

### MANY ELECTIONS, AI'S DARK DIMENSION

#### Context

- The exponential growth of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has placed humanity at a pivotal juncture in its history.
- The emergence of Generative AI (GAI) heralds the prospect of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), which could potentially replicate human capabilities.
- So, it is important to delve into the transformative impact of AI on human existence, particularly focusing on electoral dynamics and the broader societal implications.

#### Concerns Regarding AI's Impact on Electoral Integrity

- **The Rise of Deep Fakes**
  - The rise of 'Deep Fake' technology, capable of generating hyper-realistic yet fabricated audio, video, and textual content, poses challenges for identifying and countering misinformation and disinformation campaigns.
  - AI-generated deep fakes can deceive voters, manipulate public opinion, and undermine trust in democratic institutions, thereby distorting electoral outcomes.
- **Influence on Public Discourse and Decision-making**
  - AI-powered algorithms may inadvertently amplify polarising content, reinforce preexisting biases, and contribute to the fragmentation of public discourse, thereby influencing voter perceptions and decision-making processes.

#### Understanding AI Determinism, Challenges and Measures to Tackle It

- **Introduction to AI 'Determinism'**
  - 'Determinism' in the context of AI refers to the propensity of AI-driven tactics to influence or determine human behaviour and decision-making processes, often without individuals' awareness or consent.
- **Challenges in Tackling AI 'Determinism'**

- One of the key challenges in tackling AI 'determinism' lies in mitigating the influence of AI-driven manipulation on electoral dynamics.
- AI-powered algorithms can analyse vast amounts of data to predict and influence voter behaviour, shaping electoral outcomes in ways that may not align with democratic principles or the will of the electorate.
- Therefore, it is imperative to implement safeguards to prevent AI-driven tactics from unduly influencing electoral processes and outcomes.
- **Transparency and Accountability**
  - Transparency and accountability are critical components in addressing AI 'determinism.'
  - Electoral authorities and policymakers **must establish clear guidelines and regulations governing the use of AI in political campaigns** and voter engagement initiatives.
  - This includes requirements for disclosing the use of AI-driven algorithms, data sources, and methodologies employed in campaign strategies.
  - **By promoting transparency, stakeholders can enhance public awareness** and understanding of AI's role in electoral processes, enabling voters to make informed decisions.
- **Prioritise to Protect Democratic Values**
  - Furthermore, efforts to combat AI 'determinism' should prioritise the protection of democratic values and the integrity of electoral systems.
  - **This involves implementing measures to detect and mitigate AI-driven manipulation, such as disinformation campaigns, deep fakes,** and algorithmic bias.
  - Collaborative approaches involving electoral authorities, technology companies, civil society organisations, and academic institutions are essential to develop robust tools and techniques for detecting and countering AI-driven threats to electoral integrity.
- **Empower Voters through Literacy**

- Promoting media literacy and digital literacy among the electorate is **another crucial strategy for tackling AI 'determinism.'**
- By empowering voters with the skills and knowledge to critically evaluate information sources, discern fact from fiction, **and identify manipulation tactics, individuals can resist the influence of AI-driven propaganda and make informed voting decisions.**
- Educational initiatives, public awareness campaigns, and media literacy programs play a vital role in enhancing the resilience of the electorate against AI-driven misinformation and manipulation.

## Conclusion

- **The advent of AI represents a watershed moment in human history**, with profound implications for electoral landscapes and societal cohesion.
- While AI promises unprecedented advancements, **vigilance is paramount to mitigate its disruptive potential and safeguard democratic principles.**
- As humanity navigates the AI frontier, **prudence and foresight must guide our trajectory towards a future shaped by ethical AI governance** and responsible innovation.

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## WHAT IS 'PASSING OFF' UNDER TRADEMARK RULES?

The Delhi High Court recently cancelled a trademark registration based on a Passing off condition.



