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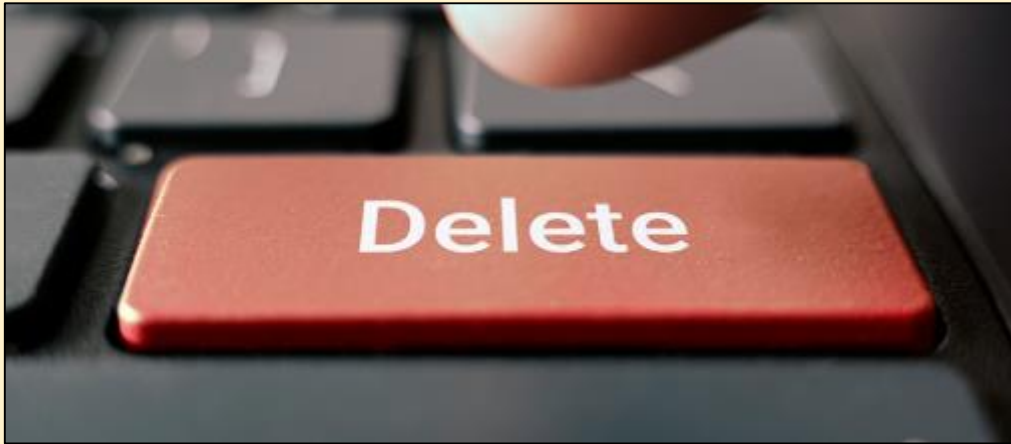
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THE RIGHT TO BE FORGOTTEN

The Delhi High Court laid down a landmark framework governing the right to be forgotten in India through its ruling in *Laksh Vir Singh Yadav v. Union of India*.



The Right to be Forgotten

About The Right to be Forgotten:

What it is?

- The right to be forgotten empowers individuals to seek the removal, erasure, or de-indexing of their personal information from public digital platforms and search engines. It is invoked when the continued digital accessibility of such information—like past accusations or obsolete legal disputes—causes ongoing harm and no longer serves any legitimate public interest.

Background of the Right to be Forgotten:

- **The European Origins:** The concept gained global prominence in 2014 when a Spanish citizen, Mario Costeja González, successfully petitioned the European Court of Justice against Google to remove outdated newspaper notices regarding a settled debt.
- **Codification in the EU:** Following the Spanish landmark ruling, the right to erasure was formally codified and incorporated into Article 17 of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- **Evolution in Indian Law:** The foundation for the right in India was laid by the Supreme Court's K.S. Puttaswamy (2017) judgment, which established informational privacy as a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution.
- **The Pre-2026 Legal Vacuum:** Before the recent Delhi High Court judgment, India lacked a coherent statutory framework; various High Courts took divergent approaches, with some allowing name masking and others refusing it on the grounds of open justice.

Need for the Right to be Forgotten in India:

- **Permanent Stigma Despite Acquittal:** Innocent individuals continue to suffer because name-based searches yield historical accusations rather than acquittals.

- **Protection of Victims and Falsely Accused:** Digital permanence ruins the reputations of those falsely accused of heinous crimes even after courts clear them.
- **Shielding Private Matrimonial Disputes:** Purely private family matters that carry no continuing public value can cause unnecessary social stigma if left easily searchable.
- **Preventing Harm from Incidental Mentions:** Some people suffer reputational damage simply by being tangentially related to a case without any personal involvement.

Court Judgments:

- **K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017):** The Supreme Court constitutionally recognized privacy, including informational privacy and information self-determination, as a fundamental right guaranteed under Article 21.
- **Laksh Vir Singh Yadav v. Union of India (2026):** The Delhi High Court ruled that the right to be forgotten naturally flows from Article 21's guarantee of dignity and informational privacy, operating even against private commercial entities.
- **The Structured Proportionality Test:** The Delhi High Court established that the retention of digital records must have a legitimate purpose, and any harm to privacy must be carefully weighed against the public interest.

Way Ahead

- **Operationalizing the DPDP Act:** The government must notify the rules for the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, and fully operationalize the Data Protection Board to address erasure requests efficiently.
- **Establishing a Tiered Dispute System:** To prevent judicial bottlenecks, erasure requests should first be handled by tech platforms, escalated to the Data Protection Board if contested, and only reach the courts for final judicial review.
- **Improving Digital Accuracy Over Obfuscation:** Legal databases must be mandated to regularly refresh their systems to display contextual updates – such as subsequent acquittals or discharges – rather than relying solely on hiding information.
- **Ensuring Cross-Platform Technical Compliance:** The right remains largely symbolic if de-indexing only occurs on one search engine; a coordinated technical mechanism is required to prevent archive copies and social media mirrors from resurfacing redacted data.
- **Awaiting Supreme Court Ratification:** While the Delhi High Court has laid down an important framework, a definitive Supreme Court ruling is necessary to create a binding, nationwide standard balancing privacy with open justice.

