

## Karnataka Government to regulate online betting, gaming sectors

Karnataka Government has formed a committee to draft the new legislation aimed at **regulating online gambling and betting platforms**, to curb fraudulent practices and support the legal gaming sector.

➤ **Gambling** can be defined as a game comprising three key elements: **consideration, an element of chance, and a reward.**

### Need for regulating online betting

- **Better monitoring and enforcement:** legalisation of regulated betting and gambling activities, asserting that a complete ban has not been returning the desired results. **(276<sup>th</sup> Report of Law Commission)**
- **To address the issue of match-fixing:** Regulating betting could help reduce unethical participation by sportspeople in betting. **(Justice Lodha Committee)**
- **Curbing black money:** FICCI has been urging the government to legalize betting, estimating potential revenues of 12,000-19,000 crore rupees.

### Concerns in regulating online betting and gambling

- **Games of skill:** **Sports betting conceptually resembles horse betting** therefore sports betting should be permitted in India.
  - ⊕ In **RMD Chamarbaugawala v. Union of India Case (1957)**, Supreme Court held that **activities involving substantial skill** are considered commercial and are **protected under Article 19(1)(g)** of the Constitution.
- **Gambling is a state subject:** It will violate the **federal principle of division of power** centre and states.
- **Effect on tourism:** Most states have banned it for locals but Gambling is a tourist attraction in states like Goa.

### Existing Regulatory Framework

- **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 ("IT Rules 2021"):** Co-regulatory regime whereby MeitY-recognised, independent self-regulatory bodies to verify whether an "online real-money game" is to be made available to the general public or not.
- **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) (Amednment) Rules, 2023:** seek to regulate online gaming by mandating their verification, registration, and transparency regarding privacy policies as well as user agreements.
- **State specific rules:** State of Assam has Assam Gaming and Betting Act (1970); Goa has Goa, Daman and Diu Public Gambling Act (1976), etc.

## Union Commerce Minister highlights lack of deep-tech innovation in Indian Startups

While appreciating growth of **consumer-driven ventures** (e.g. Food-delivery and Q-commerce apps) in India, minister highlighted **lack of innovation** in deep-tech startups.

➤ **Deep-tech startups are high-risk, long-gestation ventures** that leverage advanced technologies like **AI/ML, block chain** etc. to create novel solutions for complex problems. E.g. Skyroot Aerospace, Sarvam AI.

### Issues with the Startup ecosystem in India

- **Funding:** Low government and private **capital investment** and a **risk-averse investment culture** stifle startups aiming to tackle complex problems.
  - ⊕ The total **tech investment** in India during **2014-2024** is estimated at **\$160 billion**, against **China's \$845 billion**.
  - ⊕ India's **venture capital (VC) landscape** prioritizes **quick returns** over **patient capital**.
- **Education and research infrastructure:** **Lag** in ecosystem development due to **subpar quality**, lack of **industry-academia linkages**, lack of **skilled workforce**, **brain drain** etc.
- **Governance:** Policy uncertainty and regulatory hurdles hinder **ease of doing business**.
  - ⊕ E.g. Access to **credit**, **taxation** and import barriers on raw materials, **red tape and corruption** in getting approvals etc.

### Way Forward

- **Policy reforms:** Provide grants/ access to **regulatory sandboxes** to test prototypes, logistical support for **commercialization**, deep-tech focused **skill development** programs.
- **Investment promotion:** Setting up deep-tech innovation funds; establish **co-investment** programs with VCs.
- **Education reform:** Promoting **quality research** by building **strong academia-start-up bridges**.

