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KAMBALA
(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 – Art and Culture)

Kambala comes to Bengaluru: How buffalo race's popularity outran bans

AKRAM M
BENGALURU, NOVEMBER 27

THE PAST weekend saw Bengaluru hold its first Kambala race, with 159 pairs of buffaloes and their jockeys racing through the specially made slush tracks in the city's Palace Grounds. The final rounds of the races ended only by 2 am on Monday. Lakhs of people visited the venue to watch the event.

Kambala has in the past been banned by the Supreme Court, but the Karnataka government, keeping its popularity in mind, amended legislation to allow the races to go on.

EXPLAINED CULTURE

What is Kambala?

It is a folk sport practised in coastal Karnataka districts, especially in regions where Tulu speakers form a majority. In the past, races were hosted by various families and groups in sludgy fields in the days after paddy was harvested. More recently, various Kambala Samithis or organising bodies have come up, which host weekly events from the end of November till the first half of April across Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts.

Kambala is a matter of prestige for many families, especially from the Bunt community in the coastal areas. Pairs of buffaloes are groomed by them round the year in the hope of winning a Kambala event.

What are the categories?

Kambala is generally held under four categories. First is *Negilu* (plough), where light ploughs are used to tie buffaloes for the race. The event is for entry-level animals.

The second is *Hagga* (rope), where buffaloes are raced by jockeys with just a rope tying the pair together. The third category is *Adda Halage*, in which jockeys stand over a horizontal plank dragged by buffaloes. Thus, unlike *Hagga* and *Negilu*, where jockeys run behind the animals, in this, buffaloes drag the jockeys. *Kane Halage* is the fourth category, where a wooden plank is tied to buffaloes. The plank, on which the jockeys stand, has two holes through which water gushes out as the plank is dragged along the slush tracks. The height to which water splashes determines the winner of the event.



The Kambala event was held in Bengaluru on November 25 and 26. *Jithendra M*

Is Kambala popular across Karnataka?

Though the popularity of the races is restricted to coastal Karnataka, the Bengaluru organisers believe that movies like *Kanthara* have given the event a pan-Karnataka appeal. Due to the success of the movie, many people are interested in learning more about the folk sport, Puttur MLA Ashok Rai, one of the main organisers of the event, said.

To ensure that more teams participated in the Kambala at the state's capital, an incentive of Rs 50,000 was offered to bring the buffaloes to Bengaluru for the event.

Why was Kambala outlawed?

Several organisations, including People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, had filed pleas against all traditional sporting events, complaining about animal abuse.

The complaint against Kambala was that the buffaloes' noses are tied with a rope and the animals are whipped continuously during the race, which amounts to cruelty. The SC, which heard these petitions, ruled to ban Jallikattu, Kambala and bullock cart racing in 2014.

How was the ban lifted?

In January 2016, the Environment Ministry issued a notification where an exception was made, saying "bulls might be continued to be trained as performing animals at events such as Jallikattu in Tamil Nadu and Bullock Cart Races in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Punjab, Haryana, Kerala and Gujarat in the manner...or practice traditionally under the customs or as part of culture in any part of the country."

This exception was made subject to certain conditions aimed at reducing the suffering of the animals being used for such sports.

At the same time, state governments amended provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act to provide an exemption for these events. Though this was challenged, a five-judge Constitutional Bench upheld the amendments made by Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra in May this year.

LONGER VERSION ON indianexpress.com/explained

Context: Recently, **Bengaluru made history by hosting its first Kambala race over** the past weekend, featuring 159 pairs of buffaloes and their skilled jockeys speeding through specially designed slush tracks in the city's Palace Grounds.

Kambala

- **About:** It is a folk sport practiced in coastal Karnataka districts, especially in regions where Tulu speakers form a majority.
- In the past, races were hosted by various families and groups in sludgy fields in the days after paddy was harvested.
- **Cultural Significance**: Kambala is a matter of prestige for many families, especially from the Bunt community in the coastal areas.
- Pairs of buffaloes are groomed by them round the year in the hope of winning a Kambala event.

