n a significant update to the playing conditions for T20 internationals, the International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced a revised powerplay structure for shortened matches, aiming to bring greater clarity and consistency to games that are truncated due to weather or other interruptions. These new rules, which come into effect from July 2025, define the : number of powerplay overs more precisely for each reduced match format.

Under normal T20 rules, the first six overs of an innings constitute the powerplay phase, during which only two fielders are allowed outside the 30-yard circle. However, in rain-curtailed or otherwise shortened matches, the length of the powerplay has often been adjusted proportionally. The new ICC guidelines take this proportionality further by providing an explicit table that details the exact number of powerplay overs for every shortened match scenario, ranging from five to sixteen overs per innings.

According to the new system, if a match is reduced to five overs per side, 1.3 overs will be designated as the powerplay. For a six-over innings, there will be 1.5 overs of powerplay, and a seven-over match will feature 2.1 overs of restricted fielding. The eight-over format, which previously had a three-over powerplay under older rules, will now have 2.2 overs during which only two fielders are permitted outside the inner circle.

Continuing with this progression, a nine-over innings will now feature 2.4 overs of powerplay. If the innings is extended to ten overs, then three overs will be designated as powerplay overs.

For eleven overs, the powerplay increases to 3.2 overs, and a twelve-over innings will include 3.4 overs of fielding restrictions.

The ICC's official powerplay structure goes further for slightly longer matches.

For instance, a thirteen-over match will include 3.5 overs of powerplay, while a fourteen-over game will feature 4.1 overs of powerplay. If the match is set for fifteen overs, the first 4.3 overs will be played under powerplay conditions. Finally, in a sixteen-over game, there will be 4.5 overs of restricted fielding.

This new table-based approach is designed to bring precision and fairness to the game in situations where match length is shortened due to external factors such as rain delays.

It provides captains, coaches, and fans with a clear and predictable understanding of how fielding restrictions will apply based on the number of overs allotted.

The move has been welcomed by several former players and analysts who believe it adds structure and clarity to a previously murky area of T20 regulations. Previously, powerplay durations in shortened games were often calculated on the spot using complex formulas, leading to confusion and inconsistency across different matches and tournaments.

With this reform, the ICC has made sure the process is transparent and standardized, to implement for both

NEW POWERPLAY RULES From Bharat to the World: The Enduring Legacy of Indian Knowledge Systems

■ PROF. DINESH CHANDRA RAI

he current global landscape, marked by persistent conflicts and profound divisions, highlights an urgent need for approaches that champion cohesion and peace. In this context, the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) emerges as a profound resource, offering a holistic framework derived from India's expansive intellectual, spiritual, and cultural heritage. From the philosophical foundations of the Vedas to the practical applications of Ayurvedic medicine, IKS presents a comprehensive vision of existence. Among its diverse facets, yoga has attained global prominence, acting as a potent instrument to reveal the extensive treasures of IKS. Yoga's resurgence brings renewed attention to India's ancient wisdom, progressively establishing its significant global footprint. This trajectory, strategically supported by the Government of India, complemented by the efforts of Indian universities, and reinforced by regular events such as the Nalanda Gvan Kumbh, presents substantial potential for disseminating India's enduring legacy. Critically, in an era defined by global strife, the Indian philosophical tenets of peace, harmony, and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the world is one family) are more imperative than ever.

Integrated Nature of Indian Knowledge Systems

IKS goes beyond being a mere collection of historical traditions; it represents a dynamic and integrated system encompassing philosophy, science, arts, and ethics. Its foundations are deeply embedded in texts such as Upanishads, Puranas, Arthashastra, spanning disciplines that include Vedanta, Sanskrit, astronomy, mathematics, and traditional agricultural practices. A central principle within these systems is balance-the equilibrium between the individual and the cosmos, and the synthesis of tradition with innovation. Yoga, through its integrated practice of physical postures. breath control, and meditation, exemplifies this ethos. However, yoga constitutes merely one aspect of IKS, serving as an initial engagement that introduces fundamental concepts such as mindfulness and dharma, subtly guiding practitioners towards the broader expanse of Indian intellectual herYoga: A Conduit for Cultural Exchange