## Startup Ecosystem in India



### Status of Startup Ecosystem

- ➔ Third-largest startup hub globally
- ➔ Over 100 unicorns in India
- ➔ Ranked 39<sup>th</sup> in the 2024 Global Innovation Index
- ➔ 4,000 deep-tech startups attracted \$1.6 billion in 2024 (↑78% YoY)
- ➔ Nearly 50% of startups originate from Tier II and Tier III cities



### Policy and Schemes

- ➔ Draft National Deep Tech Startup Policy (2023)
- ➔ Startup India Seed Fund
- ➔ Rs 10,000 crore IndiaAI Mission and a Fund of Funds for deep-toch
- ➔ Bharat Startup Knowledge Access Registry (BHASKAR) initiative

## India tests Directed Energy Weapon System that can disable Drones, Missiles, Aircraft

DRDO successfully conducted a **trial of a Mk-II(A) LASER- Directed Energy Weapon (DEW) system** at the National Open Air Range (NOAR) in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh.

- India became the **fourth country** in the world, after the **US, China, and Russia** who possess advanced LASER weapon capabilities.

### About Mk-II(A) DEW system

- **Developed by:** Indigenously by DRDO's Centre for High Energy Systems and Sciences (CHESS), Hyderabad.
- **Mechanism:** Once detected by a radar or inbuilt Electro Optic (EO) system, it engages targets and uses an intense **high-energy 30 kilowatt LASER Beam** to cut through the target, leading to structural failure.
- **Characteristics:** Lightning speed of engagement, precision, and can have lethality delivered to the target within a few seconds.

### Significance of DEW System

- **Potential to revolutionize the battle space economics:** It can reduce the reliance on expensive ammunition while also **lowering the risk of collateral damage**.
- **Counter-electronic capabilities:** High-power microwave (HPM) weapons can **disable electronic systems, radars, and communications without physical destruction**.
- **For offensive and defensive warfare:** Such as for tactical air defence, anti-ballistic missile defence, and anti-satellite (A-SAT) applications, Low-power lasers for crowd control and deterring pirates.

### About Directed Energy Weapons

- They **use concentrated energy from electromagnetic or particle technology**, rather than kinetic energy, to degrade or destroy targets.
- **Types:** High Energy LASER (HELs), High power microwave weapons (HPMs), millimeter waves, Particle beams weapons.

## Self-regulatory body introduces code of standards for influencer marketing business

Industry leaders have launched the **India Influencer Governing Council (IIGC)**, a **self-regulatory body for Influencer marketing** with members from major firms like Meta and Google.

- It introduced a **Code of Standards and weekly influencer ratings** to ensure transparency, accountability, and ethical content creation in **India's digital ecosystem**.
  - ☉ Influencer marketing is projected to **reach Rs 3,375 crore by 2026**.

### Need for regulating Influencer Marketing

- **Consumer Misinformation and Fraud:** Influencers often promote unverified products, like **health supplements or crypto schemes**.
  - ☉ Regulation can **enforce accountability, ensuring claims are substantiated**.
- **Exploitation of Vulnerable Audiences:** Influencers often **target young or impressionable followers**.
  - ☉ Regulations can protect minors by restricting **promotions of age-inappropriate products, like alcohol or gambling**.
- **Unfair Competition and Market Distortion:** Unregulated influencer campaigns can **undermine traditional advertising, which faces stricter scrutiny**.
- **Mental Health and Unrealistic Standards:** Influencer **content can promote harmful beauty or lifestyle ideas**. There is a need to curb **deceptive editing (e.g., filters) and mandate warnings**.
- **Platform Accountability Gaps:** Social media platforms **often evade responsibility for influencer content**. Regulation can force platforms to **monitor and remove violative content**.

### Code of Standards for Influencers



<p><b>Paid Partnerships:</b> Influencers must disclose any material partnership with brands.</p>	<p><b>AI Influencers:</b> Must follow the same rules as human influencers, with a disclaimer about their non-human nature.</p>	<p><b>Brand Relations:</b> Influencers can't endorse products they don't genuinely support or work with competing brands simultaneously.</p>	<p><b>Defluence:</b> Honest criticism of brands is allowed but must be truthful and responsible.</p>	<p><b>Child-Safe Content:</b> Content must be safe, positive, and appropriate for children.</p>	<p><b>Complaint Forum:</b> A consumer complaint forum is established under the IIGC.</p>
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## Provisions of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023 dilute the RTI Framework: MPs

A joint letter by over 120 Members of Parliament (MPs) called for **repealing the Section 44(3) of the DPDP Act, 2023** as it **weakens the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005**.

