the investigation to map out recruitment tactics, operational procedures, and identify wider linkages.
- The inquiry will determine if any of the returnees were knowingly involved in scamming or criminal activity while employed in Myanmar.

Broader Implications

- The episode highlights the growing threat of international cyberscam rackets, their ability to target vulnerable job seekers, and the cross-border collaboration required for counteraction.
- India's operation in coordination with Thailand provides a model for future interventions and underscores diplomatic roles in citizen protection amid transnational crimes.

This is unfair to the court, says CJI to request on Attorney-General's behalf for adjournment

- Chief Justice of India (CJI) B.R. Gavai rejected a request made by Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati on behalf of Attorney-General R. Venkataramani seeking adjournment in a crucial case challenging the Tribunal Reforms Act of 2021.
- The CJI expressed displeasure that the government's top law officers repeatedly sought adjournments even in high-priority cases, calling the request "unfair to the court".

Judicial Concerns and Reactions

- Chief Justice Gavai underscored the importance of the case and the time already spent by the court in hearing it, criticizing any perceived pattern of adjournments as disrespectful to the judicial process.
- The CJI highlighted that the accommodation requested by the Attorney-General had already been granted twice and pointed out the dilemma this creates for judges who need to prepare judgments.
- Visibly annoyed, the CJI questioned the sincerity of repeated postponement requests, especially after the case had been marked as a court priority.

Sequence of Proceedings

- The CJI clarified that after the hearing, judges require time to prepare judgments and expressed frustration over the expectation to list other cases on succeeding days, further stretching judicial resources.
- It was noted that part-heard matters need to be given strict priority and that repeated delays disrupt the entire schedule of the bench.

Reference to Attorney-General's Schedule

- The CJI acknowledged the Attorney-General's important obligations, but emphasized that the highest respect for his office should not outweigh the court's need for efficient scheduling in vital cases.
- CJI himself is set to retire on November 24, adding urgency to finalize important cases and judgments before his retirement.

Broader Implications

- The Chief Justice remarked on the systemic issues caused when high-level government advocates frequently seek adjournments, hinting it could be perceived as a "tactic" to delay proceedings.
- The CJI's rhetorical question about when the judgment will actually be written if hearings are postponed, illustrating concern about the backlog and potential administrative inefficiencies.
- The Attorney General is the chief legal advisor to the Government of India and the primary lawyer in the Supreme Court.
- Appointment: The President of India appoints the Attorney General under Article 76(1) of the Constitution.

NATIONAL

First PSLV made by private firms to be unveiled in 2026, says ISRO Chairman

Key Announcement

- ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan announced that the first Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) developed by a private consortium—led by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Larsen & Toubro (L&T)—will be launched in February 2026.
- This consortium has already produced the rocket to be used in the launch, marking a major shift in India's space sector towards private industrial participation.

Private Sector Involvement

- The plan is for at least 50% of the PSLV to be built directly by this private consortium in the future.
- 80-85% of the systems used in the PSLV are already supplied by private Indian industries, showing a longstanding but steadily increasing collaboration between ISRO and the private sector.

Indigenous Achievements

- Narayanan highlighted the November 2 successful placement of CMS-03, ISRO's heaviest communication satellite, in orbit using the Bahubali rocket LVM-3 M5, as a symbol of India's growing capability.
- He emphasized that the major share of sub-systems, components, and services for such missions are provided by Indian companies, reflecting broad-based domestic expertise.

Industrial Participation

- Around 450 Indian industries are currently part of the supply chain for India's space program.
- Over 300 plus start-ups and system integrators are also participating, indicating a vibrant ecosystem contributing to space missions.
- The contribution of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) is especially significant for the program, as highlighted by DRDO Chairman Samir V. Kamat.

Broader Vision

- By 2040, India's space programme will be competitive with other established global space-faring nations across launch, satellite, and human space flight applications, according to Narayanan.
- Achieving technological self-reliance is viewed as vital for national sovereignty, reinforcing the critical need for indigenous capability development in sensitive strategic technologies.

