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- Union Cabinet Approved to Set-up the 8th Central Pay Commission
- ISRO's Space Docking Mission, SPADEX, Launched Successfully
- PM Narendra Modi Inaugurated the Z-Morh Tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir
- India's Foreign Trade During April-December 2024
- Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2024 Report
- Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry Launches National Turmeric Board
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To Our Readers

Dear Readers,

It is with a sense of great delight and pleasure that we are presenting the March 2025 issue of your favourite magazine **Pratiyogita Darpan.** As usual, present issue of the magazine contains useful material relevant to competitive examinations. Our editorial board and the team of highly qualified and experienced authors take painstaking efforts to present the study material, keeping in view the requirements of our esteemed readers. We are sure that if you read it intelligently and wisely, it will go a long way in equipping you with knowledge to face the gruelling battle of the examination and bring you the desired success.

We always try to understand the demands and requirements of our readers, their suggestions and changes in the pattern and content of the competitive examinations. We make all efforts to include them, as far as possible, in successive issues of the magazine. It gives us great satisfaction to know that our readers have unanimously endorsed the utility of the magazine.

In the present issue, a number of core articles on important national and international events, contributed by reputed authors, have been given. Some of the representative articles in this present issue are : Economic Survey 2024-25, Union Budget 2025-26, 76th Republic Day, 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2025, ISRO's SPADEX Mission, Inauguration of Z-Morh Tunnel, India's Foreign Trade During April-December 2024, Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2024 Report, Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry Launches National Turmeric Board, Donald Trump Took Oath as the 47th President of USA, Interpol's First 'Silver Notice', National Sports Awards 2024, Padma Awards 2025, Australian Open 2025, India Ranked 85th in the Henley Passport Index 2025.

The most important section of the Magazine contains a number of question papers selected from various competitive examinations. They have been solved with relevant hints in short, but clear-cut explanations. All efforts are made to provide error-free solutions. A careful study of and practice session with these papers will be very useful to face any competitive examination.

The columns **Compendium, Test Your Knowledge, Memorable Points** and **Concentric Quiz** have been widely appreciated as trusted tools for the benefit of our readers. An intelligent study and memorizing of their content will be highly useful in solving questions in any future examination.

You will also get the questions based on the Gist of Essential Magazines and their solutions based on the pattern of UPSC Main exam. With these questions, you can find the QR code which can be scanned to download the complete Gist.

Pratiyogita Darpan gives you the best guidance and reading material. It is upto you to make the best use of it for a bright success in any competitive examination.

Read Pratiyogita Darpan regularly and intelligently. It gives you the power to master your career and shape your destiny.

With best wishes for your brilliant success and bright future.

Sincerely yours,

RAHUL JAIN
(Editor)

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Editorial

Try To Be Good

"You can change all things for the better when you change yourself for the better."

—Jim Rohn

The best motto, the best ethical principle in life is to strive to be good within margin of human possibility. A person who is good of heart and mind is also externally good and relishes doing good to one and all. The selfish person can never be good. Hence, the first condition to be good is to be selfless to the maximum extent possible. Since, we live in the world of imperfect individuals, perfection is not possible to achieve by anyone. Only God is perfect. But a good person partakes of the attributes of God, say, godliness. We have a short sojourn on this planet earth and everybody's life is rounded with a sleep (death), is it not proper for us to lead a good, pious, right and ethical life ? The powers and pelf of this world will remain here when we leave the world. We will go empty-handed to the other world. But the good deed of people will go with them, while the so-called Great who hoarded immense wealth and power went away with their hands spread, with nothing on their palms. Alexander, the Great, who had conquered lots of territories belonging to others; and Soloman, one of the richest persons, both, went empty-handed, while saints like Swami Dayanand and Swami Vivekanand left behind a rich legacy of goodness and morality and went away with their hands full of goodness and beauty, something allied to goodness. Therefore, the best principle to cherish in life is to be good, to do good and serve others.

Goodness is in your nature
To be good is your birth right.

To spread goodness is in your power. You want to look like a good man and also welcome to be called a good man. Everybody wants to be so. But very few of us try to become a really good man.

Let us first ask ourselves whom we call good men and what we expect of a good man. The answer is simple. A good man is first of all a gentleman and a gentleman is he who does not inflict pain on others or does not give any cause for offence to any one. On the other hand, he tries to be helpful and useful to all whom he comes into contact with. If you expect others to be good to you, then be helpful to others. Do unto others, as you want to be done by them. As you sow, so shall you reap. Ask your innerself—am I a good person ? You would immediately know where you stand.

When you join some service—be it as an administrator, you would like to be a good officer, but people will call you good only when you do a good to persons who come to you to redress their grievances.

A great author has written that the secret of sound sleep is good work. He had made it a point to do a good work to atleast one person everyday and felt satisfied when he went to sleep. You can also experience it by doing good work. So many persons suffer from insomnia because they do not do good work and do not enjoy the pleasure of self-satisfaction.

What accompanies a person when he or she departs for heavenly abode. No money, no riches, no property, but only his goodness and at the same time, only goodness remains and lasts forever.

God is called good, because he is good to all beings and likes all. You also begin to like all and be good to all; you too, will be called good. The first step is to like and love your own self, because you are a good person, but outwardly and inwardly you will at once experience that God and goodness will be standing beside you because goodness is next to Godliness.

Some people might think that God wants them to do some thing that they do not really want to do or like doing. I think they are right to some extent. We want to go the way of pleasures, while He wants us to take the path of the 'good'. The great poet of all times, Rabindra Nath Tagore, has written that God had been good to me by rejecting many of my prayers, for pleasant things and thus left me with good things and goodness. Those who followed the path of the good, became good and great like Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, etc. God wants His creatures to become happy by becoming good and being good to others, and thereby change everything in life. When you ask to know God's will, you are really asking to be aware of what makes you happy. He will lead you to happiness by always reminding you to extend your love which implies being good to everyone you come in contact with.

There is a mistaken and deep rooted belief that the will of the individual and God's will can be separate. But that is not possible. You want to be happy, God wants you to be happy so the goal of the will is the same in both the cases. Then why bother to know God's will ? Your will is God's will. Try to know your will and act accordingly. Trying to do good can never lead us to any wrong. We should always follow the dictates of our conscience, which is God's spark in us. If you feel miserable at some time it means you have taken an ego-decision and that you are not doing the thing with the idea of doing good and spreading goodness 'Be good and you would be lovesome', says Mark Twain. You try to be good yourself and find the soul of goodness in everything and everybody you come across; then everyone will appear to be good and make yourself look good to everybody. As Bible says "A good man is covered with blessings from head to foot, but an evil man inwardly curses his luck."

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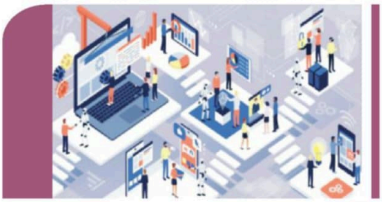

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Nation

This Month

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- *India Celebrated its 76th Republic Day Commemorating 75 Years of Indian Republic*
- *18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2025*
- *Union Cabinet Clears the Third Launchpad in Sriharikota*
- *The Union Government Scraps No Detention Policy for Classes 5 and 8*
- *School Enrollment in India Declines : UDISE + Report*
- *India Launched 10,000 Human Genomes Database*
- *MEITY Released the Draft Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2025*
- *Prime Minister Inaugurated New Jammu Railway Division*
- *West Bengal and Rajasthan New Migration Destination Hotspots : EAC-PM*
- *440 Districts with Excess Nitrate Level in Groundwater : CGWB*
- *Total Annual Groundwater Recharge has Increased Substantially by 15 BCM*
- *Union Home Minister Launched Bharatpol Portal*
- *CBI Doesn't Need State Consent for FIR Against Centre Officials : Supreme Court*
- *UGC's New Draft Rules on Appointments of Vice-Chancellors*
- *Shri Om Prakash Birla Inaugurated the Panchayat Se Parliament 2·0*
- *Union Cabinet Approved to Set-up the 8th Central Pay Commission*

India Celebrated its 76th Republic Day Commemorating 75 Years of Indian Republic

India celebrated its 76th Republic Day on January 26, 2025, commemorating 75 years of the enactment of the Constitution. Indonesian President, Prabowo Subianto was the chief guest, which was his first state visit to India, and the 4th Indonesian President visit to attend Republic Day celebrations.



Around 10,000 special guests in 34 categories, including Sarpanches from villages excelling in key government schemes, were invited with the objective to increase *Jan Bhagidari*.

The ceremony began with the visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to the National War Memorial for paying tributes to the fallen heroes by laying a wreath. The President's Bodyguard (Rashtrapati Ke Angrakshak), the senior most regiment of the Indian Army, escorted the President and the Chief Guest Prabowo, to Kartavya Path, a tradition performed after 40 years gap. The 21-gun salute took place using 105-mm Light Field Guns, after unfurling National Flag and playing of National Anthem. 300 cultural artists played '*Sare Jahan Se Achha*', followed by showering of flower petals by Mi-17 1V helicopters in the Dhwaj Formation.

Parade Commander Lieutenant General Bhavnish Kumar, a second-generation officer, commanded the Republic Day Parade. Two Param Vir Chakra awardees—Subedar Major and Honorary Captain Yogendra Singh Yadav (Retd) and Subedar Major Sanjay Kumar (retd) and Ashok Chakra awardee Lt. Col. Jas Ram Singh (retd) took part in the military parade.

A 352 member march past by the Marching Contingent of Indonesian National Armed Forces and Military Band of Indonesia's Military Academy also took place at Kartavya Path.

For the first time, indigenously developed short-range tactical missile, Pralay, developed by DRDO, was showcased at the Republic Day parade. It is a short-range surface-to-surface missile with a payload capacity of 500-1,000 kg. It has a range of 150 to 500 kms

For the first time, a Tri-services tableau with the theme '*Shashakt aur Surakshit Bharat*', rolled down the Kartavya Path, depicting Joint Operations Room facilitating networking and communication among the three Services.

The Naval Tableau showcased the Destroyer INS Surat, Frigate INS Nilgiri and Submarine INS Vaghsheer which have been commissioned in the Indian Navy on January 15, 2025. The DRDO Tableau, with the theme 'Raksha Kavach—Multi-layer Protection against Multi-domain Threats,' displaying path-breaking innovations for national security.

148 member all-women marching contingent of Central Reserve Police Force was led by Assistant Commandant Aishwarya Joy M. The all-girls marching contingent of NCC-SW (Girls) was led by Senior Under Officer Ekta Kumari of Jammu Kashmir & Ladakh Directorate.

Tableaux from 16 State Government/Union Territories and 10 Ministries/Departments of the Central Government, with the theme '*Swarnim Bharat : Virasat aur Vikas*' (Golden India : Heritage and Development).

In a first, bands from three government schools, including two all-girl teams, performed during the 76th Republic Day parade.

5,000 artists gave 11-minute performance in a title of '*Jayati Jaya Mamañ Bharatam*' with over 45 dance forms, curated by Sangeet Natak Academy, covering the entire Kartavya Path for the first time. Subhash Sehgal had written the lyrics and Shankar Mahadevan had composed the music of 'Jayati Jaya Mamañ Bharatam.'

Army's Corps of Signals' Motorcycle Rider Display Team (Dare Devils), performed motor-cycle stunts such as Bullet Salute, Tank Top, Double Jimmy, Devils Down, Ladder Salute, Shatrujeet, Shraddhanjali, Mercury Peak, Info Warriors, Lotus and Human Pyramid.

The Indian Air Force's 40 aircraft/helicopters displayed a variety of formations including Dhwaj, Ajay, Satluj, Rakshak, Arjan, Netra, Bheem, Amrit, Vajrang, Trishul and Vijay, including Vertical Charlie maneuver performed by a Rafale fighter aircraft.

- Indonesia's Presidents have been the Chief Guest at the Republic Day Parade for four times—Sukarno (1950); Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2011); Joko Widodo (2017) and Prabowo Subianto (2025).
- The most invited country is France, which had been invited six times- 1976, 1980, 1998, 2008, 2016 and 2024. United Kingdom (UK) has been invited five times-1956, 1959, 1961, 1964 and 1993. Pakistan has been the Chief Guest twice 1955 and 1965.
- Republic Day parade without chief guest were held in 1952, 1953, 1966, 2021 and 2022.
- In 2022, the song '*Abide With Me*', favourite of Mahatma Gandhi, was dropped from the Beating Retreat Ceremony. It was written by Scottish poet Henry Francis Lyte and composed by William Henry Monk.
- January 26 also has a historical significance when the 'Poorna Swaraj' or complete independence was officially promulgated as the goal of the Indian National Congress.

On 29th January, 2025, the Republic Day Celebrations came to an end with the 'Beating Retreat Ceremony', at Vijay Chowk, playing only Indian tunes. It marks a centuries old military tradition, when the troops ceased fighting, sheathed their arms, withdrew from the battlefield and returned to the camps at sunset at the sounding of the Retreat.

18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2025

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, on January 9, 2025. It was jointly organized by the Ministry of External Affairs and the State Government of Odisha from January 8 to 10, 2025. The theme was 'Diaspora's Contribution to a Viksit Bharat' and Christine Carla Kangaloo, the incumbent President of Trinidad and Tobago was the Chief Guest.

The 35 million Indian diaspora about 15·85 million NRIs and 19·57 million PIOs have seamlessly assimilated into the local society and have thrived and contributed to the communities, including growth and prosperity of India.

PM Narendra Modi remotely launched the **Pravasi Bharatiya Express,** under the Pravasi Teertha Darshan Yojana of the Ministry of External Affairs, for the Persons of Indian Origin (45-65 years age group), which began its 3-week journey from the Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station, and travelling to prominent tourist and religious places such as Ayodhya, Rameswaram, Madurai, Kochi, Goa, Patna, Gaya, Varanasi, Mahabalipuram, Ekta Nagar (Kevadia), Ajmer, Pushkar and Agra.

He also spoke to bring together the diaspora under a Girmitiya Conference. He urged diaspora to travel within India and contribute towards the 'Chalo India' tourism campaign. He urged young diaspora to participate in 'Bharat Ko Janiye' quiz.

He also inaugurated four exhibitions, which were as follows :

- Vishwaroop Ram—The Universal Legacy of Ramayana
- Diaspora's Contribution to Technology and Viksit Bharat.
- Spread and Evolution of Indian diaspora in the world with special focus on Mandvi to Muscat.
- Heritage and Culture of Odisha.

5 Plenary Sessions of PBD 2025

- **Diaspora Youth Leadership :** Harnessing youth leadership in a globalized world.
- **Migrant Skills :** Stories of building bridges and breaking barriers.
- **Sustainable Development :** Contributions of the diaspora to green initiatives.
- **Women's Leadership :** Celebrating Nari Shakti and the influence of diaspora women.
- **Cultural Connections :** Stories of belonging and cultural dialogue.

The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2025 were conferred by the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, upon Non-Resident Indians, Persons of Indian

Origin, or organizations established and run by them, during the valedictory session of the convention on January 10, 2025. It was conferred upon 27 individuals/ organisations recognizing their contribution in the field of education, science and innovation, trade and industry, arts and culture, social work, public service and philanthropy.

Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held on January 8, 2025, in part-nership with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The Guest of Honour was Dr. Dev Pragad, CEO of Newsweek. Grammy-winning artist Ricky Kej performed his theme song at the event on January 9, 2025. It came to a close with a soulful santoor concert by Maestro Shri Abhay Rustum Sopori.

PBD in Odisha : Strengthening Act East Policy

For the first time, PBD was held in Eastern India, aligning with the Government's focus on 'Purvodaya' to strengthen India's Act East Policy by leveraging Odisha's historical maritime connections with South East Asia. Two thematic sessions on Odisha were also organized- 'Unraveling India's Best Kept Secret' and 'Viksit Odisha: The Road Ahead'. A joint business session chaired by Dr. S. Jaishankar (External Affairs Minister) and Mohan Charan Majhi (Odisha's CM) highlighted the business opportunities in Odisha and how global investors can take advantage of its economic and technological growth.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is celebrated on 9th January every year since 2003 to mark the contribution of Overseas Indian community in the development of India. It commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India from South Africa on January 9, 2025. Since 2015, it is held once every two years with theme-based PBD Conferences. In 2023, it was held in Indore. It was hosted in virtual format in 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Union Cabinet Clears the Third Launchpad in Sriharikota

On January 16, 2025, the Union Cabinet approved the establishment of the Third Launch Pad (TLP) at Satish Dhawan Space Centre of ISRO at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

It is designed to have universal and adaptable configuration to support NGLV along with the LVM3 vehicles with Semicryogenic stage as well as scaled up configurations of NGLV, with new propulsion systems, which will be crucial for future space missions such as Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS) by 2035 and an Indian Crewed Lunar Landing by 2040.

TLP is targeted to be established within a duration of 48 months or 4 years. The total fund requirement is ₹ 3984·86 crore. The project will be realized with maximum industry participation.

The Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV) is designed to have a maximum payload capability of 30 tonnes to Low Earth Orbit, which also has a reusable first stage. It will have 3 times the present payload capability with 1·5 times the cost compared to LVM3, and will also have reusability resulting in low-cost access to space and modular green propulsion systems.

About ISRO's Existing Launchpads

- The First Launch Pad (FLP) was built in early 1990's and the first launch took place on 20th September, 1993. It continues to provide launch support for PSLV & SSLV.
- The Second Launch Pad (SLP) became operational in 2005 and the first launch took place on 5th May, 2005. It was established primarily for GSLV & LVM3 and as standby for PSLV.

Do You Know ?

- India's first private launchpad, designed and operated by an Indian space-tech start-up, Agnikul, was inaugurated on November 25, 2022. It is located in the ISRO campus at Satish Dhawan Space Center (SDSC),SHAR, Sriharikota.
- On December 30, 2024, ISRO's SPADEX Mission was its 99th launch. It was a space docking mission which made India fourth country to successfully experiment space docking, after USA, Russia and China.

The Union Government Scraps No Detention Policy for Classes 5 and 8

According to the 'Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Rules, 2024', notified by the Union Ministry of Education under the Section 38 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, following rules have been made :

- Holding regular examination in Class 5 and Class 8, at the end of every academic year.
- If child fails in an examination, he will be given additional instruction and opportunity for re-examination within a period of two months, after the declaration of results.
- The child will be held back in his respective class, if he fails in re-examination.
- During the holding back, the child will be guided by the class teacher and provide specialised inputs after identifying the learning gaps at various stages of assessment. The learning progress of child will be monitored by the Head Master.
- Most notably, the rule makes clear that no child shall be expelled from any school till he completes elementary education.

This change affects over 3,000 Central government-run schools, including Kendriya Vidyalayas, Navodaya Vidyalayas and Sainik Schools. The new rule aims to improve learning outcomes while balancing the rights of standards with academic standards.

No Detention Policy : A Brief Background

- Section 16 of the Right to Education Act, 2009, prohibited holding back or expelling a child, till he completes elementary education *i.e.*, upto Class VIII. It was meant to ensure that a student completes elementary education without dropping out.

- The Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE) passed a resolution in 2016 for scrapping the no-detention policy. It was based on its Sub-Committee report (2015) to which 18 States/UTs had recommended modification in no-detention policy.
- In 2017, a Bill was introduced to amend RTE 2009 providing for holding regular examination for Classes 5 and 8, at the end of the academic year. It was referred to a standing committee that recommended removing the no-detention policy. The Bill was then passed in 2019.

Declining Trend in Learning Levels

- According to the Annual Survey of Education Report 2023 (ASER 2023), released by Pratham NGO, only 42·8% of Class 5 students could read a Class 2-level text in 2022, a fall from 50·5% in 2018. Only 25·6% of them could do basic arithmetic problems in 2022, a slight drop from 27·9% in 2018. About 25% of students aged 14-18 years were unable to read a Class 2 level text and 50% among them faced difficulties in performing basic division problems of Class 3 and 4.
- The National Achievement Survey 2021 revealed clear decline in learning levels. Class 3 students scored an average of 323 in language and 306 in Mathematics. By Class 5, the scores dropped to 309 and 284 respectively and to 302 and 255 by Class 8.
- A government analysis of Classes 10 and 12 results across 59 State and national boards in 2023 showed that more than 65 lakh students had failed to clear their examinations.

Reasons for Declining Learning Level

- The lackadaisical implementation of No-Detention Policy in which the government schools in several states stopped testing in any form until Class 5.
- The Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) could not be implemented effectively due to insufficient resources and training.
- Several State Boards abandoned the model of multiple formative and summative assessments.

Way Forward

- Training and equipping teachers for regular assessment at school level for improving learning outcomes.
- Learning gaps must be identified at various stages of assessment for providing specialized inputs. Integrating CCE for tracking student's progress and reduce learning gaps.
- Rigorous teacher appraisal is needed to ensure inclusive teaching.

The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right. The Right to Education Act, 2009, provides for free and compulsory education to all children in the 6 to 14 age group.

In 2021, Structured Assessment For Analysing Learning (SAFAL) was launched for competency-based assessment for grades 3, 5, and 8. It was introduced by CBSE. National Education Policy 2020 (Para 4·40) seeks for school examinations in Grades 3 5, and 8 to test achievement of basic learning outcomes.

School Enrollment in India Declines : UDISE + Report

According to the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+), the school enrollment declined by 6% from 2018-19 from 26·36 crore (2018-2022 average) to 25·17 crore in 2022-23 and 24·8 crore in 2023-24.

The Department of School Education & Literacy (DOSEL) introduced the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) in 2018-19. It enables schools to upload data online for ensuring accuracy and reliability, and improving the quality of education from pre-primary to higher secondary levels. Since 2023-24, student-wise data along with their Aadhaar numbers on a voluntary basis was collected for individual student records.

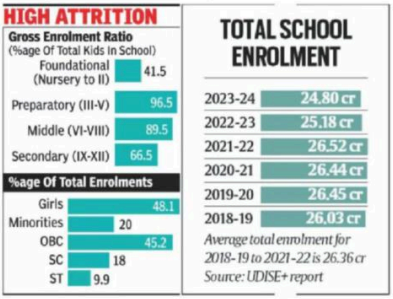
Class-wise Enrollment : In 2023-24, 24·8 crore students enrolled in the schools. There was drop in enrollments in primary, upper primary and secondary classes. However, enrollment increased in pre-primary and secondary classes.

Gender-wise Enrollment : Enrollment for boys witnessed 4·87% decline, from 13·53 crore in 2018-19 to 12·87 crore in 2023-24. Girls enrollment fell by 4·48%, from 12·49 crore in 2018-19 to 11·93 crore in 2023-24. Boys accounted for 51·9% of total enrolment, while girls made up 48·1%.

The National Education Policy 2020 aims for 100% Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030- from pre-school to secondary level. The Centre and the States will work together to increase the public investment in education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest.

State-wise Disparity in Enrollment

- Highest drops in enrollment were observed in Bihar (36·65 lakhs), Uttar Pradesh (28·26 lakhs) and Maharashtra (18·55 lakh.)
- West Bengal has 79% foundational and preparatory schools but only 11·6% secondary schools, creating higher risk for school dropouts.



Drop-outs Rate

- Zero-drop out rates in pre-primary to Class 2 but maximum dropouts were observed in classes 9 to 12.

India 2024

- India's maiden solar mission, Aditya-L1, reaches final orbit, 1.5 million km from Earth, Jan 6
- PM Narendra Modi inaugurates the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya during the 'Pran Pratishtha' ceremony, Jan 22
- Nitish Kumar resigns as Bihar CM, ends alliance with RJD-Congress, and forms a new government with BJP-led NDA, Jan 28
- Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren arrested in a money laundering case, Jan 31; Champai Soren takes oath as the new CM, Feb 2
- SC strikes down the Electoral Bond Scheme as unconstitutional and violating the right to information, Feb 15
- India implements Citizenship Amendment Act, easing citizenship for persecuted minorities from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh, Mar 11
- Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal arrested by ED in excise policy case, Mar 21
- Controversy erupts over alleged question paper leaks and result anomalies in NEET-UG medical entrance exam, June 4
- India's new criminal codes replace colonial-era laws, including the IPC, July 1
- Hemant Soren back as Jharkhand CM following release on bail, July 4
- About 120 killed in a stampede at a religious event in Hathras, Uttar Pradesh, July 2
- Anant Ambani marries Radhika Merchant in a lavish wedding, estimated at ₹5,000 crore, July 12
- At least 254 killed and 47 missing in Wayanad district landslides, Kerala, July 30
- Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina ousted, flees to India following violent protests, Aug 5
- Rape and murder of a 31-year-old trainee doctor in Kolkata sparks nationwide protests, Aug 9
- Tripura Peace Accord, signed between rebel groups and State and Central governments, ends 35-year insurgency, Sept 4
- Arvind Kejriwal, granted bail by SC on Sept 13, resigns as Delhi CM; Atishi Marlena takes over, Sept 21
- India recalls High Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Verma and expels Canadian diplomats as diplomatic row escalates over the investigation into Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar's killing, Oct 14
- SC disallows demolitions of homes belonging to those accused of criminal offenses, Nov 13
- DRDO successfully tests the country's first long-range hypersonic missile, Nov 16

Lok Sabha Polls

- India's seven-phase election, the world's largest electoral exercise, begins on Apr 19, culminating in a historic victory for the BJP-led NDA and Narendra Modi's swearing-in for a rare third consecutive term as Prime Minister on June 9

Electoral Outcomes at a Glance

State Assemblies

- **Sikkim :** SKM storms back to power; Prem Singh Tamang remains CM, June 10
- **Odisha :** BJP secures majority, ending BJD's 24-year rule; Mohan Charan Majhi becomes CM, June 12
- **Jammu & Kashmir :** National Conference-Congress alliance wins; Omar Abdullah sworn in as CM, Oct 16
- **Jharkhand :** JMM-led alliance secures another term; Hemant Soren begins 4th term as CM, Nov 28
- **Andhra Pradesh :** Big win for TDP; N Chandrababu Naidu takes over as CM, June 12
- **Arunachal Pradesh :** BJP returns to power; Pema Khandu becomes CM for 3rd time, June 13
- **Haryana :** BJP retains power for 3rd term; Nayab Saini becomes CM for 2nd time, Oct 17
- **Maharashtra :** BJP-led Mahayuti wins landslide; Devendra Fadnavis becomes CM, Dec 5

Sports

Tennis : Rohan Bopanna (43) and Matthew Ebden win the Australian Open Men's Doubles title, making Bopanna the oldest male doubles champion in Grand Slam history

Cricket :
- India ends an 11-year ICC trophy drought with a thrilling 7-run victory over South Africa to win the T20 World Cup
- **IPL :** Kolkata Knight Riders defeat Sunrisers Hyderabad to claim the title

Paris Olympics 2024 :
- India's Medal Tally: 6 (1 Silver, 5 Bronze)
- Neeraj Chopra: Silver in Javelin Throw, his second Olympic medal
- Manu Bhaker: First Indian to win two medals in a single Olympics—both bronze, one in 10m Air Pistol and another in Mixed Team 10m Air Pistol with Sarabjot Singh
- Swapnil Kusale: Bronze in 50m Rifle 3 Positions
- Aman Sehrawat: Bronze in Wrestling (57kg)
- Men's Hockey: Back-to-back bronze after Tokyo 2020

Paris Paralympics : Indian contingent wins a record-breaking 29 medals (7 Gold, 9 Silver, 13 Bronze)

Chess : Gukesh Dommaraju became the youngest undisputed World Chess Champion at 18, defeating defending champion Ding Liren of China

Deaths

- **Manohar Joshi** (Former Maharashtra CM, ex-Lok Sabha Speaker)
- **Pankaj Udhas** (Iconic ghazal singer)
- **Anshuman Gaekwad** (Former India cricketer and coach)
- **Yamini Krishnamurthy** (Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi legend)
- **Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee** (Former West Bengal CM)
- **Natwar Singh** (Former External Affairs Minister, senior Congress leader)
- **AG Noorani** (Eminent jurist, constitutional expert)
- **Sitaram Yechury** (CPI-M stalwart)
- **Ratan Tata** (Tata Sons chairman emeritus, industry icon)
- **Rohit Bal** (Celebrated fashion designer)
- **Shashi Ruia** (Industrialist, Essar Group co-founder)
- **SM Krishna** (Veteran politician, ex-Karnataka CM)
- **Ustad Zakir Hussain** (Tabla maestro)
- **Om Prakash Chautala** (Former Haryana CM)
- **Shyam Benegal** (Renowned filmmaker)
- **Manmohan Singh** (Former Prime Minister and distinguished economist)

KBK Infographics

Status of School Infrastructure

- More than 90% of schools are equipped with basic facilities such as electricity and gender-specific toilets. However, functional computers, Internet access and Accessibility (Ramps) are available only in 57%, 54% and 52% of schools, respectively.
- Low student-to-school ratios, indicating under-utilisation of school infrastructure, have been reported in Assam, Odisha, and Karnataka.

India Launched 10,000 Human Genomes Database

The Genome India Project (GIP), initiated in 2020 by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), has made the genomic data of 10,000 individuals publicly accessible. The whole genome of 10,000 healthy individuals from 99 communities, representing all major linguistic and social groups, across the country has been archived at the Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC), in Faridabad, Haryana.

The data will only be available to research institutes partnering with the Department of Biotechnology. The data has been encoded at several levels for preventing breach in privacy and anonymity.

Overview of Genome India Project

- The first phase of GIP envisaged to create a comprehensive 'Indian reference genome' by sequencing at least 10,000 genomes, with collaboration of 20 institutions, including the Indian Institute of Science's Centre for Brain Research, Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology and National Institute of Biomedical Genomics.
- The second phase of the project would involve sequencing the genomes of those with specific disease. This will enable researchers compare the diseased genomes with the healthy ones, helping in identifying genes that are responsible for or predispose a person to certain diseases. They may be able to study the genetic changes when someone gets a disease, take for example cancer.

The first Human Genome Project was an international consortium funded by the US National Institutes of Health, which published the world's first complete human genome in 2003. In 2012, the 1,000-genome project published 1,092 sequences. A UK government project sequenced 100,000 genomes by 2018. There has also been a European effort to sequence more than a million genomes across 24 countries.

Significance of the Project

- To study genetic variations associated with various diseases prevalent in the Indian population for developing more effective diagnostic tools and treatments tailored to the unique genetic makeup of different communities.
- It will address the underrepresentation of Indian genomes in global databases, promoting inclusivity in genomic research.
- Expanding the scope of project by sequencing additional genomes will enhance the understanding of India's genetic diversity and its implications for health and disease, paving the way for advancements in precision medicine and public health strategies.
- The data will serve as a foundation for cutting-edge research and will catalyze innovations in areas such as mRNA-based vaccines, protein manufacturing, and genetic disorder treatments.

MEITY Released the Draft Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2025

The Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) released the draft Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2025, for enforcing provisions of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. The Rules seek to create framework for empowering citizens in a rapidly growing digital economy and addressing challenges like unauthorised commercial use of data, digital harms and personal data breaches.

Key Features of the Rules :

- **Citizens at the Centre :** Citizens will have greater control over their data. Data Fiduciaries must provide clear and accessible information about how personal data is processed. Citizens are empowered with rights to demand data erasure, appoint digital nominees, and access user-friendly mechanisms to manage their data. Parents and guardians are empowered to ensure online safety for their children.
- **Balancing innovation and regulation :** Lesser compliance burden for smaller businesses and startups. An adequate time period to be provided for smooth transition for ensuring compliance with the new law, for all stakeholders, from small enterprises to large corporates. Hence, it encourages economic growth while prioritizing citizen welfare.
- **Digital-first approach :** Consent mechanisms, grievance redressal and the functioning of the Data Protection Board are all envisaged as "born digital", to ensure Ease of Living and Ease of Doing Business. The Rules incorporate 'digital by design' philosophy. Workflows from processing complaints to interacting with Data Fiduciaries have been optimised to ensure speed and transparency.
- **Inclusive Approach :** The draft rules are based on wide ranging inputs gathered from various stakeholders and study of global best practices. They are grounded in the principles enshrined in the DPDP Act, 2023.
- **Graded Responsibilities :** Startups and MSMEs have lower compliance burden, while Significant Data Fiduciaries have higher obligations. Sector-specific data protection measures to complement the core personal data protection framework created by the Act and the rules.
- **Addressing Stakeholders Concerns :** Data Protection Board's digital office approach would ensure quick and transparent resolution of complaints, and impose penalties by taking into consideration factors

such as the nature and gravity of default, efforts made to mitigate impact, etc. Securing compliance through annual data protection impact assessments and audits for Significant Data Fiduciaries and registration of consent managers. Within 72 hours of a data breach, the Data Protection Board of India (DPBI) should be informed.

- **Data Erasure :** Data retention is allowed for up to three years from the last interaction with the Data Principal (Users) or the effective date of the rules, whichever is later. The Data Fiduciary must notify the Data Principal at least 48 hours before erasure.
- **Exemptions :** The government and its 'instrumentalities' can collect data for the purpose of providing subsidies and benefits. Data collected for 'statistical' purposes is also exempted.
- **Data Protection Board :** It will have the power of civil courts for adjudicating on personal data breach complaints. Board members will be appointed for two years and eligible for re-appointment.

Criticism

- Violation of privacy as it provides for exemptions to data processing by the State on certain grounds. Right to Privacy is a fundamental right protected under Article 21 as held in the *Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd.) and Anr. Vs. Union of India and Ors* (2017).
- The draft rules fail to clarify make how users may make requests pertaining to right to access, correct, complete, update, and erase their personal data.
- Weaker sanctions for non-compliance with the Rules, unlike the European Union's GDPR, which imposes stringent penalties.

In 2017, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) established the Justice B.N. Srikrishna Committee to develop a data protection framework for India. In 2018, the Data Protection Bill was introduced, which was finally replaced with the Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2022. On August 12, 2023, it received the assent of the President.

Prime Minister Inaugurated New Jammu Railway Division

On January 6, 2025, PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the new Jammu Railway Division, carved out from Ferozepur Division, and will manage key rail sections including Pathankot – Jammu – Udhampur - Srinagar-Baramulla (423 route km), Bhogpur-Sirwal-Pathankot (87·21 route km), Batala-Pathankot (68·17 route km), and Pathankot-Joginder Nagar (narrow gauge section, 163·72 route km), covering a total of 742·1 kilometres.

Jammu Railway Division is the Indian Railways' 70th overall and the sixth under Northern Railways after Ambala, Delhi, Lucknow, Moradabad and Firozpur. Currently, the railway line runs up to Katra and Reasi in Jammu. Once opened, the 62-km-long track between Katra and Sangaldan, Reasi, in Jammu will also boast the world's highest bridge over Chenab.

PM Narendra Modi also laid the foundation stone of Rayagada Railway Division Building of East Coast Railway and inaugurated the Charlapalli New Terminal Station in Telangana.

The Raygada Railway Divison was carved out from Waltair Division of South Coast Railway Zone in 2019 to strengthen Odisha's railway infrastructure.

Charlapalli New Terminal station in the Medchal-Malkajgiri district of Telangana has been developed as a new coaching terminal to ease congestion on the existing coaching terminals in Secunderabad, Hyderabad and Kacheguda.

India has become home to the third-largest metro network in the world, covering over 1,000 km across 11 states and 23 cities. India has surpassed Japan in Metro Rail Projects in 2022 and is on track to become the 2nd largest Metro network in the world. On January 5, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 13 km stretch of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Namo Bharat corridor, which will greatly ease travel between Delhi and Meerut.

West Bengal and Rajasthan New Migration Destination Hotspots : EAC-PM

According to a working paper by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) titled '400 Million Dreams! Examining volume and directions of domestic migration in India using novel high frequency data', the number of domestic migrants stood at 40,20,90,396 in 2023, which was 11·78% lower compared to the 45,57,87,621 as per Census 2011. The migration rate stood at 28'88%, compared to 37·64% of total population as per Census 2011

Migration Pattern Across the State

- Maximum percentage growth of arriving passengers was observed in West Bengal, Rajasthan and Karnataka.
- West Bengal and Rajasthan emerged among the top five destination states. The other three states are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.
- Compared to 2012 data, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar are now ranked a notch lower.

Major Migration Routes

- Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka and Telangana are the major origin states for arrivals into Maharashtra. Similarly, for Delhi, the major origin states are Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh.
- General Class passengers originating from Uttar Pradesh are headed to Delhi, Bihar, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana. For Bihar, major destinations are Delhi, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Jharkhand.
- Uttar Pradesh to Delhi was the most popular state-to-state route. Gujarat-Maharashtra was second, Telangana-Andhra Pradesh in third place, Bihar-Delhi was in fourth place and Bihar-West Bengal in the fifth position.

District-Level Migration Trend

- Mumbai was top destination for in-migration. It was followed by Bengaluru, Howrah, Central Delhi and Hyderabad.
- Valsad was the top originating district for out-migration. Villupuram (Tamil Nadu), Saharsa (Bihar), Moradabad (UP) and Murshidabad (West Bengal) are the new entrants in the top-10 originating district list.
- The top origin districts are coalesced around major urban agglomerations *viz*. Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Kolkata etc.
- Murshidabad to Kolkata was the top route of general class passengers' movement. Paschim Bardhaman to Howrah, Valsad to Mumbai, Chittoor to Bengaluru Urban and Surat to Mumbai were in second, third, fourth and fifth position respectively.
- Agra, Patna, Kanpur Nagar, Jhansi and Bareilly are the top source district for general class passengers to Delhi, with Dausa and Ludhiana as the new districts in the top-10 list of origin districts to Delhi. Valsad, Surat, Nashik, Ratnagiri and Varanasi are top-5 origin districts of the passengers to Mumbai, with Sindhudurg as new entry in top 10.

440 Districts with Excess Nitrate Level in Groundwater : CGWB

The 'Annual Groundwater Quality Report 2024', released by the Central Groundwater Board (CGWB) on December 31, 2024. The report revealed 440 districts with excessive nitrate concentration, increasing from 359 in 2017.

Nitrate Contamination

- 20% of water samples exceeded the nitrate concentration limit of 45 mg/L.
- Rajasthan, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu reported the maximum nitrate contamination problem, with 49%, 48%, and 37% of their tested samples respectively.
- Increasing trend of nitrate concentration has been observed in Central and Southern India, such as Maharashtra (35·74%), Telangana (27·48%), Andhra Pradesh (23·5%) and Madhya Pradesh (22·58%).
- Lower percentages of nitrate concentration were observed in Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Jharkhand and Bihar. Nitrate concentration was within safe limits in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Goa, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland.

Fluoride Contamination

- 9·04% of samples had fluoride levels above the maximum safe limit of 1·5 mg/L.
- Fluoride concentration exceeding permissible limit were mainly observed in Rajasthan, Haryana, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana.

Arsenic Contamination

- 3·55% of water samples showed arsenic contamination *i.e.*, more than 10 parts per billion.
- Elevated arsenic levels (more than 10 parts per billion) were found particularly in flood plains of Ganga and Brahmaputra. Affected States were West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Punjab and Chhattisgarh's Rajnandgaon District.

Uranium Concentration

- 6·60% of samples exceeded the permissible limit of uranium (30 parks per billion).
- Uranium concentration exceeding 100 ppb (parts per billion) were observed in 42% samples of Rajasthan and 30% samples of Punjab.
- Several groundwater stress zones in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka reported uranium concentration above 30 ppb. These clusters/zones have been identified as over-exploited, critical and semi-critical groundwater stress zones.
- Chronic exposure to uranium leads to kidney failure.

- Nitrate contamination is primarily linked to agricultural run-off and overuse of fertilizers. 'Blue Baby Syndrome' is associated with high nitrate level.
- Long-term exposure to fluoride causes fluorosis. Arsenic contamination leads to cancer or skin lesions.
- Chronic exposure to uranium can lead to kidney damage.
- Iron contamination and Electrical Conductivity is mostly a concern for aesthetic quality.

Electrical Conductivity (EC) Values

- 7·25% of samples exceeded the safe limit of Electrical Conductivity (3000 μS/cm at 25°C)
- Rajasthan, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka were severely affected by high electrical conductivity values in groundwater.
- Haryana has the highest number of districts with EC.

Iron Contamination

- Iron contamination was observed in 13.20% of samples, which exceeded the maximum safe limit of 1mg/L.
- Northern and Central India having more iron content in groundwater compare to Western Indian part. The most affected States was Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Chemical Profile

- In terms of cations, calcium dominates the ion content, followed by sodium and potassium. For anions, bicarbonate is the most prevalent, followed by chloride and sulphate. This indicates that overall water in the country is of **Calcium-Bicarbonate type.**
- 81% of samples meet safe thresholds of Sodium Adsorption Ration (SAR) and Residual Sodium Carbonate (RSC), reinforcing the suitability of groundwater for irrigation.

Regional Variability and Seasonal Trends

- In States such as Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Jammu and Kashmir, 100% of the water samples met the BIS standards. Rajasthan, Haryana, and Andhra Pradesh faced widespread groundwater contamination.

- Post-monsoon, a modest reduction in EC levels and Fluoride was observed in some regions, indicating that monsoon recharge can temporarily improve water quality by diluting salts. However, Barmer and Jodhpur (Rajasthan) showed a rising trend in EC levels.
- Monsoon rainfall tends to increase nitrate levels, with 30·77% of samples contaminated in the pre-monsoon period compared to 32·66% after the rainy season.

Total Annual Groundwater Recharge has Increased Substantially by 15 BCM

As per the Dynamic Ground Water Resource Assessment Report of the Country for the Year 2024, released by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti and assessed by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) :

- Total annual groundwater (GW) recharge in the country has been assessed as 446·90 billion cubic meters (BCM).
- Annual extractable ground water resource has been assessed as 406·19 BCM.
- The annual groundwater extraction for all uses is 245·64 BCM.
- The average stage of groundwater extraction stands at 60·47%.
- As compared to 2017, total Annual GW Recharge has increased (15 BCM) substantially and Extraction has declined (3 BCM) in 2024.
- With respect to the year 2017, there is an increase of 11·36 BCM in recharge from Tanks, Ponds & WCS, from 13·98 BCM in 2017 to 25·34 BCM in 2024.

Categorization of Assessment Units	Percentage
Safe	73·4%
Semi-critical	10·5%
Critical	3·05%
Overexploited	11·1%
Saline	1·8%

- Increase in ground water recharge has been mainly due to increase in recharge from water bodies/tanks & water conservation structures.
- There has been overall decrease in percentage of over-exploited, Critical and Semi-Critical units.

Union Home Minister Launched Bharatpol Portal

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, launched the BHARATPOL portal developed by CBI on January 7, 2025, at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

Key Features :

- 5 key modules of Bharatpol—Connect, Interpol Notices, References, Broadcast and Resources—provide a technological platform to support all our law enforcement agencies.
- It will expedite responses to domestic and international requests for real-time data sharing, including the issuance of Red Corner Notices and other alerts through a global network.
- Real Time Interface, Bharatpol's key feature, will enable seamless and effective communication among agencies to enhance crime control measures.
- Access to 19 types of INTERPOL databases will help to analyze data, develop crime prevention strategies, and apprehend criminals more effectively.

- **Connect :** All Law enforcement agencies will function as an extension of Interpol's National Central Bureau (NCB-New Delhi) *i.e.*, CBI.
- **Notices** : It will ensure quick, secure, and structured transmission of requests for Interpol notices, enabling a scientific mechanism to swiftly locate criminals from India and across the globe, within India.
- **References :** Interpol References from 195 countries will make it much simpler to seek and provide international assistance for investigations abroad.
- **Broadcast** : Requests for assistance from 195 countries will now be immediately available.
- **Resource** : To facilitate the exchange and management of documents and capacity-building initiatives.

Advantages

- Criminals committing crimes in India and fleeing to other countries can be brought within the ambit of justice.
- It will empower Indian law enforcement agencies to bring fugitives to justice, under Trial in Absentia in the three new criminal laws.
- It will address emerging challenges in cybercrime with greater speed and efficiency.
- It will enable cooperation with 195 countries in combating crimes related with drugs, weapons, human trafficking and other cross-border offenses.

CBI Doesn't Need State Consent for FIR Against Centre Officials : Supreme Court

On January 2, 2025, the Supreme Court held that CBI does not require the sanction of a State government to register a case under a Central legislation like the Prevention of Corruption Act against a Central government employee working within the territory of the state concerned.

The judgement set aside the 2023 judgement of the Andhra Pradesh High Court in which it had quashed the First Information Report (FIR) against two Central Government employees which were registered at Hyderabad in Telangana. The High Court had held that that after the A.P. Reorganisation Act came into force on June 2, 2014, there was no power vested with the CBI in Telangana to conduct investigation thereon, as general consent was given only by Andhra Pradesh.

The Supreme Court in its judgement held that laws made by Andhra Pradesh before bifurcation would be in force in Telangana (new State formed post bifurcation) unless altered or repealed or amended by it, in accordance with law.

The court also held that general consent granted by a state under the DSPE Act was sufficient for the CBI investigations involving central offences and State-specific formalities, such as a fresh consent, was not required.

Section 6 in the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946 (DSPE Act, 1946)

It deals with the consent of State Government required by CBI to exercise it power in a State.

When a State gives general consent, CBI does not require fresh permission every time it enters that state for investi-gation. If general consent has not been given by the State, CBI requires consent on a case-by-case basis and cannot act before the consent is given. In such cases, CBI will not have power of police personnel while entering the state. Several states which have withdrawn the general consent in recent pasts are Karnataka, Punjab, Jharkhand, Kerala, West Bengal, Telangana, Meghalaya, and Tamil Nadu.

UGC's New Draft Rules on Appointments of Vice-Chancellors

The UGC (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment and Promotion of Teachers and Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) Regulations, 2025, stipulates that the Search-cum-Selection Committee (SSC) for appointing Vice-Chancellors (VC) will consist of nominees of the Chancellor (Governor), the UGC Chairman and the university's apex body (Senate/Syndicate/Executive Council). The Chancellor's nominee will be the chairperson of the committee.

Individuals at senior levels in industry, public administration, public policy, or public sector undertakings, with a proven record of significant academic or scholarly contributions shall be eligible for appointment as VC. It will be applicable to the Central, State, private and deemed universities.

Major Concerns

- Earlier, the state government used to constitute a search committee comprising nominees from the government, university concerned and UGC. Under new draft rules, Chancellor (Governor) will set-up the Search-cum-Selection Committee. It undermines the autonomy of the State government.
- UGC Regulations are subordinate legislations, which cannot override State University Acts.
- Making non-academics eligible for post of Vice Chancellors may create the disconnect between the VC and academic community.
- In a diverse country like India, known for its linguistic, cultural, and regional differences, a one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective.

Way Ahead

- Education is in the Concurrent List of the VII Schedule of the Constitution. Hence, both the Centre and State governments should work together for improving quality of higher education.
- State governments should have a greater role in governing State-run higher education institutions to better address local needs and contexts.
- A model similar to the system in the US can be followed, where State governments manage day-to-day operations, while the federal government provides support through funding and policy recommendations.

Shri Om Prakash Birla Inaugurated the Panchayat Se Parliament 2·0

The Parliamentary Research and Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE) of Lok Sabha Secretariat in collaboration with National Commission for Women and Ministry of Tribal Affairs, organized the 'Panchayat Se Parliament 2·0' on 6th January, 2025 at the Central Hall, Parliament of India. Around 500 elected women representatives from Scheduled Tribes in the Three-Tier Panchayati Raj Institutions across 24 States participated to gain a deeper understanding of constitutional and democratic values. Two interactive workshops and sessions were organized : Constitutional Provisions related to Women with special emphasis on 73rd Amendment the PESA Act; Schemes and Programmes of Central Government to address Tribal issues.

Shri Om Prakash Birla, the Speaker of Lok Sabha, interacted with them through Sansad Bhashini—an AI tool used for translating speeches into 6 Indian languages—Gujarati, Marathi, Odia, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. He urged them to adopt Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning and innovation to make their constituencies more people oriented. He highlighted that Bhagwan Birsa Munda's struggle went beyond the preservation of forests and land, aiming at protecting the dignity and self-respect of tribal communities. He urged the participants to draw inspiration from Bhagwan Birsa Munda's life and legacy.

Union Cabinet Approved to Set-up the 8th Central Pay Commission

On January 16, 2025, the Union Cabinet approved the establishment of the Eight Central Pay Commission, to revise salaries of about 50 lakh employees and allowances of 65 lakh pensioners of the Union government, including serving and retired defence personnel. The Commission will be composed of a chairman and two members.

Generally, every 10 years, the Central government implements a pay commission to revise employee remuneration. Since 1947, seven Pay Commissions have been constituted, with the last one constituted in 2014 and implemented on January 1, 2016. As the 7th Pay Commission's term concludes in December 2025, initiating the process now ensures sufficient time to receive and review recommendations before its completion.

Pay commissions consult with Central and State governments, along with other stakeholders, before recommending salary structures, benefits, and allowances for government employees. Their recommendations are often adopted by state-owned organisations. It also suggests formula for revising dearness allowance and dearness relief for offsetting the impact of inflation.

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World

This Month

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- *Pakistan's Gwadar Airport Entered into Operation*
- *India Summons Bangladesh Envoy, Defends Fencework*
- *US Removes Export Controls for Three Indian Nuclear Entities*
- *China's Mega Dam Project in Tibet*
- *Finland-Estonia Cable Damage : NATO to Increase Baltic Sea Patrols*
- *Gaza Ceasefire Agreement Became Effective from January 19, 2025*
- *India Voted in Favour in UNGA for Ending Israeli Occupation in Palestine*
- *UNGA Resolution 'Demand for Ceasefire in Gaza' Adopted*
- *QUAD Foreign Ministers' Meeting 2025*
- *Nine Navies Held Joint Drills in Strategic Straits of the Indian and the Pacific Oceans*
- *Los Angeles Wildlife : Three Factors Driving It*

Donald Trump Took Oath as the 47th President of USA

Donald Trump was sworn in as the 47th President of the United States on January 20, 2025. The swearing-in ceremony was held indoors at the Capitol Rotunda in the US Capitol, Washington DC. J.D. Vance took the oath of office as Vice President of the United States.

India was represented by S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister. Chinese Vice President Han Zheng, Foreign Affairs Ministers of Japan and Australia, all the living former US Presidents—Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama—attended the swearing-in ceremony.

After swearing-in as US President, he signed several executive orders, revoking 78 of Biden administration decisions, pardoning 1,500 defendants charged in the Capitol riot of January 6, 2021, allowing short-form video app TikTok to operate for 75 more days in the United States and officially renamed the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America.

He pulled US out of the Paris Climate Treaty, and also issued order for withdrawal of the USA from WHO. He signed executive orders declaring illegal immigration at the US-Mexico border a national emergency, designating criminal cartels as terrorist organizations.

He also signed an executive order ending birthright citizenship for children whose parents lack legal status. Birthplace-based citizenship, also called *jus soli*, grants unrestricted citizenship based on place of birth. It is guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution.

Panama rejected Trump's vow to take back Panama Canal which was mainly built by USA between 1904 and 1914. However, after years of protest, former US President Jimmy Carter signed a treaty with Panama in 1977 to gradually give back control and Panama took full control of the canal in 1999. The 82 km long Panama Canal accounts for an estimated 2·5 per cent of global sea trade and 40 per cent of all US container traffic passing through it between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Though, China does not control the canal, a Hong Kong-based corporation, CK Hutchison Holdings has operated two of the canal's ports, located on the Caribbean and Pacific entrances, since 1997.

Interpol's First 'Silver Notice' for Targeting Criminal Assets

Interpol published its first ever 'Silver Notice' to help trace and recover criminal assets, combat transnational organized crime and enhance international police cooperation. The inaugural Silver Notice was issued at the request of investigators from the *Guardia di Finanza* in Palermo in Sicily in Italy.

Details of the Silver Notice

- In 2023, Interpol 91st General Assembly, held in Vienna, Austria, outlined the development and implementation of the Silver Notice and Diffusion pilot.
- The pilot phase includes 52 countries and territories, which will run at least until November 2025. Participating countries in pilot can collectively request up to 500 Silver Notices and Silver Diffusions.
- It enables member countries to request information on assets linked to a person's criminal activities such as fraud, corruption, drug trafficking, environmental crime and other serious offenses.

- Countries can use such information as a basis for bilateral engagement, including bilateral requests for seizure, confiscation or recovery of assets, subject to national laws.
- Interpol's General Secretariat will review every Silver Notice and Diffusion, ensuring compliance with its rules, including Article 3 of Interpol's Constitution prohibiting it to undertake any intervention or activities of a political, military, religious or racial character.

Significance

- Silver Notices and Diffusion will facilitate exchange of information in cross-border asset recovery investigations by targeting financial gains and assets of criminal networks, 99% of which is uncovered, through international cooperation.



Interpol : Brief Background

- It was established as the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC) in Vienna in 1923, with Dr. Johannes Schober as its President from 1923-32. Oskar Dressler served as its first Secretary-General, a post created in 1932, from 1932-1946. The first Red Notice was issued in 1947.
- It was renamed as the International Criminal Police Organisation (ICPO-Interpol) in 1956, and headquarter shifted to Lyon, France in 1989. Paris (1946-1966) and Saint Cloud (1966-1989) also served as the headquarters of Interpol.
- Ahmed Naser Al-Raisi is the incumbent President and Valdecy Urquiza is the incumbent Secretary-General. India had hosted the 90th General Assembly of Interpol in October 2022.

Interpol Notices

- Interpol's colour-coded notices are issued by the General Secretariat at the request of a member country's Interpol National Central Bureau, International Criminal Tribunals and the International Criminal Court, the United Nations. Notices are not available publicly, except in exceptional circumstances for alerting or seeking help from public. All UN notices are public.
- Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in India is the National Central Bureau for Interpol. Bharatpol, developed by CBI, aims to facilitate every agency and police force in India to seamlessly connect with Interpol, thereby expediting investigations.

The United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), also called the Palermo Convention, is the main international instrument in the fight against transnational organized crime. It has three protocols for preventing trafficking of women and children, preventing smuggling of migrants and preventing Illicit manufacturing, trafficking in Firearms.

State Visit of President of Singapore to India : Commemorated 60th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations

The official visit of the President of the Republic of Singapore, Tharman Shanmugaratnam, from January 14-18, 2025, marked the 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Singapore. To commemorate the event, a joint logo was unveiled in New Delhi on January 16, 2025.

The joint logo incorporates colours from the Indian and Singaporean National flags, the Lotus (National flower of India) & Orchid (National flower of Singapore), and the number 60 with the logo reading "India Singapore 60 years of diplomatic relations".



India-Singapore Bilateral Relationship : Core Features

- India was one of the first countries to recognize Singapore in 1965.
- India-Singapore relations were elevated to Strategic Partnership in 2015, and elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in September 2024.
- Singapore is a key pillar of India's Act East Policy and vision of the Indo-Pacific.
- Cooperation between two countries have expanded in the fields of advanced manufacturing, connectivity, digitalisation, healthcare & medicine, sustainability and education & skills development.
- The first and second India-Singapore Ministerial Conference, held in 2022 and 2024, prioritized certain areas of co-operation such as digital economy, health and skill development and semiconductor ecosystem development.

Visit to Odisha : Focus on 'Purvodaya' Plan

- Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam's visit to Odisha from January 17-18, 2025, saw the signing of the 8 MoUs, including a green hydrogen production facility of 7·2 lakh metric tonnes per year.
- MoUs were also signed for skill development in the semiconductor sector, for a green hydrogen corridor

and for developing Petro Chemical and Petroleum Investment Region (PCPIR). An MoU seeking to extend cooperation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), particularly for semiconductor industry was also signed.

- Another MoU was signed between Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development (IDCO) and Sembcorp, Singapore for development of industrial parks. For the development of a new city, an agreement was inked between the Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) and Surbana Jurong, Singapore.
- Nanyang Technological University (NTU) of Singapore, GRIDCO, and IIT Bhubaneshwar signed an agreement for promoting research in renewable energy technologies and energy storage system.
- The Electronics and IT Department of Odisha signed a MoU with the Global Finance and Technology Network to establish Global Competency Center in Odisha.
- He also visited the state-of-the-art Sapigen Biologix (subsidiary of Bharat Biotech) in Bhubaneshwar, Odisha. He also visited the World Skill Centre, set up by Singapore's Institute of Technical Education and Education Services (ITEES) with funding from the Asian Development Bank.

Announced in the Union Budget 2024-25, Purvodaya Plan seeks all-round development of five states in the eastern region, including Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. It covers human resource development, infrastructure, and generation of economic opportunities.

India Hands Over Defence Stores and Equipments to Maldives

During the official visit of the Maldives' Defence Minister Mohammed Ghassan Maumoon to India from January 8 to 10, 2025, India handed over the defence equipment and stores to the Maldives, on the request of the Maldivian Government.

Key Highlights of the Visit :

- India urged Maldives to take forward the 'Ektha' harbour project at Uthuru Thila Falhu (UTF) atoll. It is the biggest Indian grant-in-aid projects in the Maldives, which was announced in 2021.
- Both the countries discussed extending the lease of aviation platforms–two Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) expiring in 2025. It was gifted by India for medical evacuation purposes.
- Both the countries also discussed the implication of frequent docking of foreign vessels, including Chinese vessels.
- Maldives' Defence Minister also visited Goa and Mumbai to further strengthen ties between two countries.

India and Maldives : The Maldives occupies a special place in India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy, which aims to bring stability and prosperity in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), thus contributing to India's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR). During the October 2024 visit of Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu to India, both sides had agreed on training and capacity-building of the Maldives National Defence Force. During the official visit of Dr. Abdulla Khaleel, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives, to India from January 2-4, 2025, both countries signed a MoU for implementing High Impact Community Development Projects (Phase-III) in Maldives, through grant assistance by India.

Foreign Secretary Vivek Misri's Met with the Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan

On January 8, 2025, India's Foreign Secretary, Vivek Misri, had a meeting with the Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, in Dubai. The two sides discussed various issues pertaining to bilateral relations as well as regional developments.

Earlier, in November 2024, The Taliban administration of Afghanistan had appointed Ikramuddin Kamil, as a new representative at the Afghanistan Consulate General in Mumbai, to facilitate consular services and represent the interests of Afghanistan in India.

Key Highlights of the Visit :

- India would consider engaging in development projects in the near future, in addition to the ongoing humanitarian assistance programme.
- India will provide further material support to Afghanistan for strengthening health sector and for the rehabilitation of refugees.
- The two sides also discussed strengthening of sports cooperation, especially cricket.
- It was also agreed to promote the use of Chabahar port in Iran for supporting trade and commercial activities, including for the purpose of humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan.

India and Afghanistan Since 2021

- Though, India has not recognized the Taliban Government in Afghanistan, which came to power in 2021, but it has maintained a 'technical team' at its Embassy in Kabul since 2022, for facilitating trade and humanitarian aid. Consular services at the Afghan missions in New Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai facilitates Afghan students and medical tourists visiting India.
- India has so far dispatched assistance consisting of 50,000 MTs of wheat, 300 tons of medicines, 27 tons of earthquake relief aid, 40,000 litres of pesticides, 100 million polio doses, 1·5 million doses of COVID Vaccine, 11,000 units of hygiene kits for the drug de-addiction programme, 500 units of winter clothing and 1·2 tonnes of stationery kits, etc.

In 2023, China became the first country to name a new ambassador to Afghanistan since the Taliban retook power in Afghanistan in 2021. On January 30, 2024, China became the first country to accept Taliban appointed ambassador in Beijing.

WORLD 2024

JANUARY

1 Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the UAE officially join BRICS, expanding the group's global influence

1 A magnitude 7.6 earthquake strikes Japan, resulting in close to 500 deaths and infrastructure damage



14 Queen Margrethe II of Denmark abdicates after 52 years of rule. Her son, Crown Prince Frederik becomes King





25 Former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan is sentenced to prison on corruption charges, sparking nationwide protests

FEBRUARY

3 Chile declares a state of emergency as wildfires ravage central regions

4 Taylor Swift sets a record with her fourth "Album of the Year" Grammy for *Midnights*



8 Pakistan's election sees Shehbaz Sharif reclaim the PM's office with a coalition majority

16 Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, 47, dies in prison under suspicious circumstances



MARCH

4 France becomes the first country to include access to abortion in its constitution

7 Sweden becomes NATO's 32nd member, expanding the alliance's presence in Northern Europe

17 Vladimir Putin wins the Russian presidential election for a fifth term



APRIL

8 A total solar eclipse mesmerises millions across North America



14 Iran launches scores of missiles at Israeli positions, escalating tensions in the Middle East

MAY

29 South Africa's ANC party loses its parliamentary majority for the first time since the end of apartheid, leading to a coalition govt.

30 Donald Trump becomes the first former U.S. President to be convicted on 34 felony counts of falsifying business records, tied to hush money payments to a porn star

JUNE



9 Narendra Modi sworn in for a third consecutive term as India's PM after the BJP-led NDA wins in the Lok Sabha elections



12 China's Chang'e mission collects its first lunar samples, marking a significant milestone in space exploration



24 Claudia Sheinbaum becomes Mexico's first female president



29 India wins the ICC T20 World Cup, defeating South Africa in a thrilling final

30 WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is released and returns to Australia



JULY

4 Labour wins a landslide victory in the UK election, ending 14 years of Conservative rule, with Keir Starmer replacing Rishi Sunak as PM

13 Former U.S. President Donald Trump survives an assassination attempt at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania

21 U.S. President Joe Biden withdraws from the presidential race, endorsing Vice President Kamala Harris



AUGUST

5 Bangladeshi PM Sheikh Hasina resigns amid protests and flees to India, ending her 15-year rule





15 Paetongtarn Shinawatra, 37, becomes Thailand's youngest PM after Srettha Thavisin's dismissal by the Constitutional Court

15 A 2,492-carat diamond, the largest in over a century, is discovered in a Botswana mine



SEPTEMBER



10 Super Typhoon Yagi devastates Southeast Asia, causing over 800 fatalities, with Vietnam and Myanmar hardest hit



23 Israeli airstrikes in Lebanon kill about 500 people, marking the deadliest day in the Israel-Hezbollah conflict in nearly two decades



26 Hurricane Helene hits Florida, leaving 228 dead across the Southeast U.S.

26 Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah is killed in an Israeli airstrike on Beirut, intensifying regional tensions



OCTOBER

13 SpaceX makes history by catching a rocket booster mid-flight using its Mechazilla tower, advancing reusable rocket technology



16 Israeli forces kill Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, the mastermind of the Oct 7, 2023, attacks on Israel that ignited the ongoing conflict



29 Torrential rains cause catastrophic floods in Valencia, Spain, resulting in over 220 deaths

NOVEMBER

5 Donald Trump wins the U.S. presidential election, set to become the first in 132 years to serve non-consecutive terms



19 Ukraine marks 1,000 days of resisting Russia's invasion, a grim milestone in the ongoing conflict serve non-consecutive terms

DECEMBER



7 Notre Dame Cathedral reopens in Paris, five years after the devastating fire



8 Rebel forces overthrow Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, ending his family's 61-year rule as he flees to Russia



25 Azerbaijan Airlines aircraft crashes in Kazakhstan, killing 38, with 29 survivors



27 South Korea's crisis deepens as Acting President Han Duck-soo is impeached after President Yoon Suk Yeol's removal

29 A Jeju Air plane crashes in South Korea, claiming 179 lives and leaving only two survivors

KBK Infographics

Pakistan's Gwadar Airport Entered into Operation

Pakistan's largest international airport, Gwadar International Airport, in Balochistan, entered into operation, with the arrival of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) PK 503 aircraft.

The Gwadar International Airport and the Gwadar deep sea port built in the Balochistan province under the USD 42 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project (CPEC), under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), are seen as important for boosting trade and regional connectivity by both countries. China and Pakistan see the port city of Gwadar and its deep-sea port and international airport as a hub of connectivity for the corridor, and an indispensable interchange for a 21st century Silk Route—a crucial link between Central and Eastern Asia, the Middle East, and Gulf countries.

It will also give China access to the shipping lanes of the Arabian Sea through Pakistan.

China officially announced the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013, the vast infrastructure project that China devised to boost trade and connectivity across Asia, Europe and Africa. Two primary components of BRI are : the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. In 2017, the Communist Party of China officially incorporated the advancement of the BRI into its constitution. Launched in 2015, the CPEC is a trade corridor that connects Pakistan's Gwadar port on the Arabian Sea with Kashgar, a city in China's western Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The project includes the construction of airports, railways, highways and pipelines, among other types of trade and energy infrastructure. India opposes the CPEC as the corridor passes through Gilgit-Baltistan, a POK territory.

India Summons Bangladesh Envoy, Defends Fencework

On January 13, 2025, the Ministry of External Affairs summoned the Acting High Commissioner of Bangladesh, Md. Nural Islam, over security measures at the border, including on fencing.

Incidents of Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) obstructing the Border Security Force's attempt to install fencing on the international boundary in Malda, recently and Cooch Behar in West Bengal in August 2024, has come into light. Earlier, Bangladesh had summoned Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Pranay Verma, for expressing deep concern over BSF's recent activities on India-Bangladesh border.

- According to the 1975 Joint India-Bangladesh Guidelines for Border Authorities guidelines, no defence structure can be constructed within 150 yards from the zero line or the international boundary by either side.
- India doesn't consider wire fencing to be defence structure, but Bangladesh and Pakistan consider them as defence structures.
- According to Bangladesh, constructing single row fencing violates 1975 agreement and causes inconvenience to residents along the international border. It has also objected to BSF's attempt for 'smart fencing' with CCTV and electronic surveillance gadgets.
- According to Ministry of Home Affairs, 3,141 km of India-Bangladesh border have been fenced out of a total of 4,156 km.
- Barbed wire fencing, border lighting, installation of technical devices and cattle fences are measures for securing the border, ensuring a crime-free border by effectively addressing the challenges of cross-border criminal activities, smuggling, movement of criminals and trafficking. About 60 per cent of trans-border crimes take place where there is no fencing and where villages are on the international boundary.

On December 18, 2024, the High Court division of the Bangladesh Supreme Court commuted death penalty of ULFA chief, Paresh Barua. In 2014, he had been sentenced to death in the 'Ten Trucks Arms Haul' case of 2004, in which ten trucks filled with arms and ammunition were apprehended at the State-run jetty of Chittagong Urea Fertilizer Ltd., meant for insurgent groups in the North-East India.

India-Bangladesh Border : In Brief

- India-Bangladesh Border is 4096·70 km running along West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. It is also known as Radcliffe Line.
- Issues related with 6·1 km undemarcated land boundary in Assam, Tripura and West Bengal; exchange of enclaves and adverse possessions remained even after signing of Nehru-Noon Agreement (1958) and Land Boundary Agreement (1974).
- In 2015, a renewed Land Boundary Agreement was signed which facilitated exchange of 111 enclaves to Bangladesh and 51 enclaves to India. The Constitution (One Hundredth Amendment) Act, 2015 ratified the land boundary agreement between India and Bangladesh.
- Riverine terrains, shifting river courses, dense forests make border management difficult and creates easy access points for infiltrators and smugglers.
- Between August and December 2024, 1,956 Bangladeshi nationals were apprehended by BSF troops, which was 50% of the entire year.

US Removes Export Controls for Three Indian Nuclear Entities

On January 15, 2024, the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) delisted three Indian nuclear entities from the US Commerce Department's 'Entity List' export controls database. The three Indian Government entities are :

- Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Trombay, Maharashtra.
- Indira Gandhi Atomic Research Centre, Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu.
- Indian Rare Earths Limited (IREL), Mumbai.

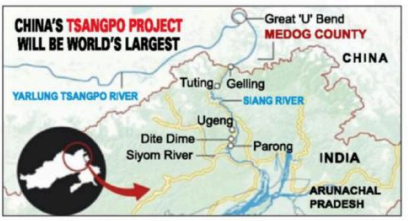
Significance of Removal of Indian Entities

- Reducing barriers to advanced energy cooperation between two countries.
- Pursuing joint research and development and science and technology cooperation for achieving energy security needs and goals.
- Closer cooperation between two countries for securing more resilient critical mineral for clean energy supply chains.
- It will bolster civil nuclear cooperation by facilitating deeper collaboration between nuclear entities of both countries, including private sectors, scientists and technologists. It will facilitate Indian entities to access cutting edge US research and development.
- It will help in operationalizing the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement, 2008.

The Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement was signed on October 2, 2008. It ended technology denial regimes against India, and ending India's nuclear isolation. Since, the agreement is related with Section 123 of the US Atomic Energy Act, 1954, the agreement is popularly known as 123 Agreement. For India, the agreement facilitated NSG (Nuclear Supplier Group) waiver for India, and placing its civilian nuclear facilities under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. Following the NSG waiver, India signed nuclear cooperation agreement and specific agreements for import of Uranium with several countries. India's indigenous three stage nuclear programme does not get affected by this agreement, and India is not under obligation to sign CTBT or FMCT.

China's Mega Dam Project in Tibet

On December 25, 2024, China approved the construction of mega hydropower project across Yarlung Zangbo (or Tsangpo) in the Great Bend Region of the Himalaya in Tibet. It has raised concerns in the lower riparian states such as India, Bangladesh and Bhutan.



About the Project

- In 2020, the project was included in the 14th Five Year Plan (2021-25) of China.
- It is to be built across Yarlung Tsnagpo river at the Great Bend Region of the Himalayas in the Medog county in the Tibetan Autonomous Region.
- The 60 GW mega hydropower project will produce thrice the electricity generated from the Three Gorges Dam (currently, the world's largest dam) built on Yangtze river in China.
- Yarlung Tsangpo's steep descent from high mountains with remarkable flow rate makes it ideal for mega hydroelectricity projects.
- Through this project, China seeks to make transition from conventional sources of energy to cleaner energy alternatives and achieve net carbon neutrality by 2060.

River Gone Rogue

'Water Kingdom : A Secret History of China' by Philip Ball describes that Yarlung Tsangpo is described as a 'river gone rogue' in Chinese history as it turns sharply to the south at the Great Bend to enter India, while other major rivers in China runs from west to east. China seeks to correct this geographical anomaly by building mega dam. China has already built Zangmu Dam (510 MW) on Yarlung Tsangpo river in Tibet, which became fully operational in 2015.

Impacts of the Project

- The Great Bend of the Himalayas is located along an active tectonic plate boundary, making it prone to earthquakes and earthquake-induced landslides. For example, the 1950 Medog Earthquake, with epicentre in Medog, led to unending cycle of annual floods in downstream Assam and Bangladesh.
- The River System of Tibet have important role in Earth's cryosphere, precipitation pathways such as monsoon and major climate systems. Building dams will aggravate the climate change-induced disasters in upper reaches of the Himalayas. For example, Chungthang Dam collapse in Sikkim in October 2023, caused widespread devastation in downstream areas.
- Territorializing river systems breaks natural life cycles of the river, affecting river morphology, biodiversity, agro-pastoral communities dependent on river system, biodiversity, biota of the rivers. It also has negative consequences on surface water levels, overall monsoon patterns, and groundwater system of the river basin.

Geopolitics of Tibetan River System

- Mega-dams on rivers systems are seen as important symbol of exercising sovereignty and nation-state's control over natural features, contributing to an intense geopolitical power projection in the river basin.
- China being the upper riparian state has complete control over the Tibetan River systems, capable of deploying unilateral hydropower projects, affecting the lower riparian states.
- China has approved its biggest hydropower project at the Great Bend while India has announced its largest dam project, Upper Siang HEP in Arunachal Pradesh. Bhutan has been planning and building several medium to small dams.
- The riparian countries of the Brahmaputra river basin have not signed the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses (adopted in 1997 and came into force in 2014), making first user-rights on river systems not enforceable.

- India-China land disputes aggravates the securitization of Brahmaputra River system.

Yarlung Tsangpo is a transboundary Himalayan River basin shared by China, Bhutan, India and Bangladesh. From Tibet, it enters Arunachal Pradesh, where it is known as the Siang. In Assam, it is joined by tributaries such as Dibang and Lohit, and is called the Brahmaputra. It enters Bangladesh, and flows as Jamuna after meeting Teesta, and finally joins Meghna, and drains in to the Bay of Bengal.

Shortcomings in Coordination Mechanism

- India and China do not have a comprehensive bilateral treaty to govern shared transboundary rivers. They are not the signatory of the UN Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses (1997). MoUs on Sutlej and Brahmaputra have expired in 2023.
- The 14th meeting of the Expert Level Mechanism, established in 2006, was held in 2023 for sharing hydrological data on transboundary rivers and discussing outstanding issues. It has not been able to resolve any of the major disputes between the two countries.

On December 27, 2024, Chinese news agency Xinhua reported the creation of two new counties-He'an County and Hekang County in the Hotan Prefecture, in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. The Hotan Prefecture, also known as Khotan in India, contains parts of Aksai Chin that India accuses China of occupying illegally and forcibly. India has lodged a strong protest with China over the creation of two counties, which includes areas in Ladakh.

Finland-Estonia Cable Damage : NATO to Increase Baltic Sea Patrols

On December 25, 2024, the Eastlink 2 power cable, under the Baltic Sea, connecting Finland and Estonia was damaged. Four telecommunication cables were also damaged. The Eastlink 2 and Eastlink 1 cables transfer electricity from Finland to Estonia across the Gulf of Finland.

According to Finnish authorities, Eagle S, sailing under Cook Islands' flag and allegedly belonging to Russia's 'shadow fleet' have caused the damage.

Tensions Under the Baltic Sea : In November 2024, two data cables, one running between Finland and Germany and another between Lithuania and Sweden, were severed allegedly by a Chinese cargo ship, the Yi Peng 3. In October 2023, a gas pipeline connecting Estonia and Finland was damaged by a Hong Kong-flagged ship's anchor. Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2, built by Russia's Gazprom to supply natural gas to Germany, were damaged on Sept. 26, 2022.

In all these three sabotages, commercial vessels sailing from Russian ports, dragged their anchors on the seabed, which severed undersea cables and pipelines, which are critical for energy security and promoting trade among the European countries, by reducing its dependence on Russia.

Baltic Sea : A Geopolitical Hotspot

- Post-Cold War tensions began in the region with the accession of three Baltic states—Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to NATO. It has been further aggravated by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and the accession of Sweden and Finland to NATO in 2024.
- Baltic Sea is surrounded by 8 NATO members and Russia's Baltic Sea fleet is located in Kaliningrad enclave.
- Moreover, the sea has shallow and narrow basins, with three choke points, making it susceptible of sabotages of undersea cables which are part of 'hybrid warfare.'
- The 'dark ship' activity has witnessed a rise since the Western countries have imposed sanctions on Russia after its 2022 invasion of Ukraine. A dark ship circumvents sanctions by turning off its signal system which transmits its position coordinates.

NATO's Response : On January 14, 2025, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Secretary General, Mark Rutte co-hosted a Summit of Baltic Sea Allies, along with the Finland's President Alexander Stubb and Estonia's PM Kristen Michal of Estonia. NATO launched 'Baltic Sentry' to enhance it's military presence in the Baltic Sea to protect critical infrastructure. It will work within the Critical Undersea Infrastructure Network, which includes industry, to explore further ways to protect infrastructure and improve resilience of underwater assets.

On January 1, 2025, Russian gas supplies to Europe through Ukraine via Urengoy-Pomary-Uzhgorod Pipeline, stopped after the Ukraine's state-owned energy company, Naftogaz, refused to renew the gas transit deal, which was signed in 2020 for five years, amid the ongoing war between both the countries. Since the Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the European Union has significantly reduced imports of gas from Russia—40% in 2021 to 10% in 2023. However, Austria and Slovakia continued to import significant amount of Russian gas. Moldova, a non-EU member, has already declared 60-day state of emergency in the energy sector since mid-December. Russia can still supply gas to Hungary, Turkey and Serbia through the TurkStream pipeline across the Black Sea.

Gaza Ceasefire Agreement Became Effective from January 19, 2025

The first six-week phase of the Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal, mediated by USA, Qatar and Egypt, went into effect from January 19, 2025. Qatar presented a ceasefire plan for ending the conflict which has killed more than 46,000 people in Gaza and displacing 1·9 million people *i.e.*, 9 in 10 people displaced, since October 7, 2023. It was approved by Israeli Government on January 18, 2025.

Key Highlights of the Three-phase Ceasefire Plan

First Phase :

- **Hostage Releases :** 33 Israeli hostages would be set free from Gaza—three living female hostages will be

returned on Day 1, four on Day 7 and the remaining 26 over the following five weeks. During each exchange, Palestinian prisoners will be released by Israel after hostages have arrived safely. All women and children under 19 from Gaza held by Israel will be freed. All Palestinian prisoners who were convicted of deadly attacks will be exiled to Gaza or abroad some for three years and others permanently and barred from returning to Israel or the West Bank. The remaining hostages in Gaza, including male soldiers, are to be released in a second phase to be negotiated during the first.

- **Phased Withdrawal :** Israel will withdraw its forces from Gaza's population centres to areas no more than 700 metres inside Gaza's border with Israel. Withdraw from the Netzarim corridor in central Gaza will take place in stages. Israeli forces will reduce their presence in the Philadelphi Corridor, and then withdraw completely no later than the 50th day. Phased withdrawal will allow displaced Palestinians to return to their homes, including in Gaza City and northern Gaza.
- **Humanitarian Aid :** Gaza should also see a surge in food, medical supplies and other humanitarian aid, which is in the grip of humanitarian crisis.

Second Phase : Hamas will release all the remaining living captives, mostly male soldiers, in return for the freeing of more Palestinians held in the Israel. In addition, Israel would initiate its "complete withdrawal" from Gaza.

Third Phase : The bodies of the remaining captives handed over in return for a three to five year reconstruction plan to be conducted under international supervision. There is currently no agreement over who will administer Gaza beyond the ceasefire. The United States has pressed for a reformed version of the Palestinian Authority to do so.

India Voted in Favour in UNGA for Ending Israeli Occupation in Palestine

On December 3, 2024, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the resolution 'Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine' with 157 members voting in favour, including India. It was tabled by Senegal. Argentina, Hungary, Israel, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea and the United States voted against it. Cameroon, Czechia, Ecuador, Georgia, Paraguay, Ukraine and Uruguay abstained from voting.

Features of the Resolution

- Withdrawal of Israel from Palestinian territory, including the East Jerusalem, which had been occupied by Israel since the Six Day War (1967).
- Resolution supported 'Two-State Solution' of Israel and Palestine based on pre-1967 borders, with Gaza Strip as part of the Palestinian territory.
- Israel to comply strictly with its obligations under international law, including as reflected in the advisory opinion of the International Court of 19 July, 2024.
- It rejected any attempt at demographic or territorial change in the Gaza Strip, including any actions that reduce the territory of Gaza.

The ICJ in July 2024 had declared Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory, encompassing the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, as unlawful under international law and emphasised that Israel's actions amount to annexation.

Resolution on Syrian Golan : The UN General Assembly's resolution demanding Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of June 1967. It was adopted with 97 votes in favour, 64 abstentions, and 8 votes against, including by Australia, Canada, Israel, the United Kingdom and the United States. India voted in the favour of the resolution.

It declared that the Israeli decision of December 1981 to impose its laws, Jurisdiction, and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan as 'null and void'.

During the Six Day War (1967), Israel captured the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt and the Golan Heights from Syria. Hence, since 1967, Israel controls the whole historical Palestine.

UNGA Resolution 'Demand for Ceasefire in Gaza' Adopted

On December 12, 2024, India was among the 158 countries who voted in favour of UNGA resolution 'Demand for ceasefire in Gaza', introduced by Indonesia. Nine countries including USA and Israel voted against it, whereas, 13 countries abstained from voting. Another resolution, adopted by 159 votes in favour, deplored Israeli laws banning UNRWA activities in Palestine.

Key Features of the Resolution :

- Immediate, unconditional and permanent ceasefire, to be respected by all parties.
- Immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, the exchange of Palestinian prisoners, the return of the remains of hostages who have been killed, the return of Palestinian civilians to their homes.
- Full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.
- Facilitation of full, rapid, safe and unhindered entry of humanitarian assistance, under the coordination of the United Nations, throughout the Gaza Strip.
- Parties to fully comply with international law, including international humanitarian law, notably with regard to the protection of civilians, especially women and children.

Two-State Solution : India Supports State of Palestine

In 1947, the United Nations agreed a plan partitioning Palestine into Arab and Jewish states with international rule over Jerusalem. The Partition plan was adopted in the UN General Assembly (Resolution 181), but it never made it to the UN Security Council (UNSC). The State of Israel was declared on May 14, 1948, in absence of UNSC decision. India supports a negotiated two State solution, and Palestine's membership of the UN.

QUAD Foreign Ministers' Meeting 2025

Union Minister of External Affairs attended the QUAD Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Washington DC, USA. It was held on January 21, 2025 after the inauguration of the new US administration under Donald Trump's presidency.

The meeting reaffirmed the QUAD's commitment toward the realization of a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' (FOIP) and to further strengthen the cooperation. Ministers strongly opposed the unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force including in the East and South China Seas. They concurred on holding regular foreign ministers' meetings and preparing for the leaders' meeting to be hosted by India in 2025. Iwaya Takeshi, Japanese Foreign Minister, expressed serious concerns over North Korea's nuclear and missile activities.

Newly-appointed US Secretary of State Marco Rubio raised the issue of 'irregular immigration' in his very first meeting with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar. In 2023-24, the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) deported over 1,100 Indian nationals as part of broader efforts targeting unauthorised migrants. As of November 2024, 17,940 Indians are under 'final removal orders' and 2,467 are in detention centre of the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Nine Navies Held Joint Drills in Strategic Straits of the Indian and the Pacific Oceans

Navies of nine Indo-Pacific countries took part in the 4th edition of multilateral exercise, La Perouse, hosted by France, in the strategic straits of Malacca, Sunda, and Lombok, between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, from January 16 to 24, 2025. It was led by the French Carrier Strike Group (CSG) headed by the carrier Charles de Gaulle.

The three straits are critical choke points providing entry and exit into the Indian Ocean Region. They have gained strategic focus with the increasing forays by the Chinese Navy.

Australia, Canada, France, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, UK and the US were part of the exercise. INS Mumbai, indigenously designed and built guided missile destroyer, participated in the exercise.

The exercise aims to develop common Maritime Situational Awareness by enhancing the cooperation in the field of maritime surveillance, maritime interdiction operations and air operations along with the conduct of progressive training and information sharing, including VBSS (Visit, Board, Search and Seizure) operations.

Los Angeles Wildfire : Three Factors Driving It

Two historic fires—the Palisades and Eaton fires—along with several smaller fires in the Southern California have burned more than 35,000 acres, destroying neighbourhoods near Los Angeles and rendering thousands of Californians homeless. Some of the wildfires still burning are the Palisades fire, the Eaton fire, Sunset, Hurst, and Lidia fires. These wildfires are raging in winter, typically not the wildfire season. Though, power cables blowing in the wind are likely cause but three important factors driving it are :

- Exceptionally dry winter of 2024 has dried up the vegetation which grew during preceding wet winters of 2022 and 2023, leading to the wildfires.
- Santa Ana Winds, which are common in California, have been exceptionally stronger in 2024 winter, leading to fire spreading rapidly in large area.
- Increasing global temperatures has elongated the annual burning season with yearly peak shifting to July from August. Warmer springs and summer intensify the dry season and adding moisture stress on vegetation.





Updates National and International

ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

CCRUM — Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine
CERC — Central Electricity Regulatory Commission
DARPG — Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances
DPIIT — Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
NICDC — National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation
NMHC — National Maritime Heritage Complex

APPOINTMENTS/ELECTIONS

Justice V. Ramasubramanian Appointed as the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)

Justice V. Ramasubramanian, a former Judge of the Supreme Court of India, assumed charge as the 9th Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India on December 30, 2024 for a tenure of three years ending December 2027. Justice (Dr.) Vidyut Ranjan Sarangi also took office as a Member of the Commission on the occasion.



Justice V. Ramasubramanian

The previous NHRC chairman, Justice Arun Mishra, completed his term on June 1, 2024. It had since been functioning under the aegis of Acting Chairperson Vijaya Bharati Sayani. Previous chairpersons of NHRC also include former Chief Justices of India Ranganath Mishra (the first NHRC Chairperson), M.N. Venkatachaliah, J.S. Verma, A.S. Anand, S. Rajendra Babu, K.G. Balakrishnan and H.L. Dattu.

- Born on June 30, 1958, in Mannargudi, Tamil Nadu, Justice Ramasubramanian is a distinguished jurist. He holds a B.Sc. in Chemistry from Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda College, Chennai, and a law degree from Madras Law College.
- Justice Ramasubramanian was appointed as an Additional Judge of the Madras High Court in 2006 and became a permanent judge in 2009.
- In 2016, he was transferred to the High Court of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, continuing his tenure in the Telangana High Court after bifurcation.
- In 2019, Justice V. Ramasubramanian was appointed Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court and later that year became a Judge of the Supreme Court.
- Justice Ramasubramanian retired on June 29, 2023, after authoring 102 judgements, including landmark rulings on the 2016 demonetization policy and circumstantial evidence in bribery cases.
- The NHRC is empowered to investigate allegations of human rights violations, either of its own accord or after receiving a petition from a victim (or someone on their behalf). It may also intervene as a party in ongoing cases concerning human rights violations, make recommendations aimed at protecting human rights and conduct or promote research in related fields.

Manish Singhal Appointed Secretary-General of ASSOCHAM

The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), one of the country's oldest business chambers, has appointed Manish Singhal as its new Secretary General on January 1, 2025. He succeeds Deepak Sood, who stepped down after a five year stint.

- Singhal, an industry leader with over 35 years of experience in Chamber and Corporate India, had earlier worked as Deputy Secretary General of The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- Manish Singhal had also worked with various Indian transnational companies, including Tata Motors, Eicher (Volvo), Tata Auto Comp Systems, Moser Baer India and BEML to name a few.
- ASSOCHAM, established in 1920, plays a crucial role in policy advocacy and strengthening India's economic ecosystem. It represents over 4·5 lakh members, including large corporations and MSMEs, and continues to work toward enhancing the business climate in India.

Bhuvnesh Kumar Appointed as CEO of UIDAI

Bhuvnesh Kumar, an IAS officer of the 1995 batch from the Uttar Pradesh cadre, on January 1, 2025 assumed charge as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). Kumar also continues to be an Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). Kumar as UIDAI CEO succeeds Amit Agrawal who was appointed the Secretary of Department of Pharmaceuticals in December, 2024.



Bhuvnesh Kumar

- Bhuvnesh Kumar is an IAS officer from the 1995 batch of Uttar Pradesh cadre. He is a graduate of National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra.

- UIDAI is a statutory authority under MeitY that is responsible for issuing Aadhaar numbers and maintaining the Central Identities Data Repository (CIDR), the centralised database of demographic and biometric data of people issued the identification number.

Faiz Ahmed Kidwai Appointed DG of DGCA

Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, a 1996-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre was appointed on January 3, 2025 as the Director General of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) after the approval of the Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC). Vikram Dev Dutt, a 1993-batch IAS officer who previously served as DG of DGCA, the aviation regulator from February 28, 2023, stepped down on October 20, 2024 after his appointment as the coal secretary. Since then, Dinesh Chand Sharma, the senior most joint director general of DGCA, has held additional charge.

The ACC has also approved the appointment of Ashutosh Agnihotri, a 1999-batch IAS officer of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, as the Chairman and Managing Director of the Food Corporation of India.

Dr. V. Narayanan Takes Charge as the Chairman of ISRO and Chairman of Space Commission

Dr. V. Narayanan, distinguished Scientist (Apex Grade), assumed the charge of Secretary, Department of Space, Chairman, Space Commission and Chairman, ISRO on January 13, 2025, succeeding Dr. S. Somanath.

Prior to this, he served as Director, Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC), one of the major Centres of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), with its headquarters at Valiamala in Thiruvananthapuram and a unit at Bangalore. As Director, he provided technomanagerial leadership to LPSC, which is engaged in the development of Liquid, Semi-Cryogenic and Cryogenic Propulsion Stages for Launch Vehicles, Chemical and Electric Propulsion Systems for Satellites, Control Systems for Launch Vehicles and Transducer development for propulsion system health monitoring.

- An alumnus of IIT Kharagpur, Dr. Narayanan holds an M. Tech in Cryogenic Engineering and a Ph.D. in Aerospace Engineering.
- A veteran scientist, Narayanan joined ISRO in 1984 and has contributed significantly to India's space missions over the decades. He became the Director of LPSC in January 2018, cementing his reputation as a leader in rocket and spacecraft propulsion technologies.
- As project director of the C25 cryogenic project for the LVM3 vehicle, he led the development of the C25 cryogenic stage powered by a 20-tonne thrust engine, which was crucial for the successful maiden launch of LVM3.

President Droupadi Murmu Appoints New Governors in Five States

President Droupadi Murmu on December 24, 2024 appointed two new Governors and reassigned three other Governors in three States, changing Governor positions in total five States.

Ajay Kumar Bhalla, a seasoned administrator, was appointed as the new Governor of Manipur, replacing Anusuiya Uikey.

Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati, who had been the Governor of Mizoram, was appointed as the Governor of Odisha. General (Dr.) Vijay Kumar Singh (Retd.) was designated as the new Governor of Mizoram.

Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, earlier serving as the Governor of Bihar, assumed the role of Governor of Kerala. Arif Mohammed Khan, the Governor of Kerala, was assigned the position of Governor of Bihar.

DEATHS/OBITUARIES

Former US President and Nobel Peace Laureate Jimmy Carter Passed Away

Jimmy Carter, who served as the 39th US President from 1977 to 1981, died at the age of 100 at his home in Georgia, the USA on December 29, 2024. Carter, who won the Nobel Peace Prize for his humanitarian work, is credited with brokering peace between Israel and Egypt.



Jimmy Carter

Carter, who prior to becoming the President of USA was Governor of Georgia, a lieutenant in the US Navy and a farmer is survived by his four children, 11 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. A Democrat, Carter entered the White House after beating incumbent President, Republican Gerald Ford, in the 1976 US election. He was defeated in the 1980 election by actor-turned politician Ronald Reagan, who had earlier served as California Governor.

He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 for his contributions to finding peaceful solutions to international conflicts, apart from advancing democracy and human rights among others. His single four-year stay at the Oval Office witnessed the 1978 Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt that helped bring stability to the Middle East.

Former Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis Passed Away

Former Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis, who ushered the country into the European Union's single currency in 2001, died on January 5, 2025 aged 88 at his summer house in the Peloponnese. Simitis, a law professor and a reformist, assumed leadership of the PASOK socialist party in 1996 and was Prime Minister until 2004. During his government, Simitis reduced the budget deficit and public debt to make Athens qualify for euro zone membership.

In 2012, three years after the Greek debt crisis erupted, he published a book criticising the handling of the crisis by Greek politicians and the EU. In that book, called 'Derailment', he also accused the European Commission of turning a blind eye to overspending by his conservative successor.

Eminent Indian Nuclear Scientist Dr. R. Chidambaram Passed Away

Dr. Rajagopala Chidambaram, a former Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and a former Principal Scientific Advisor, passed away in Mumbai on January 5, 2025 at the age of 88. One of the very few scientists closely involved in both of India's nuclear tests in 1974 and 1998 Chidambaram was the guiding force behind India's nuclear self-reliance and its emergence as an overt nuclear power in the last three decades.

Chidambaram had retired from the Atomic Energy Commission in 2000, after receiving two extensions, but was soon appointed to succeed Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam as the Principal Scientific Advisor, a post created in the wake of the 1998 nuclear tests. He served in that position from 2001 to 2018 working with three Prime Ministers—Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who had appointed him, Manmohan Singh, who negotiated a landmark civil nuclear deal with the US, and PM Modi.

Born in Chennai in 1936, Chidambaram was an alumnus of Presidency College in Chennai. He pursued a Ph.D. at the Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru before joining the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) in 1962. His career at BARC culminated in his appointment as director in 1990. In 1993, he became Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, a position he held until 2000.

Chidambaram was a pivotal figure in India's nuclear history, playing a key role in both the nation's first nuclear test, Pokhran I (Operation Smiling Buddha) on May 18, 1974 and the second, Pokhran II (Operation Shakti) in 1998. His contributions earned him the Padma Shri in 1975 and the Padma Vibhushan in 1999.

Chidambaram was also instrumental in the Indo-US civil nuclear agreement, which ended India's isolation within the global nuclear community.

Pritish Nandy

Veteran journalist, poet and filmmaker Pritish Nandy died in Mumbai on January 8, 2025 at the age of 73. Born in 1951 in Bihar's Bhagalpur, Pritish Nandy had a long and stellar career, where he excelled as a painter, journalist, parliamentarian, media and television personality, animal activist and maker of films, TV and streaming content. He founded Pritish Nandy Communications in 1993 and remained its non-executive chairman and creative mentor till his death. After years of producing TV shows, he moved to film production with Kuch Khatti Kuch Meethi in 2001. Over the years, he produced several films like Chameli, Kaante, Raat Gayi Baat Gayi and Shaadi Ke Side Effects.

He was elected to Rajya Sabha on a Shiv Sena ticket in 1998 and served as a Member of Parliament for six years.

American Filmmaker David Lynch Passed Away

David Lynch, the American filmmaker whose works include the surrealist cult classics Mulholland Drive and Twin Peaks, passed away on January 16, 2025 at the age of 78. Considered by many a maverick filmmaker, he received three best director Oscar nominations throughout his career for his work on Blue Velvet, The Elephant Man and Mulholland Drive.

Lynch's almost-50-year cinematic career was distinguished by a series of distinctive, highly stylized films that often feature surreal situations, fragmented timelines and supernatural elements. He was awarded the Golden Lion for lifetime achievement at the Venice Film Festival in 2006 and an honourary Oscar in 2019 for "a lifetime of artistic accomplishment." He was also a four-times Oscar nominee including three times for best director for 1980's 'Elephant Man', 1986's 'Blue Velvet' and 'Mulholland Drive' from 2001.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

National Sports Awards 2024; Four Sports Personalities Conferred on the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2024

Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports announced the National Sports Awards 2024 on January 2, 2025 for splendid achievements and contributions in different sports. This year, the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2024, the most prestigious national honour in sports has been conferred on four sports personalities for their splendid achievements in sports. Gukesh D. (Chess), Harmanpreet Singh (Hockey), Praveen Kumar (Para-Athletics) and Manu Bhaker (Shooting) were declared the winners of the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2024. 'Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award' is given for the spectacular and most outstanding performance in the field of sports by a sportsperson over the period of the previous four years.

Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award 2024

Name of the Sportsperson	Discipline
Gukesh D.	Chess
Harmanpreet Singh	Hockey
Praveen Kumar	Para-Athletics
Manu Bhaker	Shooting

Arjuna Awards for Outstanding Performance in Sports and Games 2024

Jyoti Yarraji	Athletics
Annu Rani	Athletics
Nitu	Boxing
Saweety	Boxing
Vantika Agrawal	Chess
Salima Tete	Hockey
Abhishek	Hockey
Sanjay	Hockey
Jarmanpreet Singh	Hockey
Sukhjeet Singh	Hockey
Rakesh Kumar	Para-Archery
Preeti Pal	Para-Athletics
Jeevanji Deepthi	Para-Athletics
Ajeet Singh	Para-Athletics
Sachin Sarjerao Khilari	Para-Athletics
Dharambir	Para-Athletics

Pranav Soorma	Para-Athletics
H. Hokato Sema	Para-Athletics
Simran	Para-Athletics
Navdeep	Para-Athletics
Nitesh Kumar	Para-Badminton
Thulasimathi Murugesan	Para-Badminton
Nithya Sre Sumathy Sivan	Para-Badminton
Manisha Ramadass	Para-Badminton
Kapil Parmar	Para-Judo
Mona Agarwal	Para-Shooting
Rubina Francis	Para-Shooting
Swapnil Suresh Kusale	Shooting
Sarabjot Singh	Shooting
Abhya Singh	Squash
Sajan Prakash	Swimming
Aman	Wrestling

Arjuna Awards (Lifetime) for Outstanding Performance in Sports and Games 2024

Sucha Singh	Athletics
Murlikant Rajaram Petker	Para-Swimming

Dronacharya Award for Outstanding Coaches in Sports and Games 2024

(A) Regular Category :

Subhash Rana	Para-Shooting
Deepali Deshpande	Shooting
Sandeep Sangwan	Hockey

(B) Lifetime Category

S. Muralidharan	Badminton
Armando Agnelo Colaco	Football

Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar

Physical Education Foundation of India

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy 2024

Chandigarh University	Overall winner University
Lovely Professional University (Punjab)	1st runner-up University
Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar	2nd runner-up University

82nd Golden Globe Awards

The 82nd Golden Globe Awards were conferred on January 5, 2025 in different film categories at an award ceremony at the Beverly Hilton in California, honouring great work in films and television for 2024. Nikki Glaser became the first woman to host the Golden Globes solo. 'The Brutalist' dominated the award ceremony by winning many awards with Adrien Brody winning his first Golden Globe for his best actor male. Brady Corbet, who also co-wrote the film, earning a best director; and the movie ultimately claiming the title of best drama motion picture.

82nd Golden Globe : Major Award Winners

Film :

- **Best Motion Picture :** Drama—*'The Brutalist'*
- **Best Motion Picture :** Musical/Comedy—*'Emilia Pérez'*
- **Best Motion Picture :** Animated—*'Flow'*
- **Best Motion Picture :** Non-English Language—*'Emilia Pérez'*
- **Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture :** Drama—Adrien Brody for *'The Brutalist'*
- **Best Performance by a Female Actor in a Motion Picture :** Drama—Fernanda Torres for *'I'm Still Here'*
- **Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture :** Musical or Comedy—Sebastian Stan for *'A Different Man'*
- **Best Performance by a Female Actor in a Motion Picture :** Musical or Comedy—Demi Moore for *'The Substance'*
- **Best Performance by a Supporting Actor in a Motion Picture :** Kieran Culkin for *'A Real Pain'*
- **Best Performance by a Supporting Female Actor in a Motion Picture :** Zoe Saldaña, for *'Emilia Pérez'*
- **Best Director** : Brady Corbet for *'The Brutalist'*
- **Best Screenplay :** Peter Straughan for *'Conclave'*
- **Best Original Score :** Trent Reznor, Atticus Ross for *'Challengers'*
- **Best Original Song :** *'El Mal'* by Clément Ducol, Camille and Jacques Audiard (from *'Emilia Pérez'*)

Television :

- **Best Television Series :** Drama—*'Shōgun'*
- **Best Television Series :** Musical or Comedy—*'Hacks'*
- **Best Limited Series, Anthology Series, or Motion Picture :** *'Baby Reindeer'*
- **Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series :** Drama—Hiroyuki Sanada for *'Shōgun'*
- **Best Performance by a Female Actor in a Television Series :** Drama—Anna Sawai for *'Shōgun'*
- **Best Performance by a Female Actor in a Television Series :** Musical or Comedy—Jean Smart for *'Hacks'*
- **Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series–Musical or Comedy :** Jeremy Allen White for 'The Bear'

Tarun Das Gets Singapore Honourary Citizen Award

Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam conferred the Singapore Honourary Citizen Award, the highest recognition for non-Singaporeans, to former Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Director General Tarun Das for his outstanding contribution to strengthening bilateral relations during a ceremony in New Delhi on January 15, 2025. He led a delegation of Indian industrialists to Singapore in 1993 as part of India's 'Look East' policy.

The Honourary Citizenship Award is the highest recognition by the Singapore government for a non-Singaporean. It is awarded to individuals who have made significant impact in fields such as business, science and technology, education, health, arts and culture, and community service.

INCOIS, Hyderabad Chosen for Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar for 2025

The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad was on January 23, 2025 awarded the prestigious Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar for 2025 in the Institutional Category. Recognized for its exemplary contributions to disaster management, INCOIS has played a vital role in enhancing India's disaster preparedness and response mechanisms.

- INCOIS's expertise extends to forecasting high waves, cyclones and storm surges, safeguarding coastal areas and maritime activities. Its contributions during Cyclones Phailin (2013) and Hudhud (2014) provided critical advisories, enabling timely evacuations and reducing risks to coastal populations.
- Established in 1999 in Hyderabad, Telangana, INCOIS is a cornerstone of India's ocean-related disaster management strategies. It operates the Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC), which can issue tsunami alerts within 10 minutes, serving both India and 28 Indian Ocean countries. UNESCO has recognized it as a leading Tsunami Service Provider globally.
- Instituted by the Government of India under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar is awarded annually to honour individuals and organizations making significant contributions in dis-aster management. Announced on January 23, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's birth anniversary, the award carries a cash prize of ₹ 51 lakh and a certificate for institutions, and ₹ 5 lakh with a certificate for individuals.

Padma Awards 2025

President Droupadi Murmu on January 25, 2025 approved conferment of 139 Padma Awards including 1 duo case (in a duo case, the Award is counted as one) for contributions in various disciplines/ fields of activities, *viz.*, art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service, etc. This year Padma awardees list comprises 7 Padma Vibhushan, 19 Padma Bhushan and 113 Padma Shri Awards. 23 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 10 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI and 13 Posthumous awardees. 'Padma Vibhushan' is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service; 'Padma Bhushan' for distinguished service of high order and 'Padma Shri' for distinguished service in any field.

Padma Vibhushan (7) :

S. No.	Name	Field	State/ Country
1.	Shri Duvvur Nagesh-war Reddy	Medicine	Telangana
2.	Justice (Retd.) Shri Jagdish Singh Khehar	Public Affairs	Chandigarh
3.	Smt. Kumudini Rajni-kant Lakhia	Art	Gujarat
4.	Shri Lakshminarayana Subramaniam	Art	Karnataka
5.	Shri M.T. Vasudevan Nair (Posthumous)	Literature and Education	Kerala
6.	Shri Osamu Suzuki (Posthumous)	Trade and Industry	Japan
7.	Smt. Sharda Sinha (Posthumous)	Art	Bihar

Padma Bhushan (19) :

8.	Shri A. Surya Prakash	Literature and Education-Journalism	Karnataka
9.	Shri Anant Nag	Art	Karnataka
10.	Shri Bibek Debroy (Posthumous)	Literature and Education	NCT Delhi
11.	Shri Jatin Goswami	Art	Assam
12.	Shri Jose Chacko Periappuram	Medicine	Kerala
13.	Shri Kailash Nath Dikshit	Others-Archaeology	NCT Delhi
14.	Shri Manohar Joshi (Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Maharashtra
15.	Shri Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti	Trade and Industry	Tamil Nadu
16.	Shri Nandamuri Bala-krishna	Art	Andhra Pradesh
17.	Shri P.R. Sreejesh	Sports	Kerala
18.	Shri Pankaj Patel	Trade and Industry	Gujarat
19.	Shri Pankaj Udhas (Posthumous)	Art	Maharashtra
20.	Shri Rambahadur Rai	Literature and Education-Journalism	Uttar Pradesh
21.	Sadhvi Ritambhara	Social Work	Uttar Pradesh
22.	Shri S. Ajith Kumar	Art	Tamil Nadu
23.	Shri Shekhar Kapur	Art	Maharashtra
24.	Ms. Shobana Chandra-kumar	Art	Tamil Nadu
25.	Shri Sushil Kumar Modi (Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Bihar
26.	Shri Vinod Dham	Science and Engineering	USA

Padma Shri (113) :

27.	Shri Adwaita Charan Gadanayak	Art	Odisha
28.	Shri Achyut Ramchan-dra Palav	Art	Maharashtra
29.	Shri Ajay V. Bhatt	Science and Engineering	United States of America
30.	Shri Anil Kumar Boro	Literature and Education	Assam
31.	Shri Arijit Singh	Art	West Bengal
32.	Smt. Arundhati Bhatta-charya	Trade and Industry	Maharashtra

33.	Shri Arunoday Saha	Literature and Education	Tripura
34.	Shri Arvind Sharma	Literature and Education	Canada
35.	Shri Ashok Kumar Mahapatra	Medicine	Odisha
36.	Shri Ashok Laxman Saraf	Art	Maharashtra
37.	Shri Ashutosh Sharma	Science and Engineering	Uttar Pradesh
38.	Smt. Ashwini Bhide Deshpande	Art	Maharashtra
39.	Shri Baijnath Maharaj	Others-Spiritualism	Rajasthan
40.	Shri Barry Godfray John	Art	NCT Delhi
41.	Smt. Begam Batool	Art	Rajasthan
42.	Shri Bharat Gupt	Art	NCT Delhi
43.	Shri Bheru Singh Chouhan	Art	Madhya Pradesh
44.	Shri Bhim Singh Bhavesh	Social Work	Bihar
45.	Smt. Bhimavva Dodda-balappa Shillekyathara	Art	Karnataka
46.	Shri Budhendra Kumar Jain	Medicine	Madhya Pradesh
47.	Shri C.S. Vaidyanathan	Public Affairs	NCT Delhi
48.	Shri Chaitram Deochand Pawar	Social Work	Maharashtra
49.	Shri Chandrakant Sheth (Posthumous)	Literature and Education	Gujarat
50.	Shri Chandrakant Sompura	Others-Architecture	Gujarat
51.	Shri Chetan E. Chitnis	Science and Engineering	France
52.	Shri David R. Syiemlieh	Literature and Education	Meghalaya
53.	Shri Durga Charan Ranbir	Art	Odisha
54.	Shri Farooq Ahmad Mir	Art	Jammu & Kashmir
55.	Shri Ganeshwar Shastri Dravid	Literature and Education	Uttar Pradesh
56.	Smt. Gita Upadhyay	Literature and Education	Assam
57.	Shri Gokul Chandra Das	Art	West Bengal
58.	Shri Guruvayur Dorai	Art	Tamil Nadu
59.	Shri Harchandan Singh Bhatty	Art	Madhya Pradesh
60.	Shri Hariman Sharma	Others-Agriculture	Himachal Pradesh
61.	Shri Harjinder Singh Srinagar Wale	Art	Punjab
62.	Shri Harvinder Singh	Sports	Haryana
63.	Shri Hassan Raghu	Art	Karnataka
64.	Shri Hemant Kumar	Medicine	Bihar
65.	Shri Hriday Narayan Dixit	Literature and Education	Uttar Pradesh
66.	Shri Hugh and Colleen Gantzer(Posthumous) (Duo)*	Literature and Education-Journalism	Uttarakhand
67.	Shri Inivalappil Mani Vijayan	Sports	Kerala
68.	Shri Jagadish Joshila	Literature and Education	Madhya Pradesh
69.	Smt. Jaspinder Narula	Art	Maharashtra
70.	Shri Jonas Masetti	Others-Spiritualism	Brazil
71.	Shri Joynacharan Bathari	Art	Assam
72.	Smt. Jumde Yomgam Gamlin	Social Work	Arunachal Pradesh
73.	Shri K. Damodaran	Others-Culinary	Tamil Nadu
74.	Shri K.L. Krishna	Literature and Education	Andhra Pradesh
75.	Smt. K. Omanakutty Amma	Art	Kerala
76.	Shri Kishore Kunal (Posthumous)	Civil Service	Bihar
77.	Shri L. Hangthing	Others-Agriculture	Nagaland
78.	Shri Lakshmipathy Ramasubbaiyer	Literature and Education-Journalism	Tamil Nadu
79.	Shri Lalit Kumar Mangotra	Literature and Education	Jammu and Kashmir
80.	Shri Lama Lobzang(Posthumous)	Others-Spiritualism	Ladakh
81.	Smt. Libia Lobo Sardesai	Social Work	Goa
82.	Shri M.D. Srinivas	Science and Engineering	Tamil Nadu
83.	Shri Madugula Naga-phani Sarma	Art	Andhra Pradesh
84.	Shri Mahabir Nayak	Art	Jharkhand
85.	Smt. Mamata Shankar	Art	West Bengal
86.	Shri Manda Krishna Madiga	Public Affairs	Telangana
87.	Shri Maruti Bhujangrao Chitampalli	Literature and Education	Maharashtra
88.	Shri Miriyala Apparao (Posthumous)	Art	Andhra Pradesh
89.	Shri Nagendra Nath Roy	Literature and Education	West Bengal
90.	Shri Narayan (Bhulai Bhai) (Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Uttar Pradesh
91.	Shri Naren Gurung	Art	Sikkim
92.	Smt. Neerja Bhatla	Medicine	NCT Delhi
93.	Smt. Nirmala Devi	Art	Bihar
94.	Shri Nitin Nohria	Literature and Education	USA
95.	Shri Onkar Singh Pahwa	Trade and Industry	Punjab
96.	Shri P. Datchana-moorthy	Art	Puducherry
97.	Shri Pandi Ram Mandavi	Art	Chhattisgarh
98.	Shri Parmar Lavjibhai Nagjibhai	Art	Gujarat
99.	Shri Pawan Goenka	Trade and Industry	West Bengal

100.	Shri Prashanth Prakash	Trade and Industry	Karnataka
101.	Smt. Pratibha Satpathy	Literature and Education	Odisha
102.	Shri Purisai Kannappa Sambandan	Art	Tamil Nadu
103.	Shri R. Ashwin	Sports	Tamil Nadu
104.	Shri R.G. Chandra-mogan	Trade and Industry	Tamil Nadu
105.	Smt. Radha Bahin Bhatt	Social Work	Uttarakhand
106.	Shri Radhakrishnan Devasenapathy	Art	Tamil Nadu
107.	Shri Ramdarash Mishra	Literature and Education	NCT Delhi
108.	Shri Ranendra Bhanu Majumdar	Art	Maharashtra
109.	Shri Ratan Kumar Parimoo	Art	Gujarat
110.	Shri Reba Kanta Mahanta	Art	Assam
111.	Shri Renthlei Lalrawna	Literature and Education	Mizoram
112.	Shri Ricky Gyan Kej	Art	Karnataka
113.	Shri Sajjan Bhajanka	Trade and Industry	West Bengal
114.	Smt. Sally Holkar	Trade and Industry	Madhya Pradesh
115.	Shri Sant Ram Deswal	Literature and Education	Haryana
116.	Shri Satyapal Singh	Sports	Uttar Pradesh
117.	Shri Seeni Viswanathan	Literature and Education	Tamil Nadu
118.	Shri Sethuraman Panchanathan	Science and Engineering	USA
119	Smt. Sheikha Shaikha Ali Al-Jaber Al-Sabah	Medicine	Kuwait
120.	Shri Sheen Kaaf Nizam (Shiv Kishan Bissa)	Literature and Education	Rajasthan
121.	Shri Shyam Bihari Agrawal	Art	Uttar Pradesh
122.	Smt. Soniya Nityanand	Medicine	Uttar Pradesh
123.	Shri Stephen Knapp	Literature and Education	USA
124.	Shri Subhash Khetulal Sharma	Others-Agriculture	Maharashtra
125.	Shri Suresh Harilal Soni	Social Work	Gujarat
126.	Shri Surinder Kumar Vasal	Science and Engineering	Delhi
127.	Shri Swami Pradipta-nanda (Kartik Maharaj)	Others-Spiri-tualism	West Bengal
128.	Shri Syed Ainul Hasan	Literature and Education	Uttar Pradesh
129.	Shri Tejendra Narayan Majumdar	Art	West Bengal
130.	Smt. Thiyam Surya-mukhi Devi	Art	Manipur
131.	Shri Tushar Durgesh-bhai Shukla	Literature and Education	Gujarat
132.	Shri Vadiraj Ragha-wendracharya Pancha-mukhi	Literature and Education	Andhra Pradesh
133.	Shri Vasudeo Kamath	Art	Maharashtra
134.	Shri Velu Aasaan	Art	Tamil Nadu
135.	Shri Venkappa Ambaji Sugatekar	Art	Karnataka
136.	Shri Vijay Nityanand Surishwar Ji Maharaj	Others-Spiri-tualism	Bihar
137.	Smt. Vijayalakshmi Deshamane	Medicine	Karnataka
138.	Shri Vilas Dangre	Medicine	Maharashtra
139.	Shri Vinayak Lohani	Social Work	West Bengal

CONFERENCE/MEETINGS

Regional Conference on 'Drug Trafficking and National Security' Held in New Delhi

A Regional Conference on Drug Trafficking and National Security was organized at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi on January 11, 2025 with an objective to focus on tackling the growing concern of drug trafficking and its impact on national security, with a special focus on eight States and Union Territories of northern India. The Conference organized by the Narcotics Control Bureau, was chaired by Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Mr. Amit Shah.

He highlighted that in 2024, the NCB and police forces across India seized drugs valued at ₹ 16,914 crore—the highest figure since independence—Shri Shah stressed the importance of timely policies, enhanced intensity, meticulous micro-planning and consistent monitoring for achieving a drug-free India. He called for unified efforts, urging both the Union and State governments, along with all relevant departments, to work collaboratively to eradicate drug trafficking.

- He announced the launch of *'Drug Disposal Fortnight'* dedicated to the destruction of confiscated narcotics. As part of this campaign, one lakh kilograms of narcotics valued at approximately ₹ 8,600 crore will be destroyed over the next ten days.
- He also inaugurated the regional unit in Bhopal and dedicated the extension of the *MANAS*-2 helpline across 36 States and Union Territories.

SURVEY/REPORT/INDEX

4th Edition of ILO Global Estimates on International Migrants

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) released the 4th edition of the 'Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers', with following key highlights :

- In 2022, International Migrants (IM) made up 4·7% (167·7 million) of the global labour force; over 30 million more than in 2013. An estimated 155·6 million were employed and 12·1 million unemployed.

- The share of IM men in the total employment for males globally was estimated at 4·7% and that of IM women at 4·4%. However, between 2019-2022, the rate of growth dipped annually to less than 1%.
- 61·3% out of a total of 102·7 million male IMs were employed. 38·7% female IMs were employed out of a total of 64·9 million in 2022.
- IM workers, aged 25 to 54 years, constituted 74·9% (125·6 million) of total IM workers.
- 68·4% of IM workers are concentrated in services sector.
- High-income countries absorbed the largest number of IMs, accounting for 68·4% (114 million people), in key sectors such as services. The Arab states accounted for 13·3% of IM workers in 2022, down three percentage points over 2013.

Global Status Report on Drowning Prevention 2024

WHO released its first-ever Global Status Report on Drowning Prevention 2024 stating that there were around 3 lakhs death due to drowning in 2021–30 deaths every hour. In April 2021, the UN General Assembly adopted the first-ever Resolution on drowning prevention. It declared July 25 as the World Drowning Prevention Day.

Key Highlights of the WHO Report :

- 92% deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. It is three times higher in lower and middle-income countries than in high-income countries.
- Children and young adults (aged 0–29 years) account for 57% of all drowning deaths. Children below 5 years account for nearly a quarter of all drowning deaths. Also, it is twice among males as compared to females. If the present trend continues, more than 7·2 million people, mainly children, could die due to drowning, by 2050.
- Drowning accounts for 75% of deaths in flood disasters.
- Since 2000, it has fallen by 38%, from 6·1 to 3·8 per 100,000. However, it falls short of meeting Sustainable Development targets.
- According to WHO, investing in day-care programmes for pre-school children and teaching children basic swim skills would lead to saving lives and avoiding life-limiting injuries for lakhs of children. It will result in savings of US $ 400 billion 9 times the cost of interventions.
- Setting and enforcing safe boating, shipping and ferry regulations; developing a national water safety strategy; and better disaster preparedness planning for managing the risks of flooding, could significantly reduce drowning related deaths.

India Ranked 25th in the QS World Future Skills Index 2025

The QS World Future Skills Index evaluates how well countries are equipped to meet the evolving demands of the international job market. It is released by London-based Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) and is based on four parameters : Skills Fit, Academic Readiness, Future of Work and Economic Transformation. India was ranked 25th overall and categorized as a 'contender' in the index with overall score of 76·6. India was ranked 2nd in the 'Future of Work' category, behind USA. India's ranking under various categories is :

- Skills Fit : 37th position with score of 59·1
- Academic Readiness : 26th position with score of 89·9
- Future of Work : 2nd position with score of 99·1
- Economic Transformation : 40th position with score of 58·3

The US, UK, Canada, Germany and Australia have emerged as top performers in the inaugural QS World Future Skills Index 2025.

India Ranked 85th in the January 2025 Henley Passport Index

In the Henley Passport Index 2025, India's rank has dropped to 85th, down from 80th in 2024 giving its holders visa free access to 57 countries. From 2006-2025, India's rank was the lowest at 90th in 2021, while its best score was in 2006 when the country was ranked 71st.

Singapore's passport tops the index, with visa-free travel to 195 destinations across the world. Japan's passport was placed second in the index, with 193 visa-free destinations.

Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and South Korea were placed third, with access to 192 visa-free destinations. USA was placed at 9th position along with Estonia. Afghanistan was placed at the bottom with 106th rank. Pakistan and Bangladesh stood at 103rd (101st in 2024) and 100th (97th in 2024) and China was ranked 60th.

The Henley Passport Index is the original, authoritative ranking of all the world's passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa. The index is based on exclusive data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and enhanced by Henley & Partners' research team.

ENVIRONMENT/BIO-DIVERSITY/ECOLOGY

IUCN Lists Western Ghats as Key Freshwater Biodiversity Hotspot

The Western Ghats in India has been identified as a key global hotspot for threatened freshwater species by the first-ever multi-taxon global freshwater fauna assessment conducted by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List of Threatened Species. The study highlights that one-quarter of freshwater species worldwide face a high risk of extinction, with the Western Ghats being one of the most critical regions for freshwater biodiversity conservation.

The Western Ghats mountain range, one of India's four biodiversity hotspots, is among the four regions in the world where freshwater species are most threatened with extinction, as per a recent study published in the journal nature on January 8, 2025. The study shows that 24% of the world's freshwater fish, dragonfly, damselfly, crab, crayfish and shrimp species are at high risk of extinction.

- The recent study found that at least 4,294 species out of 23,496 freshwater animals on the IUCN Red

List are at high risk of extinction. Crabs, crayfishes and shrimps are at the highest risk of extinction of the groups studied, with 30% of all these species being threatened, followed by 26% of freshwater fishes and 16% of dragonflies and damselflies.

- The greatest number of threatened species dwell in Lake Victoria (distributed across the African countries of Tanzania and Uganda, and on the border of Kenya), Lake Titicaca (in the Andes mountain range bordering Peru and Bolivia), Sri Lanka's Wet Zone (in the central and southwestern region of the island nation) and the Western Ghats of India.
- The threatened species in the Western Ghats include the Saffron reedtail (Indosticta deccanensis), a dragonfly that is found only in some localities in the mountain range and is considered 'Vulnerable' by the Red List, and the Dwarf Malabar Puffer (Carinotetraodon travancoricus), a species of freshwater puffer fish found in some streams of the Ghats and is 'Data Deficient'.
- However, species like the Kani maranjandu, a spider-like tree crab discovered from the southern Western Ghats in Kerala in 2017, are not even currently assessed in the Red List—there is no data on its conservation status at all.

PLACES IN THE NEWS

Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 8, 2025 laid the foundation stone for NTPC Green Energy Ltd. (NGEL) Green Hydrogen Hub Project at Pudimadaka near Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

- This ambitious project, jointly developed by NGEL, the renewable arm of NTPC, and the New & Renewable Energy Development Corporation of Andhra Pradesh (NREDCAP), marks the first Green Hydrogen Hub under India's National Green Hydrogen Mission.
- The hub will include 20 GW of renewable energy projects, 1,500 TPD (tonnes per day) of Green Hydrogen production, and 7,500 TPD of Green Hydrogen derivatives such as Green Methanol, Green Urea, and Sustainable Aviation Fuel.
- This initiative is poised to become one of India's largest integrated green hydrogen production facilities, bringing an estimated ₹ 1·85 lakh crore investment to Andhra Pradesh while creating significant employment opportunities.

Kappad and Chal Beaches Get Blue Flag Certification

Kerala's famed Kappad beach in Kozhikode and Chal beach in Kannur were on January 9, 2025 bestowed with the coveted Blue Flag certification by Denmark-based Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) for meeting stringent environmental and safety standards.

Both beaches have implemented initiatives ensuring cleanliness, safety, and eco-conscious practices that meet the Blue Flag programme's 33 criteria. This certification highlights Kerala's success in balancing environmental preservation with tourism, providing a model for sustainable tourism worldwide.

IMPORTANT DAYS/WEEKS/YEARS

March 2025

National

March 4	National Safety Day
March 10	CISF Raising Day
March 16	National Vaccination Day
March 18	Ordnance Factories Day

International

March 8	International Women's Day, United Nations Day for Women's Right & International Peace
March 15	World Consumer Rights Day
March 20	International Day of Happiness
March 21	World Forestry Day, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
March 22	World Water Day
March 23	World Meteorological Day
March 24	World Tuberculosis Day
March 27	World Theatre Day

India and Spain to Celebate 2026 as 'Dual Year' for Culture, Tourism and AI

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, during his official visit to Spain on January 14, 2025 announced that 2026 will be marked as a 'dual year' between India and Spain to celebrate culture, tourism and advancements in artificial intelligence. He added, "Through 2025, we (India and Spain) will work hard to prepare for 2026, a year of celebration and collaboration." India and Spain currently enjoy annual trade worth USD 10 billion, with collaborations spanning railways, clean technology, drones and space exploration. PIDarpan

Continued from Page 18

Aykroyd Formula for Revising Salaries and Allowances

- The fitment factor is a multiplier used for calculating salaries and pensions, which is derived from Aykroyd Formula, developed by Dr. Wallace Aykroyd, for calculating wages based on the nutritional requirements of an average worker and adopted by the 15th Indian Labour Conference (ILC) in 1957 for setting minimum wages for workers and their family.
- Salary and pension hikes are calculated by multiplying the fitment factor by the previous minimum salary or pension amount to ensure salaries align with current living costs.
- The fitment factor of 2·57 was used for revising the salary and pensions by the 7th Central Pay Commission, based on which Minimum Basic Pay was revised from ₹ 7,000 to ₹ 18,000 per month. Based on reports, there are speculations that the government might go for a fitment factor in the range of 1·92 to 2·86, by combining the Aykroyd formula with updated market data. PIDarpan



Sports World

CRICKET

Sachin Tendulkar Becomes Honorary Member of Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC)

India's sports icon and legendary cricketer Sachin Tendulkar was on December 27, 2024 awarded honorary membership of the prestigious Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC), one of the oldest and most influential sporting institutions in Australia. Founded in 1838, the MCC oversees the management of the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), a venue that has hosted countless historic matches, remains one of the most revered grounds in world cricket.



Sachin Tendulkar

Tendulkar has an impressive record at the MCG, with 449 runs from five Tests at an average of 44·90, including a century and three fifties. Earlier in 2012, the Indian batter was awarded the Order of Australia, one of the country's highest honours.

Karnataka Wins Vijay Hazare Trophy 2024-25; Claims Record 5th Vijay Hazare Title

Karnataka defeated Vidarbha by 36 runs in the 2024-25 edition final at the Kotambi Stadium in Vadodara on January 18, 2025 to claim its record fifth Vijay Hazare Trophy title. R. Smaran hit his second List A hundred to help Karnataka post a daunting total of 348 for 6 in the title clash. In the 349 runs chasing attempt, the Karun Nair-led Vidarbha side was bowled out for 312, eventually losing by 36 runs.

- Mayank Agarwal was the skipper of the champion Karnataka team.
- It was Karnataka's 5th Vijay Hazare title as Karnataka first won the tournament in the 2013-14 season and successfully defended their title the following year. Their third title came in the 2017-18 season, with Agarwal leading the batting charts, while Padikkal emerged as the top run-scorer during Karnataka's fourth triumph in the 2019-20 season, defeating Tamil Nadu.
- Karnataka defeated defending champion Haryana in the semi-final while Vidarbha pipped Maharashtra in another semi-final of the event.

FOOTBALL

Santosh Trophy 2024-25; West Bengal Emerges Champion

West Bengal re-asserted its supremacy in the Santosh Trophy national football championship, clinching the title for a record 33rd time with a 1-0 win against Kerala in the final of the 78th edition at the GMC Balayogi Stadium in Hyderabad on December 31, 2024. Robi Hansda scored the only and decisive goal of the final to help West Bengal win the title. He was also the top scorer of the tournament with 12 goals to his credit.

- West Bengal defeated Services 4-2 in the semi-final while in the second semi-final, Kerala outplayed Manipur with a 5-1 win to make it to the final.
- Santosh Trophy is generally referred to as the national football championship for men.

Santosh Trophy : Results in Brief (Last 10 Editions)

Edition	Winner	Runners up
2013-14	Mizoram	Railways
2014-15	Services	Punjab
2015-16	Services	Maharashtra
2016-17	West Bengal	Goa
2017-18	Kerala	West Bengal
2018-19	Services	Punjab
2021-22	Kerala	West Bengal
2022-23	Karnataka	Meghalaya
2023-24	Services	Goa
2024-25	West Bengal	Kerala

ATHLETICS

Bahadur Singh Sagoo Elected New President of Athletics Federation of India (AFI)

Bahadur Singh Sagoo was elected as the new President of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) on January 7, 2025. Bahadur Singh Sagoo, the Asian Games shot put medallist, succeeded Adille Sumariwalla, the outgoing President, during the Annual General Assembly Meeting of the federation in Chandigarh.



Bahadur Singh Sagoo

Sagoo, a one-time Asian medallist and two-time national champion, won a gold medal in the shot put at the 2002 Busan Asian Games. He also competed in the 2000 and 2004 Olympics. His best attempt of 20·40 m came in 2004 in Koncha-Zaspa, Kyiv.

Sandeep Mehta, who previously held the position of senior joint secretary was elected as the secretary of the body during the AGM.

Anju Bobby George Named Chairperson of AFI's Athletes Commission

Long jump great *Anju Bobby George* was on January 8, 2025 named Chairperson of the Athletics Federation of India's nine-strong athletes commission in Chandigarh. The AFI Athletes Commission also featured six female athletes with javelin throw star *Neeraj Chopra* being its most prominent male member.

- The other women in the new AFI Athletes Commission panel are runner *Jyotirmoyee Sikdar*, discus thrower *Krishna Poonia*, hurdler *MD Valsamma*, steeplechaser *Sudha Singh* and runner *Sunita Rani*.
- Anju Bobby, a 2003 World Championships bronze medal winner, is also a senior Vice President in the AFI.
- The other two male members of the commission are 3000 m steeplechaser *Avinash Sable* and newly-elected AFI President *Bahadur Singh Sagoo*, a shot put gold medal winner at 2002 Asian Games.
- Outgoing AFI President Adille Sumariwalla will continue as an ex-officio member of the Executive Council.

Tata Mumbai Marathon 2025; Berhane Tesfay and Joyce Chepkemoi Win Men's and Women's Titles

Berhane Tesfay of Eritrea emerged champion of the Tata Mumbai Marathon 2025 Men's title on January 19, 2025. Tesfay clocked a time of 2 hours 11 minutes and 44 seconds to complete the 42·195 km distance and win his maiden international full marathon title. The African nation of Eritrea finished 1-2 as Tesfay's compatriot Merhawi Kesete was second in 2:11:50s while Ethiopia's Tesfaye Demeke (2:11:56s) was third.

Kenya's Joyce Chepkemoi Tele clinched the Mumbai Marathon 2025 Women's title with a time of 2:24:56 to bag the women's elite crown. Tele finished fastest ahead of Shitaye Eshete (2:25:29s) of Bahrain and Medina Deme Armino (2:27:58s) of Ethiopia for second and third places respectively.

Among the Indians, Anish Thapa (2:17:23s) finished first among men, while Nirmaben Thakor (2:50:06s) defended her title among women.

It was the 20th edition of the Mumbai Marathon, which is a World Athletics Gold Label Road Race event. It was also a qualifier for the World Athletics Championships in September, this year.



BWF India Open 2025; An Se-Young and Viktor Axelsen Win Singles Titles

Viktor Axelsen from Denmark won Men's Singles title at the BWF India Open 2025, a BWF Super 750 event organized from January 14 to 19, 2025 at the KD Jadhav indoor hall in the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi as he defeated last year's runner-up Cheuk Yiu Lee of Singapore 21-16, 21-8 in the final on January 19, 2025. It was Axelsen's third India Open title victory in six finals over 10 years—give space equalling Malaysian legend Lee Chong Wei for the most titles here.

An Se-young from South Korea clinched the India Open 2025 Women's Singles title beating Thailand's Pornpawee Chochuwong 21-12, 21-9 in the final. It was her second title at India Open after her 2023 success.

The unseeded Japanese pair of Arisa Igarashi and Ayako Sakuramoto, playing only their third event together, continued their dream run in the tournament with a clinical 21-15, 21-13 victory against South Korea's Kim Hye-Jeong and Kong Hee-Yong in the women's doubles.