The global spread of yoga has established a pivotal cultural bridge, attracting millions to explore IKS. A typical yoga session in global urban centers often extends beyond physical asanas, incorporating Sanskrit chants or Avurvedic principles. Avurveda, the IKS science of health, complements yoga by emphasizing diet, herbs, and lifestyle, gaining considerable traction within the global wellness industry. Projections indicate significant growth in the global Ayurveda market in the coming years. Similarly, Sanskrit, the ancient language of IKS's foundational texts, is experiencing a discernible revival, with prominent international universities now offering courses, indicating a renewed academic interest globally. International yoga festivals frequently showcase Indian classical dance, music, and meditation, offering vivid insights into the cultural richness of IKS. Thus, yoga functions as an accessible entry point, inviting global engagement with India's profound philosophical and scientific legacy.

Strategic Promotion and Institutional

Since 2014, the Government of India, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has actively promoted IKS, with yoga identified as a key access point. The establishment of International Yoga Day on June 21, formally recognized by 177 nations through a United Nations Resolution, has united millions in a worldwide celebration of yoga. The 2025 theme, "Yoga for One Earth, One Health," articulates IKS's holistic perspective, linking individual well-being to planetary harmony. Further supporting these efforts, the Ministry of AYUSH, inaugurated in 2014, actively backs research and educational initiatives in IKS disciplines such as Ayurveda and Siddha, with a particular focus on enhancing services and scientific inquiry. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 mandates the integration of IKS into educational curricula, aiming to develop a new generation conversant in traditional knowledge This integration seeks to enhance critical thinking, problem-solving, and cultural connectedness, while embedding empathy and environmental responsibility. Moreover, initiatives like "Heal in India" are designed to promote wellness tourism, demonstrating the

tangible benefits of IKS.

Indian universities serve as crucial custodians of IKS, ensuring its preservation and global dissemination. The University Grants Commission's directive for 5% IKS credits in higher education has spurred institutions nationwide to offer specialized courses in voga, Vedic mathematics, and Indian astronomy. IKS principles are increasingly being incorporated into academic programs, encouraging interdisciplinary research and elevating scholarly standards. Events such as the Nalanda Gyan Kumbh, held at Nalanda University from November 16-18, 2024, exemplify the vibrant contemporary relevance of IKS. Organized by Shiksha Sanskriti Utthan Nyas, this assembly brought together 150 institutions to deliberate on "Indian Knowledge Tradition and Developed India 2047," particularly emphasizing the role of Indian languages in achieving this national vision. Participating institutions, through comprehensive exhibitions and academic sessions, highlighted diverse IKS disciplines, ensuring the continuity and dynamism of these traditions.

Expanding Reach through Diaspora and Digital Platforms

The Indian diaspora, alongside sophisticated digital platforms, significantly amplifies the global reach of IKS. Yoga studios across continents frequently integrate various IKS elements, from Avurvedic dietary practices to Vedantic philosophy, making these ancient traditions accessible to diverse audiences. Online platforms like SWAYAM offer IKS courses, reaching learners from various countries, truly embodying the spirit of global knowledge exchange. Innovative endeavors such as Harit Yoga, which combines yoga with tree-planting, illustrate IKS's inherent environmental consciousness, advocating sustainability in conjunction with personal wellness. These concerted efforts have stimulated global interest in Vedanta and Sanskrit, firmly establishing IKS's presence on the international stage.

Navigating Challenges and Securing the

Despite this promising trajectory, IKS faces inherent challenges. The specter of commercialization poses a risk, potentially trivializing IKS into mere market trends and divesting yoga of its profound spiritual

essence or Ayurveda of its scientific rigor. To mitigate this, a standardized education system, deeply rooted in IKS's philosophical foundations, is indispensable for maintaining its authenticity. Critics also advise against the politicization of IKS, urging instead a focus on its universal values. Substantial investment in research, particularly through collaborations with international universities, is crucial to validate IKS's contributions to fields like medicine and ecology, thereby facilitating its acceptance and application in contemporary contexts. Furthermore, digital platforms must continue to expand, ensuring broad accessibility of IKS while meticulously preserving its integrity and depth.

