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**The most effective  
way to do it,  
is to do it.**

**- Amelia Earhart**

# OPERATION SINDOOR





AFP



## PRESS RELEASE:

### **OPERATION SINDOOR : INDIAN ARMED FORCES CARRIED OUT PRECISION STRIKE AT TERRORIST CAMPS**

Posted On: 07 MAY 2025 1:44AM by PIB Delhi

A little while ago, the Indian Armed Forces launched ‘OPERATION SINDOOR’, hitting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir from where terrorist attacks against India have been planned and directed.

Altogether, nine (9) sites have been targeted.

Our actions have been focused, measured and non-escalatory in nature. No Pakistani military facilities have been targeted. India has demonstrated considerable restraint in selection of targets and method of execution.

These steps come in the wake of the barbaric Pahalgam terrorist attack in which 25 Indians and one Nepali citizen were murdered. We are living up to the commitment that those responsible for this attack will be held accountable.

There will be detailed briefing on ‘OPERATION SINDOOR’, later today.

# India up three spots to 130 among 193 nations in HDI, but inequality persists

Page No. 1, GS 2

**Bindu Shajan Perappadan**

NEW DELHI

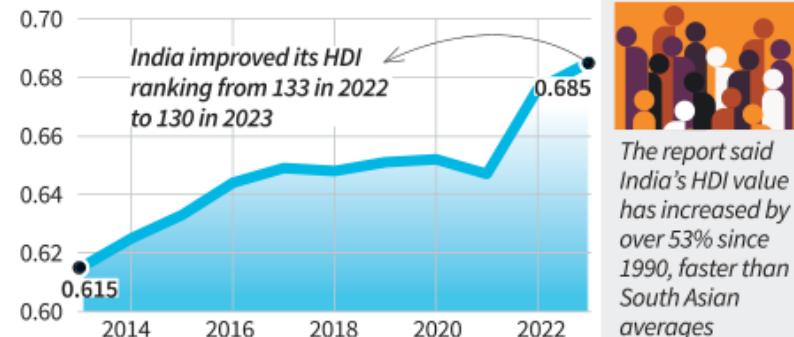
India moved up three spots in the Human Development Index, ranking 130 out of 193 countries in 2023, shows the Human Development Report, 2025, released on Tuesday by the United Nations Development Programme.

With the HDI value improving to 0.685 in 2023 from 0.676 in 2022, India remained in the medium human development category, moving closer to the high human development threshold of 0.700.

The Gross National Income per capita rose over four times to \$9,046.76 in 2023 from \$2,167.22 in 1990, while 135 million In-

## Steady progress

According to the latest UNDP report, India's Human Development Index(HDI) score improved from 0.676 in 2022 to 0.685 in 2023



dians escaped multidimensional poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21.

However, challenges persist, with inequality reducing India's HDI by 30.7%, one of the highest losses in the region, the report said. "While health and education inequality

have improved, income and gender disparities remain significant. Female labour force participation and political representation lag, though recent steps – such as the constitutional amendment reserving one-third of legislative seats for women –

offer promise for transformative change," it added.

Life expectancy in India rose to 72 in 2023 from 58.6 in 1990, the highest since the inception of the index, indicating a strong recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Global slowdown

Underscoring a broader global slowdown in human development the report revealed that the current pace of progress is the slowest since 1990, and India is no exception.

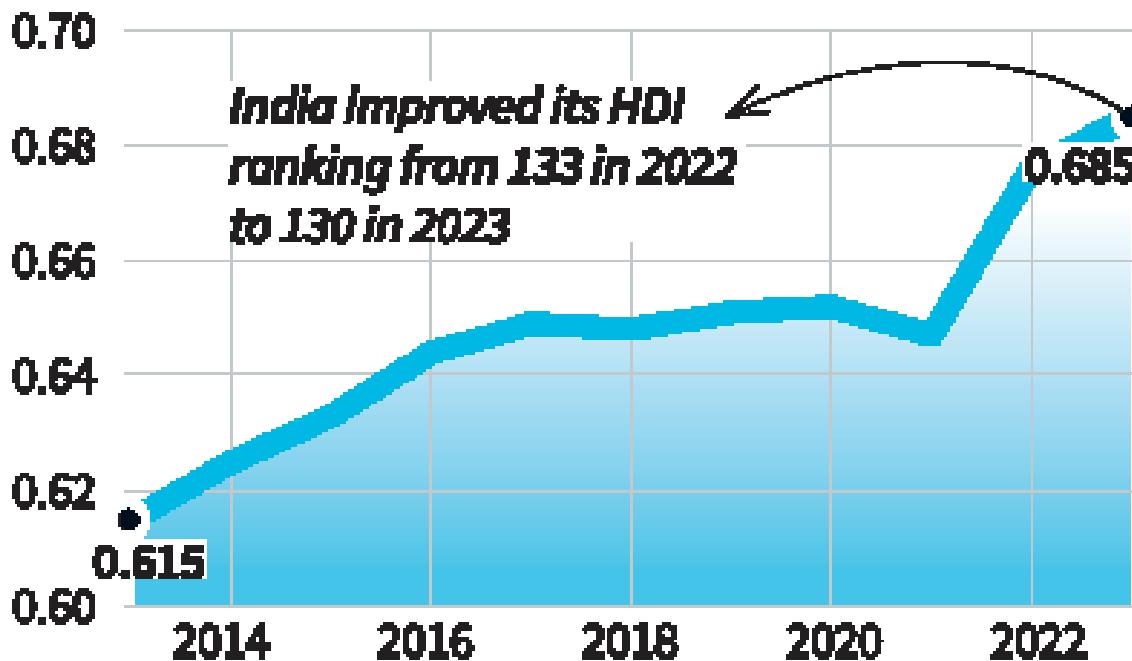
The inequality between low and very high HDI countries had increased for the fourth consecutive year, reversing long-standing progress, the report said.

