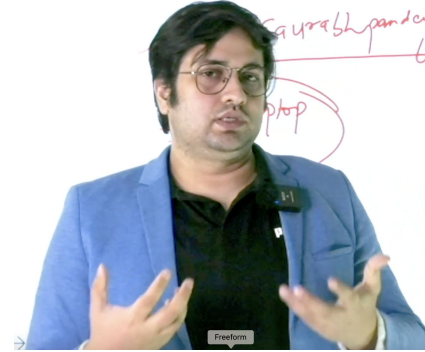


Topics - MINDS MAPS included (Daily current affairs) -- 11th October 2024



- Nobel Prize in Literature
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By saurabh Pandey



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South Korea's Kang wins literature Nobel for her 'intense prose'

Sudipta Datta
 KOLKATA

After two years of Europe-centric Nobel Prizes in Literature (Jon Fosse, Annie Ernaux), the Swedish Academy has looked east this year. It has awarded the 2024 prize to South Korean writer Han Kang "for her intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life".

In awarding the top prize to a 53-year-old Asian writer at the peak of her writing career, the academy has ensured a wider readership of an "innovator in contemporary prose", who with her experimental style has conjured up universal tales of the human condition. With a

radical and poetic imagination, she writes about women battling patriarchy, violence, grief and also about historical wrongs and injustices.

Her literary career began with a book of poems but her breakthrough novel was *The Vegetarian*, first published in Korean in 2007, and translated into English by Deborah Smith in 2015. It immediately scooped up many honours, including the Man Booker International Prize in 2016.

The story revolves around a woman and the consequences of her decision to give up eating meat, and was expanded from her short story, 'The Fruit of My Woman'. As the protagonist Yeong-hye de-

fends her radical stand, and small act of independence, her family reacts in extraordinary, violent ways to make her change her mind. The obsessive tale has been compared to Kafka's nightmarish stories.

Winning the Booker opened the door for her other books, *Human Acts*, *The White Book* and *Greek Lessons*, to be translated into English. Another, *We Do Not Part*, the story of two women told in the backdrop of a hidden chapter in Korean history, a massacre that happened in the 1940s, is being translated by e. Yaewon and Paige Aniyah Morris, and will be published in early 2025.

In its bio-bibliography, the academy says that in



Han Kang

We Do Not Part, Han Kang, with "imagery that is as precise as it is condensed, conveys the power of the past over the present," and also "traces the friends' unyielding attempts to bring to light what has fallen into collective oblivion and transform their trauma into a joint art project, which lends the book its title." In terms of "imagery of pain",

it is closely linked to her 2017 novel, *The White Book*, which is an "elegy dedicated to the person who could have been the narrative self's elder sister, but who passed away only a couple of hours after birth."

The story is narrated "in a sequence of short notes, all concerning white objects; it is through this colour of grief that the work as a whole is associatively constructed."

Han Kang takes on Korean history in another of her novels, *Human Acts* (2016). Setting the story around a historical event, a massacre undertaken by the South Korean military in 1980 on protesting students and civilians, she seeks "to give voice to the

victims of history," but in an experimental style that is "as visionary as it is succinct." Her 2023 novel, *Greek Lessons* (first published in Korean in 2011) is a story of a relationship between two vulnerable individuals, a young woman who has lost the power of speech and her teacher who is losing his power to see. "From their respective flaws, a brittle love affair develops. The book is a beautiful meditation around loss, intimacy and the ultimate conditions of language," the academy notes.

In her oeuvre, the academy says Han Kang, the first Korean to win the Nobel Prize in literature, confronts historical traumas and invisible sets of rules

and, in each of her works, exposes the fragility of human life.


"She has a unique awareness of the connections between body and soul, the living and the dead, and in her poetic and experimental style has become an innovator in contemporary prose," it contends.


But most of all, through her writing, Han Kang has shown the power of literature to "speak the truth."

The number of translators working on Korean literature has increased dramatically, Han Kang said, after winning the Booker, "a phenomenon that seems to be also closely related to the global success of Korean cinema and pop music."


Topic → Nobel Prize in Literature





 The 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature has been awarded to South Korean writer Han Kang for her impactful poetic prose.


 This marks a shift from recent Eurocentric winners, highlighting a broader recognition of global literary voices.

 Han Kang is celebrated for her innovative contemporary prose, addressing themes of historical trauma and the fragility of human life.

 Her works often explore women's struggles against patriarchy, violence, and grief, as well as historical injustices.

 Her breakthrough novel, "The Vegetarian," was first published in Korean in 2007 and translated into English in 2015, winning the Man Booker International Prize in 2016.

 "The Vegetarian" tells the story of Yeong-hye, a woman whose decision to stop eating meat leads to violent family reactions, reflecting themes of independence and obsession.

 The narrative has drawn comparisons to Kafka's nightmarish storytelling style, emphasizing its psychological depth.

Summary: Han Kang, a South Korean author, has won the 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature for her profound and innovative writing that tackles complex themes of trauma and human experience.

Bonedi bari pujas of Kolkata bring back annals of the past for younger generations

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Bonedi bari pujas or the Durga Pujas performed at Kolkata's aristocratic households of yesteryear are some of the oldest puja celebrations in the city. Some date back 415 years or more, way before the British set foot in India.

The Sabarna Roy Choudhury family in south Kolkata, Behala area is said to have the oldest Durga Puja in the city. The pujas are now handled by the 35th generation of the family line.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Srimant Roy Choudhury, one of the heirs of this *zamindar* (landlord) family, said, "Our Durga Puja started in 1610, we had traditions like buffalo and goat sacrifice, but to keep up with the changing times, I myself took the initiative to stop this animal sacrifice. The pujas happen in the same courtyard where the deed to lease Kalikata, Sutanuti, and Gobindapur to the East India Company was signed from where the British era started in India."

The tale of Ms. Choudhury's Durga Pujas is very



The Durga idol of Sobhabajar Rajbari or Gopinath *bari* that was started in 1970. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

similar to that of north Kolkata's Darjipara Mitra Bari Pujas, or the Sobhabajar Rajbari Pujas. They are all hundreds of years old and most of them follow generations of old traditions to keep the heritage alive which speaks of a thousand family tales. Even with many family members residing outside the State or even the country, they take pride in the fact that families unite during the four days of the *pujas*.

Traditions like using old moulds to make the faces of the idols, or pandits,

idol makers, and *dhakis* (drummers) who have been with the family for generations are still kept alive by the current generations.