The recognition of the right to be forgotten marks a crucial step in shielding citizens from the perpetual shadow of crime caused by an unforgiving digital memory. By balancing informational privacy with open justice through name masking rather than total deletion, the judiciary has forged a balanced middle path. However, its ultimate success will depend on robust technical compliance from tech giants and the active enforcement of the DPDP Act across India.

ABOUT DPDP ACT, 2023

- **Aim:** To provide mechanism for the processing of digital personal data in a manner that recognizes both the right of individuals to protect their personal data and the need to process such personal data for lawful purpose.
- **7 Core Principles:** Consent and Transparency, Purpose Limitation, Data Minimisation, Accuracy, Storage Limitation, Security Safeguards, and Accountability.
- **Key Definitions**
 - **Data Principal:** Person to whom the data relates
 - **Data Fiduciary:** Person/company/government entity that processes data
 - **Consent Manager:** Entity registered with Data Protection Board of India (DPBI) to enable data principals to give, review, and withdraws consent.
- **Applicability:** Processing of digital personal data within India (collected digitally or digitized later), Processing outside India if offering goods/services in India
 - **Does not apply to:** Personal use data, publicly available data.
- **Consent Requirements:** Personal data processed only for lawful purposes with Data Principal's consent
 - **Consent not required for:** Government benefits/services, medical emergencies (legitimate uses).
- **Data Protection Board of India (DPBI):** Monitor compliance and impose penalties.
- **Financial penalties for non-compliance by Data Fiduciaries:**
 - Up to **₹250 crore** in case of failure to maintain reasonable security safeguards.
 - Up to **₹200 crore** for not notifying the Board or affected individuals of a personal data breach; violations of obligations relating to children.
 - Up to **₹50 crore** for any other violation of the Act or Rules.
- **Revises Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act:** By exempting disclosure of information which relates to personal information.

Need of digital data protection

- **Protection of Individual Privacy:** Without safeguards, citizens may face surveillance, profiling by **arbitrary state or Big tech companies** using Personal data (biometrics, location, health, financial details).
- **Prevention of Data Misuse & Exploitation:** Data can be misused for identity theft, financial fraud, targeted manipulation (ads, elections).
 - E.g., 33,000 additional Cybercrime cases were reported in 2023 as compared to 2021. (National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB))
- **Cyber-security & National Security:** Large datasets are targets for Hackers and hostile state actors for Cyber espionage.
 - E.g., **Cybersecurity incidents** in India rose **from 10.29 lakh in 2022 to 22.68 lakh in 2024.**
- **Building trust in digital economy:** It will allow India's digital economy grow in a secure and globally competitive way.
 - India's digital economy accounted for **11.74% of GDP** in **2022-23.**
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups:** Children, elderly, women are more vulnerable to data breaches, online harassment and exploitation.
- **Ethical Use of Emerging Technologies:** Ensures non-discrimination, fair algorithms and human oversight.

Criticisms of DPDP Rules, 2025 and DPDP Act, 2023

- **Broad Exemptions:** Government can exempt notified agencies for reasons like "security," "sovereignty," and "public order" without clear oversight mechanisms from data protection obligations.
- **Missing Rights:** Act omits the right to data portability and the right to be forgotten.
- **Ambiguity in definitions:** E.g., "significant data fiduciary" and thresholds for stricter obligations.
- **Compliance Burden and Impact on Innovation:** High compliance costs and operational complexity may stifle business growth and innovation in Data-heavy businesses.

Other initiatives taken for digital Data protection

- **K.S. Puttaswamy Judgment (2017):** Recognized the **Right to Privacy** as a **fundamental right** under **Article 21** and directed the government to establish a **robust data protection framework**.
- **Justice B.N. Srikrishna Committee (2017):** Examined data protection issues and recommended a comprehensive law for data protection.
- **Digital Information Security in Healthcare Act (DISHA):** Framework for healthcare data protection.
- **Computer Emergency Response Team - India (CERT-In): Cybersecurity Directions (April 2022)** of CERT-In requires reporting incidents of data breach within 6 hours, maintaining security logs.

About DPDP Rules, 2025

- Marks the full operationalisation of Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (DPDP Act).
- Ministry: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- Implementation timeline: 18-month phased compliance period for organizations to adjust their systems and adopt responsible data practices.

Key Provisions of the rules

Rights of citizens under DPDP Rules



Right to Nominate Another Person to exercise their data rights on their behalf.



Right to Give or Refuse Consent, includes withdrawal of consent at any time.



Right to Know How personal Data is Used, includes information on what data has been collected and why it has been collected.



Right to Access Personal Data held by a Data Fiduciary.



Right to Correct and update Personal Data.



Right to Erase Personal Data in certain situations.

