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### A SOCIAL MEDIA BAN WILL NOT SAVE OUR CHILDREN

- Research consistently associates heavy social media use with **anxiety, depression, self-harm, and body image** dissatisfaction, particularly among teenage girls.
- Online comparison, cyberbullying, and constant performance pressure can aggravate emotional vulnerability.
- These findings warrant concern but require careful interpretation. Digital exposure rarely operates as a single cause; instead, it interacts with loneliness, academic stress, or family conflict.
- Overstating its influence risks ignoring broader psychological and social contexts. The issue is therefore not whether harm exists, but how society should address it without restricting opportunity.

### Why a Social Media Ban Would Fail in India?

- **Technical Ineffectiveness**
  - Restrictions are easily bypassed. Adolescents often possess higher **digital literacy** than regulators and can access platforms through VPNs or alternative applications.
  - Prohibitions may push users into **unregulated** or encrypted spaces, increasing exposure to **grooming, extremism**, and exploitation.
  - Mandatory **surveillance** through identity verification also raises privacy risks.
- **Ignoring the Social Value of Digital Platforms**
  - For many teenagers, especially those in marginalised settings, online spaces offer **community**, belonging, and support.
  - Rural youth, socially isolated adolescents, and **LGBTQ** individuals rely on digital networks to express identity and seek advice.
  - Removing access may deepen isolation rather than improve well-being.
- **Democratic Deficit in Policymaking**

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- Policies affecting young people often exclude their voices. Adolescents are treated as passive subjects instead of participants.
- A meaningful democracy requires consultation, listening, and recognition of lived experiences.
- Regulation designed without youth engagement risks misunderstanding both problems and solutions.
- **Reinforcing Gender Inequality**
  - A prohibition would likely intensify gender disparities. Internet access in India already favours boys over girls.
  - Within conservative households, restrictions would lead families to confiscate devices primarily from daughters, limiting education, skills, and **mobility**.
  - A protective measure could therefore entrench inequality rather than reduce harm.

### A Better Policy Approach

- **Regulating Technology Companies**
    - Attention must shift from controlling children to governing corporations. Platform **algorithms** are designed to maximise engagement and profit.
    - Governments should impose enforceable **duty of care** obligations, establish competition law, and require **accountability** for harmful design practices.
    - An independent regulator with technical expertise would be better suited than general administrative authorities.
  - **Promoting Research and Youth Participation**
    - Comprehensive research is needed to understand how online behaviour varies across class, caste, and region.
    - Long-term studies should inform **policy** rather than speculation. Young people must participate directly in consultation processes, shaping interventions that affect their daily lives.
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### INDIA'S TEXTILE SECTOR - REIMAGINING FROM VOLUME TO VALUE

- The Union Budget 2026–27 positioned the textile sector as a **strategic driver** of economic growth, employment generation, export expansion, and rural livelihood support.
- The Budget marks a shift from fragmented, scheme-based support to an **integrated** value-chain approach, covering fibre to fashion.
- However, the core question remains - Will India merely expand textile production, or will it capture the higher value embedded in design, branding, and global fashion markets?

#### Strategic Shift in Textile Policy:

- **Earlier approach:** Isolated schemes targeting individual bottlenecks, and fragmented policy architecture.
- **Budget 2026 approach:**
  - Integrated, value-chain-based policy
  - Treating textiles as a strategic industrial ecosystem
  - Connecting economic, social, and cultural dimensions
  - Reflecting a maturing policy imagination

#### Key Challenges and Gaps Identified:

- **The value creation deficit:**
  - Though India exports fabric, garments, and embellishments, it remains a low-margin, cost-competitive supplier, weak in brand ownership and creative authorship.
  - **Missing elements:** Design education, trend intelligence systems, sustainability certification, and brand-oriented export strategy.
  - Without these, India risks being a volume producer, not a value-setter in global fashion.
- **Narrow framing of skills:**