## Content.

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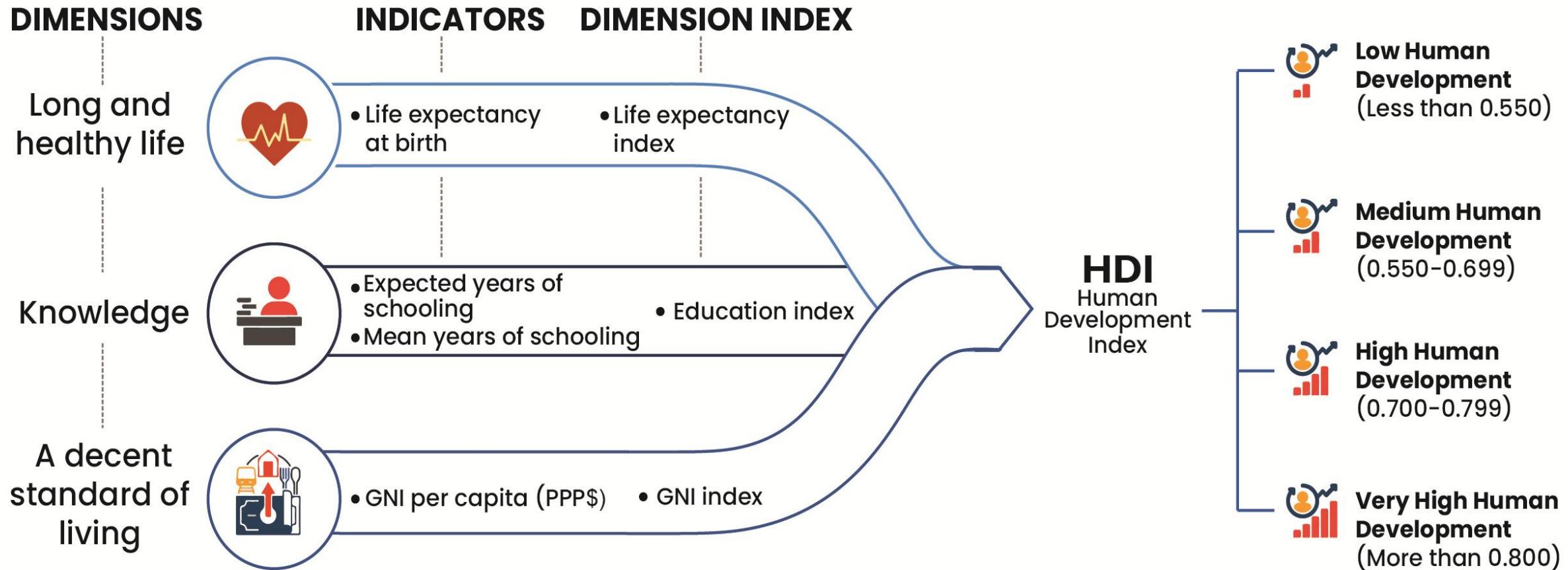


*The report said India's HDI value has increased by over 53% since 1990, faster than South Asian averages*

## Fact

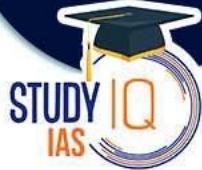
- The concept of human development was introduced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990, emphasizing the expansion of people's freedoms and capabilities.
- The Human Development Index (HDI) measures human development based on three dimensions:
- Health: Life expectancy at birth.
- Education: Mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling.
- Standard of Living: Gross National Income (GNI) per capita.
- India's ranking
- India ranked 135 in 2021. It had moved up to 134 in 2022.

# Human Development Index (HDI)



## Fact

- The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is an independent statutory body established to protect and promote human rights in India.
- It is responsible for reviewing and addressing human rights violations and making recommendations for the protection and promotion of human rights.
- NHRC was established under the Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993.
- It is an embodiment of India's concern for the promotion and protection of human rights.
- It is established in conformity with the Paris Principles (1991), adopted at the first international workshop on national institutions for the protection of human rights.