A lesser-known Durga Puja but historic one is a 307-year-old *bonedi bari puja* from Sarisha in South 24 Parganas, the Basu Bari Puja. Started in 1717, this puja is one of the iconic celebrations in the locality. Pallabi Dey, a daughter of the Basu family said, "Traditionally our family were the *zamindars* of this place, so during immer-



The *bonedi bari* Durga Puja of Darjipara Mitra Bari in north Kolkata, which is a female-driven initiative. SHRABANA CHATTERJEE

sion on Dashami our goddess is immersed first and then the rest of the locality *pujas*. This tradition is still followed by many in honour of the history."

Sobhabajar Rajbari in the northern parts of Kolkata is one of the oldest Durga Pujas in that side of the city. This puja was started by Raja Naba Krishna Deb, one of the closest confidants of Sir Robert Clive. There are two divisions to this Durga Puja, one was started in 1757, another in 1790.

Prabir Krishna Deb, an

8th generation heir of Raja Naba Krishna Deb from the 1790s Durga Puja lineage (*choto torof* or Gopinath *bari*, younger side), told *The Hindu* that their side of the *pujas* started over 233 years ago.

Mr. Krishna Deb said, "Traditionally we used to fly a *nilkantha* (Indian roller) bird on Dashami to send a message to Lord Shiv about Goddess Durga's departure from Earth and her next journey onto her abode in the mountains. But we had to stop because of government's

animal welfare rules."

Durga Pujas in their courtyard were a star-studded affair in those glory days. People like Ramkumar Chattopadhyay, Birendra Krishna Bhadra, and other famous singers came to perform for their audience. They have kept the cultural programmes alive, where dramas are conducted by the family members themselves. Hundreds of locals and puja enthusiasts from across the State flock to their homes every year to get a glimpse of the royalty of the age-old traditions.

Traditions weaved in

Back in the day *bonedi bari pujas* were not very inclusive as they mostly allowed extended family members to attend. Over the years, modernisation changed the world view and common people were allowed inside the tall gates of the old houses. "Utsob sobar, *dharma je jar* (Festival is for everyone, religion is individual)," said Mr. Roy Choudhury when asked about the closely guarded traditions and festivities of *bonedi bari pujas*. He welcomed everyone to visit their *pujas* and learn about

the history of their family and Kolkata.

Vinayak Chowdhury, a *bonedi bari pujas* tour conductor from Trek Break & More who documents the history of these historic Durga Pujas and conducts guided tours, said: "Maintenance and upkeep of these houses and the Durga Pujas itself have become a huge issue over the years, needs huge money. Sometimes involving the upcoming generation also becomes a challenge. But if we lose these *pujas* to such issues, a part of our history will be erased from the lives of the next generations."

Mr. Chowdhury also pointed out that these logistical issues have led to many historic *pujas* going out of commission forever and a part of culture was washed away with them. Many of these houses have either gone under the hammer and "modern era" multi-storied buildings have come up in their place or are just kept for film shoots to raise money for maintenance.

"That is why it is crucial to have extensive conservation and awareness, so that we do not lose our herit-

age," he said.

Though home-based pujas are always considered a woman's domain, the same women were never made the in-charge of any major Durga Pujas and most traditions were passed down through male heirs of the family in the *bonedi baris* of Kolkata.

Female-driven

This age-old tradition was broken and challenged by the Darjipara Mitra Bari Durga Puja in north Kolkata when the Mitra household did not have a male heir to take over the puja rituals.

The Mitra Bari puja is now 218 years old and Anushua Mitra Biswas and other women in the family take a leading role in managing it.

Ms. Mitra Biswas points out that on the last day of the *pujas*, *Dashami* (Dasara), the women who conduct the *boron* (farewell) ceremony go and sit on the goddess's throne. This tradition is followed to signify that Durga is a female power, so are the women of the family. While bidding farewell, they ask for the goddess to give them at least a small part of her prowess.

Topic → Bonedi Bari Pooja

Cultural Significance 🎉

Represents traditional Bengali heritage

Spiritual observance for Durga Puja

Historical Context 🏛️

Originated in Kolkata's heritage homes

Celebrated by prominent families (Bonedi Baris)

Modern Celebrations 🌿

Blends tradition with contemporary themes

Engages local communities

Tele mental health assistance to reach Puducherry soon

Bindu Shajan Perappadan

NEW DELHI

The Union Territories of Lakshadweep and Puducherry will soon be covered under the National Tele Mental Health Programme of India and offer Tele MANAS service. Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States or Tele MANAS, which was started in 2022, seeks to function as a comprehensive, integrated, and inclusive 24x7 tele-mental health facility.

According to data released by the Health Ministry on Thursday, an overview of the type of complaints on the helpline shows that the top four complaints here relate to sleep disturbances (14%), sadness of mood (14%), stress (11%) and anxiety (9%). Currently, Tele MANAS services are available across 34 States/Union Territories in 20 languages. The Ministry added that within a year the programme has got over 3,51,454 calls.

Analysis of Tele MANAS users shows that most of the callers on the helpline are male (56.15%) and aged 18 to 45 years (71.5%). Most callers (70.75%) seek advice regarding their own mental health while 18.4% of callers are caregivers, calling on behalf of someone else. Of the total calls, 93% received on Tele MANAS helpline are classified as routine calls, 3.49% of calls are classified as emergency and escalated to a mental health specialist. Overall, less than 3% of total complaints have been identified as suicide-related cases. Additionally, 2.2% of calls were prank calls.



The Ministry says that within a year, Tele MANAS has got 3,51,454 calls. GETTY IMAGES


Globally, Tele MANAS is one of the largest deployments of a digital, phone-based mental health initiative in a country. "Privacy considerations are threaded into the platform's operation," said the report adding these measures have been incorporated at various levels, including data storage, access controls, and caller-specific protocols.

The programme comprises a network of 23 tele-mental health centres of excellence, with National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) as the nodal centre.

The International Institute of Information Technology-Bengaluru (IIIT-B) offers technological support and leading on IT architecture. The National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC) leads on the health systems domain.

Specific recommendations across key thematic areas as per the report include – support and strengthening of the Tele MANAS workforce through workplace enhancement for improved service delivery, human resource planning and recruitment and human resource management and augmenting service delivery through strengthening triage.

— Topic → Tele MANAS

 **Tele MANAS Service: The Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (**Tele MANAS**) program, initiated in 2022, will soon include Lakshadweep and Puducherry, providing a 24x7 telemental health facility.**

Summary: The Tele MANAS program is expanding to include Lakshadweep and Puducherry, providing essential mental health support with a focus on common issues like sleep disturbances and anxiety.