- **Obligations on Data Fiduciaries:**

- **Issue standalone consent notices:** That are clear and simple, provide an itemized description and specific purpose of personal data and specify means by which the Data Principal may withdraw consent.
 - The **ease of withdrawing consent** must be comparable to **ease with which it was given**.
- **Erase personal data:** If specified purpose is no longer being served (unless legally required to retain it).
 - Personal data, and other logs related to processing need to be retained for a **minimum period of 1 year** from the date of processing, unless longer retention is mandated by law or notification.
- **Issue Personal Data Breach Notification:** Informing all affected individuals without delay, explaining what happened, possible impact and steps taken to address the issue.
- **Publish business contact information of designated officer/Data Protection Officer:** on the website or app for queries related to personal data.
- **Mandatory Response within 90 Days:** for all requests related to access, correction, updating or erasure.
- **Special Protection of children's data:** Through verifiable consent from a parent or guardian before processing a child's personal data.
 - Exemption of consent allowed for essential purposes like **healthcare, education, and real-time safety and protection** of child.

- **Rights and protections for citizens (See infographic).**

- **Data Protection Board of India (DPBI):** Consisting of 4 members with dedicated portal and mobile application allowing citizens to file and track complaints.
 - Appeals against Board's decisions to be heard by **Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT)**.

- **Other provisions:**

- **Enhance obligations on Significant Data Fiduciaries (SDFs)** including mandatory periodic Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA), **independent audits once every 12 months**, stricter checks while using new or sensitive technologies etc.
- **Consent Managers** to be companies based in India.
- **Special Protection for Persons with Disabilities** if they cannot make legal decisions.

INDIA-AUSTRALIA ANNUAL SUMMIT

Prime Minister of India visited Australia to participate in the Third India-Australia Annual Summit in Melbourne, where both leaders adopted a Joint Statement to deepen the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP).



About Third India-Australia Annual Summit:

What is it?

- The India-Australia Annual Summit is the highest-level bilateral engagement mechanism between the two countries, held annually to review and expand the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) established in 2020.

Key Outcomes of the Third India-Australia Annual Summit:

1. Defense and Maritime Security Architecture:

- **Joint Security Declaration:** The leaders announced a milestone Joint Declaration on Defense and Security Cooperation alongside establishing an **Annual Defense Ministers' Dialogue** to elevate services-level interoperability.
- **The Maritime Security Roadmap:** Both nations launched the India-Australia Maritime Security Collaboration Roadmap and formalized a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Australian Maritime Border Command and the Indian Coast Guard.
- **Defense Industrial Integration:** Plans were formalized to finalize an MoU for the Provision of Defense Articles and Defense Services, supported by the upcoming placement of an Indian military instructor at the Australian Defense College in 2028-2029.

2. Trade, Critical Minerals, and Supply Chain Resilience

- **Progressing toward the CECA:** Building on the active Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA), both leaders committed to accelerating the finalization of a comprehensive, full-scale **Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)**.
- **Critical Minerals Partnership:** The summit formalized project-based investment pipelines between government agencies and private firms to secure long-term offtake, refining, and value-addition capabilities for critical tech minerals.

3. Climate, Energy, and Space Technology

- **Uranium Export Arrangements:** The leaders finalized and signed the Administrative Arrangement under the bilateral Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, enabling immediate, **long-term Australian uranium exports to India** under strict IAEA safeguards.
- **The Renewable Energy Partnership:** Under the Joint Statement on Energy Security, the summit operationalized the Rooftop Solar Academy to drive decentralized electrification.
- **Space Infrastructure Integration:** Australia confirmed ongoing tracking support for India's **Gaganyaan Human Space Flight Program** by commissioning a temporary space tracking terminal on the Cocos Keeling Islands.

4. Education, Mobility, and Cultural Pacts

- **Inaugurating Australian Campuses in India:** The University Grants Commission (UGC) issued a Letter of Intent to **Flinders University** to open its campus in Bengaluru, and a Letter of Approval to **Victoria University** for a campus in Gurugram.
- **The Maitri Grants Rollout:** Australia announced a **\$10 million allocation** for the Centre for Australia-India Relations' Maitri Grants to deepen people-to-people links.
- **The Bhubaneswar Skilling Hub:** The Western Australian Government partnered with India to establish a National Centre of Excellence for Skilling in Mining in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Strategic Opportunities:

- **Unlocking Comprehensive Bilateral Trade:** Finalizing the ambitious CECA will remove non-tariff trade barriers, helping businesses optimize operations across two massive consumer markets.

Example: The ongoing drop in tariffs under ECTA has already boosted agricultural and textile shipments.

- **Securing Clean Energy Feedstocks:** India can secure its domestic semiconductor and EV push by importing certified lithium and cobalt from Australia.

Example: Joint venture frameworks allow Indian entities to co-invest directly in mining assets across Western Australia.

- **Deepening Space Exploration Backbones:** Establishing multi-island technical telemetry links directly improves India's launch tracking capabilities.

Example: The Cocos Keeling Islands tracking terminal provides critical real-time communication coordinates for the upcoming Gaganyaan mission.

