

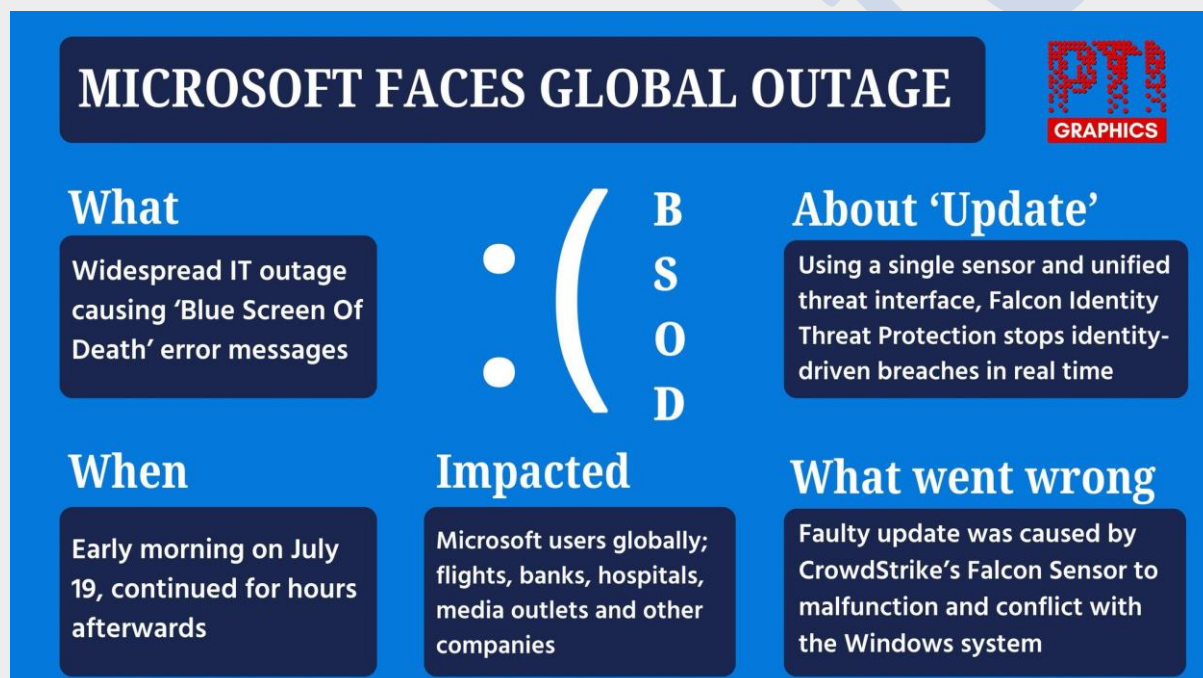
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### 1. Windows outage: how a faulty software update hit businesses worldwide

#### Why in News?

A major disruption in Microsoft Corp's cloud services caused service disruptions to a number of businesses around the world, including in India.



#### What caused the outage?

Microsoft said that a preliminary cause for the disruption was a configuration change "in a portion of [its] Azure backend workloads", which resulted in connectivity failures that affected Microsoft 365 services dependent on these connections. Azure is Microsoft's cloud computing platform.

At the heart of the issue was a software update issued by US cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike for Windows systems, which ended up malfunctioning and caused system downtimes. The issue was specific to Falcon, one of the company's main software products, which is deeply embedded with the Windows operating system. Major corporations across the world use software developed by CrowdStrike, which is why all their systems faced the outage at the same time.

### **What is Falcon?**

In cybersecurity parlance, Falcon is described as “endpoint detection and response” (EDR) software. It is a complex software, but its basic job is to monitor activity on computers on which it is installed, and constantly scan them for any potential threats such as malware. All major businesses around the world, including several Fortune 500 companies, are understood to use the service.

To carry out its job, Falcon first gets access to deep details of a system. This includes, among other things, the communications that computers are sending over the internet, what programs they are running, and the files that are being opened.

In that sense, Falcon is a ‘privileged software’ given its deep rooted integration at the operating system level. Since a number of businesses use systems which run on Windows, Falcon is deeply embedded within those systems — this was the major reason why a faulty code in the Falcon update primarily impacted Windows PCs.

### **Which sectors in India were the most impacted by the outage?**

In India, the impact of the outage was most pronounced in the aviation sector. Hundreds of flights were delayed, and several cancelled, as airline operators found their systems inoperational, forcing them to switch to manual processes.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation, in collaboration with the Airports Authority of India, implemented manual backup systems to maintain operational continuity. Extra staff was deployed to assist passengers, and address their concerns.

The aviation sector saw major disruptions worldwide. Major US carriers like Delta, United, and American Airlines had flights grounded by authorities. Airlines in Europe and the Asia-Pacific also reported disruptions.

In India, at least ten banks and NBFCs faced minor disruptions, which have either been resolved or are being resolved, the Reserve Bank of India said. It added that overall, the financial sector in India remained insulated from the global outage since critical systems of most banks were not in the cloud, and only a few banks are using the CrowdStrike tool.

A number of Windows PC-users were also greeted with the infamous ‘blue screen of death’, where their systems simply did not start up beyond a blue screen displaying an error message. According to Microsoft, a Windows device displays blue screen errors if the operating system has encountered a serious problem that has forced it to shut down or restart unexpectedly.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Science & Technology

Source: Indian Express

## **2. Bombay HC quashes exemption from RTE quota for private schools: what did the rule say?**

### **Why in News?**

The Bombay High Court recently quashed the Maharashtra government's recent notification which had exempted private schools — located within one kilometre radius of a government or government-aided school — from providing a 25% quota for students belonging to "weaker section and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood".