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- While Samarth 2.0 modernises workforce skills, it focuses mainly on operational training.
- **Missing elements:** Creative capabilities, design leadership, managerial competence, systems-level thinking, and digital and sustainability integration.
- In a global market driven by fast fashion cycles, digital tools, ESG compliance, and consumer consciousness, skill depth matters as much as scale.
- **Artisan vulnerability and pricing power:**
  - Even with Gram Swaraj support, **structural issues** (fragmented supply chains, inconsistent quality standards, weak bargaining power, income insecurity) persist.
  - Therefore, assured procurement mechanisms, transparent pricing systems, quality certification frameworks, and direct market access platforms (digital marketplaces) are needed.
  - Otherwise, artisans remain vulnerable despite increased output.
- **External trade pressures:**
  - **Opportunities:** Emerging trade agreements (e.g., with the European Union), and expanded global market access.
  - **Risks:** Competition from Bangladesh, Vietnam; fluctuating tariffs; stringent compliance norms; and sustainability standards.
  - India must combine infrastructure, scale, brand building, and standards compliance.

### Way Forward - From “Make More” to “Value Better”:

- **Move towards brand ownership:** Promote Indian global fashion brands. Incentivise design-led exports. Create fashion innovation hubs.
  - **Strengthen creative ecosystem:** Invest in top-tier design institutes. Encourage industry-academia collaboration. Support IP protection in fashion.
  - **Secure artisan livelihoods structurally:** Introduce minimum support mechanisms. Digital platforms for direct selling. GI tagging and certification expansion. Transparent value-chain integration.
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### AI IMPACT SUMMIT 2026: INDIA EYES A LARGER ROLE IN THE GLOBAL AI ECONOMY

- The summit builds on a series of international meetings on AI governance.
- The **Bletchley Park AI Safety Summit (2023)** focused on identifying catastrophic AI risks.
- The **Seoul Summit (2024)** widened the agenda to include innovation and inclusivity.
- The **Paris AI Action Summit (2025)** shifted attention to implementation and economic opportunities.
- Each iteration has gradually expanded the scope beyond safety towards practical and developmental concerns.

#### **India's Distinct Approach**

- Unlike earlier summits centred on regulation and risk containment, India is steering the discussion towards “**People, Planet, and Progress.**”
- The focus is on developing AI solutions that address real-world challenges, especially in developing countries.
- This reflects India's dual role as an emerging AI power and a representative voice of the Global South.
- Through this summit, India is positioning itself to secure a larger role in shaping global AI governance and capturing greater economic and developmental benefits from the technology.

#### **India AI Impact Summit 2026: What to Expect**

- **Scale and Significance** - The AI Impact Summit 2026 has been described by Union IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw as the largest such global gathering so far, with strong international interest and participation.
- **High-Level Global Participation** - The summit is expected to host representatives from over 100 countries, including 15–20 heads of government, more than 50 ministers, and over 40 CEOs of leading global and Indian companies.

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- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the event, host a dinner, and address a CEO roundtable.
- **Diverse Stakeholders** - Participants will include governments, industry leaders, researchers, civil society organisations, and international institutions, highlighting the summit's multi-stakeholder approach to AI governance and development.
- **Key Themes and Deliberations** - The summit will feature working groups and discussions on major issues such as AI's impact on jobs, trust and safety frameworks for AI systems, and the application of AI across key industries.
- **India's AI Push and Model Launches** - As part of the Rs 10,370 crore IndiaAI Mission, the government will launch several indigenous AI language models during the summit, including foundational and small language models.
- **Startup and Innovation Showcase** - The event will showcase over 500 AI startups and host around 500 sessions alongside the main programme, making it one of the most comprehensive global forums focused on artificial intelligence.

