



Current Affairs of the Day

The saviour complex of Facebook's critics

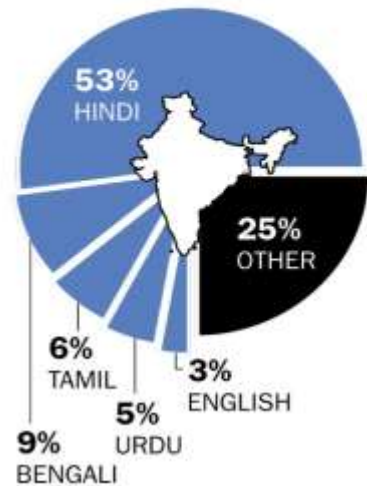
1. Back in February 2019, a Facebook employee ran a test to understand what a new user in India would see if all they did was follow pages and groups recommended by Facebook's algorithms.
2. What the test revealed was horrifying: "A near constant barrage of polarising nationalist content, misinformation, and violence and gore," according to the tester.
3. This included Islamophobia. India joins Brazil and the US in an exclusive club, "Tier zero," for hate speech and disinformation on Facebook.
4. The company had set up pre-election "war rooms" and dashboards to alert officials to emerging problems. Yet, despite this elite status, India has been left out in the cold not just by Facebook but by its critics as well.

Hate gap

About 75% of Indians speak at least one of **five languages** that are monitored by Facebook's hate speech algorithms. But only 62% speak one of those languages as a first language.

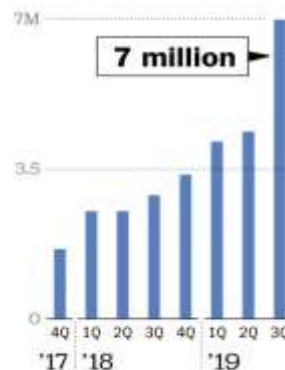
PIE CHART DOES NOT EQUAL 100% DUE TO ROUNDING
SOURCES: FACEBOOK; TIME CALCULATIONS BASED ON INDIA CENSUS, 2011

Percentage of Indians who can speak:



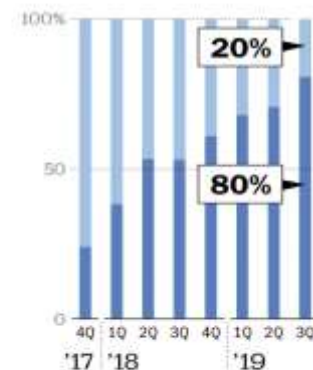
Hate speech on Facebook

Amount of hate speech acted on by Facebook



SOURCES: FACEBOOK

Of this, percentage flagged first by



Meta Revelation:

1. Thanks to the revelations tumbling out with the Facebook Papers, we now learn that despite the elevated risk status of countries such as India and Brazil or Indonesia



- and Iran that bagged spots in the next tier of priority for monitoring, 87 per cent of Facebook's global budget was dedicated to identifying misinformation solely in the US, leaving a measly 13 per cent for all others.
2. Notably, 52.5 per cent of Facebook's revenues from the first quarter of 2021 came from outside the US and Canada.
 3. To make things worse, thanks to the lack of Arabic, Hindi and Bengali classifiers, much of the problematic content out of India never got flagged. This is a head-scratcher, as much of Facebook's content moderation is outsourced to cheap labour from India.

Snarled supply chains force manufacturing exodus from Asia

1. Major clothing and shoe companies are moving production to countries closer to their U.S. and European stores, smarting from a resurgence in cases of the Delta variant of the novel coronavirus in Vietnam and China.



2. The disclosures come amid a massive shipping logjam that is driving up costs and forcing companies to rethink their globe-spanning supply chains and low-cost manufacturing hubs in Asia.
3. The latest example is Spanish fashion retailer Mango, which told Reuters on Friday it has "accelerated" its process of increasing local production in countries such as Turkey, Morocco and Portugal.
4. Similarly, U.S. shoe retailer Steve Madden said it had pulled back production in Vietnam and had shifted 50% of its footwear production to Brazil and Mexico from China.
5. Bulgaria, Ukraine, Romania, the Czech Republic, Morocco and Turkey were some of the countries drawing new interest from clothing and shoe producers, though China continues to produce a large share of the apparel for U.S. and European clothing chains.



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The Zika virus is here to stay in India, Kanpur just latest victim

- The presence of the vector and the virus together makes India extremely vulnerable to Zika
- The Zika virus has made repeated appearances across India in 2021.
- Zika is not good news. Though this virus usually causes mild fever, aches, rashes and conjunctivitis, sometimes, it can lead to microcephaly (a condition of underdeveloped heads and brain defects) in children born to women who suffered from the infection during pregnancy.