➤ **Section 44(3) of the DPDP Act, 2023** amends the **Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act, 2005**, prohibiting sharing of all 'personal information'.

⊕ **Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act, 2005** entails **exemption** from disclosure of **personal information** unless it is of 'public interest'.

### Key concerns raised

➤ **Public accountability:** The **blanket exemption** of and the **vague definition** of personal information provides **discretion** to public authorities.

⊕ This impacts **citizens' ability to scrutinise public officials**, demand clarity on policy decisions, and **hold institutions accountable**.

➤ **Constitutional balance between privacy and transparency:** **Right to privacy and information are complementary**. However, balance is required between both these fundamental rights.

⊕ **Justice A.P. Shah Committee (2012):** Cautioned against allowing data protection to override access rights under the RTI Act.

⊕ **K.S. Puttaswamy vs. Union of India Case (2017):** **Privacy and transparency** must be reconciled within a **proportionality framework**—ensuring that **restrictions are justified and necessary**.

⊕ **Girish Ramchandra Deshpande vs. Central Information Commissioner & Ors.:** Supreme Court prioritised **privacy** yet observed that **necessary information** can be disclosed if it is in the **public interest**.

### Recommendations

➤ **Justice BN Srikrishna Committee (2018):** Recommended **narrowly tailored exemptions** - permitting **non-disclosure** only where there is a **risk of grave harm**. E.g. identity theft, discrimination

➤ **Suo-motu disclosure:** Promoting public entities to **readily disclose information of public interest** as per Section 4 of the RTI Act.



### Also In News



#### Types of Diabetes

**Malnutrition-related diabetes** has been officially recognized and named "**type 5 diabetes**" at International Diabetes Federation's (IDF) World Diabetes Congress.

➤ Also called **J-type diabetes**, is known to be associated with **undernutrition and low weight {body mass index (BMI)}**.

➤ It is a type of diabetes linked to **chronic undernutrition, especially during childhood or adolescence**.

#### Other Types of Diabetes

➤ **Type 1:** Autoimmune destruction of **insulin-producing beta cells** that prevents your pancreas from making insulin.

➤ **Type 2:** high blood sugar levels, often **due to insulin resistance** or insufficient insulin production.

⊕ Mainly caused by **obesity and overnutrition** (Body does not use insulin well).

➤ **Gestational:** Occurs with high **blood glucose during pregnancy** and can cause **complications for both mother and child**.



#### Velvet Worms

Researchers at Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment (ATREE) **rediscovered a velvet worm (phylum Onychophora)**.

#### About Velvet worms

➤ **Onychophora** commonly known as **velvet worms**, walking worms or peripatus due to **velvety texture and caterpillar like appearances**.

➤ **Velvety texture:** Their skin has numerous papillae (small projections) that give them a **velvety appearance**.

➤ **Size:** from 0.5 to 15 cm in length.

➤ **Habitat:** They are found in **moist environments, such as forests, under rocks, and in leaf litter**

➤ **Colour:** Such as **orange, red, brown, green, blue, gold, etc.**

➤ **Carnivorous:** They can shoot adhesive slime up to 30 cm to catch their prey such as beetles and other insects.

➤ **Diversity:** **183 species** in the world, only one species in India (Assam).





## Pink Moon

On April 12, "Pink moon" also known as April's first 'full moon', was observed in the night sky.

### About Pink Moon

- The name actually comes from a **springtime wildflower "Phlox subulata"**, which bursts into bloom around this time of year in **North America** leading to the naming of natural phenomenon.
- This particular full moon is also termed as "**micromoon**" because it appears **slightly smaller than usual**.
  - ⊕ This is due to the **moon being at apogee**, the **farthest point in its orbit from Earth**.



## Cyber Slavery

More than 60 **Indian nationals** forced into '**cyber slavery**' rescued from **Myanmar**.

