

DAILY PT POINTERS

16th October,
2024



The Hindu-Geography(GSI)-Page 6

Northeast monsoon sets in with a bang in T.N., heavy rain lashes the State, red alert for Chennai

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The northeast monsoon set in over Tamil Nadu and Puducherry on Tuesday, bringing heavy rain to the northern parts of the State, particularly Chennai and its neighbouring districts.

A red alert has been sounded for Chennai and its neighbouring areas for Wednesday too, indicating the possibility of isolated extremely heavy rain. The well-marked low-pressure area has intensified into a depression over the southwest Bay of Bengal, and lies about 490 km south-



Intense spell: A red alert has been sounded for Chennai and its neighbouring areas for Wednesday. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

has announced a holiday on Wednesday for schools and colleges in Chennai, Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram, and Chengalpattu districts.

The monsoon has set in

mil Nadu on Tuesday. Kudimyanmalai in Pudukkottai district recorded the heaviest rainfall of 13 cm in the past 24 hours, ending 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday. Several other places in and

- The northeast monsoon set in over Tamil Nadu and Puducherry on Tuesday, bringing heavy rain to the northern parts of the State, particularly Chennai and its neighbouring districts.
- The Indian Monsoon is a critical climatic phenomenon characterised by seasonal wind shifts that bring heavy rains to the Indian subcontinent.
- The Southwest Monsoon typically begins in June, bringing moisture-laden winds from the Indian Ocean, and continues until September.
- The Northeast Monsoon, occurring from October to December, affects southeastern India. The Northeast Monsoon, also known as the Retreating Monsoon, occurs from October to December and is characterized by winds blowing from the northeast.
- This monsoon primarily affects southeastern India, including Tamil Nadu, and parts of the eastern coast.
- During this period, the northeast trade winds bring moisture from the Bay of Bengal, resulting in rainfall.

On the need to make more containers to boost trade

Does India have a shortage of containers for the swift transport of goods?

N. Bhanu Prakash

The story so far:

India's rapid trade growth is planned around the containerised transport of goods. However, there is a key logistical bottleneck. India just does not make enough containers.

How important are containers?

Containers can seamlessly be transported via rail, ship and road. It revolutionised world trade by rapidly cutting transportation time, port delays and so on. It can be said that the untold story of swift trade movements that have enabled globalisation is actually the containerisation of goods. Container boxes are standardised in dimensions and cargo-carrying capacities. Once the cargo is stuffed inside the container and sealed, the boxes can be moved over long distances without any disturbance.

What is the scene in India?

handling capacity in various ports to boost exports. Ambitious new ventures such as the Vadhavan and Galathea Bay ports as well as the multimodal India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor are built around containers. India's container market is expected to more than double from 11.4 million TEU (twenty-foot equivalent unit) in 2023 to 26.6 million TEU by 2028.

India manufactures around 10,000 to 30,000 container boxes a year and this production can support only a fraction of the projected doubling. China, in comparison, manufactures 2.5 to 3 million container boxes per year. In India, it takes \$3,500 to \$4,800 to make one container whereas in China it costs \$2,500 and \$3,500. India therefore has to lease the container boxes, mostly from China. All our plans for ramping up trade are put at risk by inadequate container production within India. Moreover, shortage of containers often jacks up freight rates in the country, with congestion at Indian ports also increasing.

the East-West trade route but cannot aspire to be hub ports because of container shortage. As a result, Colombo, Dubai and Hong Kong draw mother ship traffic, not Indian ports. Indian shippers are forced to depend on short distance feeder vessels where the providers of containers do not see much business and profits. This in turn, leads to higher tariff for our shippers.

The crisis in West Asia often casts a shadow on ship traffic through Suez Canal. Circumnavigating Africa lengthens voyages by 10 to 15 days and container availability takes a hit as a result. The Russia-Ukraine war has led to closure of some ports, changes in routes and insurance costs, as well as enhanced container freight rates. Piracy has also increased freight costs. In these conditions, it makes sense to build a large and secure supply of container boxes.

What can the government do?

The government has come up with Make In India initiatives to promote indigenous

PPP mode between the Container Corporation of India and private players or by directly incentivising private production. Direct subsidy and viability gap funding are two support measures available with the government.

A few more measures can help. A reduction in the charges of repositioning and storing empty containers can help ease the shortage of containers.