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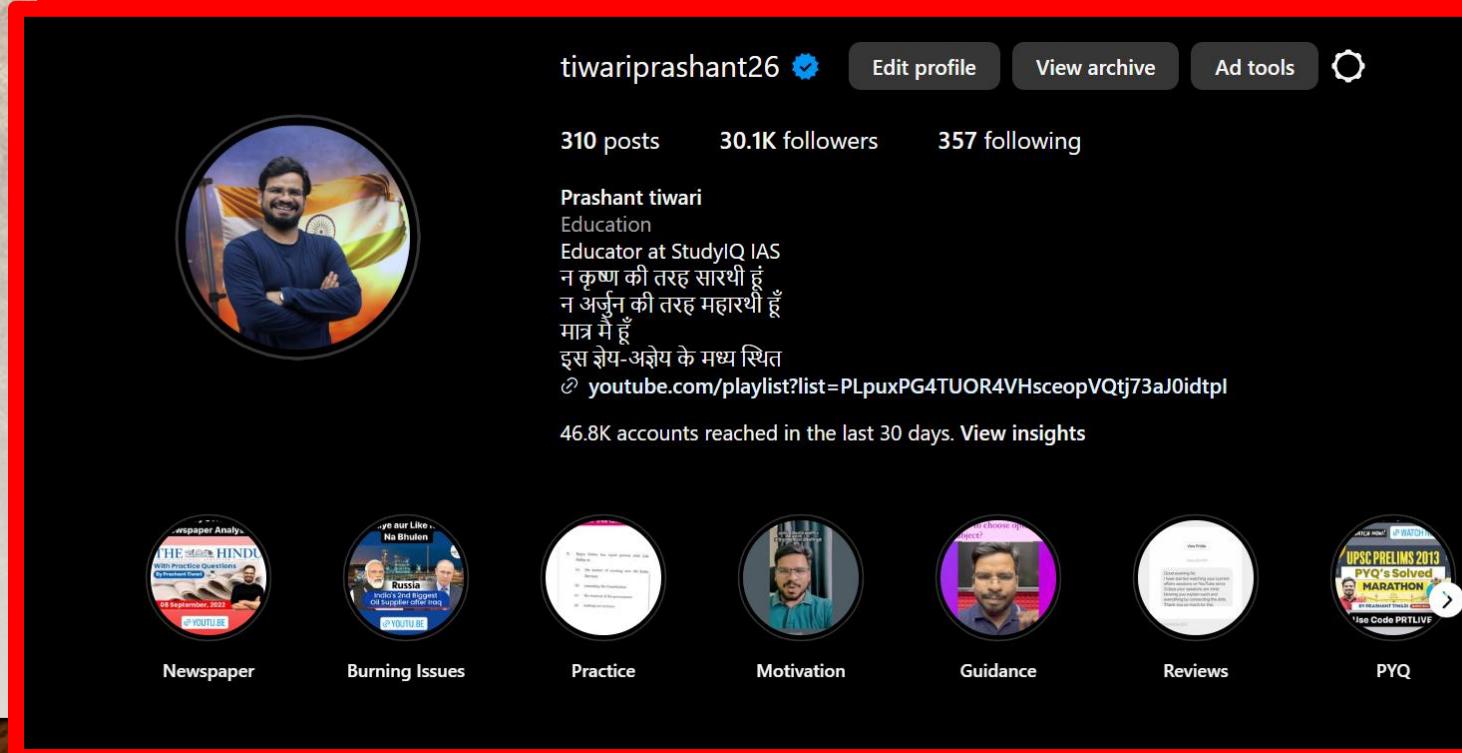
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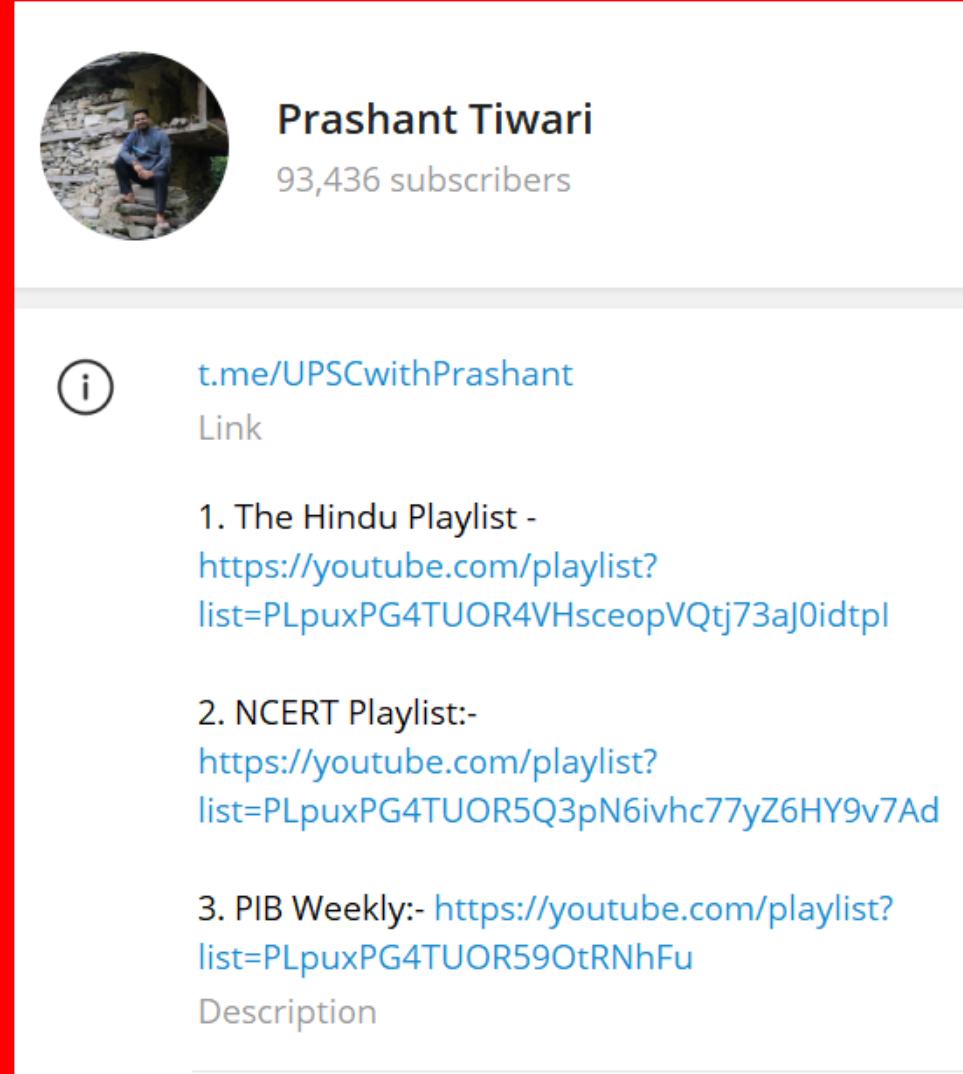
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Prashant tiwari  
Educator at StudyIQ IAS  
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3. PIB Weekly:- [https://youtube.com/playlist?  
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Description

# India, U.K. conclude landmark trade deal

**T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan**

NEW DELHI

India and the United Kingdom have concluded a historic Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that will see 99% of Indian exports to the U.K. benefiting from zero duties, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced on Tuesday.

“In a historic milestone, India and the U.K. have successfully concluded an ambitious and mutually beneficial Free Trade Agreement, along with a Double Contribution Convention,” Mr. Modi said on X, following a phone conversation with Mr. Starmer.

According to the Commerce and Industry Ministry, the FTA ensures comprehensive market access

## Breaking barriers

The deal is expected to double bilateral trade by 2030

- **99%** Indian exports to benefit from **zero duty** in U.K. market
- Britain to benefit from reduction in tariffs on whisky, gin and automotive imports

- Reduced import duties for cosmetics, aerospace and medical devices, lamb, salmon, electrical machinery, chocolates and biscuits to benefit Indian consumers



in the U.K. for Indian goods, covering all of India's export interests.

**CONTINUED ON**

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# The fragmentation in the global fight against terror

**T**he Pahalgam terror attack of April 22 has exposed, yet again, the fragmentation in the global fight against terror and Pakistan's resort to terrorism when it fears normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir. While a number of countries have condemned the Pahalgam attack, they have, at the same time, called upon India and Pakistan to exercise restraint. The United States Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, went to the extent of calling on both parties to "work towards ... a responsible resolution that maintains long term peace and regional stability in South Asia". U.S. Vice-President J.D. Vance "hoped" that India's response would not lead to a wider regional conflict. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said that "settling disagreements" between New Delhi and Islamabad on a bilateral basis should be by political and diplomatic means. The European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas could not even get around to calling it a "terror attack".

## The end of a collective fight

Gone are the days of "zero tolerance" to terror. Gone are the days when the perpetrators of terror were called out and accountability demanded. Some have even asked India for "proof" of Pakistan's complicity, conveniently forgetting *inter alia* the Pulwama (2019) and 26/11 Mumbai (2008) terror attacks. In effect, they are calling on India, the victim, to be restrained and to not go after Pakistan, the perpetrator and backer.

India should not be surprised. To begin with, the appetite for a flare-up in Asia is low after the raging wars in Ukraine, Gaza and West Asia. Moreover, successful elections in Jammu and Kashmir and tourists flocking to Kashmir are red flags for Pakistan. To top it all, the global fight against terror is no more a collective fight. It is now left for each state to fend for itself. The consensus reached after the 9/11 terror attacks in the U.S. in 2001, to fight terror comprehensively, seems to have run its course. The world has gone back to the era of "my terrorist" and "your terrorist."

Europe is focused on "its" terrorists – right-wing extremism and terror. The U.S., under former President Joe Biden, focused on REMVE, or racially and ethnically motivated violent extremism. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is keen only to use Islamophobia as an excuse to condone terror. Canada has told India that "your" terrorists are not "my" terrorists and that any terrorist threat against India from its soil is covered under its freedom of expression – in effect asking India to wait till a terror act is committed before approaching them. China has blocked proposals submitted by India in 2022 to "black-list", under the UN Security Council 1267 sanctions regime,



**T.S. Tirumurti**  
was Ambassador/  
Permanent  
Representative of  
India to the United  
Nations, New York  
(2020-22)

terrorists operating against India from Pakistani soil. Now that Pakistan is in the UN Security Council (UNSC) for 2025-26 (as a non-permanent member), these will remain blocked for at least two more years.

The world is blindsided by the spread of terror in Asia and Africa. Terrorism in Africa has spread exponentially, from the Sahel to Mozambique. The Global Terrorism Index 2025 points out that the Sahel is now the epicentre of terrorism, accounting for over half of all terrorism deaths in the world. But the international community says they are "your" terrorists not "my" terrorists and is short-changing Africa.

## A different yardstick for India

However, a different yardstick applies when it comes to India, which is the biggest victim of state-sponsored terror from Pakistan. First, it is about "regional stability" and not about fighting terror as Pakistan has successfully sold the "nuclear war" bogey to the world. Even as they egg Ukraine on in its war with "nuclear" Russia, the thought of two developing countries using nuclear arms scares the West enough to call on India to stop fighting cross-border terror. It is quickly forgotten that it was Prime Minister Narendra Modi who called on Russian President Vladimir Putin not to use nuclear arms in the Ukraine war for which he was thanked by the U.S. among other countries.

Further, it is now common knowledge that in Pahalgam, the terrorists singled out the tourists based on religion and shot them. A Muslim pony ride operator was shot while trying to save the tourists. The terror attack, which The Resistance Front (a proxy of the Pakistan-based terror group Lashkar-e-Taiba) claimed that it had carried out – it retracted this statement later – was clearly done to raise tensions and create a communal divide in India.

While the whole world cries hoarse in condemning Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and Christianophobia, why does it become silent when calling out the recent attack for what it is, i.e., Hinduphobia? When even protests in American university campuses are being dubbed anti-Semitic or Islamophobic and portrayed in religious terms, rather than contextualising them in terms of the 52,000 Palestinians killed in Gaza or Israeli hostages still with Hamas, to maintain radio silence on Hinduphobic attacks is glaring, if not unexpected. Even U.S. presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy, was confronted with accusations of belonging to a "pagan, wicked" faith while on the campaign trail.

But there has been a refreshing departure – the statement by the U.S. Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, who characterised the Pahalgam attack in religious terms, as a "horrible Islamist terrorist attack" and recognised that the targets were Hindus. A silver lining is the

extradition of Tahawwur Rana from the U.S. to India for the Mumbai attacks, even if big fish, David Headley, is still in the U.S.

Further, predictably, Pakistan used its presence in the UNSC to move for an emergency closed session on a "deteriorating regional environment and rising tension" posing "a serious risk of escalation". In 2019, a similar closed meeting took place, at China's behest, just after Article 370 was abrogated, but fizzled out. The meeting now was no different and no document was issued. It underlined once again that the P-5 (the five permanent UNSC member states), with the exception of China, is in no mood to play the "Kashmir" game, which it considers to be a bilateral matter between India and Pakistan (even if parts of it have been ceded by Pakistan to China).

India's move to keep the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance has also been targeted by Pakistan at the UNSC. India will no doubt keep the pressure on the UNSC to stop any outcome document, unlike how a similar issue was dealt with in 2021 between Ethiopia and Egypt on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. Any one country in the UNSC can stop a statement.

## The path ahead

Consequently, if the world is so concerned about India not using kinetic options to fight terror from where it originates, should not India's "strategic" partners demand accountability from Pakistan rather than substituting harsh words for real action or calling on "both sides" to "defuse" tensions? To deter Pakistan, India's close Gulf partners, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which are themselves undertaking internal socio-religious reforms, need to step up. The international community must act to deter and sanction Pakistan, and not merely react episodically. If it refuses to act, India will act alone. Apart from the current slew of options, India will also have to think ahead

Having built a strong international framework to combat terror, including terror financing and misuse of emerging technology, the international community cannot step back on combating terror, especially state-sponsored terrorism. Three years after raising it for the first time in the UN General Assembly in 2022, India has yet another opportunity to take the lead in combating religiophobia against non-Abrahamic religions. This time its campaign should go beyond the UN, where select Indian Missions should take up the issue bilaterally with their host countries.

All this points to one thing. India should not only create geopolitical space for itself through its strategic autonomy and multi-alignment policy, but must also be prepared to use it when it matters. There is no doubt that such parleys are on.