- **Bridging the Vocational Skill Deficit:** India can leverage Australia's industrial training modules to upgrade its local workforce in advanced engineering sectors.

Example: The newly established Mining Centre in Bhubaneswar will deliver specialized vocational credentials to thousands of local technicians.

- **Expanding Global Sports and Event Infrastructure:** Preparing for sequential global tournaments provides an avenue to share best practices in modern sports logistics.

Example: The countries launched a Sports Collaboration Roadmap as Australia prepares for the 2032 Brisbane Olympics and India builds assets for the 2030 Ahmedabad Commonwealth Games.

Key Challenges and Friction Points:

- **The Weaponization of Economic Interdependence:** Both economies face deep trade exposure to dominant regional non-market powers, creating high vulnerabilities during supply chain shocks.

Example: Arbitrary export restrictions on critical lithium and rare earth elements highlight the difficulty of achieving commercial decoupling.

- **Countering Regional and Cross-Border Terrorism:** The emergence of new, online-driven radical networks and localized violent extremism presents an ongoing threat to democratic institutions.

Example: The joint statement highlighted and condemned recent tragic terrorist acts perpetrated at Pahalgam and Bondi Beach.

- **Disruptions to Key Maritime Chokepoints:** Ongoing geopolitical conflicts across West Asia directly threaten energy flows and maritime shipping safety.

Example: Recent escalations in tensions near the Persian Gulf have driven up commercial logistics costs and insurance premiums for vessels.

- **Slow Realization of Trade Treaties:** Navigating domestic industrial lobbies, agricultural protections, and data localization rules can delay the final execution of full-scale trade deals.

Example: Transitioning the early-stage ECTA into a finalized, comprehensive CECA has required years of complex regulatory negotiations.

- **Persistent Gaps in Global Governance Reforms:** Structural resistance from legacy superpowers continues to delay needed text-based updates to archaic international security councils.

Example: Despite Australia's explicit backing for India's permanent seat, the UN Security Council remains unrepresentative of contemporary realities.

Way Forward:

- **Executing the Uranium Administrative Arrangement:** Fast-track the newly finalized regulatory protocols to commence continuous Australian uranium shipments for India's clean energy reactors under full IAEA safeguards.
- **Finalizing the CECA Free Trade Agreement:** Instruct trade ministries to resolve remaining tariff disputes to sign the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement before the end of the current fiscal year.
- **Operationalizing PACTS for Supply Chains:** Fully deploy the Australia-India Partnership on Cyber, Critical Technologies and Supply Chains to build secure, alternative semiconductor and telecom networks.
- **Launching Trilateral Maritime Security Exercises:** Leverage the existing Australia-India-Indonesia trilateral mechanism to execute real-time data sharing and counter marine pollution across the Eastern Indian Ocean.
- **Standardizing the International Skilling Matrix:** Ensure the vocational mining certifications delivered at the Bhubaneswar center are globally aligned, allowing smooth talent circulation between both industrial markets.

By matching critical agreements like long-term uranium exports with advanced defense articles MoUs and direct university branch campuses, the two democracies have built a comprehensive, future-ready partnership. Moving forward, finalizing the comprehensive CECA trade deal and securing semiconductor supply lines will remain vital to protect their economic sovereignty and ensure regional stability.

TRIBEX

Context: Union Minister for Tribal Affairs officially launched **TribeX**, a first-of-its-kind digital learning platform dedicated to tribal arts, culture, traditional knowledge, and skill development.



About TribeX Digital Learning Platform:

What It Is?

- TribeX is a comprehensive, centralized digital learning ecosystem and repository created to preserve, document, and globally showcase India's rich tribal culture. The platform acts as an open-access gateway, offering learners, researchers, and enthusiasts worldwide the opportunity to study directly under master tribal artisans and native knowledge experts.

Ministry: the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.

Aim: The core objective of TribeX is to bridge geographical barriers through technology, empower tribal communities, preserve indigenous knowledge, languages, and crafts, and promote sustainable livelihood-oriented education for future generations.

Key Features:

- **Dual-Tier Academic Framework:**
 - **Free Certificate Courses:** Currently hosts **20 free certificate courses** covering a wide range of tribal art forms, paintings, handicrafts, handloom, and traditional musical instruments, with a formal roadmap to scale up to over 100 courses.
 - **Post Graduate Diplomas:** Offers five UGC-recognized, one-year hybrid diploma programmes launched through a strategic MoU with the Sampurnanand Sanskrit University (SSU), Varanasi.
- **The Five Core PG Diploma Specializations:**
 - Tribal Language: Santali (utilizing the script **OI Chiki**)
 - Sustainable Tribal Culture-Based Livelihood Practices
 - Museology and Tribal Museum Management
 - Tribal Arts and Crafts of India
 - Tribal Textiles

- **Job-Oriented Curriculum:** The PG diploma programs combine expert online lectures with mandatory real-world field internships and dissertation writing, explicitly designed to create immediate employment opportunities in design, curation, tourism, and research.
- **Robust Core Management Systems:** Driven by an integrated **Learning Management System (LMS)** and a secure **Repository Management System**, providing seamless user navigation, structured student tracking, and high-fidelity knowledge cataloging.
- **Massive Multimedia Heritage Archive:** Contains an expanding repository of **over 5,000 multimedia resources** (scaling up to 10,000), including field audio recordings, documentary videos, and verified literature capturing tribal festivals, socio-cultural rituals, and rare oral histories from across India.