### About Cyber Slavery

- It is an emerging form of **organized crime** involving **exploiting** individuals through **digital means** under **coercive or deceptive conditions**.
- **Trans-national nature**: It involves **human trafficking** of **tech-savvy youth** across borders under the pretext of **employment**.
- **Forms of cyber slavery**:
  - ⊕ Coercive involvement in **cybercrime** e.g. money laundering and crypto fraud,
  - ⊕ Forced employment in **online frauds** e.g. digital arrest,
  - ⊕ Exploitation in the **gig economy**, or involuntary slavery.



## Harvest Festivals

**Traditional harvest festivals** are being celebrated in different parts of India.

- Marking the **1<sup>st</sup> day of the New Year**, they are a way of **thanksgiving for the abundant harvest** at the coming of **spring**.

### Traditional harvest festivals in India

- **Baisakhi (Punjab)**: Marks the beginning of harvesting of Rabi crops. **Bhangra and Gidda** dances are performed.
- **Vishu (Kerala and Tamil Nadu)**: Marks the traditional **spring equinox** when day and night are equal.
- **Poila Boishakh (West Bengal)**: **Traders** begin the **new financial year** by opening fresh account books, known as **Haal Khaata**.
- **Others**: **Bohag Bihu or Rongali Bihu (Assam)**, **Puthandu (Tamil Nadu)**, **Makar Sakranti (Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana)**, **Lohri (Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, J&K)**, **Pongal (Tamil Nadu)**.



## Thangjing Hill

The civil society organisations have warned the **Meitei community** against climbing the **Thangjing Hill**.

### Thangjing Hill

- It is a mountain peak in the **Indian state of Manipur**, in the **Churachandpur district**, to the west of **Moirang**.
- The range forms part of the **western border of the Imphal Valley**.
- **Sacred Hill: The Thangjing Hill** is believed by Manipuris to be the **abode of Thangching, the ancestral deity of Moirang**.
  - ⊕ The Meiteis of the **Moirang region** carry out an **annual pilgrimage** to the top of the hill.
- Streams rising in the western slopes of the hill flow into the **Leimatak River**, which flows **north to join the Irang River**.
- To the south rises the **Tuila River**, which joins the **Tuivai River**, a major river of the **Churachandpur district**.



## GPS Spoofing

Recently, Indian Air Force planes faced **GPS spoofing** in **Myanmar's airspace**.

### GPS spoofing

- It is also known as GPS simulation, refers to the **practice of manipulating or tricking a GPS receiver by broadcasting false GPS signals**.
- It misleads the GPS receiver into **believing it is located somewhere it is not, resulting in the device providing inaccurate location data**.
- It **exploits weak satellite signals** by overwhelming receivers with fake transmissions, causing devices to **display false location data**.
- It has the **potential to affect various industries extensively**, including **logistics and supply chain, telecommunications, energy, and defense**.



## Morag Axis

Israel has completed the takeover of a **new security corridor** known as the **Morag axis**.

### Morag axis

- This area consists mainly of **agricultural land located between Khan Younis and Rafah**, stretching from east to west across the **Gaza Strip**.
- The name "**Morag**" refers to an **illegal Israeli settlement** that was established in the region between 1972 and 2005.

## Personality in News



## Daripalli Ramaiah

Recently the famous environmentalist of Telangana **Daripalli Ramaiah** died.

### About Daripalli Ramaiah (1937- 2025)

- A **native** of **Reddipalli village, Telangana**.
- **Locally known as 'Chetla Ramaiah' or Vanajeevi (forest dweller)**.
- **Recipient of Padma Shri award in 2017**.

### Contributions

- A **crusader for social forestry**: Estimated to have planted over **1 crore saplings** during his life.
- Known as "**tree-man**" used to wear a **green board** around his neck to spread awareness of conservation of trees.
- **Awards**: **Seva Award** in 1995, the **Vanamitra Award** in 2005, and the **National Innovations and Outstanding Traditional Knowledge Award** in 2015.
- **Values**: **Environmentalism, empathy, passion etc.**



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI