● POLITY　　● ECONOMICS　　● TECHNOLOGY　　● ECOLOGY

FLOOD SITUATION TURNS GRIM IN TELANGANA, A.P.

CONTEXT: The heavy rainfall in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh has caused widespread flooding, resulting in significant damage to infrastructure, loss of lives, and displacement of people.

Heavy Rainfall and Rising Waters

Severe flooding has ravaged Telangana and Andhra Pradesh due to incessant heavy rainfall. The situation has turned grim as numerous districts have been severely affected, leading to widespread damage and loss of life.

Khammam and Mahabubabad Bear the Brunt

Khammam and Mahabubabad districts have been particularly hard hit, with unprecedented rainfall causing significant flooding. The situation has forced authorities to undertake rescue and relief operations on a large scale.

Casualties and Disruptions

The floods have claimed lives, with several people reported missing. Essential services like railways and bus services have been disrupted due to the rising water levels. National highways and railway tracks have been submerged, rendering many areas inaccessible.

Government Response and Central Support

The state governments of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh have mobilized resources to address the crisis. Chief Ministers A. Revanth Reddy and N. Chandrababu Naidu have directed officials to prioritize rescue and relief efforts. The central government has also pledged support, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah assuring assistance to the affected regions.

Ongoing Challenges and Relief Efforts

The situation remains critical as the floodwaters continue to rise. Rescue teams are working tirelessly to reach stranded individuals and provide essential aid. Relief camps have been set up to accommodate displaced people. The authorities are closely monitoring the situation and taking necessary measures to mitigate the impact of the floods.

ISRAEL RECOVERS BODIES OF SIX HOSTAGES FROM GAZA TUNNEL, SPARKS CALLS FOR PROTEST AGAINST NETANYAHU

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

CONTEXT: The discovery of the bodies of six hostages in Gaza, including a prominent Israeli-American captive, has intensified public outrage in Israel, leading to mass protests against Prime Minister Netanyahu's handling of the war and hostage negotiations with Hamas. The incident has also fuelled demands for a ceasefire, with widespread strikes and demonstrations across the country.

Israel announced on Sunday the recovery of the bodies of six hostages in Gaza, including Hersh Goldberg-Polin, a young Israeli-American man who had gained international attention due to his parents' advocacy for his release. The hostages were reportedly killed shortly before Israeli forces arrived, sparking widespread protests against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Many Israelis blame Netanyahu for the failure to secure their release through negotiations with Hamas, which have been stalled for months.

Netanyahu condemned Hamas for killing the hostages "in cold blood" and accused the militant group of obstructing peace talks. He vowed to continue military operations until Hamas is defeated, stating that military pressure is essential to bring the remaining hostages home. Meanwhile, Hamas officials claimed the hostages would still be alive if Israel had accepted a U.S.-backed ceasefire proposal.

In response to the hostage deaths, Israel's largest trade union, Histadrut, called a general strike for Monday, disrupting key sectors of the economy. Tens of thousands of Israelis protested, demanding a ceasefire to secure the return of the remaining hostages, with some accusing the government of prioritizing its own survival over the lives of the captives.

AFTER FOUR-MONTH PAUSE, TWO KILLED, SIX INJURED IN FRESH VIOLENCE IN MANIPUR

POLITY & GOVERNANACE

CONTEXT: The recent violence in Manipur marks a disturbing escalation in the ongoing conflict between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities, with the use of advanced weaponry like drones highlighting the growing sophistication of the violence.

RENEWED VIOLENCE IN MANIPUR
Drone Attacks and Casualties
A wave of violence has returned to Manipur, with suspected extremists using high-tech drones to launch attacks on civilians and security forces. Two people were killed, and several others were injured, including a journalist, in the attacks.
Targeting Meitei Community
The violence primarily targeted the Meitei community, with the attacks occurring in Meitei-dominated areas. The use of drones in the attacks marks a significant escalation in the conflict.

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Government Response and Security Measures

The state government has condemned the violence and imposed restrictions in the affected areas. Security forces have been put on high alert, and joint combing operations are being conducted to maintain law and order.

Bid to Derail Peace Efforts

The government views the attacks as a deliberate attempt to undermine ongoing efforts to restore peace in the state. The use of sophisticated weaponry suggests the involvement of well-trained individuals or groups.