The U.K. and 'leaving lessons' from the Indian Ocean



The Chagos islands in the Indian Ocean comprise seven atolls, with the northernmost atoll called Peros Banhos. Maldivians know the Chagos islands as FoaLhavahi which are just 300 miles from Addu Atoll, the southern tip of the Maldives and where the United Kingdom had a Royal Air Force base on Gan Island (Maldives) until 1976. North of Peros Banhos, there are two reefs and a sandbank; another sandbank lies further north. These reefs and sandbanks are again closer to the Maldives. It is not just about proximity. Historically, these islands and shallows were a part of the Maldives.

Tracing history

A letter from a Maldives Sultan, written in 1560, survives in a Portuguese archive in Lisbon. Here, the King of Maldives clearly refers to the Peros Banhos Atoll as belonging to the Sultan.

The Atoll of FoaMulak is next to the Addu Atoll. It is not by accident that Maldivians call Peros Banhos as 'FoaLhavahi'. These two atolls have much in common, and not just in their names. British Victorian historians Albert Gray and H.C.P. Bell, in 19th century work that deconstructed island names, suggested that the first part of the word of the island of Fólávaki is perhaps, the Malay 'pulo', which is island.

The winds and navigation are what connect these two atolls to the Malay Peninsula, now a part of Malaysia. The Arab navigator Ahmad Ibn Majid would detail how after going around the Cape of Good Hope (South Africa), when travelling to the east, navigators would take the route that went from FoaLhavahi to FoaMulak, and then straight to the Malay Peninsula. Many people from the Maldives Atoll of FoaMulak have Malay features and Malay heritage.



Mohamed Nasheed

the Secretary General of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), and a former President of the Republic of Maldives

In its decolonisation in the Indian Ocean, the U.K. must ensure that all island nations agree to maintain the fully protected environmental status of the Chagos archipelago

French traveller Vincent le Blanc, while in Pengu in 1640, picked up an amazing story. According to him, there was an island called Polouois towards the south of the Maldives, which can only be what the Maldivians call the island of FoaLhavahi in the Chagos islands.

This island was ruled by the King of Achen in Sumatra. The King, who had many descendants from several wives, had given the island to one of his children, by name Argiac. Another island went to his eldest son Abdanic. This island can only be the Maldives Atoll of FoaMulak. When the king died, the two sons fought with each other; the elder boy sought the assistance of the King of Bengal, and defeated Argiac. FoaLhavahi came back to FoaMulak. Since then, FoaLhavahi remained uninhabited until slaves who were brought from Zanzibar, populated the Chagos in the late 1700s.

The Africa connection

During the same period, Maldives sultans brought slaves from Africa, and by the mid-1800s, the population in Male, the Maldives capital, had a sizable African population. It was the same slave traders who brought slaves to the Maldives and Chagos. It is very likely that slaves in the Maldives and Chagos were from the same African clans.

The sovereignty of the Chagos islands depended on which side emerged victorious in the many British-French wars. By 1965, the Chagos islands remained under United Kingdom sovereignty. When Great Britain began to decolonise its Indian Ocean territories, there was no logic or reason why the islands should be handed to Mauritius. In the late 1930s, the Sultan of the Maldives sent expeditions to the Atoll to count and mark with his seal the coconut palms

on the Chagos islands. The last expedition was led by the father of the former Foreign Minister of the Maldives, Ahmed Naseem, who is of African descent. For centuries, the Maldives have used the islands of Peros Banhos Atoll as a base for fishing expeditions. People would camp on the islands, catch fish, and cook, smoke and dry them before bringing them home.

The importance of marine conservation

It is of huge concern that fish stocks in the Indian Ocean are depleting at a fast rate because countries are handing over fishing rights to greedy factory trawlers and purse seiners that operate from countries outside the Indian Ocean. The only zones in the Indian Ocean that are fully protected from industrial fishing are those of the Maldives and the Chagos territory. In the case of the Maldives, fishermen use pole and line, one by one – fishing techniques that have no bycatch (other fish or other marine species caught unintentionally) and are maintained at a sustainable level.

Great Britain must be congratulated for bringing the whole of Chagos under protected status. For Great Britain, the best and most respectable way to leave the Indian Ocean would be to discuss with the Maldives how this protected status can be maintained indefinitely. Britain must learn its 'leaving lessons'. Leaving India in 1947 was good, but the human cost from Partition was horrific. It is vital that as the process of decolonising proceeds, all island countries of the Indian Ocean, including the Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles and Sri Lanka, jointly agree to maintain the Chagos archipelago's fully protected status, in the interests of marine conservation.

–Topic→ Chagos Islands: A Historical and Cultural Overview

Chagos Islands Overview

The Chagos Islands consist of seven atolls.

Peros Banhos is the northernmost atoll, located 300 miles from the Maldives' Addu Atoll.

Historical Claim

A letter from a Maldives Sultan in 1560 indicates that Peros Banhos Atoll was recognized as belonging to the Sultan of Maldives.

Geographical Connection

The Chagos Islands and the Maldives share historical ties. Navigational routes link them to the Malay Peninsula.



Navigational History



Arab navigator Ahmad Ibn Majid documented routes from FoaLhavahi to FoaMulak, connecting the Maldives to the Malay Peninsula.



Royal Heritage

French traveler Vincent le Blanc recounted a story of FoaLhavahi being ruled by the King of Achen in Sumatra.
Historical ties to the Maldives' FoaMulak.



Colonial Influence

The Chagos Islands were uninhabited until the late 1700s.
Slaves from Zanzibar were brought to populate them.