- Passing off action basically refers to the **unauthorised use of goods, services**, and the goodwill attached to another person's business, which would amount to misrepresentation. The notion of Passing off in the **Indian Trademarks Act, 1999**, seeks to **safeguard the goodwill associated with unregistered trademarks.**

- When the trademark has been registered by the owner and infringement happens, then it becomes a suit for infringement, but if the trademark has not been registered by the owner and infringement happens, then it becomes a case of **passing off**.
- Passing off is a common law tort which occurs when a person sells his products as the goods of another, wherein the trademark owner can take legal action to remedy this violation.
- While passing off is **not defined under the Indian Trademarks Act 1999, Section 27** recognizes the common law rights of a Trademark owner wherein the **owner can initiate legal proceedings against any person for passing off goods or services** as the goods of another person or as services provided by another person.
- Passing off occurs when there is illegal use of a trademark or trade name in such a way that the **public is misled** into believing that the products or services supplied by one party are genuinely those of another.
  - This misrepresentation can harm the goodwill and reputation of the legitimate owner of the trademark.
- Establishing passing off can be difficult since claimants must demonstrate the possibility of public misunderstanding about the origin of the products or services.
- Passing off encompasses a larger variety of commercial operations, including trade, business, and non-business initiatives, in addition to commodities and services,

## WHAT ARE BALLISTIC MISSILES?

North Korea recently fired short-range ballistic missiles towards its eastern waters as the United States Secretary of State prepared to open a democracy summit in neighbouring South Korea.



A ballistic missile is a **rocket-propelled, self-guided** strategic-weapons system that follows a ballistic trajectory to deliver a payload from its launch site to a predetermined target.

- They are **powered initially by a rocket** or series of rockets in stages, but then follow an unpowered trajectory that arches upwards before descending to reach its intended target.

- They can carry conventional high explosives as well as chemical, biological, or nuclear munitions. They can be launched from aircraft, ships and submarines, in addition to land-based silos and mobile platforms.
  - There are four general classifications of ballistic missiles:
    - **Short-range: less than 1,000 kilometers** (approximately 620 miles), also known as “tactical” ballistic missiles.
    - **Medium-range: between 1,000 and 3,000 kilometers** also known as “theater” ballistic missiles.
    - **Intermediate-range: between 3,000 and 5,500 kilometers**
    - **Long-range: more than 5,500 kilometers**, also known as intercontinental or strategic ballistic missiles.
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## LAKE BAIKAL

Recent study showed that ancient ecosystem of Lake Baikal is at risk of global warming.



Lake Baikal is located in the southern part of eastern Siberia within the republic of Russia. It is the oldest existing freshwater lake on Earth (20 million–25 million years old), as well as the deepest continental body of water.

- It is also the world’s largest freshwater lake by volume, containing about one-fifth of the fresh water on Earth’s surface. The largest rivers that flow into it include the Selenga, Barguzin, Upper (Verkhnyaya) Angara, Chikoy, and Uda.
  - It is known as the 'Galapagos of Russia'. In 1996 Lake Baikal was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site
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## INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT MODELS

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) uses ‘modelled pathways’ drawn using Integrated Assessment Models (IAMs) to estimate what it will take to limit the warming of the earth’s surface.



## About Integrated Assessment Models:

- These are complex models that examine **possible futures of the energy** and climate system and economies. They are “integrated” because they **combine different strands of knowledge** to model human society alongside parts of the Earth system.
- Its macroeconomic models can point to future growth levels in terms of GDP; its energy models can project **future consumption**; vegetation models can examine land-use changes; and earth-system models use the laws of physics to understand how climate evolves.
- With such integration across disciplines, IAMs are meant to provide policy-relevant guidelines on climate action. They also prioritise least-cost assessments — for example, the absolute cost of setting up a solar plant or undertaking afforestation in India is lower than in the U.S.
- However, experts have said they could exercise the option of enabling countries to equitably share the burden of action, where the richest undertake more drastic mitigation action more immediately.
- They capture **human-society interactions** by describing them as coupled systems on the relevant geographical and intertemporal scales for policy-making.
- They typically include a description of human activity (e.g. energy and land use), direct drivers of environmental change (e.g. emissions, land use and resource use), resulting impacts (e.g. climate change and consequences for crop yields) and response options.

## CO-BRANDED CREDIT CARD



The tightening of regulations by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may prompt banks to lean towards collaborating with larger fintech companies for co-branded credit card partnerships.