Historical Perspective

- Narayanan noted that, historically, India lagged behind advanced countries by about 70 years in space technology but is now rapidly catching up.

Uncontested polls: Centre says right to vote different from freedom of voting

- The Centre has argued before the Supreme Court that the "right to vote" in elections is distinct from "freedom of voting", asserting the former is a statutory right while the latter is a form of freedom of speech and expression.
- The argument was made in response to a petition seeking to declare Section 53(2) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, and Rule 218 of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, unconstitutional, claiming they violate the fundamental right to expression.

Petition Context

- The petition focused on "uncontested elections" where the number of valid candidates is equal to the number of available seats, resulting in automatic declaration of winners without a poll.
- The challenge claimed this process infringes upon voters' freedom of expression by preventing them from exercising their "None of the Above" (NOTA) option or voicing dissatisfaction with available candidates.

Statutory versus Fundamental Rights

- The Centre's affidavit clarified that the "right to vote" arises from Section 62 of the 1951 Act and is not a fundamental right under Article 19(1)(a) (freedom of speech and expression) of the Constitution.
- Citing the Supreme Court ruling in People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) vs. Union of India (2013), the government maintained that the right to vote is a statutory entitlement, separate from the broader freedoms protected by the Constitution.

Govt's Defense of the Law

- The Centre argued that ending uncontested polls would not serve the purpose of elections, as NOTA does not equate to a candidate and cannot affect the outcome in such cases.
- It said elections could be declared invalid only when relevant electoral procedures are not followed, pointing out the basic definition of an "election" and a "candidate" under Section 79(d) of the RP Act, 1951.

Implications for Democracy

- The Centre held that the act of voting represents a personal choice and is not comparable to the freedom to express dissatisfaction against every available candidate, especially in uncontested polls.
- The also highlights the tension between procedural fairness and voter empowerment, as well as the limits of constitutional remedies for electoral laws.

Legislative History

- The petition also argued that allowing uncontested polls undermines democratic choice, citing historical amendments in 1951 and 1968 which have shaped current legal provisions about elections.

PRELIMS CORNER :

1. Which one of the following texts helped to identify the initial year of the Gupta era by stating that the Gupta era began 241 years after the beginning of the Shaka era ?

- (a) Raghuvamsa
- (b) Razmnama
- (c) Amarakosha
- (d) Tahqiq-i-Hind

2. Who among the following enhanced the power and prestige of the Maratha Empire by defeating the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Rajput Governor of Malwa and the Governor of Gujarat?

- (a) Balaji Viswanath
- (b) Baji Rao I
- (c) Balaji Baji Rao
- (d) Madhav Rao I

3. The earliest epigraphic reference to image worship in Jainism is found in :

- (a) Nashik inscription
- (b) Junagarh inscription
- (c) Hathigumpha inscription
- (d) Mathura inscription

4. Which of the below Articles of the Indian Constitution speaks specifically of religious and linguistic minorities ?

- (a) Article 30
- (b) Article 29
- (c) Article 350A
- (d) Article 16

Talks on with RBI, lenders for big, world class banks, says FM

Policy Initiative

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman revealed that the government is in active discussions with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and major lenders to create many "big and world-class banks" in India.
- The intent is to not only rely on bank mergers but also foster an ecosystem and regulatory environment where more banks can thrive and grow, allowing for organically strong, competitive banks.

Steps and Considerations

- The process involves working with both the RBI and leading banking institutions to strategize how to scale up existing banks and possibly create new larger banking entities.
- FM underscored that simply consolidating banks via amalgamation is insufficient—growth requires ecosystem support and regulatory stimulus.
- She emphasized the need for continued policy confidence and a forward-looking approach given global uncertainties, volatile capital flows, and fragile supply chains.

Regulatory and Strategic Reforms

- Under strengthened regulatory supervision, private lenders and foreign banks are being encouraged to fortify their balance sheets, invest in new technologies, and contribute to raising banking capital and efficiency.
- Corporate governance and financial prudence are also stressed for building robust banking institutions capable of supporting India's economic trajectory.