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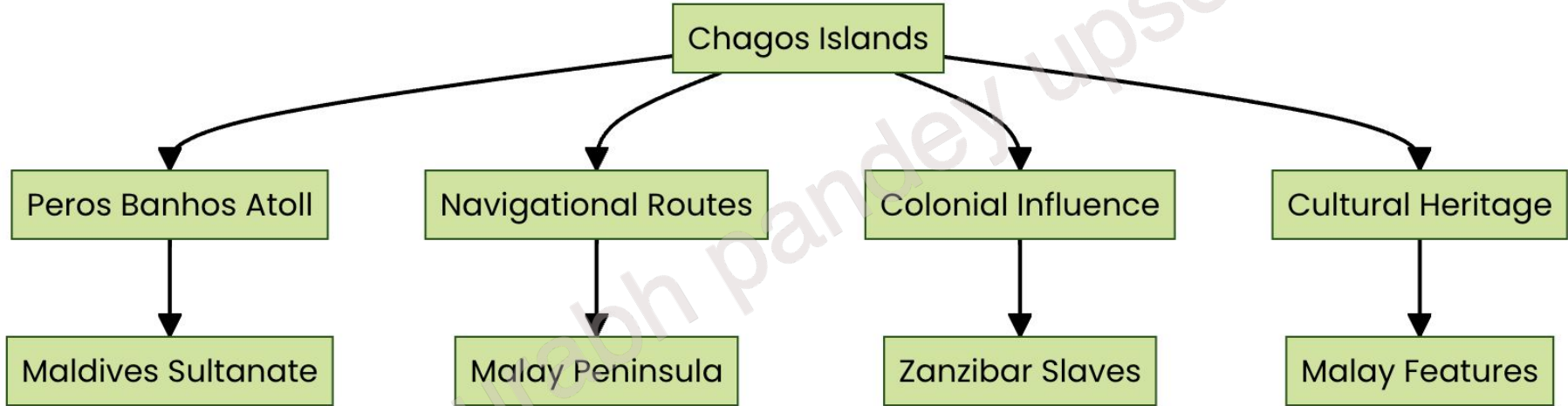



Cultural Influence


Many inhabitants of the Maldives Atoll of FoaMulak exhibit Malay features and heritage.


Reflects the islands' historical connections


saurabh pandey upsc





—  **African Influence:** The Maldives experienced a notable African presence due to the sultans bringing slaves from Africa, significantly impacting the population in Male by the mid-1800s.


 **Chagos Sovereignty:** The control of the Chagos islands was shaped by British-French conflicts, with the islands remaining under UK jurisdiction by 1965.

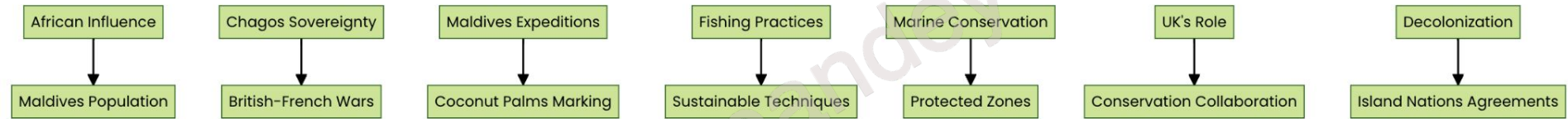
 **Maldives Expeditions:** In the late 1930s, expeditions led by Ahmed Naseem's father were sent by the Sultan of the Maldives to the Chagos islands to mark coconut palms.

 **Fishing Practices:** The Maldives has a history of using the Peros Banhos Atoll for fishing, focusing on sustainable methods that reduce bycatch.

 **Marine Conservation Concerns:** The Indian Ocean faces rapid depletion of fish stocks due to industrial fishing, with the Maldives and Chagos being the only fully protected areas.

 **UK's Role in Conservation:** The UK is praised for its efforts in protecting Chagos and is encouraged to work with the Maldives for continued conservation.

 **Decolonization Lessons:** Decolonization should involve agreements among Indian Ocean island nations to preserve the protected status of the Chagos archipelago.



Summary: This content highlights the historical African influence in the Maldives, the geopolitical dynamics of the Chagos islands, sustainable fishing practices, and the critical role of marine conservation in the Indian Ocean.



After dehydration increases, sodium concentration in the body goes on rising in hypernatremia, which could cause a brain haemorrhage. AP Photo

Why deaths occur due to heat stroke

The Hindu Bureau

Sunday's strikes in Chennai is a grim reminder of the deadly potential exposure to heat can be. Five people died, and many others were treated for heat-related conditions in the city.

C. Theerthan, dean of Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital, where 43 persons were treated, said that diabetes and a throbbing headache were the most common complaints. One person who had diabetes died.

But department specialists in Chennai had estimates at the verge of their minds, indicating that prolonged exposure to heat can exacerbate existing diseases.

How does heat impact health? According to the World Health Organisation, the amount of heat stored in the body is determined by a combination of heat loads, an imbalance of calories internally generated (heat from metabolic processes) and an environment health stress (such as high temperature, high humidity and clothing).

Creating a barrier to heat loss and internal heat gain from the environment. The body's ability to regulate internal temperature and dissipate heat gain is and circulation increases the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Ramesh K. S., head, Emergency Medicine, MGRI Healthcare said, "When a person has excessive exposure to heat, it can increase the core body temperature. The core temperature could increase to more than 40.2 degrees Celsius. This is what we call heat stroke."

The body's metabolism has a particular

Sweating due to heat exposure causes dehydration which thickens the blood and impairs circulation. This can cause a drop in blood pressure and saturation levels

temperature of 38 to 39 degrees Celsius. "When temperature builds up in the body, it can cause dilation and profuse sweating as well. This is the normal physiological process. Excessive sweating due to constant exposure to heat can cause dehydration. As a result of this, the blood becomes thick, making circulation difficult. This can cause a drop in blood pressure and saturation levels."

As body temperature rises to more than 40 degrees Celsius, it could affect enzyme-mediated reactions. It could ultimately cause stroke, blood clot in the brain or heart, Dr. Kamran Khan added.

Dr. Theerthan noted that sweating and loss of fluid leads to dehydration. "When dehydration increases, sodium concentration in the body goes up, resulting in hypernatremia, which could cause a haemorrhage in the brain. Continuous exposure to heat can affect the body's metabolism, impacting the sodium, potassium, and fluid levels in the body. It could cause electrolyte imbalance."

Severe electrolyte imbalance, hyponatremia and oedema, and low oxygen can be harmful to the person. "It can cause acute kidney injury."

Excessive temperature should be brought down immediately, Dr. Ramesh said, adding, "There could come in with altered mental behaviour and dizziness. Elderly people are vulnerable to heat stroke as their skin is thicker, and they are not as fit."

Dehydration that occurs over a prolonged period. Preventing diseases could also be a triggering factor. The intense cool shades and use cold blankets to bring down the temperature to 36 or 38 degrees Fahrenheit."

saurabh pandey upsc

Topic → Hyponatremia

Overview of Hyponatremia

Definition: Elevated sodium levels in the blood.

Causes:

Dehydration

Excessive sodium intake

Diabetes insipidus

Encephalopathy: A broad term for brain dysfunction, typically manifesting as altered mental status.

Systemic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (SIRS): A systemic inflammatory state affecting the whole body, often in response to infection or trauma.