CULTURE OF ADJOURNMENT OF CASES IN COURTS HAS TO CHANGE, SAYS PRESIDENT

POLITY & GOVERNANACE

CONTEXT: President Droupadi Murmu emphasized the need to eliminate the "culture of adjournments" in courts to ensure timely justice, particularly for vulnerable groups like women and children, while Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud highlighted the challenges of case pendency and judicial vacancies, advocating for reforms in judicial recruitment and case management.

President Calls for an End to the "Culture of Adjournments"

President Droupadi Murmu, addressing the National Conference of District Judiciary, urged for the elimination of the "culture of adjournments" in courts, which discourages poor villagers from seeking justice due to prolonged litigation. She emphasized the need for timely justice, especially in cases involving women and children, and highlighted the stress faced by ordinary citizens in courtrooms, which she termed as "black coat syndrome."

CJI Stresses the Importance of Judicial Efficiency

Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud underscored the judiciary's role as an essential service and emphasized the challenges of case pendency despite a national average disposal rate of 95%. He advocated for improving judicial recruitment, with a focus on standardizing the recruitment calendar to address the 28% vacancy in district courts. The CJI also called for national integration of judicial recruitment and stressed the importance of effective case management to reduce delays.
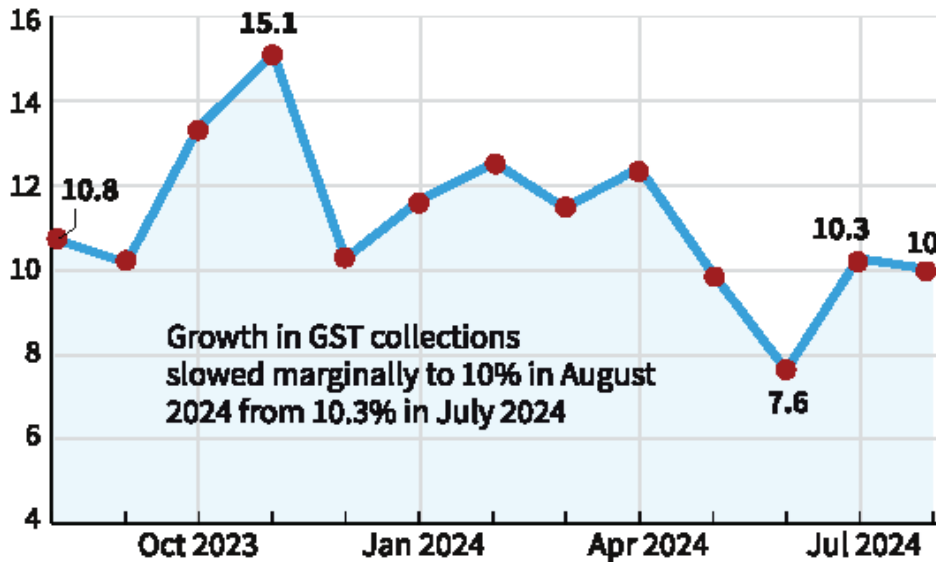
NET GST RECEIPTS' GROWTH SLIPS TO 6.5% IN AUG.

ECONOMICS & DEVELOPMENT

CONTEXT: India's GST revenue growth has slowed marginally in August, despite a rise in overall collections. However, net receipts have declined due to a surge in tax refunds, highlighting the challenges in maintaining consistent revenue growth.

Marginal decline
The graph shows year-on-year % change in GST collections

Growth in GST collections slowed marginally to 10% in August 2024 from 10.3% in July 2024

India's GST revenue growth experienced a slight slowdown in August compared to the previous month. While overall collections increased, net receipts fell due to a surge in tax refunds.

State-Wise Variations

The performance of GST revenues varied significantly across different states. Some states recorded substantial growth, while others experienced declines. Factors such as economic activity and government policies played a role in these variations.
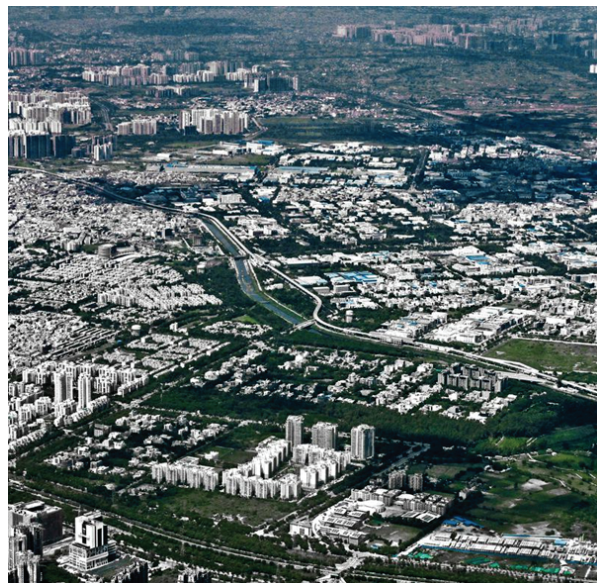
Overall Positive Trend