India's Economic Position

- Sitharaman expressed optimism about India's ability to chart a stable financial course amid global economic shifts, citing improvements in GST and supply chain resilience. She acknowledged short-term volatility but maintained confidence in India's longer-term growth prospects.
- The Minister highlighted that robust banks are vital for sustaining high growth, supporting innovation, and managing shocks from global disruptions, such as fragile supply chains and macroeconomic uncertainties.

Workforce and Partnerships

- FM called for investment in new-age partnerships, skill development, and workforce policies for the banking sector to ensure competitiveness and readiness for future economic challenges.
- She advocated for measures to support economic resilience, including leveraging regulatory reforms, better technology adoption, and creating conditions for sustainable expansion of India's banking sector.

INTERNATIONAL

U.S. circulates draft UN resolution for Trump's Gaza plan

Main Proposal

- The United States has presented a draft UN Security Council resolution to partner nations, aiming to garner support for former President Donald Trump's Gaza peace plan.
- The draft includes provisions for "green-lighting" an international security force (ISF) intended to stabilize Gaza and provide transitional security.

Diplomacy and Stakeholder Reactions

- U.S. Ambassador Mike Waltz shared the draft with the 10 elected Security Council members and regional partners including Egypt, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Turkiye.
- Several countries have shown willingness to participate in the proposed ISF, but want any deployment to be based on a UN Security Council mandate for entering Palestinian territory.
- The date for a Security Council vote on the draft is yet to be determined.

Plan Elements

- The resolution "welcomes the Board of Peace," which would act as a transitional governing body for Gaza as envisioned in Trump's 20-point plan; the Board would chair the International Stabilisation Force's involvement.
- The ISF would largely consist of troops from Muslim and Arab countries, tasked with overseeing Gaza's security as Israeli forces withdraw.
- The U.S. emphasizes results-driven action—stating under Trump's leadership, the U.S. prefers concrete outcomes over "endless talk".

Diplomatic Concerns and Practicalities

- Participation by foreign troops is subject to formal international endorsement, as countries insist on Security Council approval before sending personnel to Gaza.
- This underscores the complexity of coalition-building for peacekeeping in a fraught and sensitive theatre like Gaza.



US is skipping this year's COP summit; many around the world think that's better

US Absence from COP Summit

- The United States government is not sending top officials to the annual United Nations climate summit in Belém, Brazil, marking the first time in three decades it will not participate at a high level since global talks began.
- This reflects the Trump administration's hostility toward climate change action, which is viewed by some as a menace to international efforts on global warming.

Domestic and International Reactions

- US Senator Brian Schatz and other experts suggest that if the US cannot be constructive, its absence may improve negotiations, letting other countries move forward without obstruction.
- The Trump administration has previously acted to undermine climate agreements by urging other nations, particularly oil-producing countries, to abandon climate laws and global cooperation efforts.

Impact on Global Climate Policy

- The US has abandoned its promises under the Paris Agreement, ceased to pressure other countries to restrict greenhouse gas pollution, and opposed global regulatory action such as the introduction of a carbon pollution fee in shipping.
- Laurence Tubiana, head of the European Climate Foundation, expressed shock at the aggressiveness of US opposition to climate goals and noted relief that the US absence could ease negotiations and allow incremental progress.

Concerns about Negotiation Dynamics

- Climate summits require consensus, so any country—including the US—could potentially block progress or weaken agreements.
- Former climate negotiators for Latin American countries expressed concern that potential damage or obstruction by the US delegation is avoided when it does not participate.

The Paris Agreement and Global Pledges

- The 2015 Paris climate agreement saw the US and 197 countries voluntarily agree to hold global temperature rise "well below" 2°C, preferably 1.5°C above preindustrial levels.
- The world has already warmed by 1.3°C, and experts estimate each additional fraction could expose millions more to extreme weather and food insecurity.