4 Categories in Kambala

- **Negilu (plough)**, where light ploughs are used to tie buffaloes for the race. The event is for entry-level animals.
- **Hagga (rope)**, where buffaloes are raced by jockeys with just a rope tying the pair together.
- **Adda Halage**, in which jockeys stand over a horizontal plank dragged by buffaloes.
- **Kane Halage**, where a wooden plank is tied to buffaloes.

Kambala outlawed by the Supreme Court

- **Several organizations**, including People for the **Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), had filed a petition** against all traditional sporting events, complaining about animal abuse.
- The complaint against Kambala was that the buffaloes' **noses are tied with a rope and the animals are whipped continuously during the race**, which amounts to cruelty.
- The **SC, which heard these petitions**, ruled to **ban Jallikattu, Kambala and bullock cart** racing in 2014.

THE HINDU

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LIGHTNING DISASTER

Syllabus GS Paper 3 – Disaster Management)

Lightning strikes kill 27 in Gujarat as rain batters State

Four persons died in Dahod, three in Bharuch and two in Tapi; in Saurashtra, rain has caused damage to standing crops after which Chief Minister and Agriculture Minister ordered a survey

Mahesh Langa
AHMEDABAD

Twenty-seven people were killed in lightning strikes as unseasonal rains and hailstorms have been battering Gujarat since Sunday.

Moreover, at least 25 people were injured and 79 animals also died in the havoc wreaked by the sudden thunderstorm in more than 220 talukas where standing crops were damaged.

State government sources said at least 27 people had died in lightning strikes in different areas across the State since Sunday morning.



Nature's fury: Lightning strikes over the Khodaldham temple near Rajkot in Gujarat. Elsewhere in the State, a total of 27 people reportedly died in lightning strikes. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Union Home Minister Amit Shah condoled the deaths due to bad weather and lightning in various cities of Gujarat on Sunday, and said the local administration was engaged in relief work. Mr. Shah, in a post on X (formerly Twitter) on Sunday night said, "I am deeply saddened by the news of the death of many people due to bad weather and lightning in various cities of Gujarat. I express my deepest condolences for the irreparable loss to those who lost their loved ones in this tragedy. The local administration is engaged in relief work, praying for the speedy recovery of the injured."

Four persons died in Dahod district, three in Bharuch, and two in Tapi, while the remaining were from other districts. The rain and hailstorms have caused extensive damage to standing crops in Saurashtra and south Gujarat. Besides, the rainfall also affected the ceramic industry of Morbi district as factories were forced to remain shut.

Meanwhile, Gujarat Agriculture Minister Raghavji Patel has announced plans for a comprehensive survey to assess the extent of the damage to the crops and livestock and to provide compensation to the affected persons.

Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel also directed the officials to start the survey to assess the damage caused by the rains.

Context: Recently, **Gujarat experienced unseasonal rains and hailstorms**, resulting in the tragic deaths of **twenty-seven people due to lightning strikes.**

Lightning Disaster

- **About**: Lightning is a powerful and visible electrical phenomenon that takes place when there is a buildup of electrical charges within clouds and between clouds and the ground.
- **Effects of Lightning Discharge**: The discharge of this electrical energy results in a brilliant flash of light and a rapid expansion of air, creating the characteristic thunder that accompanies lightning.
- **Risks of Cloud-to-Ground Lightning:** It is dangerous because it can electrocute people due to its high electric voltage and current.
- **India's Early Warning System**: India ranks among the five countries worldwide with an early warning system for lightning.
- **According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) 2021 data**, lightning accounted for 2,880 deaths, comprising 40% of all accidental deaths caused by "forces of nature."
- **Regional Frequency of Lightning**: Lightning frequency is highest in northeastern states and West Bengal, Sikkim, Jharkhand, Odisha, and Bihar.
- **Bihar's Vulnerability to Lightning**: Bihar is one of the most vulnerable states to lightning strikes, with a significant number of deaths reported annually.
- **Lightning as a Natural Disaster**: The Union government opposes declaring lightning a natural disaster.
- The government believes that education and awareness can help prevent lightning-related deaths effectively.