The quota comes under Section 12(1)(C) of The Right Of Children To Free And Compulsory Education Act, 2009. Students admitted under this quota are given fee concessions, with the state government meant to reimburse private schools for the same.

Section 12(1)(c) of the RTE Act provides students from disadvantaged communities with the opportunity to access resources from private schools that may not have been available to them otherwise. The 25% quota is a move towards inclusive and quality education for all.

#### **What did the rule say?**

The notification, which came out on February 9, said: the "local authority shall not identify the private unaided school, for the purposes of 25% admission of disadvantaged group and weaker section under the Maharashtra Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2013, where government schools and aided schools are situated within one-kilometre radius of that school."

This meant that private schools within a one km radius of a government or government-aided school (which receives money from the government) would not have to set aside 25% of seats for students from socio-economically backward sections. Instead, students in these neighbourhoods would have been considered for admission into said government or

government-aided schools first.

The exemption also applied to private schools established in the future, as long as they were built within a one km radius of a government or government-aided school. In case there were no government or government-aided schools in the vicinity, private schools would be identified for RTE admissions, according to the notification.

#### **Similar Provision in Other States**

With the notification, Maharashtra joined Karnataka and Kerala as states that have imposed this new regime to exempt private schools from providing RTE admissions.

Karnataka introduced the rule in December 2018, and specifically referenced the Kerala rules which were introduced in 2011. In Kerala, the fee concession for students is only made available to RTE quota students if there are no government or aided schools "within walking distance", which is one km for students joining Class 1.

#### **Why have states introduced such exemptions?**

In Karnataka, when the rule was introduced in 2018, the state's Law Minister Krishna Byregowda said: "The primary intention of RTE is to provide education to all classes of students... Till date, Karnataka has allowed parents to admit children to private schools despite

having government schools in the same neighbourhood. This has resulted in the enrollment ratio [in government schools] dropping drastically."

Private schools and teachers' organisations have also highlighted that state governments have often failed to reimburse the fees for students admitted through this quota. According to Section 12(2) of the RTE Act, state governments are bound to reimburse expenses incurred by the school per child, or the fee amount, whichever is less.

In Maharashtra, the Maharashtra English School Trustees Association (MESTA) threatened to boycott RTE admissions last December citing pending payments of Rs 1,800 crore in reimbursements.

### Why was the notification criticised?

Shantha Sinha, a member of the sub-committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education which played a crucial role in drafting the RTE Act, said "Section 12(1)(C) of the RTE Act that mandates 25% reservation of seats to children from disadvantaged backgrounds is in the direction of contesting the education apartheid in the country, and bringing parity and equality of opportunity for all children. Maharashtra government's amendment is unjustified".

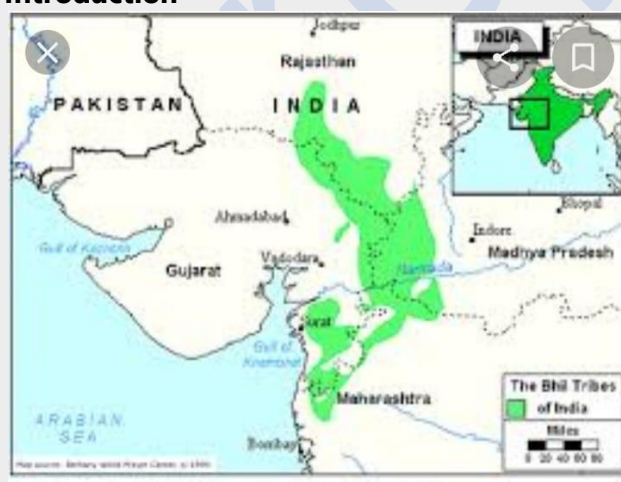
Similarly, Matin Mujawar, a Pune-based RTE activist, said that "one of the intentions of this law (the quota) was to enable students from marginalised backgrounds to get education in good schools". He said that the notification had "effectively closed" the small window through which some of the disadvantaged students got access to good education in private schools.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: Indian Express

## 3. Why members of the Bhil tribe have again demanded a separate 'Bhil Pradesh'

### Introduction



A large number of people from the Bhil tribe recently gathered at a rally in Rajasthan's Mangarh Dham, where Banswara's Member of Parliament Rajkumar Roat again raised the "long due" demand for an independent 'Bhil state'.

Babulal Kharadi, the minister for Tribal Area Development in the state's BJP-led government, responded in a statement: "In a democracy, there is freedom of expression. Every person has a right to demand, and there should be smaller states

as it is good for development. However, creating a state on the basis of caste is not apt. If it is Adivasis today, tomorrow you will have other communities demanding the same on the basis of their caste, which is not good for the society and the country, while we talk of social harmony."

The idea of a tribal state, comprising parts of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra, has been discussed earlier, too. What is the basis of that demand and why has it been raised again?

### **What is 'Bhil Pradesh'?**

The demand for a separate tribal state in western India was previously put forward by regional parties such as the Bharatiya Tribal Party (BTP). The BTP was formed in 2017 in Gujarat, with this issue as a major agenda.

The Bhil community has been demanding that 49 districts be carved out of the four states to establish Bhil Pradesh.

### **Historical demand**

BTP Rajasthan president Dr Velaram Ghogra, now also the BTP national president, earlier told that Bhil social reformer and spiritual leader Govind Guru first raised the demand for a separate state for tribals back in 1913.

This was after the Mangarh massacre, which took place six years before Jallianwalla Bagh and is sometimes referred to as the "Adivasi Jallianwala". It saw hundreds of Bhil tribals being killed by British forces on November 17, 1913, in the hills of Mangarh on the Rajasthan-Gujarat border. However, BAP MP Roat says that "the sacrifice of the tribals in 1913 wasn't just for Bhakti movement but for the demand of Bhil Pradesh."

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: Indian Express