Key Concepts

Pathophysiology: Understanding the underlying mechanisms of both conditions.

Diagnosis: Identifying symptoms and diagnostic tests.

Treatment Options: Current medical interventions and therapies.

Research Trends: Latest studies and findings.

Can India escape middle-income trap?

How does the World Bank define the threshold for middle-income economies? Why is state intervention considered crucial for breaking the middle-income trap? What lessons can be drawn from South Korea and Chile? What challenges does India face in balancing state intervention with democratic values?

ECONOMIC NOTES

Rahul Menon

The World Development Report 2024 – authored by the World Bank – calls attention to the phenomenon of the “middle-income” trap, or the slowing down of growth rates as incomes increase. The World Bank estimates a stagnation of income per capita when economies reach a level of per capita incomes 11% of that of the U.S., hindering their journey to high-income status. Over the last 34 years, only 34 middle-income economies – defined as economies with per capita incomes between \$1,136 and \$13,845 – have transitioned to higher income levels.

The WDR details the policies and strategies necessary to break out of the trap based on the developmental experiences of those countries that did manage the transition. It highlights the importance of the “3I” approach: investment, infusion, and innovation. Economies must invest, ensure the infusion of new global technologies, and develop an environment conducive to domestic innovation. This is no easy task and requires nimble and responsive state policy. In the modern economy, there are plenty of headwinds that India must overcome to successfully navigate the middle-income trap.

Role of the state

Most countries that broke the trap were part of the European Union which facilitated growth and mobility of capital and labour for its members. Such institutions that aid free factor mobility are not available for most countries, for whom capital inflows are liberalised – largely flowing into their economies – with restrictions on the movement of labour. An important non-European country that managed to escape the trap



GETTY IMAGES

is South Korea.

The South Korean state was heavily interventionist, often directing the private sector’s activities and ensuring their participation in an export-driven growth model. Successful companies were rewarded with access to new technologies and other supportive measures, while firms that did not perform were allowed to fail. This was no pure free market, but one where a powerful state intervened to bring about developmental goals, disciplining local elites and ensuring they followed the dictates of the state’s economic plan.

Another economy that broke the middle-income trap was Chile. But it too, saw state intervention in ensuring the success of natural resource exporting sectors. The salmon industry, for instance, succeeded in Chile due to the targeted intervention of the state on multiple fronts to ensure that the industry flourished.

The South Korean government’s approach carries significant lessons for India today. The state must be seen as being neutral amongst private players and ensuring those who do not make the mark are allowed to fail. The benefits firms receive from the state must be based on their performance instead of closeness

to power. The presence of powerful business houses can promote growth provided they invest, ensure the adoption and infusion of new technologies, and innovate. South Korean business houses, or chaebols, are among the leaders in innovation today.

The pitfalls

South Korea’s success was built on manufacturing exports; such a strategy is not possible in today’s economic scenario. World export growth has slowed, with demand from large economies slowing down following the multiple shocks of the last few years. Several countries have seen a slow turn to protectionism. The employment losses in developed economies caused by free trade have made it more difficult for countries such as India to access foreign markets.

Moreover, several countries have been hit by what economist Dani Rodrik terms ‘premature deindustrialisation’. Modern economies face a reduction in the income share of manufacturing at much lower levels of GDP compared to previous economies. Manufacturing is no longer an engine of growth for developing economies, and it remains to be seen whether the service sector is strong enough to break the trap.

Challenges facing India

The power of billionaires in the Indian economy has increased, and they are seen as being close to the state, with the state unable – or unwilling – to ensure high rates of investment from domestic capital. The manufacturing sector has stagnated, and there has been a reversal of the process of structural transformation, with employment increasing in agriculture and in low-productive forms following the pandemic.

The growth of the aggregate economy is not being reflected on the ground. While the government estimates a real GDP growth of around 7% in recent years, wages have not kept up. According to the PLFS, nominal wages for regular wage workers at the all-India level between April and June 2023-24 has only grown at around 5%, and that of casual workers at roughly 7%. With an inflation rate of roughly 5% during this time, this implies that wage earners have seen little to no real wage growth. An economy cannot break a middle-income trap if workers are unable to partake in the growth process, as reduced consumption demand will become a drag on the economy.

Most importantly, the question of democracy looms large. South Korea’s export strategy was overseen by a military government that ruled till the 1980s. The government frequently quelled labour unions to aid the accumulation process of capital. Chile deposed the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende by a military coup, installing General Augusto Pinochet as the head of state. It is vital not to take the wrong lessons from these countries, and think that democracy is an acceptable price to pay for higher growth. The challenge for policy is to promote state intervention to ensure growth while maintaining the sanctity of the democratic ethos.

Rahul Menon is Associate Professor in the Jindal School of Government and Public Policy at O.P. Jindal Global University

THE GIST

▼ The middle-income trap refers to the slowdown of growth as economies reach middle-income status, with only 34 countries successfully transitioning to high-income levels in the last 34 years.

▼ Breaking the middle-income trap requires policies focused on investment, infusion of global technologies, and fostering domestic innovation, supported by flexible and responsive state policies.


▼ India’s challenge is to foster growth through strategic state intervention while preserving democratic principles and ensuring inclusive participation in the growth process.


— Topic → World Development Report 2024: Overcoming the Middle-Income Trap




Key Insights from the Report


 **Middle-Income Trap:** The report highlights the challenge of the "middle-income trap," where economic growth slows as countries' incomes rise, particularly when per capita income reaches 11% of that of the U.S.


 **Stagnation Statistics:** Over the past 34 years, only 34 middle-income economies have successfully transitioned to higher income levels, defined by per capita incomes between \$1,136 and \$13,845.

 **3i Approach:** The "3i" approach—investment, infusion of global technologies, and innovation—is emphasized as crucial for escaping the—middle-income trap.