PIB Nov 27

MISSION SAKSHAM & PASHAN 2.0

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Govt Scheme)

Ministry of Women and Child Development to organize a national event to launch Anganwadi Protocol for Divyang Children - an important commitment under Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi program of Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0

Context: The **Ministry of Women and Child Development is organizing** a national event to launch the **Anganwadi Protocol for Divyang Children**, an important commitment under the **Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi program** of Mission Saksham Anganwadi and **Poshan 2.0**.

- As per the **National Education Policy 2020**, integration of Divyang students into mainstream schools should be prioritized, rather than establishing segregated educational institutions.

Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0.

- **Fund**: Centrally-sponsored program, executed in collaboration with State Governments/ UT administrations.
- **Vision**: To combat the pervasive issue of malnutrition affecting children under the age of 6, adolescent girls aged 14-18, and pregnant or lactating women.
- **Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**: Pivotal to the program's design is its commitment to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- It particularly targets SDG 2, focusing on Zero Hunger, and SDG 4, emphasizing Quality Education. By addressing malnutrition, Poshan 2.0 contributes directly to the forefront of achieving these global development goals.
- **Focus on Nutrition**: Poshan 2.0 places a special emphasis on the foundational significance of nutrition and early childhood care and education. By prioritizing these aspects, the mission aims to ensure the well-being, growth, and comprehensive development of children, fostering their transition into healthy and productive adults.
- **Inclusivity and Eligibility:** The scheme welcomes all eligible beneficiaries, with the sole precondition being registration at the nearest Anganwadi center with Aadhaar identification.
- This approach ensures accessibility and inclusivity in providing the necessary support to those in need.
- **Target Beneficiaries**: Adolescent girls aged 14-18 years, with identification and selection of beneficiaries carried out by the concerned states.

DTE

Nov 27

INDO-GANGETIC PLAIN

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 – Geography)

North India can tackle smog using eco-friendly farm practices from the South, say experts

Context: Recently, **agricultural scientists** have suggested that the **Indo-Gangetic Plain (IGP) of north India** could alleviate its annual **smog issue by adopting eco-friendly farming** practices observed in **south India's Cauvery basin, including mulching and nitrogen-fixing**.

- One of the major causes of smog formation over the IGP is burning of paddy stubble.

Cauvery

- **About**: It is the largest river in the Karnatka state.
- **Known as**: Dakshina Ganga (the Ganges of the South) and considered one of the sacred rivers of India.
- **Origin**: Bramahagiri Hills near Madikeri in Coorg.
- **Tributaries**: Harangi, Hemavathi, Lakshmanatirtha, Kabini, Shimsha, Arkavati, Suvarnavathi or Honnuholé, Bhavani, Lokapavani, Noyyal.



Indo-Gangetic Plain

- **About:** The Indo-Gangetic Plain, also referred to as the North Indian River Plain, is a vast and fertile expanse covering approximately 700 thousand km2 (172 million acres).
- **Geographic Extent**: Encompassing major portions of modern-day northern and eastern India, eastern Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the southern plains of Nepal, the Indo-Gangetic Plain holds geographical significance. The region is alternatively known as the Indus–Ganga Plain.
- **Rivers and Urban Areas**: Named after the prominent Indus and Ganges rivers, the plain is characterized by the presence of these significant water bodies.
- Moreover, the Indo-Gangetic Plain is dotted with large urban areas, including several notable cities.
- **Boundaries:** The northern boundary of the plain by Himalayas, the southern edge of the Indo-Gangetic Plain is defined by the Deccan Plateau.

DECCAN HERALD

Nov 27

SHETTIHALLI SANCTUARY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Delay in ESZ tag for Shettihalli sanctuary: Green Tribunal sets 6-month deadline

Context: Recently, the **National Green Tribunal (NGT) directed the state government** to expeditiously address the issues causing delays in notifying the **eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) status for the Shettihalli wildlife sanctuary** in Shivamogga, setting a six-month deadline for resolution.