The future of IKS is indeed bright but careful stewardship. necessitates Educational institutions could introduce Bharatiya Khel-indigenous games such as Kabaddi, Kho-Kho, and traditional board games. This initiative would not only instill cultural pride but also enhance physical fitness and strategic thinking. Universities are tasked with deepening IKS research, actively addressing pressing global issues like mental health and sustainability, thereby demonstrating the contemporary relevance of ancient wisdom. International partnerships can facilitate cross-cultural dialogue. ensuring IKS evolves dynamically without compromising its fundamental essence. By skillfully integrating tradition with innovation, India possesses the potential to lead a global renaissance of ancient wisdom, offering invaluable insights for a more harmonious and sustainable future for all.

The global expansion of yoga has undoubtedly opened a significant avenue to Indian Knowledge Systems. However, it is vital to recognize that IKS encompasses far more than just yoga. Through governmental initiatives, the dedicated efforts of universities, and the consistent organization of events like the Nalanda Gyan Kumbh, IKS is progressively securing its rightful place globally. As this timeless legacy is cultivated, its universal values-harmony, sustainability, and well-being, guided by the principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam-can be shared, thereby enriching humanity with India's pro-

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Water-An Indispensable Resource

Each year, there are about 250 million cases of

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Tater is a finite and irreplaceable resource that is fundamental to human well-being. It is indispensable for the existence of animal and plant eco-systems and is an essential element in the development of economic activities of any nation. It is the most vital resource for the existence of life on earth. No other natural resource is having such an overwhelming influence. Earth three-fourths surface is covered by the oceans. Freshwater constitutes a very small proportion of this enormous quantity. About 2.7 per cent of the total water available on the earth is fresh water of which 75.2 per cent lies frozen in Polar Regions and another 22.6 per cent is present as ground water. Rest of water is available in rivers, lakes, atmosphere water and soil and vegetation. India is having 2.4 per cent of the world's geographical area, per cent of the world's water resources and 17.7 per cent of the world's population. It has been observed that less than one per cent of the world's fresh water on earth is readily available for human consumption. As the human population grows, the demand on freshwater resources will also grow. Presently the world is facing a freshwater crisis. If per-capita consumption of water resource continues to rise at its current rate, humankind could be using over 90 per cent of all available freshwater within 25 years leaving just 10 per cent for the rest of the world's species. The availability of water is falling overtime and water crisis is the fifth highest risk to the society according to the 2020 edition of the World Economic Forum's Global Risk report. Valuing the multiple uses of water from agriculture to power generation, domestic use, industry, fisheries, ecosystem and livelihoods can help to transform this looming crisis into an opportunity for

water borne diseases with around 5-10 million deaths. It is not only people who are threatened by water shortages and pollution, freshwater ecosystems which harbour the world's greatest concentration of species are among the most vulnerable on earth. Around half of the world's wetlands have been destroyed in the last 100 years. Two-fifths of the fish are freshwater species and of these around 20 per cent are threatened, endangered or have become extinct in recent decades. Presently the freshwater demand is increasing not only because of demographic pressures but also because of improved living standards, urban and industrial growth. The world's thirst for water is likely to become one of the most important issues of the 21st century. Global water consumption raised six fold between 1990 and 1995-more than double the rate of nonulation growth and continues to grow rapidly as agricultural, industrial and domestic demand increase. In some areas, water withdrawals are so high relative to supply that surface water supplies are literally shrinking and ground water reserves are being depleted faster than they can be replenished by precipitation. Due to overexploitation of ground water, water tables are dropping and some rivers often become dry before they reach the sea. Freshwater is available as rainfall, surface water, ground water and atmospheric moisture. All these sources vary over place and time both seasonality and from year to year to year. Over exploitation of water resources, degradation of water recharge structures, paucity of funds, depleting water resources due to failure of monsoon and competing demand on the available water resources are the factors that cause concern on the supply front. On the demand side, factors such as growing urbanization, increase in population, change