Enhancing container yard capacities at Indian ports can promote business. The key would be to ensure that when scaled up, the cost of production comes down to global levels. The government has mulled Production Linked Incentives (PLI) but they need to be implemented.

Incentives, including relaxation of GST to the manufacturers of raw materials required for containers will help in reducing input costs of container production. Incentives to Indian shippers using Indian containers and facilitating long-term contracts between shippers and Indian container manufacturers can build market confidence. Mandating the use of Indian-made containers enhances domestic demand resulting in better prospects for the sector. The development of a tracking and tracing mechanism of containers through a Unified Logistics Interface Platform and Logistics Data Bank by the government can reduce the turnaround time of export containers and ease their shortage.

N. Bhanu Prakash heads the School of Maritime Management at the Indian Maritime University, Mumbai.

THE GIST

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How important are containers?

- Containers can seamlessly be transported via rail, ship and road. It revolutionised world trade by rapidly cutting transportation time, port delays and so on.
- India has sought to increase container handling capacity in various ports to boost exports. Ambitious new ventures such as the Vadhavan and Galathea Bay ports as well as the multimodal India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor are built around containers.
- India's container market is expected to more than double from 11.4 million TEU (twenty-foot equivalent unit) in 2023 to 26.6 million TEU by 2028.
- The government has come up with Make In India initiatives to promote indigenous production of container boxes either in PPP mode between the Container Corporation of India and private players or by directly incentivising private production.

The Hindu-IR(GSII)-Page 12

India, U.S. conclude \$3.5-billion deal for procurement of 31 MQ-9B armed UAVs

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

India and the U.S. on Tuesday concluded a \$3.5-billion deal for the procurement of 31 MQ-9B armed high-altitude long endurance (HALE) remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS) manufactured by General Atomics through an inter-governmental agreement, via the Foreign Military Sales programme of the U.S.

One contract was signed

for Tri-Service procurement of 31 MQ-9B Sky/Sea Guardian HALE systems, the Defence Ministry said. "Another contract has been signed with General Atomics Global India Pvt Ltd for performance based-logistics for these RPAS through Depot Level Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul in India," the Ministry said on X. The contracts were inked in the presence of Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane.

The deal also includes

16 M36E9 Hellfire captive air training missiles; 310 GBU-39B/B laser Small Diameter Bombs (SDB); and 08 GBU-39B/B LSDB guided test vehicles with live fuses among others.

Force multiplier

The deal for 31 MQ-9B UAVs, 15 Sea Guardians for the Indian Navy and 16 Sky Guardians— eight each for the Indian Army and Air Force— was formally approved by the Cabinet

week along with another major deal for the indigenous construction of two Nuclear Attack Submarines (SSN).

These advanced UAVs, once inducted, will significantly augment India's Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities. For the Navy, it is a great force multiplier in keeping an eye over large swathes of the Indian Ocean Region and will reduce the wear and tear on its P-8I long-range mari-

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The Hindu –GS 2(Governance)-Page 14

Centre sets up three AI research hubs on health, agri and cities

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday announced setting up of three centres of excellence (CoE) in artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare, agriculture and sustainable cities. While the CoE in healthcare will be led by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Delhi, the IIT in Ropar, Punjab will lead the one on agriculture. The IIT-Kanpur has been given the charge of developing a CoE in sustainable cities. The CoEs will function with industries and start-ups.

Announcing the decision, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the AI-CoEs were going to be solution providers and would create a new generation of employment providers and wealth creators. The Union Budget had proposed the setting up of AI-CoEs with a financial outlay of ₹990 crore over the period of 2023-24 to 2027-28. To oversee its implementation, an industry-heavy apex committee had also been constituted, co-chaired by Zoho founder-CEO Sridhar Vembu.

“With the unveiling of the centres, significant strides have been taken to

The Union Budget had proposed the creation of AI-CoEs with financial outlay of ₹990 crore

strengthen Bharat’s credentials in the global AI landscape,” Mr. Pradhan said and hoped that the CoEs would be a key element of global public policy and also emerge as solution providers of the world. Complimenting the panel headed by Dr. Vembu for its efforts towards the implementation of these CoEs in AI, he said these institutions would give further impetus to the start-up ecosystem in the country, and help create a new generation of job and wealth creators.

Union Higher Education Secretary K. Sanjay Murthy said the CoEs would promote multidisciplinary research with the right kind of collaboration among like-minded resources and this could result in achieving optimum results.