Eco-Sensitive Zones

- **About:** The Indian Government designates Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) around Protected Areas, National Parks, and Wildlife Sanctuaries.
- **Ministry**: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)
- **Area under ESZ:** It could go up to **10 Km around Protected Areas.**
- **Prohibited Activities**: Mining, sawmills, the establishment of major hydroelectric projects, commercial use of wood, Tourism

Shettihalli Wildlife Sanctuary

- **Location**: Shimoga District of Karnataka.
- **Coverage Area**: 395.6 square kilometres.
- **Declared a wildlife sanctuary:** On 23rd November 1974.
- **Vegetation**: Predominantly covered by tropical evergreen and semi-evergreen forests.
- Eastern and central parts are mostly covered by dry and moist deciduous forests, while the western parts have semi-evergreen forests.
- **Flora:** Major tree species include silver oak, teak, Indian Thorny Bamboo, Calcutta bamboo, Asan, Tectona Grandis, Sweet Indrajao, Amla, etc.
- **Fauna**: Tiger, Leopard, Wild Dog, Jackal, Gaur, Elephant, Sloth Bear, Sambar, Spotted Deer, Wild Pig, Common Langur, Bonnet Macaque, etc.
- Birds include Hornbills, Kingfishers, Bulbuls, Parakeets, Doves, Pigeons, Babblers, Flycatchers, Munias, Swallows, Woodpeckers, Peafowl, Jungle fowl, and Partridges.

TRIBUNE Nov 27

ABHA ID
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Govt Scheme)

ABHA IDs must for patients, hospitals told

Context: Recently, the **National Medical Commission (NMC) mandated** medical colleges to adopt the **ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Health Account) ID registration system** to facilitate the acquisition of accurate clinical material and ensure effective training for MBBS, MD, and MS students.

Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) ID

- **About:** ABHA is a randomly generated 14-digit number designed to uniquely identify individuals, authenticate them, and interconnect their health records across various systems and stakeholders.
- **Launched:** In 2021, by NHA (National Health Authority), a division of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, introduced as part of the Ayushman Bharat Yojana.
- **Opt-In for Digital Security**: Individuals have the option to voluntarily create a secure ABHA, allowing them to access and share their health data with participating healthcare providers and payers.
- **Centralized Health Record Management:** ABHA assists citizens in consolidating their health records in one secure location, promoting efficient record management.
- **Digital Accessibility for Stakeholders:** Users, insurance companies, and hospitals can digitally access health records, fostering streamlined communication and collaboration in the healthcare ecosystem.
- **Health Information Access:** ABHA facilitates easy digital access to lab reports, prescriptions, consultation details, and diagnoses from verified doctors by presenting the Health ID.
- **Nationwide Digital Connectivity:** It digitally connects hospitals across the country, promoting seamless information exchange and collaboration in the healthcare sector.
- **Voluntary Nature and Opt-Out Option:** Having an ABHA health ID card is not mandatory, providing individuals the choice to register for the facility or erase their information from the ABHA database if they wish to opt out.

HINDUSTAN TIMES

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ACCESS TO JUSTICE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)



Pro-people orders alone can't ensure access to justice: CJI

Utkarsh Anand
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NEW DELHI: Access to justice is a right that cannot be secured by delivering pro-people verdicts alone and must be complemented by meaningful administrative steps, Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud said on Monday.

Explaining the holistic concept of "access to justice", CJI Chandrachud highlighted how the use of technology, improved infrastructure, physical and functional accessibility to courtrooms, and gender-neutral measures can aid in removing a spate of barriers for the citizens.

"The complexities of law and process, the inequality between ordinary citizens and powerful adversaries, judicial delays, and the belief that the system works against marginalized communities are among the various barriers that stand in the way of equal access to justice. I realized over time that access to justice is not a right that can be secured only by crafting pro-people jurisprudence in our judgements, but rather, that it requires active progress on the administrative side of the court as well," said justice Chandrachud.