CYANANTHUS HOOKERI

Cyananthus hookeri, a rare purple-blue alpine herb of the Campanulaceae family, was rediscovered in Arunachal Pradesh after 158 years. The first confirmed Indian record since 1867 was made in the Chuna Valley near Mago village in Tawang district at an altitude of about 3,600 metres.



Species Profile

Cyananthus hookeri is a flowering alpine plant in the bellflower family, Campanulaceae. It is a delicate herb adapted to high-altitude habitats in the Eastern Himalayas. The species was last documented in India by British botanist Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker in Sikkim in 1867.

Rediscovery in Arunachal Pradesh

The plant was recorded during a field survey in September 2025 by a team from the Botanical Survey of India. The team included Dr. Sudhansu Sekhar Dash, Dr. Subhajit Lahiri, and Monalisa Das. The site lies in the Chuna Valley of Tawang district, which is part of Arunachal Pradesh's eastern Himalayan landscape.

Conservation Status and Publication

Researchers observed fewer than 50 mature plants in the wild, and some counts at the collection site showed only three to seven mature individuals. The species has been recommended for classification as Endangered in India under IUCN criteria. The findings were published online on 30 June 2026 in *Oryx*, a conservation journal published by Cambridge University Press.

Botanical and Geographical Context

High-altitude alpine plants in India are often found above the tree line in cold, rocky habitats. Tawang district is one of the northern districts of Arunachal Pradesh and contains parts of the Himalayan mountain system. Species rediscoveries in such regions are used in plant taxonomy, biodiversity surveys, and conservation planning.

CENTRE BRINGS ADVANCED CELL & GENE THERAPIES UNDER CLAA FRAMEWORK

The Central Government has **amended the Drugs Rules, 1945** to bring **Cell or Stem Cell-derived products, Gene Therapeutic Products, and Xenografts** under the **Centrally License Approving Authority (CLAA)** framework, ensuring uniform regulation across India.



What is the Amendment?

- Expands the **CLAA framework** to include: Cell or Stem Cell-derived products, Gene therapeutic products and Xenografts.
- These products will now be subject to **joint oversight** by the Central and State Licensing Authorities.

What is the CLAA Framework?

- Established under the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**.
- Provides **joint regulatory supervision** by Central Licensing Authority and State Licensing Authorities.
- Earlier covered critical biological products such as Vaccines, Large Volume Parenterals (IV solutions >100 ml), and Recombinant DNA (r-DNA)-based medicines.
- The amendment expands its scope to emerging advanced therapies.

Emerging Therapies Covered

1. Cell or Stem Cell-derived Products

- Therapies developed using stem cells or other living cells.
- Used in Regenerative medicine. **CAR-T cell therapy** for blood cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma.

2. Gene Therapeutic Products

- Modify or replace defective genes to treat diseases.
- Include Gene replacement therapy and Gene editing therapies.
- Used for Genetic disorders and Certain cancers.

3. Xenografts

- **Animal tissue or organ-derived products** transplanted into humans.
- Examples: Animal-derived heart valves.
- Applications: Cardiology and Orthopedics.

Why is the Amendment Important?

- Ensures **uniform regulatory standards** across all States.
- Enhances **patient safety** through stricter oversight.
- Strengthens regulation of rapidly evolving medical technologies.
- Aligns India's regulatory framework with **global best practices**.
- Promotes innovation while ensuring safe adoption of advanced therapies.

GUWAHATI DECLARATION

Under India's 2026 BRICS Chairship, the heads of anti-drug agencies from the expanded member nations officially adopted the Guwahati Declaration.



The BRICS adopts Guwahati Declaration

About The BRICS adopts Guwahati Declaration:

What It Is?

- The Guwahati Declaration is a comprehensive, multi-lateral security pact signed by the heads of anti-drug enforcement agencies across the expanded BRICS
- It establishes a modernized, unified framework to combat the global narcotics trade, transnational organized syndicates, and the financial tracking vulnerabilities that enable international money laundering.

Aim: The objective of the declaration is to build a fast, high-trust border-free law enforcement network that balances technology-driven interdiction with evidence-based social demand reduction.

