

1. Maharashtra Scraps Three-Language Policy Amid Political Pushback

Background: Controversial Policy on Hold

The Maharashtra government has withdrawn its decision to implement a three-language policy for Classes 1 to 5 in State-run schools. This decision came after two months of strong protests from academics, activists, and political parties — including the NCP, a member of the ruling coalition.

The policy aimed to introduce a third language (likely Hindi) in addition to Marathi and English, sparking fears of language imposition and cultural marginalisation.

Expert Committee Formed to Review Policy

To determine the future of the language policy, the government has formed an expert panel headed by economist and educationist Dr. Narendra Jadhav.

In the meantime, the two Government Resolutions (dated April 16 and June 17) that introduced the three-language policy have been officially cancelled.

NEP 2020 and the Larger Debate on Language

The debate in Maharashtra reflects a broader national controversy surrounding the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which encourages all school students to learn three languages.

Though NEP 2020 gives States flexibility to choose any two Indian languages and one foreign language, many fear Hindi could become the default second language — especially when States like Maharashtra indicate preference for it.

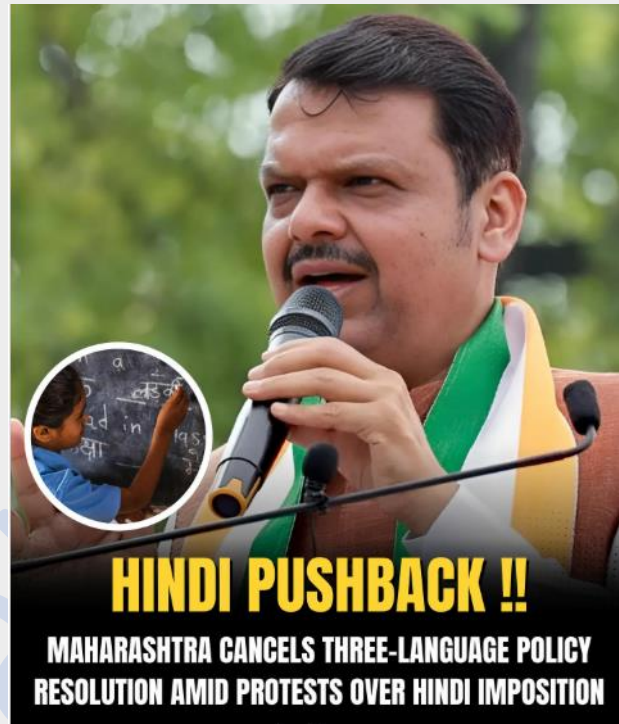
Critics argue that this undermines linguistic diversity and regional autonomy.

For instance, Maharashtra's initial suggestion that Hindi be "generally" taught until Class 5 triggered strong backlash and accusations of cultural imposition by the BJP.

Power, Language, and Practical Challenges

While promoting multilingualism sounds ideal, the real-world challenges are vast:

- Most students prefer learning English, which is seen as a language of opportunity.
- Offering a wide variety of third languages in every school is practically unfeasible.
- In Hindi-speaking States, students rarely study South Indian languages under the current policy.



HINDI PUSHBACK !!

**MAHARASHTRA CANCELS THREE-LANGUAGE POLICY
RESOLUTION AMID PROTESTS OVER HINDI IMPOSITION**

Maharashtra's Education Minister Ashish Shelar stated that 15 languages are available under the third-language option and will be taught if 20 or more students in a school request it. However, critics say implementation rarely lives up to this promise.

Conclusion: A Pause, Not an End

The Maharashtra government's decision to withdraw the policy — for now — is a clear response to political pressure and public sentiment. But by keeping the door open through a committee, the controversy is far from over.

The BJP must now reflect on the growing pushback to its language policies across India and understand that unity through coercion is not unity at all.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: Indian Express

2. A Milestone Moment for Tibetan Buddhism

Introduction

On July 6, 2025, the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, turns 90. This birthday isn't just a celebration—it marks a turning point for Tibetan Buddhism and global geopolitics. As promised years ago, the Dalai Lama is expected to make a significant statement about the future of the Dalai Lama institution and whether it should continue after him.