Despite the August slowdown, India's GST revenues have shown a positive trend over the first five months of the financial year, indicating overall economic growth and improved tax compliance.

CITIES IN ASIA ARE GROWING UPWARDS MORE THAN OUTWARDS

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

CONTEXT: The trend of cities, particularly in Asia, growing vertically rather than expanding outward, highlighting the implications for urban planning, sustainability, infrastructure, and climate resilience. It emphasizes the need for well-supported growth to accommodate rising populations while considering the environmental and social impacts of such development.

Introduction: Vertical Growth in Urban Areas

Vertical growth in cities, especially in Asia, is becoming a significant trend as urban populations surge. A recent study published in Nature Cities highlights how cities are increasingly growing upwards rather than spreading outwards. While taller buildings can house more people and increase population density, this growth must be accompanied by infrastructure enhancements, such as job creation, public transport, sewage systems, water supply, and energy resources.

The Study: Analyzing Urban Growth

A team of earth and urban scientists examined the vertical and horizontal expansion of over 1,500 cities worldwide from the 1990s to the 2010s. Using remote-sensing satellite data, they analyzed how city footprints (the ground area covered by buildings) and volumes (vertical growth) changed over time. They found that while the two-dimensional (2D) spread of cities wasn't increasing as rapidly, the volume of city structures was soaring, particularly in East Asian cities.

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Vertical Growth Trends

The study revealed that cities with populations exceeding 10 million experienced more pronounced vertical growth, especially in the 2010s. This trend was most prominent in China, where fewer building height restrictions exist compared to countries like India. In Indian cities, vertical growth was less uniform, with only larger cities showing noticeable upward expansion. Regulatory constraints and the protection of heritage zones, such as Delhi's Lutyens Bungalow Zone, have limited vertical growth in India.

Implications and Challenges

While vertical growth can increase population density and housing capacity, it presents challenges. Taller buildings require substantial infrastructure support, including jobs, efficient public transport, and robust sewage and water systems. Moreover, vertical growth can negatively impact the local environment, creating urban heat islands, slowing wind speeds, and affecting rainfall patterns.

The study underscores the need for sustainable urban planning that balances growth with climate resilience. As Indian cities continue to grow, there is a pressing need to revisit and update outdated master plans. Current planning laws often overlook critical aspects such as transportation, energy, water management, and climate change. A comprehensive approach to urban planning is essential to ensure cities remain liveable and sustainable in the face of rapid urbanization.

Conclusion: Rethinking Urban Planning

The shift towards vertical growth in cities worldwide highlights the importance of thoughtful urban planning. As India follows a trajectory similar to China in terms of population growth and industrialization, this study serves as a wake-up call. There is a need to revisit master planning acts, incorporating modern challenges like climate change, sustainability, and liveability. Urban planners must make locally grounded decisions that address the unique needs of each city while considering the broader implications of vertical growth on the environment and infrastructure.

INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH, PAST AND PRESENT

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

CONTEXT: A comprehensive analysis of the evolving political landscape in India's neighbourhood, focusing on the shifting dynamics of democracy and India's role in these transformations. It also examines the challenges India faces in maintaining stability and fostering cooperation in the region.

INDIA'S NEIGHBORHOOD: A TALE OF DEMOCRATIC TURMOIL AND INDIA'S BALANCING ACT

The Democratic Dawn of the 2000s

In the early 2000s, a wave of democratic change swept across India's neighbourhood. Countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Myanmar witnessed significant political transitions, marking a departure from decades of authoritarian rule. India played a pivotal role in fostering these developments, providing diplomatic support and economic assistance.