Dr. Vembu said these projects would holistically benefit the health of villages, cities, and people. “The CoEs will bootstrap numerous efforts, create companies, nurture talent, and generate opportunities for our talent pool,” he said.

- The India-Russia working group on cooperation in the Northern Sea Route (NSR) held their first meeting last week and discussed targets for Indian-Russian cargo transit, possible training of Indian sailors for polar navigation and development of joint projects in Arctic shipbuilding,.
- “The working group also drafted a memorandum of understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation for the development of cooperation in cargo shipping in the waters of the NSR
- As India scaled up investments in Russia’s far East, cooperation on NSR figured in the joint statement issued after Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Moscow in July. Both sides shared approaches on building a “new architecture of stable and efficient transport corridors,” including for the purpose of “implementing the idea of a greater Eurasian space.”

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu –IR(GSII)-Page 16

U.S., Philippines launch war games after China's Taiwan military drills, ship collision

Agence France-Presse
MANILA

Thousands of U.S. and Filipino troops launched joint exercises in the northern and western Philippines on Tuesday, after China held huge drills around Taiwan and a Chinese vessel collided with a Filipino patrol boat.

The annual Kamandag, or Venom, exercises are focussed on defending the north coast of the Philippines' main island of Luzon, which lies about 800 km from self-ruled Taiwan.

Beijing considers Taiwan part of its territory and has vowed it will never rule out using force to take it.



United front: Military personnel from the U.S., Philippines and other nations at the opening ceremony of the drills in Manila. AFP

The joint U.S.-Filipino exercises also come days after a collision between a Chinese and a Philippine vessel in the South China Sea.

The western Philippine island of Palawan, facing the South China Sea, will

also host part of the drills.

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The Hindu –Environment(GSIII)-Page 12- International Edition

Govt. seeks to rein in firms greenwashing Indian consumers

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The government on Tuesday unveiled comprehensive guidelines to regulate greenwashing and misleading environmental claims by companies, aiming to protect consumers and promote transparency in eco-friendly marketing.

Greenwashing refers to claims by companies about any product or service having climate-friendly impact. The guidelines, issued by the Consumer Affairs Ministry, aim at ensuring eco-friendly assertions are backed by verifiable evidence and clear disclosures.

Briefing the media, Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare emphasised the guidelines did not prohibit environmental claims but sought to ensure they are made with integrity and transparency.

"The claims have to be supported by verifiable evidence and independent studies," she said.

For instance, terms like '100% eco-friendly', 'zero emissions', and 'cruelty-free' must now be substantiated with accurate and accessible qualifiers.

The guidelines provide definitions for 'greenwashing' and 'environmental

can only be made when supported by clear and actionable plans, she added.

The new guidelines mandate firms making environmental claims must disclose all material information in advertisements or communications, either through QR codes, URLs, or other digital media.

They must also specify whether the claim refers to the product as a whole, its manufacturing process, packaging, usage, or disposal, as per the new norms.

Specific environmental claims, such as 'compostable', 'degradable', 'recyclable', and 'net-zero', must be supported by credible certification, reliable scientific evidence, or third-party verification. These disclosures should be easily accessible to consumers.

Technical terms

The guidelines also address the use of technical terms, requiring companies to provide consumer-friendly explanations for concepts like 'environmental impact assessment' and 'ecological footprint'.

While these guidelines are in addition to existing regulations, the Consumer Affairs Ministry clarified that in case of any conflict with specific laws, the latter would prevail.

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- The guidelines provide definitions for 'greenwashing' and 'environmental claims' to establish clear parameters.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Indian Express –Defense(GSIII)-Page 17



YASHEE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 15

EVEN AS Israel faces increasing criticism for targeting United Nations peacekeepers in Lebanon, the United States said initial components required to operate the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery had arrived in the country on Monday, along with a team of American military personnel.

What is THAAD?

A THAAD battery consists of 95 soldiers, six truck-mounted launchers, 48 interceptors (eight per launcher), radar surveillance and radar, and a tactical fire

the broader adjustments the US military has made in recent months to support the defense of Israel and protect Americans from attacks by Iran and Iranian-aligned militias". THAAD will "help bolster Israel's air defenses following Iran's unprecedented attacks against Israel on April 13 and again on October 1...", it said.

What is the current situation between Israel and Iran?