The CJI was speaking at the inaugural event of the first regional conference of around 70 countries from Africa and the Asia-Pacific , hosted by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) in the Capital, on the theme of "Strengthening Access to Justice in the Global South". The International Legal Foundation, United Nations Development Programme and UNICEF are co-hosting the event. Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul is the executive chairman of NALSA while the CJI is its patron-in-chief.

The most effective weapon that the judiciary can wield to accelerate access to justice, the CJI underscored, is technology. "Today, the Supreme Court is successfully using technology in myriad ways to bring the courtroom closer to the citizens. I am certain that several of you have had the opportunity to watch the live stream of proceedings before the constitution benches of the Supreme Court. In many ways, online streaming of proceedings has taken the Supreme Court to the hearts and homes of common citizens of the country," he added.

According to justice Chandrachud, the concerns over physical access to courtrooms ought to move beyond merely increasing the number of courtrooms or judicial officers. "Access to justice is as much about the quantity of judicial infrastructure as it is about making courtrooms a space where everyone feels welcome. An integral part of securing access to justice, therefore, is making the courtroom a space that is accessible to persons belonging to diverse communities cutting across age, gender identity, caste and economic status," he pointed out.

The CJI said that physical and functional accessibility of court complexes must be assessed to ensure that the physical infrastructure of the court accommodates all citizens, including pregnant women, senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

As of today, nine gender-neutral restrooms have been installed at various locations within the precincts of the top court, said the CJI, adding there are steps introduced to an additional column for lawyers to mention their preferred pronouns while appearing before the court or filing documents.

Referring to the "extraordinary role" that the judiciary plays in increasing access to justice, justice Chandrachud said that countries from the global South, including India have developed ingenious practices to increase access to justice.

DHANANJAYA Y CHANDRACHUD | CJI

An integral part of securing access to justice is making the courtroom a space that is accessible to persons belonging to diverse communities

HT

VP calls for change in laws framed by British

Abraham Thomas
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NEW DELHI: Countries that were once under colonial rule should consider reviewing all colonial laws following the example of India, said Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar adding that Indian Parliament is working to "contain, curb and decimate" exploitative provisions of the criminal procedure code and penal code of Victorian heritage.

His reference was to the replacement of the three laws that form the basis of India's criminal justice system — the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, and the Indian Evidence Act. Dhankhar added: "The legacy of colonial legal regime has been highly burdensome to the vulnerable sections of the society in the global South."

He was presiding over the inaugural event of first regional conference of around 70 countries of Asia, Africa and Pacific hosted by the National Legal Services Authority on the theme of "Strengthening Access to Justice in the Global South".

The International Legal Foundation, United Nations Development Programme and UNICEF are co-hosting the event. The Vice President, who is also chairman of Rajya Sabha said: "Our country is in the process of having a legislation, which is under consideration of the Parliament, that will bring about a sea change in our outlook and totally contain, curb and decimate those exploitative provisions in procedure and penology."

He added: "Time has come to follow India's example and emulate the same. As sovereign nations, global South nations should consider reviewing all colonial laws that perpetrate prejudice against local population."

'Legal aid can empower the marginalised'

NEW DELHI: Legal aid is not merely a service but a beacon that protects and empowers the marginalized, said National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) chairperson justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul.

Addressing the inaugural event of the first regional conference of 70 countries of Asia, Africa and Pacific justice Kaul said, "Legal aid is not merely a service but a beacon that guides the marginalised towards empowerment and protection."

He said that though the countries of the global South are separated by geographical locations, they are joined by common ambition of ensuring that justice is accessible to all. HTC

Context: Recently, the **Chief Justice of India emphasized that access to justice** is a right that cannot be secured by delivering pro-people verdicts alone and must be complemented by meaningful administrative steps.