The Challenges of Consolidation

However, the democratic gains made in the early 2000s proved to be fragile. In recent years, several countries in the region have faced setbacks, including political instability, economic crises, and military coups. The Maldives, once a beacon of democratic progress, has experienced multiple leadership changes and challenges to its democratic institutions. Bangladesh, despite holding consecutive democratic elections, has faced growing concerns over human rights abuses and political polarization.

Myanmar's democratic transition was abruptly halted in 2021 when the military seized power, reversing years of progress towards democratic governance. The country has since been engulfed in a civil conflict, with widespread human rights violations and humanitarian crises.

India's Balancing Act

India has found itself navigating a complex and challenging landscape in its neighbourhood. While it has sought to promote democracy and stability, it has also faced the dilemma of balancing its own interests with the internal affairs of its neighbours. In some cases, India's missteps or miscalculations have contributed to the challenges faced by its neighbour's. For instance, its perceived bias towards certain political factions in Bangladesh and Myanmar has drawn criticism.

However, India has also demonstrated a commitment to supporting its neighbours, particularly during times of crisis. It has provided financial assistance to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and has engaged with the Taliban in Afghanistan to protect its own interests.

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The Road Ahead

India's future in its neighbourhood will depend on its ability to adapt to the changing political landscape and to find effective strategies for promoting stability and cooperation. This will require a nuanced approach that takes into account the unique circumstances of each country and avoids interfering in their internal affairs.

Furthermore, India's economic engagement with its neighbours will be crucial in strengthening ties and building trust. By promoting regional cooperation and development, India can help to create a more stable and prosperous neighbourhood.

CONCLUSION:

As India navigates the complex and dynamic political landscape of its neighborhood, it is imperative that it continues to pursue a balanced and nuanced approach. By fostering regional cooperation, promoting democratic values, and addressing the challenges faced by its neighbour's, India can play a constructive role in shaping a more stable and prosperous future for the region.

A CRISIS IN WANA THAT NO ONE TALKS ABOUT

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

CONTEXT: The ongoing conflict in Sudan between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has spiraled into one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, marked by staggering casualties, mass displacement, and severe economic and social destabilization. Despite the devastating impact, this crisis has largely been overlooked by the global community, with foreign interests further complicating the situation.

SUDAN'S OVERLOOKED CRISIS: A HUMANITARIAN TRAGEDY UNFOLDS

In 2023, the world's worst humanitarian crisis has quietly escalated, not in Gaza as many might assume, but in Sudan. The ongoing conflict between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), commanded by General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemayti), has left Sudan in devastation. With estimates of up to 150,000 deaths and nearly 10 million people displaced—2.5 million of whom have fled abroad—Sudan's situation is dire. This agrarian nation, once a food exporter, now faces the looming threats of famine and epidemics such as cholera.

A Legacy of Conflict

Sudan, a large and multi-ethnic country, is no stranger to turmoil. Since gaining independence in 1956, Sudan has experienced 15 military coups and two civil wars, resulting in 1.5 million deaths and the eventual secession of South Sudan in 2011. For over two decades, the Darfur region has been plagued by conflict, with the Janjaweed militia—the precursor to the RSF—waging war against non-Arab Muslims, leading to over 200,000 deaths and the displacement of two million people.

The roots of the current crisis can be traced to the 30-year autocratic rule of dictator Omar Hassan al-Bashir. Overthrown in a military coup in April 2019 after months of popular protests, al-Bashir's removal led to the establishment of a Transitional Military Council, which attempted to share power with civilian groups. However, this fragile arrangement collapsed in October 2021 when General al-Burhan took control in another coup. Despite renewed efforts to establish a power-sharing framework, the RSF's rejection of a proposal to integrate into the Sudanese Army in December 2022 pushed the country into chaos. On April 15, 2023, full-scale conflict erupted between the SAF, with its 300,000 troops, and the RSF, boasting around 100,000 fighters.

A Nation Divided

The conflict has raged across Sudan for over 16 months, with neither side gaining a decisive advantage. The SAF, despite its larger numbers and air power, has been unable to dominate, even evacuating the capital, Khartoum, and relocating to Port Sudan. The RSF, bolstered by its ethnic cleansing campaigns in Darfur, has made gains in south-central Sudan but faces stiff resistance from various ethnic groups allied with the SAF. Beneath the conflict's ideological and ethnic façade lies the raw ambition of two warlords, overshadowing the original demand for civilian governance.

Foreign Interests and Interference

Sudan's strategic location and wealth of natural resources, including crude oil, gold, and fertile land, have attracted foreign interests, further complicating the conflict. Egypt, a long-time ally of Sudan, supports the SAF, as does Iran—despite its enmity with Egypt. The RSF, on the other hand, receives backing from Russia's Wagner Group, which has pushed the SAF to grant Russia a naval base in Port Sudan. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has emerged as the RSF's primary

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supporter, supplying weapons and laundering gold. Other regional actors, including Chad, Libya, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, are also entangled in the conflict.

Despite attempts by Saudi Arabia, the United States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the African Union to broker a ceasefire, no lasting agreement has been reached. The United Nations Security Council's response has been sluggish, with only one resolution passed in 11 months. Meanwhile, the International Criminal Court has made minimal progress in investigating war crimes.

India's Stake in Sudan

India has significant interests in Sudan, despite evacuating its nationals early in the conflict. In 2022-23, bilateral trade reached a record $2.034 billion, heavily favoring India. India's first major overseas investment was in Sudan's oil sector, totaling nearly $2.3 billion, and the two nations share strong people-to-people ties. A prolonged conflict in Sudan could threaten these interests and potentially revive Islamic militancy, posing risks to India's strategic and economic interests.

ANALYSIS: The Sudanese conflict, overshadowed by global events, has escalated into a severe humanitarian crisis with significant casualties and displacement. The clash between SAF and RSF, fueled by foreign interests, has destabilized the region. India's substantial economic and strategic stakes in Sudan are now at risk amid the ongoing turmoil.

CONCLUSION:

The conflict in Sudan, marked by its staggering humanitarian toll and complex geopolitical entanglements, represents a grave but overlooked crisis in the West Asia-North Africa (WANA) region. With the humanitarian situation worsening amid persistent international inaction and foreign interference, the plight of millions of displaced and suffering individuals remains dire. As the conflict rages on, the global community must urgently address the escalating crisis with coordinated humanitarian aid, diplomatic efforts, and a concerted push for peace. For nations like India, with significant investments and strategic interests in Sudan, the ongoing turmoil presents both challenges and opportunities to play a pivotal role in seeking stability and supporting recovery efforts in the region.

REFORMING THE PROCESS OF JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

CONTEXT: The ongoing debate in India over judicial appointments highlights the need for reform, particularly in addressing delays and inefficiencies caused by the current collegium system. This discussion is informed by comparisons with international models, which offer alternative approaches to enhancing both the efficiency and integrity of the judicial selection process.

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS IN INDIA: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION

Current Challenges in India's Judicial Appointments

In April, a report from the Department of Justice revealed that while 60 lakh cases were pending across various High Courts, 30% of judicial seats remained vacant. The inefficiencies in the appointment process are a significant factor contributing to this backlog. The debate over the most effective system for appointing judges remains unresolved, with the current collegium system under scrutiny.

Collegium System vs. NJAC: The Ongoing Debate

The appointment of judges in India has long been contentious. The collegium system, which places the responsibility of appointing judges solely in the hands of the judiciary, has faced criticism for its lack of accountability and transparency. This system came under challenge with the enactment of the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act, 2014, which aimed to involve politicians and civil society in the selection process.

However, the Supreme Court struck down the NJAC Act and the accompanying 99th Constitution Amendment in 2015, ruling them unconstitutional. The Court argued that the NJAC could compromise judicial independence by granting excessive control to the executive. Despite this, many legal professionals, including former judges, have suggested that the NJAC could have expedited judicial appointments and better balanced the interests of various stakeholders.

Lessons from International Models

Several countries have implemented judicial appointment systems that could serve as models for India.

• **United Kingdom:** The Constitutional Reform Act, 2005, established the Judicial Appointments Commission, a 15-member body responsible for nominating judges. The commission includes a mix of judicial members, legal

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professionals, and laypersons, promoting a diverse and transparent selection process.

- **South Africa:** The Judicial Service Commission (JSC) advises the President on judicial appointments. The JSC comprises a range of members, including judges, legal practitioners, and representatives from the National Assembly, ensuring broad representation and accountability.
- **France:** The High Council of the Judiciary (Conseil Supérieur de la Magistrature) plays a key role in the selection of judges, providing recommendations and advice to the President and the Minister of Justice. This model integrates judicial, academic, and political perspectives in the appointment process.