Iran has warned the US against more involvement in the West Asia conflict. "The US has been delivering record amount of arms to Israel. It is now also putting lives of its troops at risk by deploying them to operate US missile systems in Israel. While we have made tremendous

- US to send THAAD defence battery system to Israel
- A THAAD battery consists of 95 soldiers, six truck-mounted launchers, 48 interceptors (eight per launcher), radar surveillance and radar, and a tactical fire component, according to a paper by the US Congressional Research Service.
- THAAD provides a "rapidly deployable capability against short-range (up to 1,000 km), medium-range (1,000–3,000 km), and limited intermediate-range (3,000–5,000 km) ballistic missile threats inside or outside the atmosphere during their final (terminal) phase of flight,

How bone ossification test works, and its application in law

SADAF MODAK
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 15

ONE OF the accused in the murder of former Maharashtra MLA Baba Siddique claimed before a court in Mumbai on Sunday that he was 17 years old – and should thus be tried under the Juvenile Justice Act. The Mumbai Police Crime Branch, which sought custody of the accused, said an Aadhaar card found on the individual showed his age as 19.

To determine whether the accused was a minor, the magistrate ordered a bone ossification test, which was carried out at the state-run JJ Hospital. After the report established that the accused, Dharmaraj Kashyap, was not a minor, the court remanded him in police custody until October 21.

What is a bone ossification test, and how

does it determine the age of a person?
Ossification is the natural process of bone formation. This starts from the early developmental stage of the foetus and continues until late adolescence, but differs slightly from individual to individual. Based on the stage of development of the bones, experts can determine the approximate age of the person.

In a bone ossification test, X-rays of a few bones, such as those of hands and the wrists are conducted to determine skeletal and biological development. The images may be compared with X-rays of standard development, which can assist in determining the age.

The analysis could be also based on a scoring system that looks at individual bones on the hands and wrists and their growth, and compares them with the standard of maturation of bones among a certain population.

Why is age determination significant in

the criminal justice system?
In India, a person who is below 18 years of age is considered a minor. The criminal law differentiates between a child and an adult when it comes to procedure, correction and rehabilitation, and punishment.

Anyone below the age of 18 is governed by the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. A child who is found to be in conflict with the law cannot be sent to a prison meant for adults, and is instead sent to an observation home.

Instead of a court, the child is brought before a Juvenile Justice Board (JJB)

comprising a magistrate and two social workers with experience in working with children. After an inquiry, the Board may direct the child to be let off with an admonition, community service, or a maximum of three years in a special home, among other options.

Following an amendment to the JJ Act in 2021, in cases where "a child above the age of sixteen years" has been apprehended for a "heinous offence" (for which the minimum punishment is seven years' imprisonment), the JJB must "conduct a preliminary assessment with regard to his mental and physical capacity to commit such offence, ability to understand the consequences of the offence and the circumstances in which he allegedly committed the offence" before deciding whether the child should be tried as an adult.

**EXPLAINED
LAW**

What have courts said about the bone ossification test?

Under Section 94 of the JJ Act, "where it is obvious...based on the appearance...that the said person is a child", the Board can proceed without confirmation of age. But if there

are "reasonable grounds for doubt", the Board must "undertake the process of age determination".

Evidence has to be obtained from "the date of birth certificate from the school", "the matriculation or equivalent certificate from the concerned examination board". If these are not available, a birth certificate issued by a corporation, municipal authority or a panchayat may be considered.

"Only in the absence of [these], age shall be determined by an ossification test or any other latest medical age determination test conducted on the orders of the Committee or the Board," says the Act. In an order passed in March this year, the Supreme Court also said that tests such as ossification must be the last in the order of priorities to determine age.

Courts have held that the test cannot override documentary evidence on the age of an accused person. In some cases, courts have

rejected pleas by accused seeking a test, where documentary evidence is already present.

How reliable are bone ossification tests?
Variability in observing the maturation of bones could impact the accuracy of the test. Also, the slight differences in development among individuals leaves some scope for error.

Ossification tests give a range – say, 17-19 years. Courts have dealt with the question of margin of error in the range, and considered whether to accept the age at the lower or the upper end of the range.

The Delhi High Court said this year that in POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act cases where the age of the victim is determined through an ossification test the upper age in the test's reference range should be considered, and a "margin of error of two years is required to be applied".