Access to Justice

- **About:** Access to justice is a basic right that guarantees protection of law to all. It is integral to rule of law.
- **Evolution**: In the past, access to justice primarily denoted an individual's formal right to engage in legal proceedings, either as a litigant or a defendant.
- **Natural Rights and State Action**: The traditional view held that access to justice, being a natural right, did not necessitate active involvement or intervention by the state.
- **Dual Purposes of the Legal System**: The term "access to justice" directs attention to the fundamental goals of the legal system.
- It serves as a mechanism for individuals to assert their rights and resolve disputes, operating under the overarching authority of the state.
- **Formal Access to Justice**: Involves the adjudication of disputes through court proceedings, adhering to established civil and criminal procedures.
- **Informal Access to Justice**: Encompasses alternative dispute resolution methods like arbitration, conciliation, mediation, Lok Adalats, and Nyaya Panchayats.

Constitutional Provisions

- **Preamble:** The Preamble ensures social, economic, and political justice as well as equality of status and opportunity for every citizen of India.
- **Article 14**: Within the territory of India, the state is prohibited from denying any person equality before the law and equal protection of the law.
- **Article 21**: Guarantees the protection of life and personal liberty.
- **Article 39A**: the State to ensure that the legal system promotes justice based on equal opportunity.

LIVEMINT Page 2

DARK PATTERN

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Governance)

Dark pattern guidelines to prescribe penalty for erring digital firms

Puja Das & Gireesh Chandra Prasad

NEW DELHI

The government is set to specify penalties for e-commerce companies misleading consumers into taking unintended decisions, as it tightens regulations on unfair trade practices by digital businesses.

The guidelines for what's known in the industry as dark patterns, or deceptive patterns, are expected in a matter of weeks, said an official informed about the development.

The government decided to specify the penalties because the underlying consumer protection law does not specifically name 'dark patterns' as an unfair practice, although it has a broad scope and covers all deceptive practices and misrepresentations.

This will not only give e-commerce companies clarity on the consequences of indulging in misleading trade practices, but also make it easier for courts to deal with consumer complaints.

Dark patterns are designed to manipulate users into buying a more expensive product, paying more than initially disclosed, sharing data, or making choices based on false or paid-for reviews.



Nudging consumers online in a direction where they do not want to go is an unfair practice. GETTY IMAGES

"Dark pattern comes under the umbrella of unfair trade practice. Nudging a consumer in a direction where he does not want to go is an unfair practice. If anyone goes to court, the perpetrator will be punished. But sometimes even e-commerce players may not be aware of it," said the official mentioned above.

"To give clarity to both businesses and consumers about the applicable penalty for such unfair trade practices, the guidelines will specify that. It will also make it easier for courts."

The guidelines, framed following consultation with the industry and public feedback, will be issued shortly, the official said.

Queries sent to the department of consumer affairs and the ministry of law and justice remained unanswered at press time.

Experts described the regulations as a step in the right direction.

"Hopefully, the final guidelines that will be implemented will build in compliance mechanisms and reporting requirements in a balanced manner, enabling effective tracking of dark patterns, while also not burdening business operations," said Sweta Ranjan, partner at law firm Economic Laws Practice (ELP).

"The effectiveness of the proposals would depend on their implementation and compliance mechanisms, which are yet unclear."

Elaborating on how dark patterns work, Ranjan said marketing strategies of digital businesses are often premised on consumer psychology. "Dark patterns have evolved based on research which demonstrates that consumers may be manipulated into making unintended choices and purchases," said Ranjan.

Digital marketplaces are constantly evolving and the list of dark patterns in the guidelines would need to be regularly updated, said Sanya Sud, principal associate at law firm Saraf & Partners.

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Context: Recently, the **government has taken decisive steps** to address the **growing issue of e-commerce companies misleading consumers** into making unintended decisions by **specifying penalties and tightening regulations** on unfair trade practices in the digital business sector.

- The **government chose to delineate the penalties** because the **existing consumer protection law does not explicitly identify 'dark patterns'** as an unfair practice, despite its extensive coverage of all deceptive practices and misrepresentations within a broad scope.