in life styles etc. also increase the complexity of the problem

Presently many Indian cities do not have enough sources of water and in future, it would have to be transported over large distances as the water is found more away from the cities. The country's present and future situation can be gauged by the trend in water availability. It has been observed that irrigation alone accounted around 83 per cent of the total water use in 1997-98 on the demand side and it is likely to slow down to 69.5 per cent by the year 2050 due to the impact of technological advancement in irrigation. Demand of water for domestic, industrial and thermal power generation is expected to increase sharply. The limited ground water sources have not been able to keep pace with recharge and discharge to renew the balance. The amount of water available per person in India has decreased steadily over a period of time. It is predicted that the world in the year 2050 will be largely different from what it is today. Water sector will undergo dramatic changes in the years to come. We have no option but to depend on the available sources of water and have the responsibility to save and conserve them without fail. The water crisis has both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. We have glaring instances of water sharing conflicts not only between the states but also among the farmers or other water users. Urgent steps should be taken for drastic reduction of wastage of water in all sectors and protection of water sources from industrial pollution. There is need to frame an appropriate water policy and equally important indomitable conscience of water users to utilize water judiciously are necessary for sustainable utilization of water.

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Thematic Investing: A Smart Way to Boost Your Wealth Journey

ANKIT SHARMA



trategic investment decisions play a cru-Cial role in helping investors capture various market opportunities over the course of their longterm wealth creation journey. Throughout this journey, several investmentrelated themes develop, unfold, reach their

climax and get over in due course of time. Investing in such themes -- be it innovation, healthcare, housing, consumption or infrastructure; is known as Thematic Investing. Thematic Investment Boosts Yields

A developing investment theme brings with

itself tremendous potential and adds great values to your portfolio overtime. The key is in grabbing such opportunities well in advance and positioning the portfolio accordingly to reap the full benefits while the theme unfolds. More importantly, thematic investing allows investors to stay ahead of the curve by capitalising on emerging opportuni-

Invest through Thematic Mutual Funds

While thematic investing sounds exciting, it comes with its own set of challenges. Identifying the right theme at the right time and understanding how different sectors are interlinked requires considerable research. awareness of macroeconomic indicators and sound judgment.

Moreover, emotions like greed and fear often cloud investment decisions. Many investors struggle with deciding when to enter or exit a theme. Further, re-allocating their corpus in a tax-efficient manner can be tricky. This is where professional fund management steps in. Mutual funds, backed by research and experienced fund managers. track evolving themes, invest at the right time and exit when the theme has played out - all while managing risk and tax implications efficiently.

Conclusion

Incorporating thematic funds into your portfolio can make your wealth creation journev more rewarding. However, it's important to remember that while thematic investing offers high reward potential, it also carries higher risk. It's best to allocate a suitable portion of your investment corpus to thematic funds, complementing your core long-term investments.

One such option investors can consider is the ICICI Prudential Thematic Advantage Fund (FOF). This fund of fund scheme invests in a diversified mix of sectoral and thematic funds, providing broad-based exposure to high-potential themes. As of May 30, 2025, the fund delivered a solid one-year return of 20.85%, with CAGR returns of 21.38% over three years and an impressive 28.74% over five years

(The writer is Co-Founder, Financial

The Performance of Shamelessness: When Reels Replace Reality

DR. ASHWANI KUMAR

n the era of digital consumption, our phones are no longer _just communication devices they have become virtual stages where people perform versions of themselves for an invisible audience. With the rise of short-form video content through platforms like Instagram Reels, TikTok, and YouTube Shorts, a new kind of cultural phenomenon has emerged one that prioritizes performance over principles, spectacle over substance. Social media influencers. once admired for creativity and content, are now frequently admired or rather followed for their ability to provoke, manipulate, and distract. The result is the mass seduction of public imagination through the glamour of artificial lives, viral content, and digital validation.