Key Outcomes of the Declaration:

- **Synthetic & Precursor Networks:** Member states will monitor precursor chemicals and share intelligence to shut down illegal synthetic drug laboratories.
- **Cyber & Darknet Exploitation:** All members will jointly track anonymous crypto transactions and dismantle illicit online narcotics marketplaces.
- **Real-Time Intelligence Sharing:** Live operational data exchange on smuggling routes will enable immediate, cross-border law enforcement actions.
- **BRICS Virtual Working Group:** India's proposed digital platform will facilitate continuous information exchange and agency capacity-building.
- **People-Centric Demand Reduction:** Enforcement is balanced with public health via rehabilitation, treatment, and youth awareness campaigns.

Strategic Significance:

- **India's Network-Centric Model:** The pact validates India's Zero-Tolerance approach and boosts its 2026–2029 Vision on Narcotics Control.
- **Expanded Bloc Cooperation:** The agreement successfully unites old and newly inducted BRICS members under a single security framework.
- **Securing Global Trade Corridors:** Joint maritime surveillance will secure vulnerable shipping routes against large-scale cartel smuggling operations.

PRAMBANAN TEMPLE COMPOUNDS

Prime Minister of India and Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto officially launched an international conservation and restoration project at the **Prambanan Temple Compounds** in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.



About Prambanan Temple:

What It Is?

- Prambanan (locally known as Roro Jonggrang or Loro Jonggrang) is the largest and most architecturally complex Hindu temple compound in Indonesia, and one of the largest in Southeast Asia.
- It stands as a towering masterpiece of classical Shaivite art, design, and stone-building technology, representing the grand peak of Hindu cultural influence in the region.

Location:

- **Island Base:** Located on the fertile volcanic plains of **Java Island**, Indonesia.
- **Administrative Borders:** Straddles the provincial border between the Special Region of Yogyakarta and Central Java.

Origin and History:

- **The Sailendra and Sanjaya Heyday:** Constructed during the 8th and 9th centuries AD (c.850CE) during the peak of the powerful **Sanjaya Dynasty**, serving as a monumental royal response to the nearby Buddhist Borobudur monument and marking the revival of Shaivite Hinduism in Java.
- **The 11th-Century Collapse:** Following a political shift of power to East Java and catastrophic earthquakes paired with eruptions from the nearby **Mount Merapi volcano**, the temple complex was completely abandoned and lay forgotten under jungle overgrowth for centuries.
- **The Colonial Rediscovery:** Formally rediscovered by British surveyors during the brief British administration of Java in the early 19th century.
- **The Restoration Era:** Systematic, scientific restoration began in **1918**. In **1991**, UNESCO inscribed the Prambanan Temple Compounds as a **World Heritage Site**, and the Indonesian government designated it a National Cultural Property in 1998.

MISSION DRISHTI

Bengaluru-based space start-up GalaxEye announced that communication with **Mission Drishti** – the world’s first OptoSAR satellite and India’s largest privately built Earth observation satellite – has been lost.



Mission Drishti: India's First OptoSAR Earth Observation Satellite

About Mission Drishti: India’s First OptoSAR Earth Observation Satellite What It Is?

- Mission Drishti is a next-generation, high-performance Earth observation satellite designed and engineered entirely within India’s private sector. Weighing **190 kilograms**, it represents a major technological milestone as the first operational spacecraft in global history to fuse optical and radar imaging sensors onto a single, compact satellite chassis.

Launched By:

- **The Manufacturer:** Developed by **GalaxEye**, a deep-tech space start-up incubated out of Bengaluru.
- **Launch Vehicle & Site:** Launched into orbit on **May 3, 2026**, aboard a **SpaceX Falcon 9** rocket from the Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, USA.

Aim of the Mission:

- To build a sovereign, non-blind satellite network capable of monitoring high-altitude borders and maritime zones without interruptions from weather or nightfall.
- To plug critical intelligence gaps for the Indian Armed Forces along borders with China and Pakistan, ending reliance on delayed foreign commercial imagery during strategic standoffs.

Key Technical Features of the OptoSAR Payload:

- **The OptoSAR Sensor Fusion:** OptoSAR combines **Electro-Optical (EO) cameras** and **Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR)** on a single satellite, enabling simultaneous collection of optical and radar imagery.
- **Overcoming Natural Obstacles:** EO cameras capture clear visual images but fail in clouds or darkness, while SAR works in all weather and at night. OptoSAR merges both for reliable, all-weather imaging.

- **Co-registered Data Streams:** OptoSAR records optical and radar data from the **same location and time**, eliminating alignment errors and delays common with separate satellites.
- **Global Imagery Distribution Model:** Through **NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)**, Mission Drishti will commercially distribute its hybrid satellite imagery to domestic and international users.

Significance:

- Mission Drishti showcases India's private space capabilities by demonstrating that domestic startups can independently build advanced, globally competitive satellite technologies.
- Its all-weather surveillance capability strengthens border monitoring by detecting activities even through clouds, heavy rain, fog, or darkness.
- OptoSAR demonstrates the commercial value of combining optical and radar sensors, enabling faster, cost-effective services for agriculture, shipping, and defence.