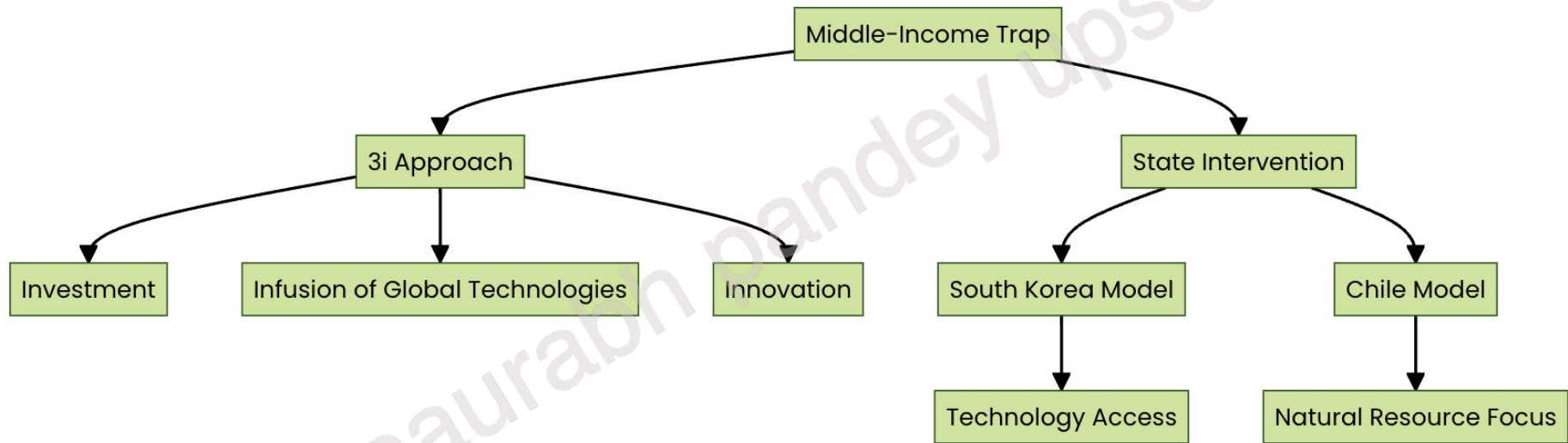
-  **Role of the State:** Successful economic transitions often involve significant state intervention, as demonstrated by countries like South Korea and Chile, where governments have directed private sector activities and supported key industries.

 **South Korea's Model:** South Korea's state intervention model rewarded successful companies with technology access while allowing underperforming firms to fail, fostering a disciplined economic environment.

 **Chile's Success:** Chile's strategic state intervention in natural resource sectors, such as the salmon industry, underscores the importance of government support in achieving economic growth.

 **Lessons for India:** The South Korean model suggests that India should adopt a neutral state role, ensuring benefits are performance-based and encouraging innovation among local businesses.

Strategic Approaches to Overcome the Middle-Income Trap:



Economic Challenges and Global Shifts

Global Economic Shifts Deindustrialization Stagnation in India Wage Disparity Democracy vs. Growth
Billionaire Influence Economic Participation

Global Economic Shifts

- **South Korea's manufacturing export success** is no longer viable due to **slowed world export growth** and **rising protectionism**.

Global Economic Dynamics:





Deindustrialization

- Many countries, including **India**, are experiencing '**premature deindustrialization**', leading to a decline in manufacturing's income share at lower GDP levels.

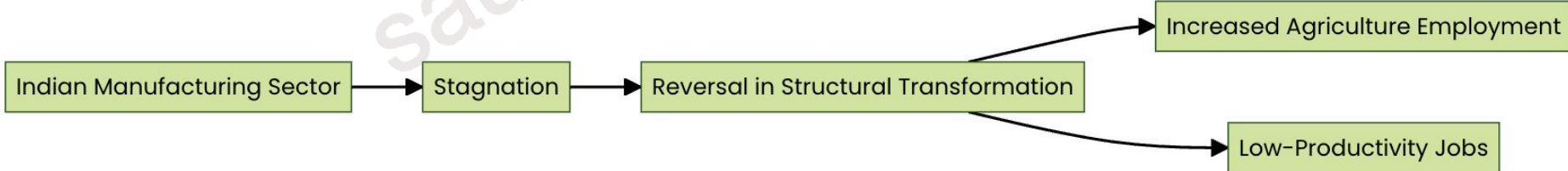
Deindustrialization Impact:



Stagnation in India

- The **Indian manufacturing sector** has stagnated, with a reversal in **structural transformation**.
- Resulting in increased employment in **agriculture** and **low-productivity jobs** post-pandemic.

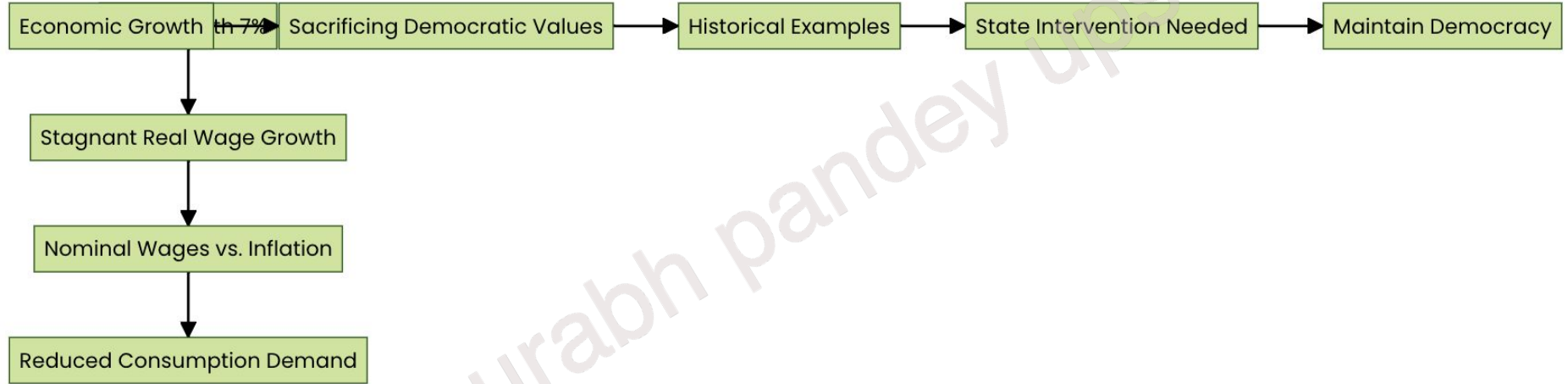
Stagnation in India:



Wage Disparity

- Despite a reported **GDP growth** of around 7%, **real wage growth** for workers has stagnated.
- **Nominal wages** fail to keep pace with **inflation**, leading to reduced **consumption demand**.