Dark Pattern

- **About**: Dark patterns, also known as deceptive patterns, refer to the tactics employed by websites or apps to lead users into unintended actions or discourage behaviors that are unfavourable for the companies.
- **Coined by**: Harry Brignull, a user experience (UX) designer in 2010, this term encapsulates the strategies used by platforms to manipulate user behavior.
- **Examples**: Intrusive ads that are difficult to dismiss, often due to tiny, hard-to-find "X" buttons, leading users to accidentally click on the ad instead.

Use of Dark Patterns

- Social media companies and Big Tech firms such as **Apple, Amazon, Skype, Facebook, LinkedIn, Microsoft, and Google use dark or deceptive patterns** to downgrade the user experience to their advantage.
- In **social media, LinkedIn users often receive unsolicited,** sponsored messages from influencers.
- **Dark pattern in India**: Section 2(9)(v) of Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides for consumer's right to seek redressal against unfair trade practice or restrictive trade practices or unscrupulous exploitation of consumers.

ECONOMIC TIMES

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PMKVY 4.0

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Govt Schemes)

SETTING TARGETS FOR PHASE-4 OF PM KAUSHAL VIKAS YOJANA

National Skill Plan in Works to Map HR Needs in Each District

Targets based on sector-wise demand till now; steering committee soon

Yogima.Sharma@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The government is readying to launch a National Skill Development Plan, said people familiar with the development. It will help map human resource requirements in each district of the country which will form the basis for setting up skilling targets under the fourth-phase of the flagship skilling scheme, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY 4.0), they said.

The move signals a strategic shift since targets have so far been based on sector-wise demand, said a senior government official.

"The idea is to expand outreach of the Skill India Mission and ensure employment generation even at the district level and below while also preventing large-scale migration to urban centres for work," said the official, who did not wish to be identified.

The proposed plan will focus on aspects including labour market and skill gap analysis, mapping demand for skilled workforce in the formal sector and employment generation capacity in each district.

The demand and supply map of skilled manpower at the district level will then be used to formulate dedicated district plans that will flow into the state skill development plans, officials said.

The Ministry of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) is gearing up to launch the fourth phase of the flagship skilling scheme, which is yet to secure the cabinet's approval.

However, the government has moved ahead with the first round of financial sanctions under the scheme, said one of the officials.

The initial plan was to run the scheme for four years from 2023, with a target to train 15 million youths at an estimated cost of ₹6,000 crore. However, ₹950 crore has been allocated to run the scheme in this financial year till the cabinet approves the fourth phase of the scheme.

The government will soon set up a steering committee, under the chairmanship of MSDE secretary, to provide broad policy direction and allocation of targets under the PMKVY 4.0, as per the guidelines for the scheme seen by ET.

The fourth phase of PMKVY will primarily focus on demand for skilled manpower for national priority projects, including those under the PM GatiShakti and the Sagarmala Project, besides catering to demand from various sector skill councils.

PMKVY 4.0 will focus on local opportunities in the farm and non-farm sectors, as well as skilling requirements of the local industry within each district. It will also seek to address the requirement of industry from emerging sectors such as drones, artificial intelligence (AI), robotics and mechatronics.

Back to the Roots

Candidates to be trained for local industry; domestic and global markets

Scheme to run for four years from 2023; train **15 million**

Estimated cost pegged at ₹6,000 cr, budget so far ₹950 cr

Ministry aims to train **2 million** candidates in current year

FILE PHOTO

	Trained	Certified	Placed
PMKVY 1.0 (2015-16)	1.98	1.45	0.26
PMKVY 2.0 (2016-20)	11.0	9.1	2.1
PMKVY 3.0 (2020-22)	0.73	0.43	0.04

(All fig in million) Source: PMKVY Dashboard

DURGA PRASAD



Context: The government is readying to launch a **National Skill Development Plan**, said people familiar with the development.

Key Points

- **Aim**: It will help map human resource requirements in each district of the country which will form the basis for setting up skilling targets.
- **Nodal Ministry**: Ministry of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)
- **Under the Program**: under the fourth-phase of the flagship skilling scheme, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY 4.0).
- **Focus Area**: Labour market and skill gap analysis, mapping demand for skilled workforce in the formal sector and employment generation capacity in each district.

