## 1. Supreme Court Backs Free Speech in Film Case

### Introduction

The Supreme Court of India has upheld the right to screen the film Thug Life, starring Kamal Haasan, in Karnataka despite protests and calls for a ban. The Court strongly reaffirmed that once a film is certified by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), it cannot be blocked due to claims of "hurt sentiments."


### Background: Language Controversy Sparks Outrage

Controversy arose after Kamal Haasan said at a pre-launch event that "Kannada was born from Tamil." While factually incorrect—both languages share a proto-Dravidian origin—his remarks led to protests in Karnataka. The Karnataka High Court even suggested that Haasan should apologise.

### Supreme Court Rejects Extra-Judicial Bans

The Supreme Court disagreed with the Karnataka High Court's moral stand and clarified that once a film is certified, no further restrictions should apply. It ruled that banning a certified film based on protest violates the rule of law and freedom of speech under the Constitution.

### Role of CBFC and Rule of Law

The Cinematograph Act, 1952, gives the CBFC the exclusive authority to certify films. Once cleared, no group or individual can block the release through intimidation or unofficial pressure. Allowing such bans would harm not only free speech but also the livelihoods of those in the film industry.

### State's Duty to Maintain Order, Not Restrict Expression

The Court emphasized that maintaining law and order during disagreements is the state's job—not the responsibility of filmmakers or artists. It also clarified that certified films are not the same as hate speech, which can be legally restricted.

### Way Forward: Protect Certified Films from Disruption

The Supreme Court's ruling sets the stage for stronger protections against extra-judicial bans. States may now need to:

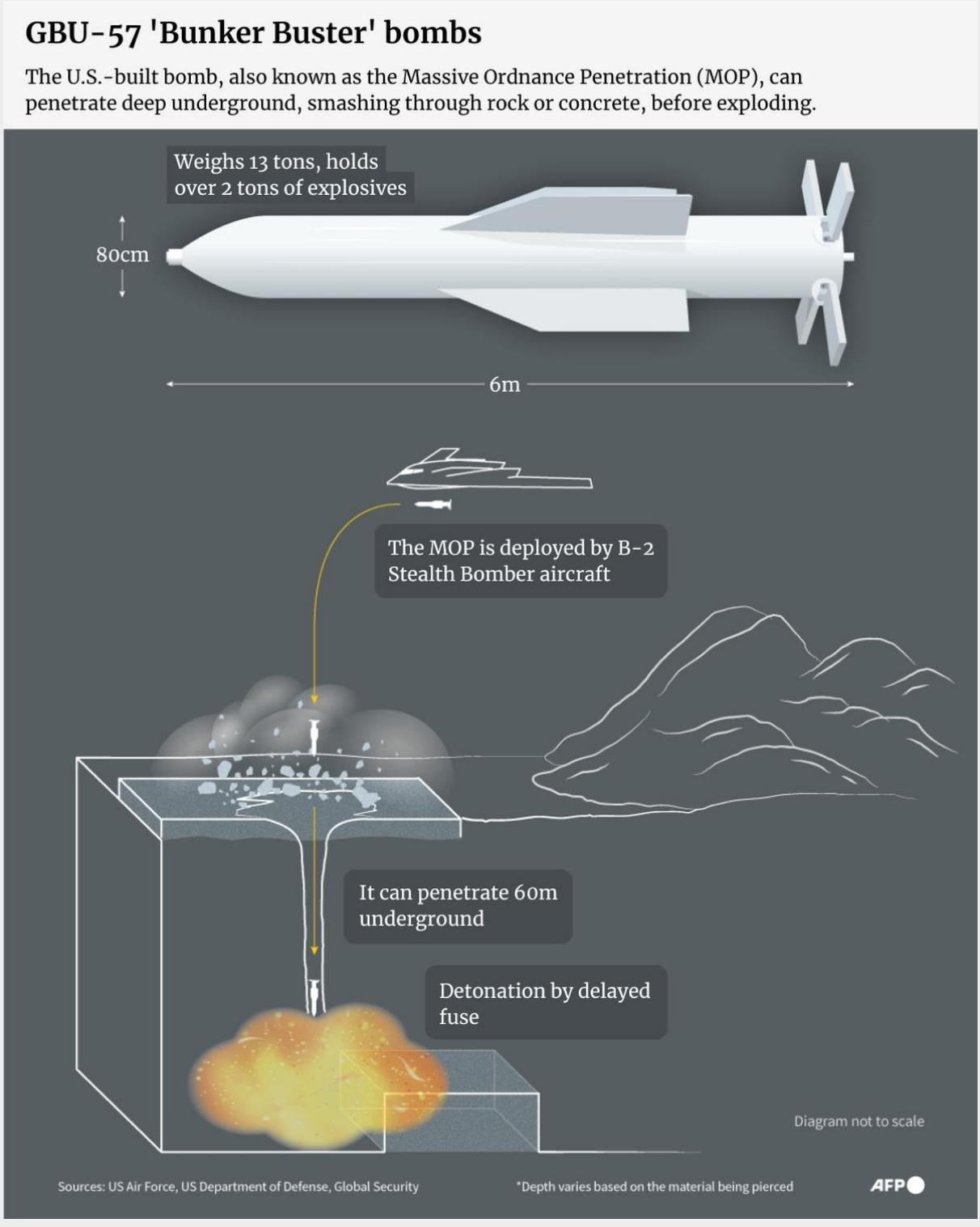
- Hold theatre owners accountable for unjust cancellations
- Provide clear policing guidelines to prevent intimidation
- Ensure audiences can watch certified films without fear

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance
Source: The Hindu

## 2. US Joins Israel-Iran Conflict with Strikes on Key Nuclear Site

### Introduction

In a major development, the United States has carried out airstrikes on Iranian nuclear facilities, marking its direct involvement in Israel's war with Iran. Among the targets was Fordo, a deeply buried uranium enrichment site that had remained untouched in Israeli strikes.