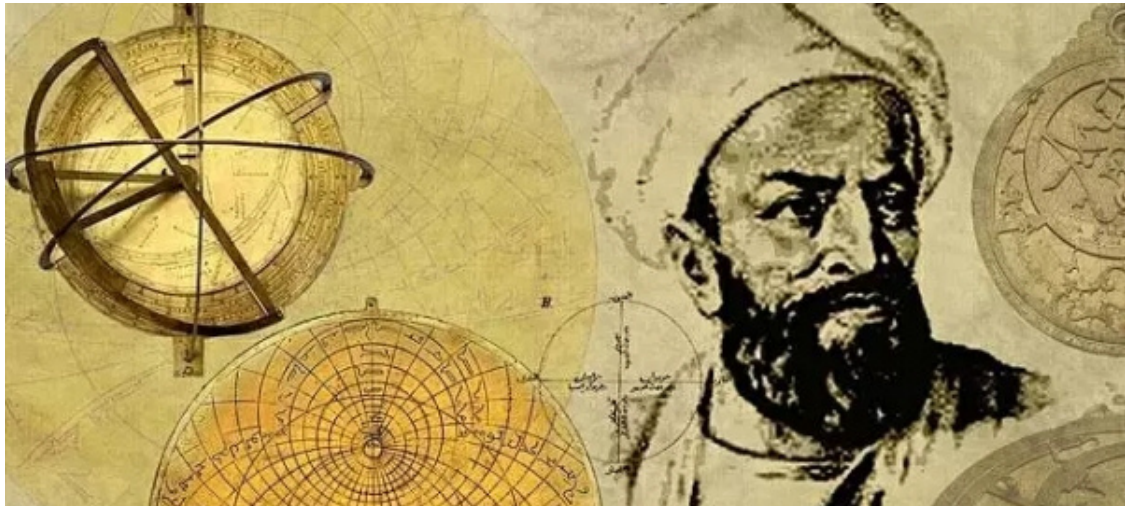
The Path Forward for COP

- Despite US absence, the summit will proceed with speeches from heads of state and government, followed by negotiations among ministers and diplomats from over 140 countries.
- Tubiana and other experts say the world must persevere without US leadership, acting on climate irrespective of American participation.
- The White House is sending no technical staff and no high-level representatives, underlining the policy disengagement.

Prelims Corner: Explanations

Q1. Ans d

The political history of c. 300-600 CE, which in general, is known as the Gupta era in Indian history, has been largely reconstructed on the basis of inscriptions and coins. There are no specific details about the origins or social backgrounds of the Guptas. Apart from the historical value of his descriptions of 11th-century India, Al-Biruni helped modern historians identify the initial year of the Gupta era in his Tahqiq-i-Hind states that the Gupta era began 241 years after the beginning of the Shaka era. Since the Shaka era began in 78 CE, this places the beginning of the Gupta era in 319-320 CE.



Q2. Ans b

Baji Rao I (1720–1740) was appointed as Peshwa in 1720 by Shahu after Balaji Viswanath (father of Baji Rao I). Baji Rao's achievements include establishing Maratha dominance in southern India and political power in northern India. As a result, he played a key role in establishing Maratha supremacy in Gujarat, Malwa, Rajputana, and Bundelkhand, as well as liberating Konkan (India's western coast) from Janjira Siddis and Portuguese dominance. After consolidating Maratha power in central India, Baji Rao resolved to reassert the Maratha right to collect taxes from the prosperous province of Gujarat. Sarbuland Khan, the Mughal governor of the Gujarat province, gave permission to the Marathas to collect Chauth. The Marathas defeated the Nizam of Hyderabad, and Peshwa Baji Rao I forced him to sign a peace treaty on March 6, 1728, in the village of Mungi-Paithan. The Nizam agreed to make some concessions to the Peshwa under the Munji Shivagaon Treaty. Thus, Baji Rao enhanced the power and prestige of the Maratha Empire by defeating the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Rajput Governor of Malwa and the Governor of Gujarat.