PMKVY 4.0

- **Focus**: Local opportunities in the farm and non-farm sectors, as well as skilling requirements of the local industry within each district.
- It will also **seek to address the requirements of industry** from emerging sectors such as drones, artificial intelligence (AI), robotics and mechatronics.

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

- **About**: PMKVY is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE).
- **Implemented by**: National Skill Development Corporation.
- **Objective**: To enable a large number of Indian youth to take up industry-relevant skill training that will help them in securing a better livelihood.

TIMES OF INDIA

Nov 1

RAT HOLE MINING

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

‘Rat-hole’ miners begin op to reach trapped 41

Vertical Drilling Also On, 36 Of 86M Bored

Gaurav Talwar & Abhyudaya Kotnala

Dehradun/Silkyara: In a dramatic alliance, six highly skilled ‘rat-hole’ miners from UP’s Jhansi have teamed up with the Army on the mission to rescue 41 trapped workers from the depths of Uttarkashi’s Silkyara tunnel.

Renowned for their expertise in navigating and digging through confined spaces, the six have been tasked with manually burrowing through the remaining 10-12 metres of rubble that separate the workers and freedom.

By Monday evening — Day 16 of the operation — the miners had already successfully excavated nearly a metre within just two hours.

Meanwhile, ‘Plan B’ that entails vertical drilling from the top of the hill made considerable progress till Monday afternoon: 36 out of a total of 86 metres were drilled.



Photos: Piyal Bhattacharjee

Two ‘rat-hole’ miners in Silkyara on Monday. Army engrs will aid them

SKILLED BURROWERS

- ‘Rat-hole’ mining entails excavation of hundreds of feet of very narrow tunnels, using basic equipment, into which workers — often kids — enter to extract coal, mainly in Meghalaya. **Was banned by NGT in 2014**
- In Silkyara, 6 such miners from UP will **manually dig their way** and are expected to cover the 10-12m metres of rubble left to reach the trapped workers in tunnel in 24 to 36 hrs
- One of the 6 tells **TOI**: ‘We’ll have no issue of claustrophobia as **we have worked inside smaller tunnels**’

► **Govt leaving no stone unturned: PM Modi,** P 12

► **Breakthrough may take 16-50 hrs, Centre told,** P 12

► **‘6 m a challenge’,** P 12

Context: Recently, **six highly skilled 'rat-hole' miners from UP's** Jhansi have teamed up with the Army on the mission to rescue 41 trapped workers from the depths of Uttarkashi's Silkyara tunnel.

Rat Hole Mining

- **About**: Rat Hole Mining entails the excavation of extremely narrow tunnels, typically ranging from 3 to 4 feet in depth, where laborers—often children—enter to extract coal.
- **Meghalaya is primarily involved in rat hole mining** due to the challenging topography and the specific characteristics of coal found in this area.

Types of Rat Hole Mining:

- **Side-cutting**: Narrow tunnels are dug in the hill slopes, and workers go inside the holes to find the coal seam.
- **Box-cutting**: Rectangular openings are made, which can vary upto 10 to 100 sq m.
- **Ban**: In 2014, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) imposed a ban on it, citing concerns about its lack of scientific validity and its potential danger to workers.
- The state **government of Meghalaya has contested this NGT ban in the Supreme Court**.

Impact of Rat Hole Mining

- **Environmental Impact in Meghalaya**: Rat-hole mining practices in Meghalaya, particularly in the Jaintia Hills district, have resulted in the acidity of numerous rivers, adversely affecting water sources.
- **Degraded Water Quality**: The aftermath of rat-hole mining includes degraded water quality characterized by elevated levels of sulfates, iron, and toxic heavy metals, coupled with low dissolved oxygen (DO) and high biological oxygen demand (BOD).
- **Coal Piling and Pollution**: Areas surrounding the mines are employed for coal stockpiling, emerging as a significant contributor to air, water, and soil pollution in the region.

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