What the Dalai Lama Said So Far

In a recent event in Dharamshala, the Dalai Lama said that the continuation of the institution would be discussed "within some kind of framework." A statement from him is expected on July 2–4, during a major Buddhist conference, possibly outlining how his reincarnation—if any—will be selected.

This follows his 2011 pledge to re-evaluate the Dalai Lama system at age 90 and decide, in consultation with senior monks and Tibetan communities, whether it should continue.

Who Is the Dalai Lama?

The Dalai Lama is both the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism and a global icon of non-violence and compassion. Born in 1935 in Taktser, northeastern Tibet (now China's Qinghai province), he was identified at age 2 as the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama.

The title "Dalai Lama" means "Ocean of Wisdom" and is believed to be a reincarnation of Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion. Dalai Lamas are part of a centuries-old tradition where revered monks are reborn to continue their spiritual guidance.

A Life in Exile

In 1959, after a failed uprising against Chinese rule in Tibet, the Dalai Lama fled to India with thousands of followers. India gave him asylum and a base in Dharamshala, where the Tibetan government-in-exile, or the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), was established.

In 2011, the Dalai Lama stepped down from his political role, passing leadership to a democratically elected Sikyong (President). This marked the end of the tradition of spiritual-political rule, which had lasted nearly 400 years.

Why Succession Matters

The biggest concern is who controls the process of selecting the next Dalai Lama. Traditionally, reincarnation involves identifying a young child who recalls past life memories, often confirmed through symbolic tests.

However, China wants to control the selection. In 1995, when the Dalai Lama chose a Panchen Lama (second-most important spiritual leader), the Chinese government rejected it, named its own candidate, and reportedly abducted the child chosen by the Dalai Lama. That child, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, has never been seen publicly since.

Tibetans fear China will repeat this by appointing a pro-Beijing "Dalai Lama" to undermine Tibetan identity and consolidate control.

China's Tightening Grip on Tibetan Buddhism

Beijing sees Tibetan Buddhism not only as a religious force but also a potential source of separatist sentiment. President Xi Jinping has promoted the "Sinicisation of religion," pushing all faiths to align with Chinese Communist values. This includes selecting religious leaders through state-sanctioned methods like the "Golden Urn" lottery system.

China officially labels the Dalai Lama a "splittist" and traitor, banning public displays of devotion. Yet millions of Tibetans still revere him.

Global Stakes: India, the US, and Geopolitics

- India hosts the Tibetan exile government and is directly impacted by any shift in Tibetan-Chinese dynamics. The Himalayan border region remains tense.
- The United States passed the Tibet Dispute Act in 2024, urging China to resume dialogue with Tibetan leaders. President Joe Biden reaffirmed U.S. support for the Dalai Lama's autonomy and succession rights.

For China, controlling Tibet isn't just symbolic—it's strategic. Tibet's natural resources, rivers, and location near India make it geopolitically vital. Chinese critics argue that Beijing has systematically eroded Tibetan culture, flooded the region with Han settlers, and restricted religious freedom.

What Happens Next?

Over the coming week, the world will watch closely as the Dalai Lama and the CTA may outline the succession process. Will there be a 15th Dalai Lama? If so, where will he be born? How will he be recognized?

This moment could define the future of Tibetan Buddhism, influence global diplomacy with China, and determine how 8 million Tibetans—inside and outside of Tibet—preserve their cultural identity.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: The Hindu

3. Cabinet approves National Sports Policy 2025

Introduction

The Union Cabinet approved the National Sports Policy (NSP) 2025, a landmark initiative aimed at reshaping the country's sporting landscape and empowering citizens through sports.

The new policy supersedes the existing National Sports Policy, 2001, and lays out a visionary and strategic roadmap to establish India as a global sporting powerhouse and a strong contender for excellence at international sporting events, including the 2036 Olympic Games.

The policy is anchored on five key pillars.