- It is a card that is **issued jointly by a card-issuer and a co-branding entity** bearing the names and logos of both the partnering entities



# CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK



- **Usage:** They can be used in any location where the card network is accepted, not just with the co-branding retailer.
- **Features:** They typically come with rewards or other benefits that are tied specifically to purchases made at the co-branding retailer and usually offer rewards or benefits for general purchases as well.

## How Co-Branded Cards Work?

- Co-branded cards work like any normal credit card. They can be used for any purchase wherever cards in that network (such as Mastercard, Visa, American Express, or Discover) are accepted.
- Co-branded card relationships can be structured in a variety of ways. But basically, in order to issue a **co-branded credit card**, a **merchant** (such as a department store, gas station, or airline) or another organization (like a university or nonprofit) must partner with a financial institution, which provides the actual credit.

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## NEPAL'S CONTINUING POLITICAL TURMOIL AND THE TASK FOR INDIA

### Why in news?

Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda won a vote of confidence in the 275-member lower house of Parliament recently.

Prachanda won his third trust vote in a bit more than a year. It happened after the Prime Minister ended his party's partnership with Sher Bahadur Deuba's Nepali Congress and formed a new alliance with K P Sharma Oli's Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist).

- **Nepal had seen 13 governments since 2008**
  - Nepal has had 13 governments since 2008, the year in which the country's 239-year-old monarchy was abolished and a republic was proclaimed.
  - Over the years, Prachanda, Deuba, and Oli have been the leading political actors in Nepal.
- **Impact of political instability on Nepal**

- The political instability in Nepal has impacted the country's economy.
- Thousands of young Nepalis are heading abroad, mainly to the Middle East, South Korea, and Malaysia, in search of work.
- In 2022-23, about 7.7 lakh people got permits to go to foreign job destinations.

## India's stand

- **Cause of concern for India**
  - The extraordinary political instability in Nepal is of concern to India, where Prachanda's moves are being watched with a mix of caution and admiration.
  - However, while Prachanda retains significant goodwill in New Delhi, his now partner in government, Oli, does not.
- **Oli and India**
  - The actions and statements by Oli in 2015 had caused a fair bit of bitterness in India.
    - During his tenure the Nepalese constitution was drafted, which led to protests and the infamous border blockade.
  - Oli, who was Prime Minister then, portrayed India as the neighbourhood bully in his country.
- **Nepal being described as India-locked**
  - Politicians in Nepal have often described the country as being India-locked, meaning it needs India for access to ports.

## Bilateral cooperation between India and Nepal

- **Bilateral trade between India and Nepal**
  - India is Nepal's largest trade partner, with bilateral trade crossing \$7 billion in FY 2019-20.
  - India provides transit for almost all of Nepal's third country trade.
  - Indian exports to Nepal have grown more than eight times over the past decade, while exports from Nepal have almost doubled.



- **Cooperation during Covid Pandemic**
  - During the Covid-19 pandemic, India provided assistance of more than \$7 million to Nepal.
  - This included the supply of more than 23 tonnes of medicines and medical equipment, more than 9.5 million doses of vaccines, and a medical oxygen plant.
- **People to people contact and remittances**
  - About 8 million Nepalese citizens live and work in India, and some 6 lakh Indians live in Nepal. Indians are about 30% of foreign tourists in Nepal.
  - The bilateral remittance flow is estimated at \$3 billion from Nepal to India, and \$1 billion in the opposite direction.

## India Vs China in Nepal

- **Use of Chinese card by Nepal**
  - Nepal is sandwiched between the two Asian giants.
  - The Nepalese political leadership, including the country's former monarchs, has long sought to play the China card to manage the relationship with India.
- **China is pouring aids to wean Nepal away from India**
  - China has been pouring aid and investment in infrastructure to wean Kathmandu away from New Delhi.
  - Nepalese imports from China almost tripled from (Indian) Rs 49.5 billion in 2013-14 to Rs 138.75 billion (\$1.67 billion) in 2022-23.

## Conclusion

New Delhi's position on the politics and future of Nepal must remain nuanced and flexible, with the people of Nepal at its centre. It must ensure that China or its proxies do not get an opportunity to ride on suspicion or prejudice against India.

More than an elder brother, India must take steps to make Nepal an equal partner.