Reworking NJAC: A Potential Path Forward

The NJAC, as proposed, could have addressed several issues associated with the collegium system. Its democratic structure aimed to streamline the appointment process and enhance transparency. However, the system was criticized for potentially undermining judicial independence.

To address these concerns, a reformed NJAC could incorporate feedback from all relevant stakeholders, including the judiciary, executive, civil society, and legal associations. By balancing judicial independence with accountability, a revised NJAC could improve the efficiency of judicial appointments while safeguarding the integrity of the judiciary.

Conclusion: Moving Forward

The need for judicial reform in India is urgent, given the ongoing delays and vacancies in the judiciary. Learning from international practices and reworking the NJAC could offer a path to a more effective and transparent system. Striking the right balance between independence and accountability is crucial for maintaining public confidence in the judiciary and ensuring timely justice.

ARE LIE-DETECTOR TESTS LEGALLY VALID?

POLITY & GOVERNANACE

CONTEXT: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) recently obtained permission from a Kolkata court to conduct polygraph tests on suspects in a high-profile rape and murder case, reigniting the debate over the legality and efficacy of such deception detection methods. Despite being contentious and criticized for reliability and human rights concerns, lie-detector tests remain a tool in Indian investigations, subject to stringent legal and procedural safeguards following the Supreme Court's 2010 ruling.

THE GIST
- On August 26, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) conducted a second round of polygraph tests on seven people, in connection with the rape and murder of a resident doctor at the R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.
- In a 2010 paper published in the Indian Journal of Medical Research, psychiatric expert Suresh Bada Math observed that lie-detection techniques have "faced a number of criticisms," and their effectiveness in revealing "concealed knowledge in applied real-world settings" remains uncertain.
- The Supreme Court in 2010 in the case of Selvi vs. State of Karnataka ruled that no lie detector tests should be administered "except on the basis of consent of the accused" in accordance with the fundamental right against self-incrimination as enshrined under Article 20(3) of the Constitution.

The Story So Far

On August 26, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) conducted a second round of polygraph tests on seven individuals in connection with the rape and murder of a resident doctor at R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital

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in Kolkata. The tests involved former medical college principal Sandip Kumar Ghosh, four doctors who had dined with the victim shortly before the crime, and two civic police volunteers, including the main accused, Sanjay Roy. Ghosh's inconsistent responses led to the additional round of tests. The CBI, investigating the case since August 13 under a Calcutta High Court order, secured permission from a Kolkata court for these tests and remanded the main accused to judicial custody for 14 days.

What Are Deception Detection Tests?

Deception detection tests (DDTs) are scientific methods used to detect possible deception during interrogations. These include:

- Polygraph Tests: These tests are based on the idea that physiological changes occur when a person is lying. Instruments like cardio-cuffs or electrodes measure variables such as blood pressure, galvanic skin response, breathing, and pulse rate while the suspect answers questions. The physiological responses are quantified to assess truthfulness.
- Narco-Analysis: This involves administering sodium pentothal, a drug that induces a hypnotic state, to reduce inhibitions and encourage truthful responses. It is often referred to as a "truth serum."
- Brain Mapping: This method measures neural activity by using electrodes attached to the subject's face and neck, detecting specific brainwaves in response to familiar stimuli.

Efficacy and Criticisms

The efficacy of these tests is controversial:

- Scientific Criticisms: In a 2010 paper, psychiatric expert Suresh Bada Math criticized lie-detection techniques for their questionable effectiveness in real-world settings. He highlighted the flawed principle behind polygraph tests, which relies on physiological indicators that are not proven to be unique to lying. A 2019 U.S. study also pointed out high false positive rates and the possibility of individuals training to defeat the polygraph.

Legal Norms Before 2010

Before 2010, Indian courts generally supported the use of DDTs:

- Rojo George vs. Deputy Superintendent of Police (2006): The Kerala High Court emphasized the necessity of scientific tests for modern crime investigations, stating that such tests, when conducted properly, did not violate fundamental rights.
- Dinesh Dalmia vs. State (2006): The Madras High Court endorsed scientific investigation methods as safer alternatives to custodial violence used to extract information.
- Sh. Shailender Sharma vs. State & Another (2008): The Delhi High Court allowed narco-analysis tests, highlighting the balance between thorough investigations and individual rights.