Wage Disparity Analysis:



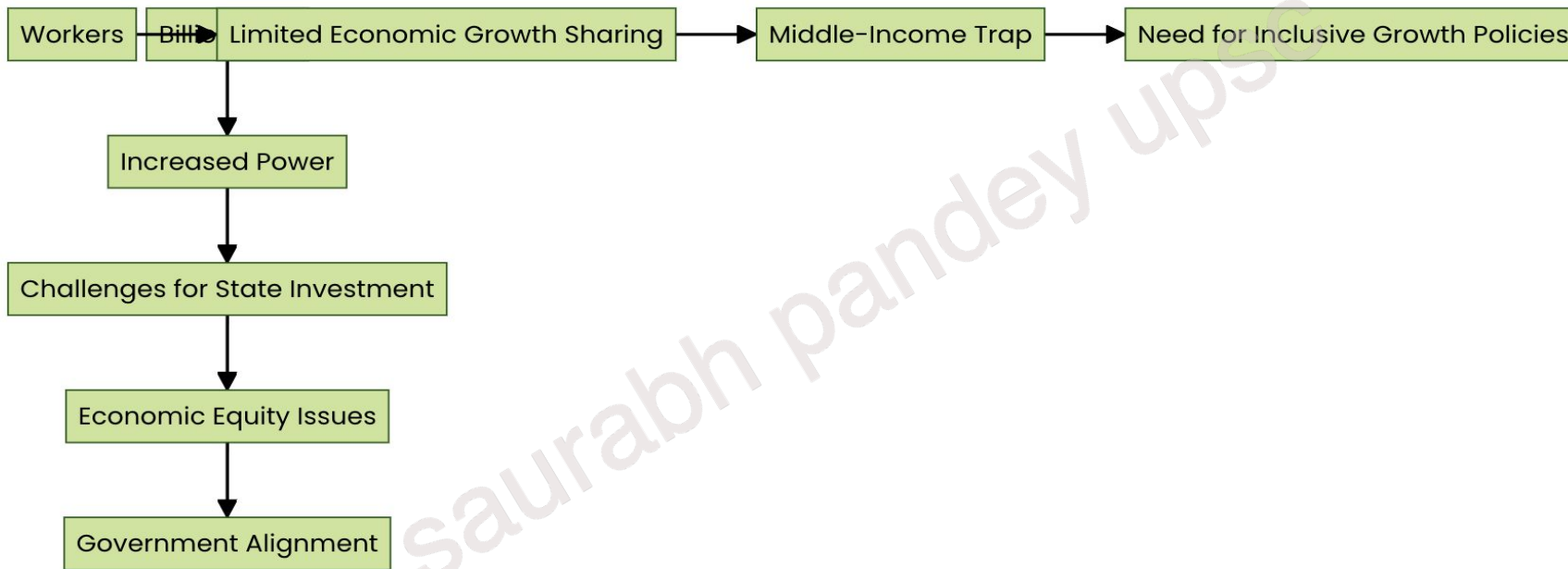
Democracy vs. Growth

- Historical examples from **South Korea** and **Chile** highlight the dangers of sacrificing **democratic values** for economic growth.
- Emphasizing the need for **state intervention** without compromising democracy.

Billionaire Influence 💰

- The increasing power of **billionaires** in India poses challenges for **state investment** and economic equity.
- They are perceived to be closely aligned with the **government**.

Billionaire Influence:



Economic Participation 🔄

- The inability of workers to share in **economic growth** hinders the potential to escape the **middle-income trap**.
- Necessitating policies that promote **inclusive growth**.

How does U.K.'s OpenSAFELY ensure transparency?

What potential does OpenSAFELY hold for the future of health data research and patient privacy?

Gayatri Saberwal

The story so far:

In a significant advancement for health data research, Ben Goldacre and his team have developed the OpenSAFELY platform, enabling access to the health records of approximately 58 million people in the U.K. without compromising individual privacy.

What data does the NHS hold?

The National Health Service (NHS) provides free healthcare to every person in the U.K. for every malady. The country is proud of its health system, and in fact, part of the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympics was a salute to the NHS. That the NHS is in a crisis at present is a separate story.

Every British citizen has a single health record from birth to death. Every bit of care provided by the NHS is entered into that record. The NHS health records go back more than 70 years. Since 1996, 96% of doctors' offices have maintained electronic records.

The NHS has had its share of data leaks. Each such event reduces the

public's trust and a reduction in trust does not bode well for popular support for such a service.

Who is Ben Goldacre?

Ben Goldacre is a professor at the University of Oxford. In the last few years, Goldacre has focused his efforts on understanding the health data of the British people. He is the first director of the Bennett Institute for Applied Data Science at Oxford. His team created OpenSAFELY, a platform for accessing health record data without breaching the privacy of the person whose data it is. Goldacre stressed that they required top-notch IT professionals to develop the system. It required the skills of people who had created or run the backend of a large e-commerce company.

How does OpenSAFELY work?

Imagine a strongroom that holds all the NHS records. It used to be that researchers could request particular types of records, which would be sent to them after vetting. There were three problems with this system. First, given the backlog, it could take months if not years to vet a researcher, thus slowing

research and innovation. Second, even if patient records had been stripped of identifying information, it was sometimes possible to reidentify the person. Third, it is in principle not ideal to have patients' records in other private hands.

With OpenSAFELY, researchers are neither allowed to enter the strongroom, nor sent any records. If they have a query, they are provided with dummy data where they can test their software and check whether the data retrieved is correct. If it is, they can submit their queries to the strongroom using the same code and obtain the data they need without accessing a single record.

What else can OpenSAFELY do?

Another important feature is that every bit of code a researcher submits is visible to the world the minute it is shared with even one person. This is important. If researchers desire particular results, they can keep changing the code to access different pieces of data, for instance, until they get the desired results. As British economist Ronald Coase is reported to have said, "If you torture the data enough it will confess to anything."

This practice is called p-hacking, where

'p' stands for p-value, a number that indicates whether some data is significant or just a chance occurrence.

Once the code is publicly visible, what the analyst did also becomes clear. This avoids the problem of different analysts performing similar but not identical analyses, thus producing different results from the same dataset.

How is OpenSAFELY being used?

Having created OpenSAFELY, Goldacre's team now routinely publishes papers involving data of 20-30 million people. The team members were able to undertake many analyses related to COVID-19, including assessing factors associated with COVID-19-related deaths; identifying about 20,000 prostate cancer diagnoses that were missed in England during COVID-19, and using the number and nature of respiratory infection cases and laboratory tests to assess the impact of the first wave of COVID-19 on clinical activity.

Separately, they have investigated a range of other topics, including auditing the prescription of pancreatic enzymes for pancreatic cancer patients and assessing the safety of prescribing direct-acting oral anticoagulants to patients with mechanical heart valves.