### Opening Up to China at the AI Impact Summit

- **Chinese Participation at the Summit** - China is expected to send a delegation to the AI Impact Summit, following a formal invitation extended by India last year as both countries seek to strengthen domestic AI capabilities.
  - **Summit Format and Invitations** - The AI Summit is not a formal multilateral grouping. Participation is determined by the host country, giving India the discretion to invite China despite geopolitical sensitivities.
  - **Precedents from Earlier Summits** - When the UK hosted the first AI Safety Summit, it faced opposition from allies and domestic lawmakers over inviting China, but proceeded nonetheless. China also participated in the subsequent summits in Seoul and Paris.
  - **Signal of Easing India–China Ties** - India's invitation to China reflects a gradual thaw in bilateral relations. Earlier this year, direct flights between the two countries resumed after a gap of more than five years.
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### SAHYADRI TIGER RESERVE (STR)



- It is located in the Sahyadri Ranges of the Western Ghats in Maharashtra.

- It is spread over two protected areas of **Koyana Sanctuary (KWLS)** and **Chandoli National Park (CNP)**.
- The central portion of STR is occupied by the “Shivsagar” reservoir of the Koyana River and the “Vasant Sagar” reservoir of the Warana River.

#### Vegetation:

- The forest cover here is that of **moist evergreen, semi-evergreen, moist, and dry deciduous**
- It is the **only place where climax and near-climax vegetation are plentiful** and prospects of **adverse anthropogenic influence in the future are minimal**.
- **Flora:**
  - Dense tree cover includes species such as **teak, bamboo, Indian laurel, and jamun**.
  - **Medicinal plants** like **Asparagus racemosus** and **Aegle marmelos** grow abundantly.
  - Unique Western Ghats **endemics, including rare orchids** and shrubs, flourish in the reserve’s humid microclimates.
- **Fauna:**
  - It is home to the endangered species of top carnivores such as **Tiger, Wild dog, and Leopard**.
  - The herbivores include **Gaur, Sambar, Four Horned Antelope, Mouse Deer, and Giant Squirrel**.
  - The habitat also supports **hornbills**, and many other endemic birds.



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### INDIAN NATIONAL CENTRE FOR OCEAN INFORMATION SERVICES (INCOIS)



- It was established as an **autonomous body** under the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)**.

- **Mandate:** It is mandated to provide **ocean information and advisory services** to society, industry, **government agencies and the scientific community** through sustained ocean observations and constant improvements through systematic and focussed research.
- It established the **Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC)** which provides **tsunami alerts** serving India and 28 Indian Ocean countries.
- It is a permanent member of **UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)**.
- It is located in **Hyderabad, Telangana**.

#### **Initiatives of INCOIS:**

- It has developed the **Search and Rescue Aided Tool (SARAT)** to assist the Indian Coast Guard, Navy and Coastal Security Police, in locating individuals or objects lost at sea.
- INCOIS has also established the **SynOPS visualization platform** which integrates real-time data to strengthen response coordination during extreme events.

#### **What are JellyAIP, SAMUDRA 2.0 Mobile App, and SIVAS?**

- **JellyAIP (Jellyfish Aggregation Information Interactive Portal):** It is a **national web-based platform** for reporting and **visualising jellyfish aggregation**, swarming, and stranding events along the Indian coast, with geospatial mapping, hotspot analysis, and multilingual first-aid guidance.



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- **SAMUDRA 2.0 Mobile App:** It is an **upgraded multilingual advisory platform** delivering ocean information and early warnings to fishermen and maritime users.
- **SIVAS:** Swell-Surge Inundation Vulnerability Advisory System, is a **coastal inundation early warning service** designed to provide advance alerts on swell-surge flooding events, currently operational for the Kerala coast, with multilingual forecast bulletins.

### KEY FACTS ABOUT GIANT PHANTOM JELLYFISH



Scientists on a month-long deep-sea expedition off Argentina's coast documented a rare giant phantom jellyfish recently.

- It is a **rare and mysterious deep-sea jellyfish** known for its **ghostly, translucent appearance**.
- It is **among the largest jellyfish**.
- Scientific Name: *Stygiomedusa gigantea*
- It is in the Ulmaridae family.
- It is believed to be **widespread throughout the world's oceans, except in the Arctic Ocean**.
- **Unlike most jellyfish, it lacks tentacles**. Instead, they **use ribbon-like arms to grab prey**, typically plankton or small fish, and pull them into their mouths.