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- The United States Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, went to the extent of calling on both parties to “work towards … a responsible resolution that maintains long term peace and regional stability in South Asia”.
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- The European Union’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas could not even get around to calling it a “terror attack”.
- Gone are the days of “zero tolerance” to terror. Gone are the days when the perpetrators of terror were called out and accountability demanded.
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## Fact

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- China has blocked proposals submitted by India in 2022 to “black-list”, under the UN Security Council 1267 sanctions regime, terrorists operating against India from Pakistani soil.
- Now that Pakistan is in the UN Security Council (UNSC) for 2025-26 (as a non-permanent member), these will remain blocked for at least two more years.
- The world is blindsided by the spread of terror in Asia and Africa. Terrorism in Africa has spread exponentially, from the Sahel to Mozambique. The Global Terrorism Index 2025 points out that the Sahel is now the epicentre of terrorism, accounting for over half of all terrorism deaths in the world.

# Food vs fuel: Surge in ethanol blending and its impacts

Will the increased diversion of sugar for ethanol blending reduce its availability for direct consumption?

## DATA POINT

### Nitika Francis

**I**ndia is looking to increase the ethanol-blending ratio in petrol to 30% to further cut down on fossil fuel consumption, as it has met its previous target of 20% in 2025, well ahead of schedule. This would require an increase in the diversion of sugar, produced from sugarcane and other sources, for ethanol production. However, sugarcane production has been on the decline since 2022, so much so that on Thursday, the Centre approved a hike in the Fair Remunerative Price for the crop to protect the interests of farmers. Consequently, the price of sugar has risen too, pinching the pockets of consumers.

Will the increased diversion of sugar for ethanol blending further reduce its availability for direct consumption and push prices even higher?

**Chart 1** shows the annual sugarcane production in India in the last 10 years. Following a dip in FY17 due to drought conditions in sugar-producing States, production was almost consistently increasing until it peaked at 490 crore tonnes in FY23. It declined in the following year and is estimated to further dip in FY25 as well to 435 crore tonnes.

A slate of components has influenced lower production of sugarcane over the recent years, such as red-rot disease among crops in major sugar-producing States, deficient rains, and problems with the flowering of crops.

This decline in production has predictably impacted the retail sugar prices across the country. **Chart 2**, which shows the country-wide modal retail price of one kilogram of sugar, depicts prices rising from ₹40 per kg in May 2023 to ₹45 per kg as of May 5, 2025.

Ethanol blending adds to the price pressure by diverting a portion of the sugar. Government data

show a rapid increase in the amount of sugarcane-based ethanol supplied for blending over the past decade, going from about 40 crore litres in FY14 to nearly 670 crore litres in FY24 (**Chart 3**). The practice is lauded for its sustainability-related benefits as well as its potential to reduce India's dependence on oil imports.

The Centre has been implementing a long-term Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP) since the start of the 2000s, which allowed for a stagnant, then gradually increasing supply of ethanol. Initially, as a means of ensuring adequate availability of sugar for domestic consumption, the government banned the use of sugarcane juice, sugar syrup, and B-heavy molasses for ethanol production. This ban was lifted later, which explains the surge in supply in recent years.

A commensurate increase can be seen in the rate at which ethanol was blended with petrol over the years. **Chart 4** shows the ethanol blending ratio over the last 10 years. From just over 1.5% in FY14, the rate of ethanol blending has surged to 20% in FY25. The ethanol blending ratio surged due to a combination of a consistent increase in sugar diverted for ethanol production and a drastic reduction in the goods and services tax imposed on ethanol meant for the EBP.

At the time of its inception, the EBP had set the target of 20% blending to be achieved by 2030. However, upon seeing the progress attained through lifting caps and taxes, standing at 15% blended ethanol in 2024, it was decided to advance the 20% target to 2025. The ratio was reached in March this year, leading to talks of a 30% target for the coming years.

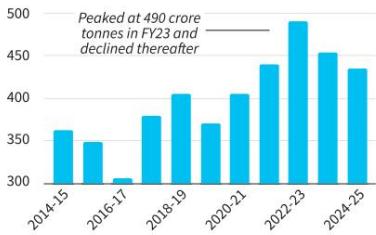
With the availability of sugarcane impacted this year, reports show that the government is looking at grains to make up for the shortfall. Moreover, with sugar prices rising, the choice between food and fuel looms.

## Bittersweet blend

The data were sourced from Lok Sabha Questions and Answers, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy



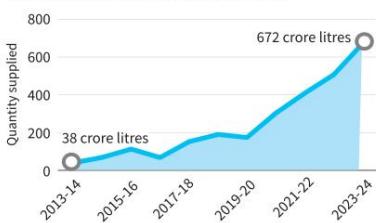
**Chart 1:** The chart shows the annual sugarcane production in India over the last ten years (in crore tonnes)



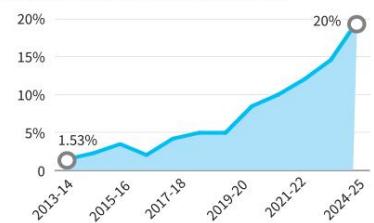
**Chart 2:** The country-wide modal retail price of 1 kg of sugar between May 2022 and May 2025 (in ₹ per kg)



**Chart 3:** The chart shows the amount of sugarcane-based ethanol supplied for blending (in crore litres)



**Chart 4:** The chart shows the ethanol blending ratio achieved in India over the last decade (in %)



**Page No. 9, GS 3**

## Content.

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## Fact

- Ethanol blending adds to the price pressure by diverting a portion of the sugar.
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- The practice is lauded for its sustainability-related benefits as well as its potential to reduce India's dependence on oil imports.
- The Centre has been implementing a long-term Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP) since the start of the 2000s, which allowed for a stagnant, then gradually increasing supply of ethanol.

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# Centre plans revision of 'safe harbour' clause

I&B Ministry says it plans to revisit guidelines for intermediaries in a bid to curb 'fake news'; the IT Act provision protects the platforms by not holding them liable for the user-generated content

**Sobhana K. Nair**

**Aroon Deep**

NEW DELHI

In a bid to disincentivise "fake news" content, the government plans to revise the guidelines for intermediary platforms and revisit the "safe harbour" provisions that protect these platforms, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has, according to sources, said in reply to questions from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communication and Information Technology, headed by BJP MP Nishikant Dubey.