Unfortunately, the cost of this cultural drift is not just individuality is collective. It is moral, social, and legal. In a time where fame can be bought through calculated shamelessness, society is being reshaped by values that are fleeting, superficial, and often disturbing. A grow-

ing number of influencers have started building their online personas not on intellect, art, or creativity, but on vulgarity, manufactured controversies, and shameless exhibitionism. In this new ecosystem, morality is mocked, decency is outdated, and cultural responsibility is considered a burden.

Many of these influencers consciously seduce the public for cheap popularity and monetization. They create content not to inform, enlighten, or entertain in meaningful ways, but to shock, irritate, or titillate. Their goal is not connection, but consumption of likes, views, shares, and revenue. They sell their personal lives, expose their bodies, and violate social boundaries all in the name of content creation. What is most troubling is that they do so with pride, turning shame into a performance and commodifying it for mass

This shamelessness is not without consequences. It creates a public nuisance that disturbs the peace of social life and agitates the cultural conscience of society. Educators, thinkers, and social activists who

raise questions about this trend are often ridiculed as conservative or moral police. But their concerns are genuine: the cultural atmosphere is being polluted by digital noise, where everything is content and nothing is sacred. Public spaces are now sets for poorly acted reels, temples and markets are turned into backgrounds for vulgar dances, and relationships are treated as episodes for viewership.

This problem came to light in a tragic way with the death of Kamal Kaur, a social media influencer from Ludhiana known for her provocative and often vulgar content. Her online presence was built around bold behavior, luxury flaunting, and dramatic videos. She had millions of followers, and her content often crossed the boundaries of cultural sensitivity. But when she was killed under mysterious circumstances, it became apparent how hollow her fame truly was. Not even a dozen of her millions of followers came forward to seek justice for her. Her tragedy exposed the fundamental difference between being followed and being supported.

This raises a crucial point for anyone who aspires to become a digital influencer: followers are not fans. A follower might track your movements, view your videos, and even comment on your posts but that doesn't mean they believe in you or stand by you. Many follow to criticize, mock, or simply gaze. Fans, on the other hand, are emotionally invested. They admire not just your content, but your character. They support your journey and defend your values. Kamal Kaur, despite her millions of followers, could not find a handful of real supporters when her life fell apart. Her fame was built on a fragile foundation attention without affection, visibility without respect.

This is not just a cultural issue it is a legal vacuum as well. India lacks a coherent legal framework to address the growing trend of vulgar, indecent, and socially disruptive content created by influencers. While cyber laws deal with explicit crimes like harassment or defamation, there are no clear provisions to tackle the social damage caused by habitual vulgarity or public nuisance through digital content. This

absence of regulation allows digital spaces to become zones of moral anarchy where anything goes, as long as it gains views.

The normalization of such content, under the pretense of freedom of expression, is dangerous. A democratic society must protect expression, but it must also define limits where that expression becomes socially destructive. Without legal tools to address this, the cultural frustration continues to build and when society is not given lawful ways to respond, it often reacts through extreme or tragic incidents. A healthy democracy needs both freedom and responsibility. The absence of either leads to chaos.

Moreover, the irritation of cultural activists, community leaders, and thoughtful citizens grows when they see shameless content being rewarded, while values

It becomes difficult to teach ethics to vouth who see indecency going viral and respect going unnoticed. It becomes harder to raise children with a sense of dignity when social media rewards those who mock it.

This is not just about tradition it's about the emotional health of a society. A civilization cannot flourish where vulgarity is normalized, and responsibility is ignored.

Influencers must recognize their role in shaping public conscious-

They must choose whether they want to chase temporary followers or cultivate loval fans. They must ask themselves if their content contributes to the social imagination or corrodes it. Going viral is not the same as being respected. Being watched is not the same as being valued. And performance, no matter how glamorous, can never replace character.

If we continue down this path of digital seduction and shameless stardom, we are not just risking individual tragedies like that of Kamal Kaur we are putting the cultural and emotional foundation of society in danger. It is time for influencers to grow beyond algorithms, for governments to act beyond reaction, and for society to reflect beyond the screen.

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