Q3. Ans c

The 1st century BCE Hathigumpha inscription of the Kalinga king Kharavela refers to his retrieving an image of a Jina. This inscription is the earliest epigraphic reference to image worship in Jainism. The Udayagiri and Khandagiri caves in Orissa are among the oldest long-standing centres of Jaina monasticism. A large number of Jaina images and inscriptions from the Mathura area indicate the popularity of Jainism. Kharavela, the Chedi king of Kalinga (in eastern India), claims in his Hathigumpha inscription to have defied a king named Satakarni in his second regnal year. He also claims two years later, he defeated the Rathikas of the Maratha country and the Bhojas of Vidarbha, who seem to have been subordinates of the Satavahanas. A possible indication of Nanda military victories in Kalinga is suggested by the later Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela, which mentions a king named Nanda building a canal and either conquering a place or taking away a Jaina shrine or image from Kalinga.

Q4. Ans a

Article 30 of the Indian Constitution speaks about the right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions. This Article consists of provisions that safeguard various rights of the minority community in the country, keeping in mind the principle of Equality as well. Article 30 (1): Promises to all linguistic and religious minorities the 'right to establish' and the 'right to administer' educational institutions of their own choice. This clause provides the right for two types of minorities, namely, religious and linguistic minorities. Article 30 (2): Restricts the State from making discrimination in the matter of providing help to any educational institution on the ground that it is managed by a religious minority or linguistic minority. Thus, Article 30 of the constitution speaks specifically of religious and linguistic minorities.

Case Study:



How Coach Amol Muzumdar Turned a Missed Dream into India's Greatest Women's Cricket Triumph:-

The historic victory of India's women's cricket team, their maiden ICC Women's World Cup title, is a story woven with resilience, faith, and the spirit of never giving up. At the heart of this triumph stands Coach Amol Muzumdar — one of the finest batters of his time and a Ranji Trophy legend. The man who wove India's victory together, not just through training, but through his guidance, pep talks, and unwavering belief in the power of the women in Blue. Amol Muzumdar was born in Mumbai in 1974; he grew up around Shivaji Park with legends like Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, VVS Laxman and Vinod Kambli. Known for his iconic batting style, he shared nets with all of these players under the mentorship of coach Ramakant Achrekar. He was just 19 years old when he smashed 260 runs in his Ranji debut. In his impeccable cricket career spanning more than two decades, he scored a remarkable tally of 11,167 runs, including over 30 centuries, with an impressive average close to 50. Despite his stellar performance and dominance in domestic cricket, he never got a chance to play for India. Instead of dwelling on what he didn't get, he never stopped honing his craft and believing that dreams do come true. In 2014, he retired from competitive cricket and started coaching young talent in India for the Under-19 and Under-23 teams.

The Union Cabinet will celebrate 150 years of the national song, 'Vande Mataram', throughout India, honouring its role in the freedom struggle

About the National Song

- The song Vande Mataram was composed in Sanskrit by Bankimchandra Chatterji in 1875 and featured in his novel *Anand Math* (1882).
- Dr. Rajendra Prasad officially designated it as the national song in the Constituent Assembly on January 24, 1950, stating it would hold equal status with the national anthem, *Jana Gana Mana*.
- The Constitution of India, under Article 51A(a), requires citizens to respect the Constitution, its ideals, institutions, the National Flag, and the National Anthem, but does not mention the national song.



वन्दे
मातरम्



The Indian Navy's indigenously built Survey Vessel (Large), Ikshak, was commissioned at a ceremonial event held at Naval Base in Kochi on Thursday. The ship's name, Ikshak, meaning "The Guide", symbolises its purpose: to chart unexplored waters, ensure safe navigation for mariners. It is constructed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) Ltd, Kolkata. INS Ikshak is also the first SVL designed with dedicated women's accommodation, reflecting the Navy's commitment to inclusivity. The ship is capable of operating as a platform for humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and medical support operations as well. It boasts over 80% indigenous content.