In the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack, the government has blocked dozens of YouTube channels citing their spread of fake news. While most of the impacted accounts are Pakistani, at least two Indian channels, one belonging to influencer Dr. Medusa and a YouTube news channel 4PM News, were taken down.

The parliamentary panel is scheduled to meet on Wednesday morning. In the written submission made ahead of the meeting, the I&B Ministry, as per sources, said: "In order to check the menace of



In order to check the menace of fake news, the due diligence for the intermediary platforms could be revisited requiring them to take appropriate steps to remove fake news from their platforms on their own

I&B MINISTRY IN REPLY TO JPC



There is a need to revisit the 'safe harbour' provision

ASHWINI VAISHNAW  
Union I&B Minister in November 2024

fake news, the due diligence for the intermediary platforms could be revisited requiring them to take appropriate steps to remove fake news from their platforms on their own."

The intermediary platforms enjoy immunity from liability for content posted on their platforms by users under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, 2000.

The provision provides a safe harbour for the intermediaries by not holding them liable for the user-generated content as long as they comply with guidelines issued by the Union government.

The government has repeatedly maintained that it plans to make the interme-

diary platforms more accountable, but has not taken any concrete step. While speaking on the occasion of National Press Day in November 2024, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw said that there was a need to revisit the "safe harbour" provision.

The I&B Ministry, meanwhile, said "self regulation" was the best way to address fake news. For now, it has ruled out bringing a new law to address "fake news" saying that it would require "broader consultation and consensus building" especially in view of provisions relating to the freedom of speech and expression in the

Constitution.

The government feels that giving a statutory basis to the Fact Check Unit under the Press Information Bureau (PIB), as proposed in the amendments to IT Rules 2021 as above is necessary for checking fake news relating to its plans, programmes and initiatives.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology is in the process of filing a special leave petition (SLP) against the judgment of Bombay High Court that struck down the Fact Check Unit's authority to eliminate safe harbour for content on social media platforms that the government has deemed to be misinformation.

**Page No. 12, GS 3**

## Content.

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## Fact

- The government feels that giving a statutory basis to the Fact Check Unit under the Press Information Bureau (PIB), as proposed in the amendments to IT Rules 2021 as above is necessary for checking fake news relating to its plans, programmes and initiatives.
- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology is in the process of filing a special leave petition (SLP) against the judgment of Bombay High Court that struck down the Fact Check Unit's authority to eliminate safe harbour for content on social media platforms that the government has deemed to be misinformation.

# In a push towards transparency, SC publishes assets of 21 judges

Page No. 12, GS 2

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**

NEW DELHI

Twenty-one Supreme Court judges, including Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, have disclosed their financial assets and liabilities on the top court's website, sending a strong message to critics who blamed the judiciary for lack of transparency.

The near-midnight publication of the wealth and properties, both earned and inherited, of the judges and their family members on Monday incidentally came within hours of the court issuing a statement that a three-member inquiry committee had submitted its report on the



transparency notes in the official residence of a High Court judge, Justice Yashwant Varma. The court had responded to allegations of opacity by moving towards transparency with regard to judges' assets and the Justice Varma controversy.

The list of assets of the 21 out of a total 33 serving judges of the apex court includes

between the commonplace and affluence: home and car loans, a few pieces of jewellery, a house still under construction as retirement draws close, ancestral properties, and residential apartments in metros.

Chief Justice Khanna has listed a three-bedroom Delhi Development Authority (DDA) flat and a four-bedroom one with parking lots at the Commonwealth Games Village in the national capital. He has a share in an ancestral property acquired and developed by his grandfather several years before Partition. The top judge has investments worth over ₹55 lakh and no loans, a Life In-

and a 2015-model hatchback.

CJI-designate B.R. Gavai has a house inherited from his father in his native Amravati in Maharashtra besides apartments in Mumbai and New Delhi and agricultural lands.

The assets of Justices B.V. Nagarathna, J.K. Mshewari, Dipankar Datta, Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Manoj Misra, Aravind Kumar, P.K. Mishra, S.C. Sharma, P.B. Varale, N. Kotiswar Singh, R. Mahadevan and Joymalya Bagchi have not been uploaded. The Supreme Court clarified that "statement of assets of other judges will be uploaded as and when the current statement of assets is revised".

## Content.

- Twenty-one Supreme Court judges, including Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, have disclosed their financial assets and liabilities on the top court's website, sending a strong message to critics who blamed the judiciary for lack of transparency.
- The near-midnight publication of the wealth and properties, both earned and inherited, of the judges and their family members on Monday incidentally came within hours of the court issuing a statement that a three-member inquiry committee had submitted its report on the discovery of half-burnt currency notes in the official residence of a High Court judge, Justice Yashwant Varma. The court had responded to allegations of opacity by moving towards transparency with regard to judges' assets and the Justice Varma controversy.
- The list of assets of the 21 out of a total 33 serving judges of the court swings between the commonplace and affluence: home and car loans, a few pieces of jewellery, a house still under construction as retirement draws close, ancestral properties, and residential apartments in metros.

# Gaganyaan's manned mission likely in first quarter of 2027: ISRO chief

Page No. 14, GS 3

**Jacob Koshy**

NEW DELHI

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) expects the Gaganyaan mission to launch Indian astronauts into space to take place in the first quarter of 2027, V. Narayanan, Chairman, ISRO, said at a press conference on Tuesday.

While it will be preceded by three test launches (two uncrewed and one with a robot), this is the latest extension of the launch date, in this most anticipated of ISRO's missions. The crewed mission was initially proposed for 2022 but kept being pushed further, with early 2027 being the latest timeline.

## Delay due to pandemic

Union Minister of State for Space Jitendra Singh and Mr. Narayanan said the delays had been caused by



**Taking flight:** The first uncrewed mission expected later this year will have a robot called Vyom-mitra on board. ANI

the COVID-19 pandemic, the tests required to train astronauts, extra test flights of the launch vehicle, and a revamped Gaganyaan programme under which eight missions, both crewed and uncrewed, would be executed till 2028.

"There are thousands of components and at least 10 lakh lines of code that need

to be written for ensuring that the crew in the launch vehicle is safe, can escape in case of an emergency, [and] they can be brought back safely to earth after the mission is completed," Mr. Narayanan said.

