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Bansilalpet Stepwell

The restored stepwell at Bansilalpet in Hyderabad won the prestigious Big 5 Construction Impact Award in Dubai.

- The Big 5 Construction Impact Award was given to Bansilalpet Stepwell under the Sustainable Initiative of the Year category.
- The 6-layer Bansilalpet stepwell is located at Hyderabad.
- The stepwell was disused and turned into a dump yard in the area.
- The Rain Water Project along with architectural firm Kshetra carried out the restoration work.
- The 17th century well was originally part of a garden of tamarind and palmyra trees before.
- A British Resident TH Keyes developed a well-planned model village around the stepwell in 1933.
- This was funded by Seth Bansilal, hence the village (Bansilalpet) was named after him.
- The boundary wall with arches was also built around the well's periphery.
- The stepwell can hold nearly 22 lakh litres of water.



- **Big 5 Awards** - The Big 5 Construction Impact Awards was created to inspire the Middle East, Africa and South Asia's construction industry.
- The Sustainable Initiative of the Year award is given to the single initiative demonstrating successful implementation, showing Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles in its work.

References

1. [The Hindu - Sustainability award for restored Bansilalpet stepwell](#)
2. [The Hindu - Renovated Bansilalpet stepwell inaugurated](#)

India Inequality Report 2022: Digital Divide

India Inequality Report 2022: Digital Divide was released by the NGO Oxfam India.

- India's growing inequality is accentuated due to the digital divide as it gets replicated in the digital space.
- The reach of digital technologies remains largely limited to male, urban, upper-caste, and upper-class individuals.
- India fares the worst with the widest gender gap of 40.4% in Asia-Pacific region.
- **Highlights** - Indian women are 15% less likely to own a mobile phone and 33% less likely to use mobile internet services than men.
- Women constitute only one third of internet users in India.
- The likelihood of a digital payment by the richest 60% is four times more than the poorest 40% in India.

Digital Divide	Access to phone
Male	61%
Female	31%
Rural	31%
Urban	67%
Salaried permanent workers	95%
Unemployed (willing and looking for a job)	50%

- The report also highlights that the use of computer devices decreased in the rural areas post-pandemic.
- 3% of the rural population used to own a computer before the pandemic, the number slipped to just 1% post-COVID.

Caste	Access to a computer or a laptop
General	8%
SC	2%
ST	1%

- Internet penetration among States
 1. Highest - Maharashtra, Goa, Kerala
 2. Lowest - Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand

E-Participation Index

- According to UN's e-participation index (2022), India ranks 105 out of 193 nations.
- UN's e-participation index is a composite measure of three important dimensions of e-government, namely provision of online services, telecommunication connectivity and human capacity.

References

1. [Indian Express - India Inequality Report 2022: Digital Divide](#)
2. [Business Standard - India Inequality Report 2022: Digital Divide](#)
3. [Business Insider - India Inequality Report 2022: Digital Divide](#)

Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane

The dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT) monitoring in raptors is heavily biased toward the global north.

- DDT was first used in the World War-II to protect soldiers against malaria and typhus, which are spread by mosquitoes and body lice.
- After war it was used as a synthetic insecticide and pesticide.
- **Ill Effects** - Continued exposure to the chemical can cause neurological damage, endocrine disorders and reproductive failure in both humans and animals.
- **Ban and Usage** - Most of the developed world (global north) banned the use of DDT in the 1970s and 80s.
- In 2004, the [Stockholm Convention](#) on Persistent Organic Pollutants banned DDT in most parts of the world.
- In 2006, World Health Organization recommended the restricted use of DDT to control malaria.
- Malaria is still prevalent in and DDT is still in usage in various tropical countries in Asia, Africa, and South and Central America.
- **Effects on predators** - Birds of prey or raptors are often apex predators, sitting at the top of the food chain.
- The bioaccumulation of DDT severely affects raptors.
- This leads to the serious declines in raptor populations.

References

1. [Down To Earth - DDT monitoring in raptors](#)
2. [Britannica - DDT](#)

Exit Polls

Exit polls are conducted for the Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh state assembly elections.

- An exit poll is a poll of the voters at the exit of the polling station.
- It is conducted immediately after people have voted, and assesses the support for political parties and their candidates.
- Exit polls in India are conducted by a number of organisations, often in tie-ups with media organisations.
- These surveys can be conducted both in person and online.

An opinion poll is a pre-election survey to gather voters' views on a range of election-related issues.

Rules

- In 2010, Section 126(A) was introduced to the Representation of Peoples Act of 1951.
- Under the Section 126(A) of RPA 1951 , restrictions were imposed on exit polls.
- Exit polls can't be telecasted from before voting begins till the last phase concludes.

In case of a single-phased election:

- The result of any opinion poll or exit poll conducted shall not be published or disseminated in any at any time during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for closing of poll in an election.

In case of a multi-phased election and elections in difference States announced simultaneously:

- At any time during the period starting from 48 hours before the hour fixed for closing of poll in the first phase of the election and till the poll is concluded in all the phases in all States.

Historically in 1957, during the second Lok Sabha elections, the Indian Institute of Public Opinion had conducted an exit poll.

References

1. [Indian Express - What are exit polls?](#)
2. [Indian Express - Exit polls and why they are restricted](#)
3. [ECI -SVEEP](#)

Comprehensive Accessibility Audit

The Chief Justice of India has called for an accessibility audit in Supreme Court premises for disabled persons.

- The 'Supreme Court Committee on Accessibility' will be formed to conduct accessibility audit in Supreme Court.
- The Committee will be chaired by a sitting judge of the court.
- **Aim** - It aims to understand the hardships faced by specially-abled persons and ensure their better access to the justice system.
- **Functions** - The committee audits both physical as well as technology accessibility.
- It also prepares and releases a questionnaire for persons with disabilities who visit the court premises.
- **Report** - The committee will prepare a report containing the results of the audit and survey.
- The report shall also recommend proposals geared towards removing barriers to access.
- **Committee Structure**

Chair A sitting judge of the Supreme Court.
Member Secretary An officer of the Supreme Court Registry

Other Members

- A differently abled person employed at the Supreme Court
- A differently abled advocate nominated by the Supreme Court Bar Association
- A professor from the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru
- A person nominated by the Centre for Disability Studies at NALSAR University of Law

References

1. [The Hindu - Panel to conduct accessibility audit in SC](#)
2. [Business Standard - SC to conduct accessibility audit](#)
3. [Indian Express - Apex court to audit premises](#)