1. Excellence on the Global Stage

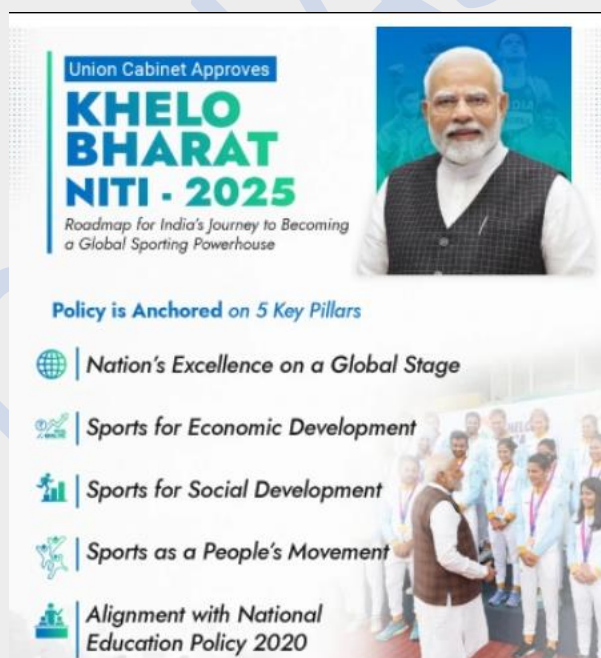
This pillar aims to:

- Strengthen sports programs from the grassroots to elite levels, including mechanisms for early identification and nurturing of talent.
- Promote the establishment of competitive leagues and competitions, and develop sports infrastructure in both rural and urban areas.
- Build world-class systems for training, coaching, and holistic athlete support.
- Enhance the capacity and governance of National Sports Federations.
- Encourage the adoption of sports science, sports medicine, and technology to boost athletic performance.
- Train and develop sports personnel, including coaches, technical officials, and support staff.

2. Sports for Economic Development

NSP 2025 recognizes the economic potential of sports and seeks to:

- Promote sports tourism and attract major international events to India.



- Strengthen the sports manufacturing ecosystem, and promote startups and entrepreneurship in the sector.
- Encourage private sector participation through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and innovative funding initiatives.

3. Sports for Social Development

The policy emphasizes the role of sports in driving social inclusion by:

- Promoting participation among women, economically weaker sections, tribal communities, and persons with disabilities through focused programs.
- Revitalizing and promoting indigenous and traditional games.
- Positioning sports as a viable career option by integrating it into education, encouraging volunteering, and facilitating dual-career pathways.
- Engaging the Indian diaspora through sports.

4. Sports as a People's Movement

To make sports a national movement, the policy aims to:

- Drive mass participation and a culture of fitness through nationwide campaigns and community-based events.
- Launch fitness indices for schools, colleges, and workplaces etc.
- Enhance universal access to sports facilities.

5. Integration with Education (NEP 2020)

In alignment with the National Education Policy 2020, the NSP 2025 proposes to:

- Integrate sports into school curricula.
- Equip educators and physical education teachers with specialized training to promote sports education and awareness.

6. Strategic Framework

To realise its objectives, the NSP 2025 lays down a comprehensive implementation strategy encompassing:

- Governance: Establish a robust regulatory framework for sports governance, including legal framework.
- Private Sector Funding & support: Develop innovative financing mechanisms and engage private sector participation through PPPs and CSR.
- Technology & Innovation: Leverage emerging technologies, including AI and data analytics, for performance tracking, research, and program implementation.
- National Monitoring Framework: Create a national framework with well-defined benchmarks, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and time-bound targets.
- Model Policy for States: The NSP 2025 will serve as a model for States and Union Territories, encouraging them to revise or formulate their own policies in alignment with national objectives.
- Whole-of-Government Approach: The policy calls for integration of sports promotion into the activities, schemes, and programs of all Ministries and Departments to achieve a holistic impact.

With its structured vision and forward-looking strategy, National Sports Policy 2025 sets India on a transformative path toward becoming a leading sporting nation globally, while creating healthier, more engaged, and empowered citizens.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: PIB

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