- The Mumbai police have confirmed that Dharmaraj Kashyap, one of the three accused in the murder case of NCP leader and former **Maharashtra Minister Baba Siddique**, is not a minor
- An ossification test is a medical examination used to estimate an individual's age by assessing the degree of bone development and fusion. This process relies on ossification, where cartilage gradually transforms into bone tissue as a person grows,"
- During the test, X-rays are taken of specific bones, such as those in the wrist, elbow, collarbone, or pelvis. These X-rays are then analysed to evaluate the stages of bone development.
- Ossification tests are most commonly conducted in legal or forensic contexts, particularly in cases where there is uncertainty or dispute regarding an individual's age

HEADLINES OF THE DAY



PIB–History(GSI)

Prime Minister's Office



PM to participate in celebration of International Abhidhamma Divas and recognition of Pali as a classical language on 17 October

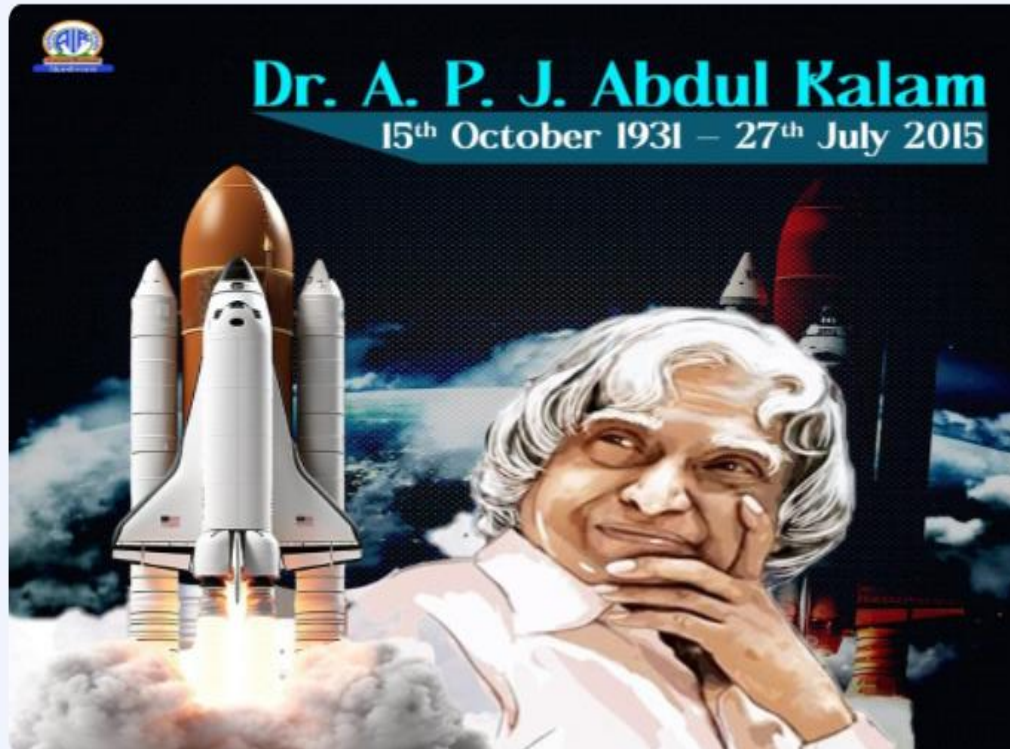
Posted On: 15 OCT 2024 9:13PM by PIB Delhi

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will participate in the celebration of International Abhidhamma Divas and recognition of Pali as a classical language at around 10 AM on 17 October at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. He will also address the gathering at the occasion.
- Abhidhamma Divas commemorates the descent of Lord Buddha from the celestial realm after teaching Abhidhamma. The recent recognition of Pali as a classical language, along with four other languages, enhances the significance of this year's Abhidhamma Divas celebrations as Lord Buddha's teachings on Abhidhamma are originally available in Pali language.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Air-Science and Tech(GSIII)

Nation Pays Tribute To Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam On His Birth Anniversary



Nation pays tribute to Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam on his birth anniversary

- It was on this day in 1931 that the former President was born in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu.
- Known as the Missile Man of India, Dr. Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam specialized in Aeronautical Engineering and made significant contributions as Project Director to develop India's first indigenous Satellite Launch Vehicle. He was also responsible for the evolution of ISRO's launch vehicle program, particularly the PSLV configuration.
- After working for two decades at ISRO, Dr. Kalam took on the responsibility of developing indigenous guided missiles and was instrumental in the development and operationalization of the AGNI and PRITHVI missiles. Mr. Kalam is also credited with the weaponization of strategic missile systems and the Pokhran-II nuclear tests, which made India a nuclear weapons state.
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