"About 10,000 people working for four-five years have to be credited with the progress so far."

Mr. Narayanan also said

the Axiom-4 private space mission to carry Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla to the International Space Station was scheduled for the first week of June. Officially, this launch, according to Axiom, is scheduled for May 29. India has paid ₹550 crore to Axiom for taking the first Indian astronaut to space after Rakesh Sharma's journey of 1984.

"This mission will allow Mr. Shukla to conduct several missions as well as gain extremely valuable experience, which will be useful to us," he said.

For the first uncrewed mission expected later this year, with a robot called Vyom-mitra on board, all propulsion systems for the human-rated launch vehicle are ready, and about 90% of the necessary infrastructure and tests are also ready.

## Content.

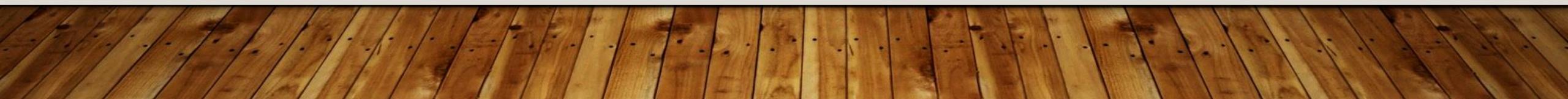
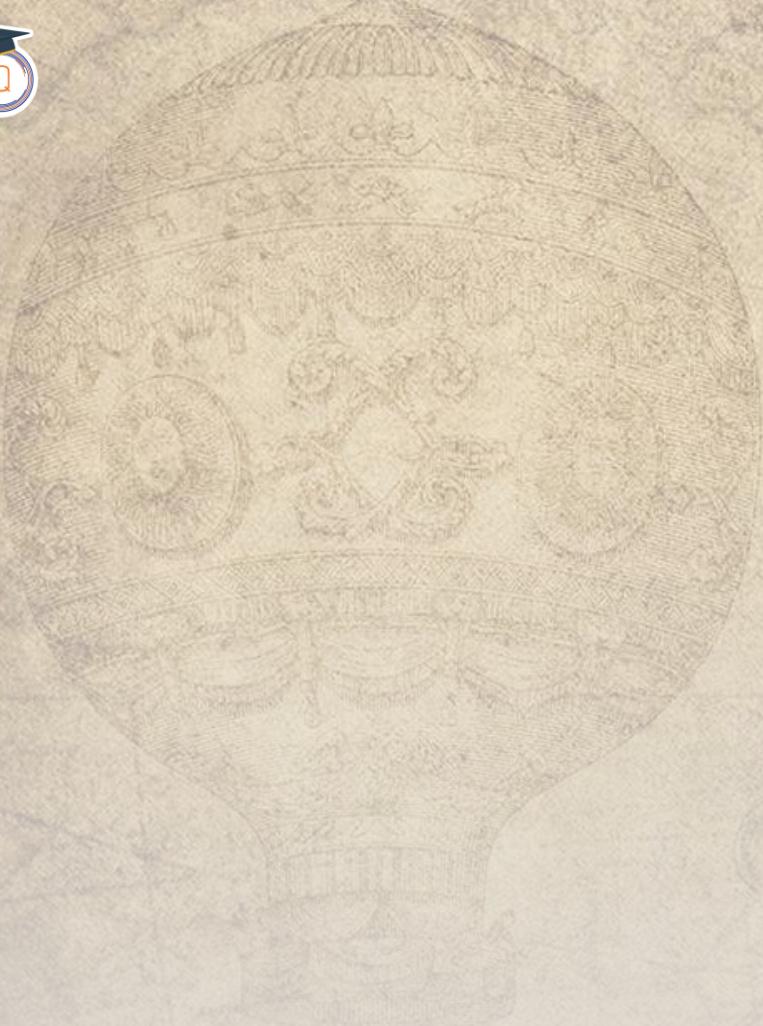
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- Union Minister of State for Space Jitendra Singh and Mr. Narayanan said the delays had been caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the tests required to train astronauts, extra test flights of the launch vehicle, and a revamped Gaganyaan programme under which eight missions, both crewed and uncrewed, would be executed till 2028.

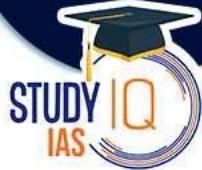
## Fact

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- Officially, this launch, according to Axiom, is scheduled for May 29. India has paid ₹550 crore to Axiom for taking the first Indian astronaut to space after Rakesh Sharma's journey of 1984.
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## Axiom-4 Mission (Ax-4)

- Ax-4 is the fourth private astronaut mission to the International Space Station (ISS).
- It is organized by Axiom Space in collaboration with NASA.
- The Ax-4 crew will launch aboard a SpaceX Dragon spacecraft to the ISS from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.
- Once docked, the private astronauts plan to spend up to 14 days aboard the ISS.
- During their time aboard the ISS, the crew will conduct scientific experiments, perform technology demonstrations, and engage in educational outreach.
- Research areas include materials science, biology, Earth observation, and more, with the potential to yield groundbreaking discoveries and innovations.
- The mission will send the first Indian astronaut to the station as part of a joint effort between NASA and the Indian space agency.