ULLAS INITIATIVE

Uttarakhand was officially declared India's **sixth fully literate State** after Governor Lieutenant General (Retd.) Gurmit Singh approved the formal proposal.



About The ULLAS Initiative:

What It Is?

- The **ULLAS** program—which stands for **Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society** (also known as the Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram or New India Literacy Programme)—is a centrally sponsored nationwide literacy initiative.
- It moves the traditional focus of adult education away from simple signatures, redefining literacy as functional competence combined with essential life skills.

Launched In: Formally approved by the Government of India for a five-year implementation span stretching from **Financial Year 2022 to 2027**.

Administrative Nodal Agency: Managed directly by the Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL) under the Union Ministry of Education.

Aim and Objectives:

- To educate non-literate adults aged **15 years and above** who missed out on formal school education.
- Aims to provide Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) to **5 crore learners** over five years (targeting 1 crore learners annually) using a hybrid delivery model.
- To transform adult learning into a civic duty (Kartavya Bodh) driven by community volunteerism, rather than a rigid top-down bureaucratic routine.

Key Features:

- **The Redefined Literacy Standard:** The standard evaluates their ability to read, write, and compute with clear comprehension, interact with modern digital devices, and understand basic financial calculations.
- **School-Centric Infrastructure Units:** Utilizes local schools as the primary operational units. Unused spaces in schools, village libraries, or panchayat offices are upgraded into **Samajik Chetna Kendras** (Social Awareness Centers) to host classes.
- **Digital Learning Infrastructure:** Registration and progress tracking are managed through the **ULLAS Mobile App and Portal**. Grains of information are accessible in regional languages through digital channels and the centralized DIKSHA portal.
- **Broad Multilingual Core Primers:** To make learning accessible, ULLAS instructional textbooks (Primers) are published and distributed in **27 different languages** and local dialects.
- **The FLNAT Assessment Framework:** Foundational Literacy and Numeracy are evaluated twice a year using a scientific testing system called the **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT)**.
 - Learners who pass receive a formal literacy certificate jointly signed by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and DoSEL.
- **Vocational and Social Safety Net Links:** To help learners secure local employment, a joint mandate connects successful adult learners with practical trade skills training run through local Jan Shikshan Sansthan(JSS).

ASTRA MK 1 MISSILE

During the bilateral summit in Jakarta, India and Indonesia signed a landmark defense deal for the supply of the indigenous **Astra Mk 1 air-to-air missiles**.



The Astra Mk 1 Missile

About The Astra Mk 1 Missile:

What It Is?

- The Astra Mk 1 is an advanced, all-weather **Beyond-Visual-Range Air-to-Air Missile (BVRAAM)**. Capable of engaging and destroying highly agile supersonic aerial targets at long distances, it belongs to an elite category of interceptors designed to clear the skies before an adversary can close in for visual dogfighting.

Developed By: Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), with Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL).

Objective: The objective of the Astra missile system is to provide fighter pilots with long-range stand-off strike superiority.

Key Technical Features and Variants:

- **High-Speed Interception:** Reaches a top speed of **Mach 4.5** (four and a half times the speed of sound), allowing it to quickly chase down and destroy fast-moving, maneuvering targets.
- **Operational Envelope:** Operates at altitudes ranging from sea level up to **20 km**, with an effective engagement range spanning from **80 km to 110 km** for the baseline Mk 1 variant.
- **Three-Phase Guidance System:**
 1. **Initial Phase:** Navigates using pre-programmed internal data systems immediately after release.
 2. **Mid-Course Phase:** Receives continuous radio data updates from the launch aircraft to adjust its flight path as the target moves.
 3. **Terminal Phase:** Activates its built-in **Radio Frequency (RF) seeker** to lock onto and track the target autonomously, ignoring enemy electronic jamming.
- **Smokeless Solid Propulsion:** Powered by a single-pulse, smokeless solid-fuel rocket motor that leaves no visible vapor trail, keeping the launch aircraft's position hidden from enemy sensors.
- **Cross-Platform Integration:** Fully operational on the Sukhoi Su-30 MKI fleet, with ongoing integration projects to adapt the missile for India's indigenous LCA Tejas Mk 1A and French-designed Rafale jets.

The Astra Family Evolution:

- **Astra Mk 2:** Features an extended range of **200 km**, powered by a dual-pulse solid rocket motor that can reignite during its final approach, leaving targets with no space to escape.
- **Astra Mk 3 (Gandiva):** Currently under development by DRDO, this longest-range variant utilizes **Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR)** technology to sustain constant propulsion mid-flight, aiming for an intercept range exceeding **350 km**.

PARROT BORNAVIRUS 4 (PABV-4)

For the first time in India, a multi-institutional team of scientists has identified and genetically characterized **parrot bornavirus 4 (PaBV-4)** circulating among captive birds.



About The PaBV-4 Bird Virus:

What It Is?