ALL ABOUT ZIKA VIRUS DISEASE

Zika virus disease is an emerging viral disease transmitted through the bite of an infected Aedes mosquito

Symptoms

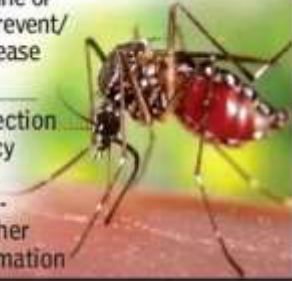
➤ Most of those infected with Zika virus disease either remain asymptomatic or show mild symptoms of fever, rash, conjunctivitis, body ache, joint pain

➤ Severe forms of disease requiring hos-

pitalization is uncommon and fatalities are rare

➤ There is no vaccine or drug available to prevent/treat Zika virus disease at present

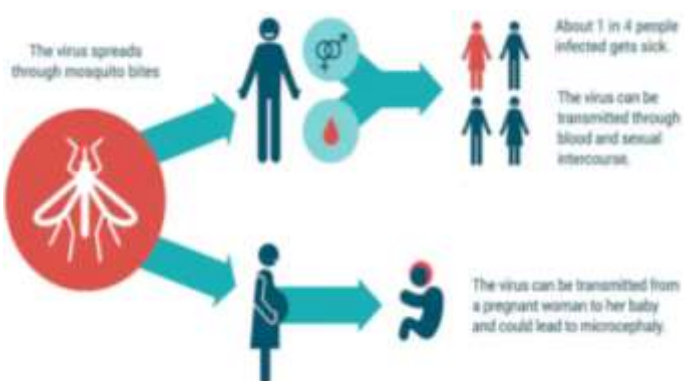
➤ Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause infants to be born with microcephaly and other congenital malformation



- The virus also seems to have a link with Guillain-Barré Syndrome, a progressive neurological disease that causes paralysis.

Zika in India:

1. India could have taken more care, considering the vector for this disease, Aedes aegypti and Aedes albopictus, are abundant in the country. These are the same mosquitoes that transmits the dengue virus and the disease has been reported widely in the country.



2. The presence of the vector and the virus together makes India extremely vulnerable to Zika and the country could have taken steps to reduce the risk.
3. Unfortunately, controlling the vector is difficult with both climate change and urbanisation creating new pockets for vector proliferation.



THE HINDU

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4. Even WHO's draft Zika Virus Research and Development Roadmap released for comments in February 2021, focuses on developing effective diagnostics, therapeutic agents and vaccines for the virus, and not on vector control.



Mosquito control has simple solutions. One of them is to remove places where the vector can breed. Every person can mosquito-proof their houses and government authorities can do the same in public places.

Why is MHA tasked to monitor foreign funds for NGOs, asks SC

1. The Supreme Court asked the government why the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has been tasked to keep an eye on the inflow and subsequent outflow of foreign funds to NGOs under the foreign contributions regulations law.
2. "Why has the whole operation been brought under the Ministry of Home Affairs and not under the finance department?," Justice A.M. Khanwilkar, heading a three-judge Bench, asked.
3. The question was posed during the hearing of petitions challenging the amendments to the Foreign Contributions Regulations law in 2020. The petitions argued that the amendments severely restricted the use of foreign funds by NGOs for their activities and transfer to other philanthropic organisations within the country.
4. The government said Intelligence Bureau (IB) inputs have shown that foreign funds entering India were used to fund activities that destabilise national peace and security.

Facebook whistleblower fears the metaverse

1. Facebook whistleblower Frances Haugen warned that the "metaverse", the all-encompassing virtual reality world promised by the social media giant, will be addictive and rob people of yet more personal information while giving the embattled company another monopoly online.



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2. Ms Haugen said her former employer rushed to trumpet the metaverse because of the intense pressure it is facing after she revealed deep-seated problems at the company and energised legislative and regulatory efforts around the world to crack down on big tech companies.



3. Meta, the new name for the parent company of Facebook, denied it was trying to divert from the troubles it faces by pushing the metaverse.

4. “So beyond the fact that these immersive environments are extremely addictive and they encourage people to unplug from the reality we actually live,” she said, “I’m also worried about it on the level of — the metaverse will require us to put many, many more sensors in our homes and our workplaces,” forcing users to relinquish more of their data and their privacy.

MAINS DAWP	<i>Q1. Discuss factors responsible for frequent Urban Floods in India. Suggest lasting remedies.</i>
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MCQ	<p><i>Q1. Consider the following statements about Zika viral disease</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. It can lead to microcephaly in children born to women who suffered from the infection during pregnancy</i> <i>2. Aedes aegypti is vector of the disease which also vector of dengue</i> <p><i>Which of the above statements is/are correct?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. 1 only</i> <i>b. 2 only</i> <i>c. Both 1 and 2</i> <i>d. Neither 1 nor 2</i>
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