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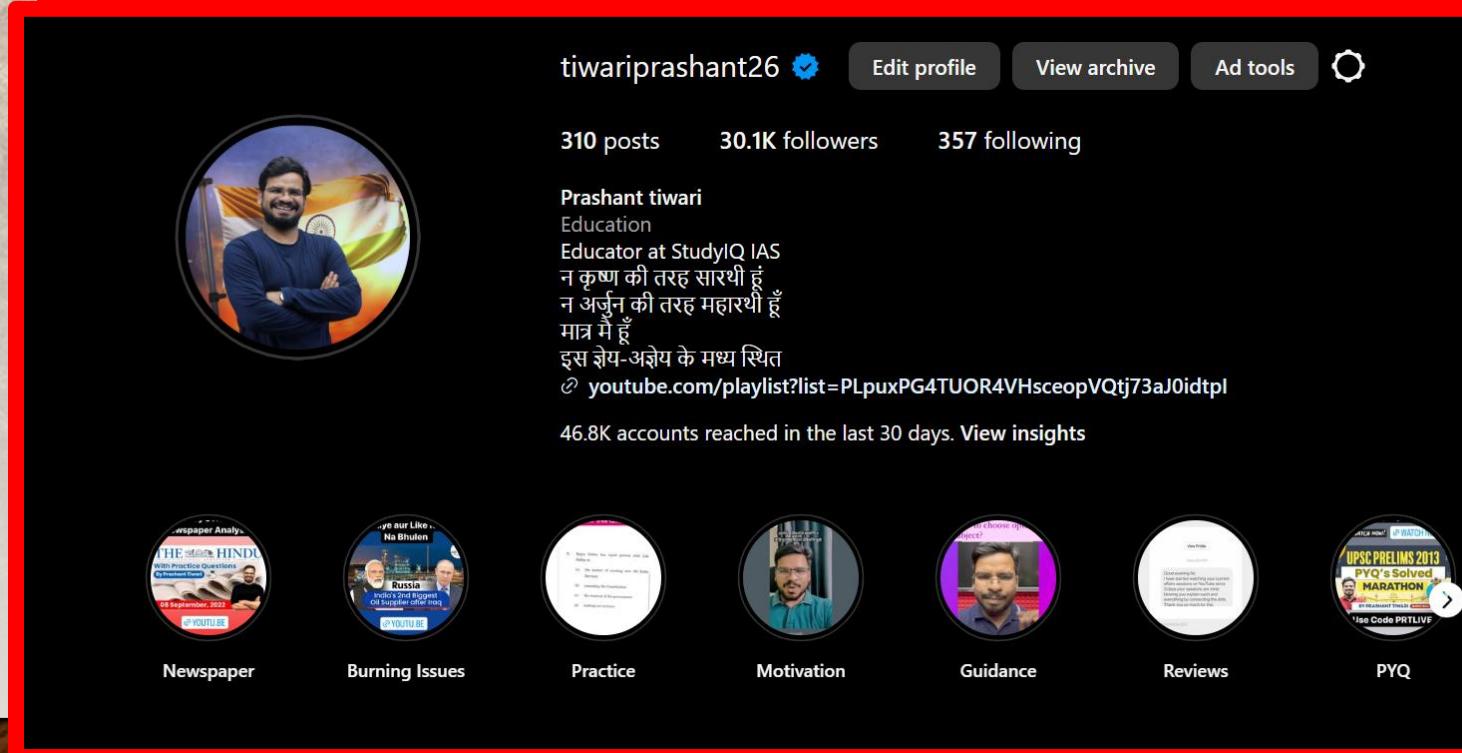
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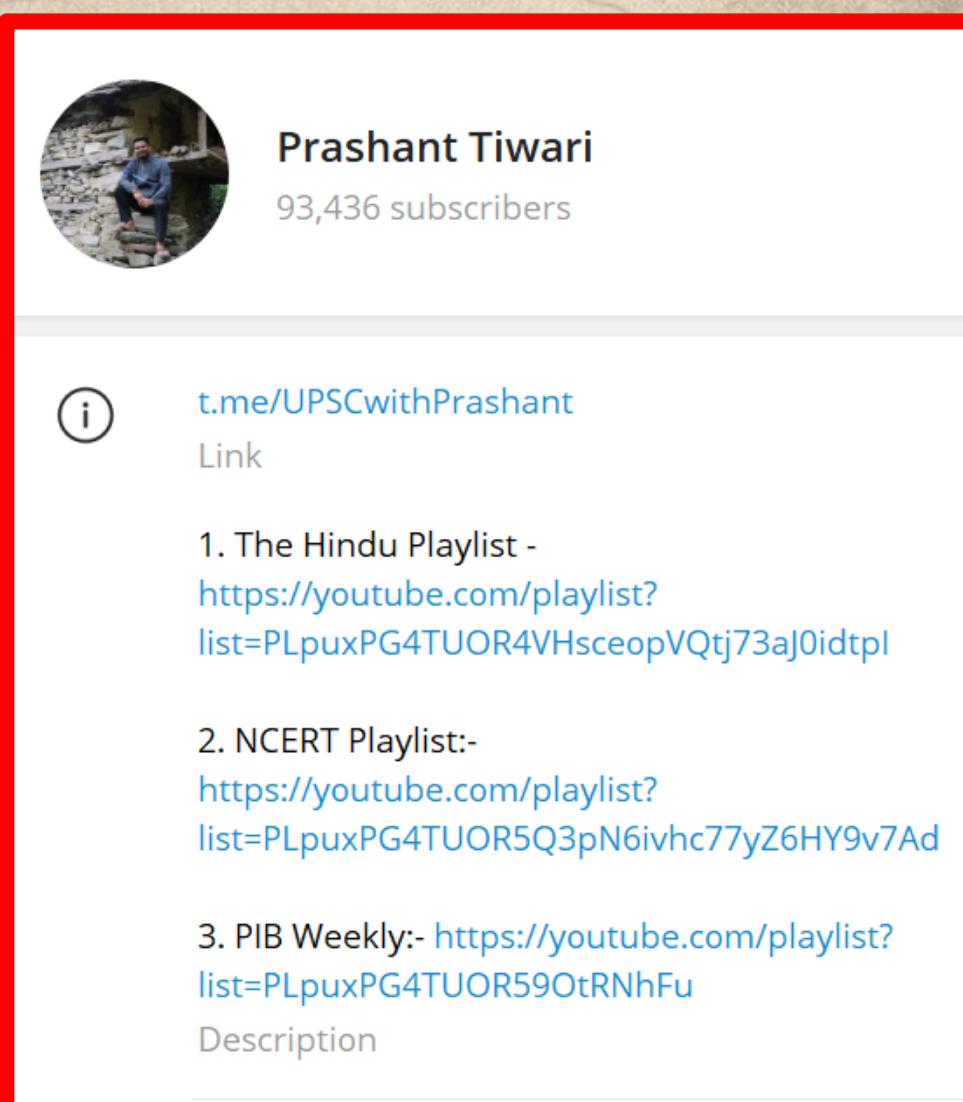
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