Supreme Court Ruling in 2010

The 2010 Supreme Court ruling in Selvi vs. State of Karnataka marked a significant shift:

- Consent Requirement: The Court ruled that lie detector tests cannot be administered without the accused's consent, in line with Article 20(3) of the Constitution, which protects against self-incrimination. The ruling emphasized the right to privacy and the need for informed, voluntary participation.
- Evidence Admissibility: While results from DDTs cannot be considered confessions, any information or material discovered as a result of voluntary test results can be admitted as evidence if corroborated by further investigation.
- Procedural Safeguards: The Court mandated that individuals undergoing DDTs must have access to legal counsel, be informed about the test's implications, and have their consent recorded by a judicial magistrate. The guidelines of the National Human Rights Commission (2000) must be followed.

Current Practices and Concerns

Despite the Supreme Court's ruling, DDTs remain common in India:

- Recent Cases: DDTs have been used in high-profile cases such as the Hathras gang rape, Sheena Bora disappearance, and Shraddha Walker murder case.
- Criticism: Jinee Lokaneeta's book The Truth Machines critiques the invasive nature of polygraphs and narco-analysis, questioning whether true informed consent is achievable in police custody. Instances of forced narco-analysis and abuse in high-profile cases, such as the Mecca Masjid and Mumbai blasts, have raised significant human rights concerns.
- Legal and Ethical Issues: Senior advocate Rebecca John argues that the use of DDTs often undermines constitutional rights and can be misused to prejudge individuals. The use of a person's refusal to undergo these tests against them is a particular concern.

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Overall, while DDTs continue to be utilized in Indian criminal investigations, their legal and ethical implications remain subjects of intense debate and scrutiny.

CONCLUSION: While lie-detector tests remain a tool in Indian investigations, their use is fraught with legal and ethical challenges. The Supreme Court's 2010 ruling established crucial safeguards, but ongoing concerns about reliability, consent, and human rights continue to fuel debate on their role in justice.

RUSSIA DOWNS OVER 150 DRONES, CAPTURES TWO UKRAINE REGIONS

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

CONTEXT: : In a significant escalation of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, Russian air defenses intercepted over 150 Ukrainian drones targeting various regions in Russia, while Russia's Defense Ministry reported capturing key towns in Ukraine's Donetsk region and continued shelling in Ukrainian cities, intensifying the multi-front conflict.

Russian Defense Intercepts 158 Ukrainian Drones

Russian air defences successfully intercepted and destroyed 158 Ukrainian drones overnight, including two over Moscow and nine over the surrounding region, according to the Defence Ministry. The drones were targeted across 15 regions, with significant interceptions over Kursk, Bryansk, Voronezh, and Belgorod, among others. Additionally, drones were shot down in the Tver and Ivanovo regions, both situated farther from the conflict's front lines.

Ukrainian Drone Strikes Intensify

Ukrainian drone strikes have increasingly targeted deep into Russian territory, including critical infrastructure such as refineries and oil terminals. This escalation is part of Ukraine's strategy to slow down the Kremlin's military advancements.
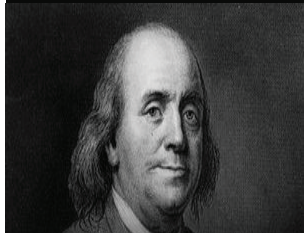
Russian Territorial Gains

In response to ongoing conflict, Russia's Defence Ministry reported capturing the towns of Pivnichne and Vyimka in Ukraine's Donetsk region. Russian forces are advancing towards Pokrovsk, a key logistical hub for Ukrainian defense, aiming to solidify control in the eastern part of Ukraine.

Casualties and Damage in Ukraine

On Sunday, Russian shelling in the town of Kurakhove resulted in three deaths and nine injuries. In Kharkiv, Russian missile strikes wounded 44 people and caused significant damage to a shopping center, sports facility, and residential buildings. Meanwhile, Ukrainian air defenses managed to shoot down eight out of 11 Russian-launched drones overnight.

CONCLUSION: The escalating conflict between Russia and Ukraine continues to intensify, with both sides increasing their military efforts. While Russia enhances its defensive and offensive operations, capturing key territories and targeting Ukrainian cities, Ukraine's drone strikes push deeper into Russian territory. The situation remains highly volatile and complex.

"If you invest more in your education, then you are likely to get more interest in it."

–Benjamin Franklin

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