- Parrot bornavirus 4 (PaBV-4) is a highly contagious, single-stranded RNA virus belonging to the species *Orthobornavirus alphapsittaciforme*.
- It is the primary, most veterinary-relevant etiological agent responsible for causing **Proventricular Dilatation Disease (PDD)**—a progressive, largely fatal neurological and gastrointestinal wasting syndrome that affects *psittacine* birds (the parrot family, including macaws, parakeets, cockatiels, and lovebirds).

Region Found In:

- **Global Footprint:** Previously documented across North America (U.S., Canada), South Korea, Japan, Israel, and Europe.
- **In India:** Identified across major captive aviculture hubs in Assam, Karnataka (Bengaluru), and West Bengal (Kolkata).

History:

- The link between avian bornaviruses and Proventricular Dilatation Disease (PDD) was first discovered globally in **2008**.
- Prior to this, the fatal condition was colloquially known as Macaw Wasting Disease since its initial description in the late 1970s.
- The July 2026 study marks the first official confirmation of the virus circulating within the Indian subcontinent.

Key Features:

- **Systemic Non-Cytolytic Infection:** The virus causes persistent infection and damages nerves mainly through immune-driven inflammation rather than directly destroying infected cells.
- **The Asymptomatic Lurk Element:** Many infected birds appear healthy yet silently shed the virus, spreading infection throughout aviaries without visible symptoms.
- **Transmission Routes:** The virus spreads through contaminated food, water, saliva, and feces, and can also pass from infected parents to eggs.
- **Diagnostic Markers:** RT-PCR detects the virus best from cloacal swabs in live birds and from brain and proventriculus tissues in dead birds.

Impacts of the Virus:

- The virus damages digestive nerves, causing stomach enlargement, poor digestion, weight loss, undigested food in droppings, and eventual death.
- Silent transmission threatens captive breeding programmes, putting vulnerable and endangered parrot species at greater risk of population decline.

AWIQLI

India launched Awiqli, the world's first once-weekly basal insulin, on 9 July 2026. The drug contains insulin icodec and is marketed by Danish pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk. In India, Awiqli is approved for adults with Type 1 diabetes and Type 2 diabetes.

**Basal Insulin and Diabetes Treatment**

Basal insulin is a long-acting insulin used to maintain blood glucose levels between meals and during sleep. Daily basal insulin regimens usually require 365 injections in a year, while once-weekly insulin reduces this number to 52 injections annually. Awiqli is designed for patients who need long-term insulin therapy and use injectable treatment for diabetes management.

Mechanism, Device and Pricing

Awikli is supplied in a FlexTouch pen device. The insulin icodec molecule binds to the blood protein albumin, which extends its action over seven days. The 700-unit pack is priced at Rs 2,611 in India, and its per-unit cost is about 30 to 40 per cent lower than existing daily insulin units.

Regulatory Status and Clinical Data

India is the seventh country to introduce Awikli. In the United States, the same product is approved only for adults with Type 2 diabetes. Clinical trials have found glycaemic control with Awikli to be comparable to or better than daily basal insulin, with a higher risk of hypoglycaemia in some Type 1 diabetes patients.

Diabetes Care in India

India has a large diabetes burden and delayed insulin initiation is often linked to fear of daily injections. The average delay in starting insulin therapy in India is 7 to 9 years. Awikli is one of the first once-weekly insulin products introduced in the global market.

PINAKA LONG RANGE GUIDED ROCKET (LRGR)

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted a flight test of the Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR) on 8 July 2026 at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur, Odisha.



The rocket was tested for a user-defined minimum strike range of 60 km and completed all planned in-flight manoeuvres before hitting the designated target.

Pinaka Rocket System

Pinaka is an indigenous multi-barrel rocket launcher system developed for the Indian Army. The system uses a launcher platform that can fire different variants of the Pinaka rocket family, which allows common launcher compatibility across multiple rocket types.

Design and Development Agencies

The Pinaka LRGR was designed by the Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE) in association with the High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL). The development effort also involved the Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL) and the Research Centre Imarat (RCI), which are DRDO laboratories associated with missile and propulsion technologies.

- The Integrated Test Range at Chandipur is a major Indian missile and weapon test facility on the east coast of Odisha.
- The Pinaka LRGR test used an in-service Pinaka launcher, which is relevant for launcher commonality in the field.
- The Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR 120) had its maiden flight test in December 2025 for a maximum range of 120 km.
- The Indian Army operates around six to seven Pinaka rocket launcher regiments and plans to expand the force structure further.

Operational Range and Force Structure

The latest test covered a minimum strike range of 60 km, while the earlier LRGR 120 test covered a maximum range of 120 km. The Indian Army currently operates around six to seven Pinaka rocket launcher regiments, with plans to expand to 10 regiments by the end of 2026 and to 22 regiments in the long term.

Institutional Oversight

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the DRDO, the Indian Army, and industry partners after the trial. Defence Secretary and DRDO Chairman Rajesh Kumar Singh monitored the test at Chandipur.

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