Thus OpenSAFELY is a system that pleases both those who are concerned with data privacy and data transparency. It is perhaps a world first to do so at this scale. Such a system could be developed for many scales of data in a wide variety of domains. It is a template that we would do well to be aware of.

Gayatri Saberwal is professor, policy research, at the Institute of Bioinformatics and Applied Biotechnology, Bengaluru

THE GIST


▼
OpenSAFELY is a platform created by Ben Goldacre and his team at the University of Oxford.

▼
It enables the publication of studies involving data from 20-30 million patients, facilitating important health research while upholding privacy standards.


▼
OpenSAFELY serves as a pioneering model for balancing health data access and patient privacy in medical research.


— Topic → **OpenSAFELY: A Revolution in Health Data Access**

Overview of OpenSAFELY


 **OpenSAFELY Platform:** Developed by Ben Goldacre's team, it provides access to health records of around 58 million people in the U.K., ensuring individual privacy.

NHS Health Records


 **Comprehensive Records:** The NHS maintains detailed health records for every British citizen from birth to death, with a history spanning over 70 years.

 **Digital Adoption:** Since 1996, 96% of doctors have been using electronic records.


Data Privacy and Security


 **Privacy Concerns:** Past data leaks have reduced public trust in the NHS, emphasizing the need for secure data management.

Leadership and Innovation


 **Ben Goldacre's Contribution:** As a professor at the University of Oxford and director of the Bennett Institute for Applied Data Science, Goldacre has been pivotal in health data research.

Functionality and Transparency

 **OpenSAFELY's Functionality:** Researchers can submit queries using dummy data, ensuring patient privacy.

 **Research Transparency:** All submitted code is publicly accessible, preventing unethical practices and ensuring consistent analysis._____

— Impact and Applications

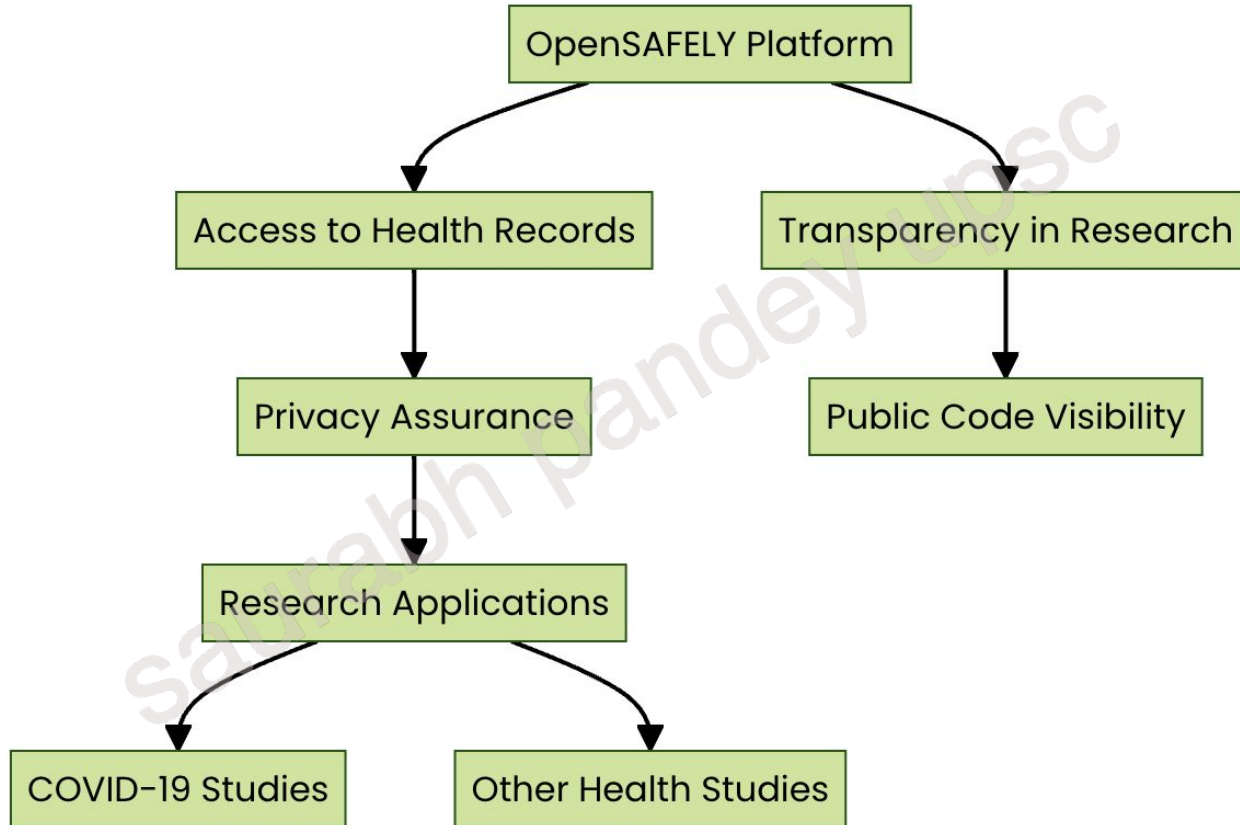
 **Significant Research:** The platform has been instrumental in COVID-19 research and other health studies, showcasing its potential for large-scale data privacy and transparency.

Summary

OpenSAFELY is a pioneering platform that facilitates secure access to NHS health records for research, prioritizing privacy and transparency.



Conceptual Overview:





Mysterious death: A drone shows workers removing the remains of a humpback whale from the Barra da Tijuca beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on Wednesday. A team of biologists has been deployed to determine the cause of death, according to an official. REUTERS

— Mapping → Barra da Tijuca Beach in Rio de Janeiro



Overview

Location: Barra da Tijuca, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Features: Long sandy beach, vibrant nightlife, water sports, and restaurants

Attractions: Natural beauty, cultural experiences, and recreational activities

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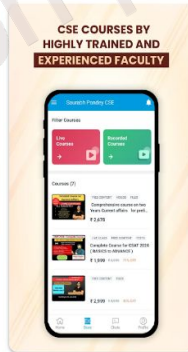
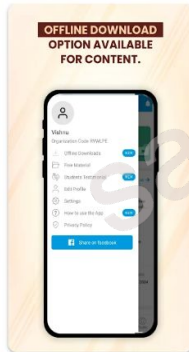
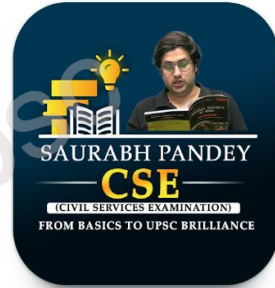
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