### Why Fordo Is Critical

• Fordo is located beneath a mountain, about 90 metres (300 feet) underground.
• It is believed to be central to Iran's efforts to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons.
• Israel could not destroy the site with its own capabilities due to its depth and fortification.

**US Drops Massive Bunker-Buster Bomb on Fordo**
• The US used the GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP) bomb.
• The bomb weighs around 13,000 kg, is 20.5 feet long, and can penetrate up to 60 metres of soil before detonating.
• It was dropped by a B-2 Spirit stealth bomber, the only aircraft capable of carrying it.

**More on the GBU-57 Bomb**
• Developed by Boeing for the US Air Force.
• Built with a special steel alloy casing to survive deep impact before explosion.
• Specifically designed to destroy hardened bunkers and underground facilities.
• As of 2015, only 20 units had been contracted for production.

**Extent of Damage Unknown**
While the bomb was successfully dropped on Fordo, the actual level of destruction is yet to be confirmed, given the site's extreme depth and fortified structure.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Issues
Source: Indian Express

## 3. What Is the Registration Bill, 2025?

**Introduction**
The Registration Bill, 2025 aims to replace the 117-year-old Registration Act of 1908. It introduces a modern, citizen-friendly approach to registering property-related documents, focusing on digital processes, transparency, and better legal safeguards.


**Key Features of the Bill**
**1. Digital and Offline Registration**
• Documents can be registered either in person at a Sub-Registrar's office or online.
• Aadhaar-based identity verification is allowed, but not mandatory.

**2. Wider Range of Compulsory Registrations**
• Now includes:
  - Agreements of sale
  - Power of attorney
  - Mortgage by title deed
  - Mergers and demergers under the Companies Act

**3. Optional Registration**
• Section 13 allows optional registration of documents not covered under compulsory registration, though it doesn't clearly list which documents this applies to.

**4. New Officer Roles**
• Introduces Additional and Assistant Inspector Generals of Registration to support administration.

**Refusal and Cancellation of Registration**
• Section 58: A document may be refused for registration if:
  - It lacks a true translation
  - Content is erased or altered
  - Submitted late (beyond four months)
  - The person involved is a minor, mentally unfit, or deceased
• Section 64(3): The Inspector General can cancel a registration if it:
  - Was based on false information
  - Violated the law
• Affected parties can appeal within 30 days.

**Penalties: Reduced Jail Term**
• Under the old law: Up to 7 years in prison + fine
• New Bill: Up to 3 years, a fine, or both

**Why Was Reform Needed?**
• The old 1908 Act was outdated and required in-person visits for all processes.
• Many states had already introduced digital features within the old law.
• Rising demand for secure, fast, and efficient property transactions made legal reform necessary.

**Concerns and Criticisms**
• Cybersecurity risks due to digital records and e-signature archives.
• Delegating roles to Common Services Centres (CSCs) may cause confusion, especially in complex legal matters like stamp duty and title transfers.
• Lack of clarity on which documents fall under optional registration.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance
Source: The Hindu

## 4. Quantum Breakthrough by IIT-Delhi and DRDO

**Introduction**
Scientists from IIT-Delhi and the DRDO have successfully demonstrated a major advancement in quantum cybersecurity. They used a quantum key distribution (QKD) system to securely transmit information over 1 km of free space on campus — a crucial step toward future-proof communications.

**Why Quantum Security Matters**

Today, most secure communications rely on complex mathematical problems that are hard to solve with current computing power. But with the rise of quantum computers, these problems may soon become solvable — putting global communications at risk.


**Quantum key distribution offers a solution:**

- It ensures secure message exchange between two parties.
- Any attempt to intercept the message instantly reveals the breach.
- If scaled via satellites, it could enable nationwide secure quantum networks.

**Part of India's National Quantum Mission**

This breakthrough ties into the National Quantum Mission launched in 2023, which focuses on:

1. Quantum communication
2. Quantum sensing
3. Quantum computing
4. Quantum materials

The mission has a budget of ₹6,003 crore till 2031.

**Administrative Hurdles Slow Progress**

Despite the promise, India's quantum efforts face significant bureaucratic and funding issues:

- Only a small portion of the funds has been released.
- Venture capital investment is minimal.
- Red tape, such as complex documentation and lack of single-window approvals, delays research.
- Short-term contracts, rented equipment, and low government salaries drive talent away.
- There is high dependence on foreign hardware (e.g., cryostats, sensors) and software (mostly controlled by multinational companies).

**India Falling Behind Global Giants**

India's current spending is much lower than other nations:

- U.S. invests 5x more
- China invests 20x more

The original 2020 budget promise of ₹8,000 crore was already reduced.

**The Way Forward: Administrative Reform**

To scale successes like the IIT-DRDO demonstration:
• India needs efficient funding mechanisms
• Reduce red tape and empower researchers
• Develop indigenous hardware and software
• Ensure long-term support and better pay for scientists
Without these structural reforms, India risks falling behind in the global quantum race.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Science & Technology
Source: The Hindu