In the men's section, Malaysians Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin managed to hang on for a hard-fought 21-15, 13-21, 21-16 victory against South Korea's Kim Won Ho and Seo Seung Jae in the only match that went to the decider.

Chinese second seeds Jiang Zhen Bang and Wei Ya Xin halted the French combination of Thom Gicquel and Delphine Delrue with a 21-18, 21-17 win in the mixed doubles.



Magnus Carlsen and Ian Nepomniachtchi Emerge Joint Winners of FIDE World Blitz Chess Championship 2024 Title

Grandmasters Magnus Carlsen and Ian Nepomniachtchi emerged joint winners of the 2024 FIDE World Blitz Chess Championship title on December 31, 2024 in New York. With nothing to separate the duo after 7 games, the reigning world blitz champion—Carlsen, made a never-seen-before proposal to his opponent that they should share the title. Nepomniachtchi agreed without hesitation and created history.

Carlsen claimed his eighth World Blitz title, while Nepomniachtchi earned his first. This marks the first time in chess history that a World Championship title has been shared.

Ju Wenjun Prevails in the Women's Blitz Championship 2024

The Women's Blitz Championship culminated in an all-Chinese showdown between reigning Women's World Champion Ju Wenjun and Lei Tingjie (who in 2023 unsuccessfully challenged Ju for the world crown in classical chess). Ju dominated the early rounds, defeating defending Blitz champion Valentina Gunina in the quarterfinals and overcoming India's Vaishali Rameshbabu in the semifinals. In finals, she won the title by having an opening advantage and gradually increased the pressure, forcing Lei's resignation.

FIDE World Rapid Chess Championship 2024

GM Volodar Murzin won the 2024 FIDE World Rapid Chess Championship with an undefeated 10/13 score. At 18 years old, he is the second-youngest rapid world champion in history, after GM Nodirbek Abdusattorov, who was 17 during his victory in 2021. Arjun Erigaisi finished fifth and R. Praggnanandhaa finished 17th with 8·5 points.

37-year-old GM Koneru Humpy from Vijaywada made an inspiring comeback to win the 2024 FIDE Women's World Rapid Chess Championship with 8·5/11, earning her second world title in rapid chess, after the gap of five years. She defeated Indonesia's Irene Sukandar in the final round in New York. The win helped Humpy move ahead of the other six joint leaders, including compatriot D. Harika, who had to settle for fifth place.

It was another step forward for India, after the nation won the 45th Chess Olympiad (both Open and Women's) and GM Gukesh Dommaraju won the 2024 FIDE World Championship.

TENNIS

Australian Open 2025

Australian Open 2025, the opening Grand Slam event of the Tennis World, was organized in January 2025 in Melbourne, Australia. Defending champion Jannik Sinner from Italy clinched the Australian Open 2025 Men's Singles final on January 26, 2025, beating Alexander Zverev from Germany in the final at the Rod Laver Arena. Sinner won the final 6-3, 7-6, 6-3 against the 27-year-old German to become the most successful Italian tennis player of all time. It was Sinner's third Grand Slam Singles title triumph.



Madison Keys with her Australian Open 2025 trophy in Melbourne

Alexander Zverev pipped Novak Djokovic in the semi-final while Sinner defeated B. Shelton in another semi-final.

USA's Madison Keys won her first-ever Grand Slam title on January 25, 2025 as she upset two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka 6-3, 2-6, 7-5 in the Australian Open Women's Singles final in Melbourne. Keys is the second-oldest woman to claim her first Australian Open Singles title in the Open era after China's Li Na, who was 31 when she triumphed at Melbourne Park in 2014. Keys defeated Iga Swiatek in the semi-final.

Finland's Harri Heliovaara and Henry Patten from Britain fought back from a set down to win the Australian Open Men's Doubles title on January 26, defeating Italian duo Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori 6-7(16), 7-6(5), 6-3 in the final. The victory gave Heliovaara and Patten their second Grand Slam crown after they triumphed at Wimbledon last year.

Top seeds Katerina Siniakova from Czech Republic and Taylor Townsend of the USA beat Jelena Ostapenko and Hsieh Su-wei 6-2, 6-7(4), 6-3 to win a gruelling final and claim the Women's Doubles crown at the Australian Open 2025 in Melbourne. The victory at Rod Laver Arena gave Siniakova and Townsend their second Grand Slam title after their Wimbledon triumph last year.

John Peers and Olivia Gadecki won the Australian Open 2025 Mixed Doubles title after beating Kimberly Birrell and John-Patrick Smith 3-6, 6-4, 10-6 in an all Australian finale.

MISCELLANEOUS

Host Kerala Wins Senior National Men's Handball Title

Kerala emerged champion of the Senior National Men's Handball title beating Chandigarh 34-31 in a close final on January 5, 2025 at Changanassery, Kerala. Kerala had earlier entered the summit clash for the first time, edging out Services 23-21 in the semi-finals, while Chandigarh earned their spot by defeating Indian Railways 32-30.

Kerala's Devendar was adjudged the 'Best Player of the Championship', while Rahul got the award for the 'Best Goalkeeper'.

India Clinch Inaugural Kho Kho World Cup 2025 Men's and Women's Titles

The Indian men's and women's teams scripted history at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi on January 19, 2025 by beating Nepal in their respective finals and winning Kho Kho World Cup 2025 Men's and Women's titles.

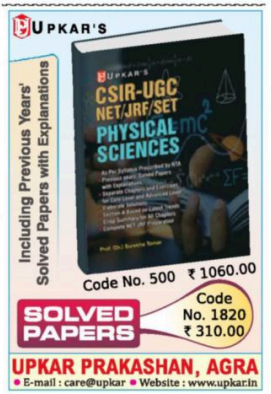
While, the Indian men's kho kho team beat Nepal 54-36 in the title clash, the Indian women's team outplayed the Nepalese eves by a 78-40 score line in the final to win the Kho Kho Women World Cup title.

Indian men remained unbeaten throughout the kho kho tournament. After topping the Group A standings with four wins, including a narrow 42-37 victory over Nepal, they beat Sri Lanka in the quarter-finals and South Africa in the semi-finals.

The Indian women's kho kho team also went through the tournament undefeated. They won their three Group A matches and then beat Bangladesh and South Africa in the quarter-finals and semi-finals, respectively.

The 2025 Kho Kho World Cup was organized by the Kho Kho Federation of India and the International Kho Kho Federation. The official tagline of the tournament was 'The World Goes Kho'. It featured two trophies—a blue trophy for the men's championship and a green trophy for the women's event. The official mascots of the tournament were Tejas (symbolizing brilliance and energy) and Tara (Guidance and aspiration). 20 men's and 19 women's teams from 24 countries participated in the tournament.

P.Darpan





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GUJARAT

India's Inaugural Census of Coastal and Wader Birds Organized in Jamnagar, Gujarat

The Gujarat government and Bird Conservation Society of Gujarat (BCSG) jointly conducted the census of coastal and wader birds at the Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuary in Jamnagar from January 3 to 5, 2025. BCSG is a voluntary organisation, active for over 25 years, dedicated to bird conservation, census activities, observation and raising public awareness about avian science.

The three-day programme which was first of its kind in India, featured expert talks by specialists in forestry and wildlife on the first day, bird counting activities on the second day, and knowledge-sharing sessions followed by a closing ceremony on the final day. According to the Gujarat forest department, Jamnagar district hosts over 300 species of local and migratory birds, including over 50 species of Wader birds.

The Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuary in Gujarat is India's first designated marine national park. Spanning the districts of Devbhoomi Dwarka, Jamnagar, and Morbi, it covers approximately 170 km of coastline and 42 islands between Okha and Navlakhi. This protected area in the Gulf of Kutch was established to conserve marine biodiversity and mangrove ecosystems.

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel Launches SWAR Platform to Bridge Language Barriers

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel on December 25, 2024 launched a new citizen-centric initiative called the SWAR (Speech and Written Analysis Resource) platform meant to bridge the language barriers among people on the occasion of Good Governance Day.

The Chief Minister's Office (CMO), in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's Bhashini Team (National Language Translation Mission), has developed the SWAR platform. This innovative platform leverages technology to overcome language barriers. The Speech-to-Text feature has also been integrated into the Gujarat CMO website.

With the Speech-to-Text functionality, citizens can dictate their messages instead of typing them manually. The SWAR platform uses the indigenous artificial intelligence system, Bhashini, to facilitate this.

This technological advancement will enable the State government to reach a larger audience and significantly improve grievance redressal and feedback mechanisms.

In the future, the SWAR platform will support the Chief Minister's Office by incorporating advanced artificial intelligence and machine learning capabilities. Resources such as Natural Language Processing (NLP), Open Source Generative AI (GenAI), Machine Learning (ML) and Computer Vision will be integrated into the resource library as per CMO requirements.

HIMACHAL PRADESH

Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration (HIPA) Set to be Renamed After Dr. Manmohan Singh

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, while presiding over the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration (HIPA) in Shimla on January 1, 2025, announced that the institute would be renamed after former Prime Minister Late Dr. Manmohan Singh. CM Sukhu praised Dr. Singh's policies, stating that they had greatly contributed to the development of India and Himachal Pradesh. He added that Dr. Singh's efforts had brought significant benefits and recognition to the state. He underscored the importance of good governance and effective, technology-based training programmes for officials to achieve this goal. He said that effective technology based training programmes was essential to achieve good governance.

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Indian Railway Unveils Anji Khad Bridge, India's First Cable-stayed Rail Bridge

The Indian Railways in January, 2025 unveiled a monumental engineering achievement with the completion of the Anji Khad Bridge, India's first cable-stayed rail bridge. Situated in the challenging terrain of the Reasi district in Jammu & Kashmir, this bridge is a key component of the ambitious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) Project.

Stretching 725·5 meters in length, the Anji Khad Bridge stands as a testament to cutting-edge engineering and innovation. Connecting Katra and Reasi, the bridge rises 331 meters above the riverbed, with its single main pylon towering 193 meters from its foundation. Its asymmetrical design, supported by 96 cables varying in length from 82 to 295 meters, ensures stability amidst the region's complex geological and seismic challenges.

- The Anji Khad Bridge is divided into four sections, including a 473·25 meter cable-stayed span crossing a deep valley and a 120 meter ancillary viaduct on the Reasi side.

- The bridge also features a single railway line, a 3·75 meter-wide service road, and 1·5 meter-wide footpaths on both sides, withstanding wind speeds of up to 213 km/h.
- Designed for speeds of 100 km/h, the bridge integrates state-of-the-art construction techniques and advanced equipment, such as the DOKA jump form shuttering system and a 40 tonne tower crane imported from Spain. These innovations enhanced safety and efficiency, reducing construction time by approximately 30%.
- The Anji Khad Bridge is equipped with an integrated monitoring system, featuring numerous sensors to ensure structural health during its service life. Its design, combining Indian codes with Eurocodes, underwent rigorous proof-checking by international firms like COWI (UK) and ITALFERR (Italy), further emphasizing its global standards.

PM Modi Inaugurates Z-Morh Tunnel in Jammu & Kashmir

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 13, 2025 inaugurated the strategically important Z-Morh Tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir's Ganderbal district, providing all-weather connectivity between Srinagar and Sonamarg and further to Leh, bypassing landslide and avalanche routes and ensuring safer and uninterrupted access to Ladakh region.

- Built at an altitude of 8,650 feet, Z-Morh tunnel – named such after the treacherous Z-shaped mountain pass—at Gagangir in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district is located 10 km ahead of the tourist resort of Sonamarg.
- Besides providing strategic accessibility to defence forces, it will connect Sonamarg with capital Srinagar all year round, will boost the economy and bring more tourists. Another 14·15 km Zoji La Tunnel, being constructed 18 kilometres away from Z-Morh, will make the strategic Srinagar-Sonamarg-Leh highway an all-weather road.
- The Z-Morh tunnel was constructed at a cost of ₹ 2,700 crores. It is equipped with an intelligent traffic management system, and includes a main tunnel, a parallel escape tunnel, and a ventilation tunnel.
- Situated at an altitude of over 8,650 feet above sea level, the Sonamarg Tunnel will enhance all-weather connectivity between Srinagar and Sonamarg. Situated between the snow-clad Himalayan peaks, the Sonamarg Tunnel is expected to unlock the full potential of the region's trade and tourism sectors.

ODISHA

Odisha Govt. Announces Monthly Pension and Free Healthcare for Emergency Detainees

The Odisha government-led by Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Majhi on January 13, 2025 announced a monthly pension of ₹ 20,000 and free healthcare for those jailed during Emergency in 1975-77. According to the latest notification issued by the state home department, the pension will be provided to persons detained in jails in Odisha under MISA (The Maintenance of Internal Security Act, 1971) or DIR (The Defence of India Rules) or DISIR (The Defence and Internal Security of India Rules) from June 26, 1975, to March 21, 1977.

These benefits will be provided for the period starting from January 1, 2025. No benefit shall be paid for the period prior to January 1, 2025. The pension amount will be sanctioned in favour of the living persons *i.e.*, those who were alive as on January 1, 2025, irrespective of the period of their detention.

Three states in the country have introduced pension schemes for the MISA or DIR prisoners of emergency period. While, Madhya Pradesh is giving ₹ 15,000 to ₹ 25,000 per annum to emergency victims, Chhattisgarh is giving ₹ 5,000 to ₹ 25,000 per month and Rajasthan ₹ 20,000.

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Employment And Career News

Union Public Service Commission

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for Civil Services Examination-2025.

Last Date for Submission of Online Applications : February 11, 2025

Age Limit : A candidate must have attained the age of 21 years and must not have attained the age of 32 years on the 1st of August, 2025 *i.e.*, the candidate must have been born not earlier than 2nd August, 1993 and not later than 1st August, 2004. Relaxation in the upper age limit will be conceded as per the UPSC norms.

Minimum Educational Qualification : A candidate must hold a Graduate degree of any of the Universities incorporated by an Act of the Central or State Legislature in India or other educational institutions established by an Act of Parliament or declared to be deemed as a University under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956 or possess an equivalent qualification.

Scheme of Examination : The Civil Services Examination will consist of two successive stages—(1) Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination (Objective type) for the selection of candidates for the Main Examination; and (2) Civil Services (Main) Examination (Written and Interview).

How to Apply : Candidates are required to apply online by using the website http://upsconline.gov.in. It is essential for the applicant to register himself/herself first at One Time Registration (OTR) platform, available on the Commission's website, and then proceed for filling up the online application for the examination.

Delhi Subordinate Services Selection Board

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for 'Combined Examination, 2024 for the posts of Post Graduate Teachers'.

Last Date for Submission of Online Applications : February 14, 2025.

Age Limit (As on February 14, 2025) : The age of the candidates should not be more than 30 years as

FORTHCOMING COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS, 2025

- SSC Constable (General Duty) Recruitment Exam., 2025 (4-25 Feb.)
- UPSC Engineering Services (Pre.) Exam., 2025 (8 Feb.)
- Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Entrance Exam., 2025-26 (For Class-IX) (8 Feb.)
- RBI Junior Engineer Recruitment Exam., 2024 (8 Feb.)
- UPSC Combined Geo-Scientist (Pre.) 2025 (9 Feb.)
- Chhattisgarh PSC State Services (Pre.) Exam., 2024 (9 Feb.)
- Madhya Pradesh PSC State Services (Pre.) Exam., 2025 (16 Feb.)
- CSIR-UGC-NET/JRF (December, 2024) Exam. (16-28 Feb.)
- SBI Junior Associate Clerk (Customer Support and Service) Recruitment Exam., 2024 (Phase-I) (Feb.)
- Air Force Common Admission Test (AFCAT) Recruitment Exam., 2025 (22-23 Feb.)
- Coast Guard Assistant Commandant Recruitment Exam., 2024 (25 Feb.)
- Rajasthan Teachers Eligibility Test (REET), 2024 (27 Feb.)
- Joint CSIR-UGC-NET Exam. (Dec. 2024) (28 Feb.–2 Mar.)
- SBI Probationary Officers (Pre.) Exam., 2024 (8 & 15 March)
- MP Middle & Primary School Teacher Recruitment Test, 2024 (20 March)
- Air Force Agniveer Vayu Selection Test 2025 (22 March)
- SBI Junior Associate Clerk (Customer Sales & Support) Recruitment Exam., 2024 (Phase-II) (Mar./April)
- Rajasthan Jail Prahari Computer Based Recruitment Exam., 2024 (9-12 April)
- Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Entrance Exam., 2025 (Hilly Areas) (12 April)
- NDA and NA (I) Exam., 2025 (13 April)
- CDS (I) Exam., 2025 (13 April)
- SBI Probationary Officers (Mains) Exam., 2024 (April-May)
- Uttarakhand Public Service Commission RO/ARO (Pre.) Exam., 2024 (4 May)
- Uttarakhand Public Service Commission Combined Lower Subordinate (Pre.) Exam., 2024 (11 May)
- Rajasthan Junior Technical Assistant Recruitment Exam., 2024 (18 May)
- Chhattisgarh (Pre.) B.Ed. Entrance Exam., 2025 (22 May)
- Chhattisgarh (Pre.) D.El.Ed. Entrance Exam., 2025 (22 May)
- UPSC Civil Services (Pre.) Exam., 2025 (25 May)
- Rajasthan Pashudhan Sahayak Recruitment Exam., 2024 (13 June)
- Uttarakhand Police Constable Recruitment Exam., 2024 (15 June)
- Rajasthan Accounts Assistant Recruitment Exam., 2024 (16 June)
- UPSC Combined Geo-Scientist (Main) Exam., 2025 (21 June)
- Chhattisgarh Home-Guard Recruitment Exam., 2024 (22 June)
- Chhattisgarh PSC State Services (Main) Exam., 2024 (26-29 June)
- Uttarakhand PSC Combined State/Upper Subordinate (Pre.) Exam., 2025 (29 June)
- SSC Combined Graduate Level Recruitment Exam., 2025 (Tier-I) (June-July)
- Rajasthan Librarian Grade-III Recruitment Exam., 2024 (27 July)
- Chhattisgarh Excise Constable Recruitment Exam., 2024 (27 July)
- CAPF Assistant Commandant Recruitment Exam., 2025 (3 Aug.)
- Rajasthan Grade-IV Staff Recruitment Exam., 2024 (18-21 Sept.)
- Rajasthan Drivers Recruitment Exam., 2024 (22-23 Nov.)

on February 14, 2025. Relaxation in the upper age limit will be given as per set norms.

Essential Educational Qualifications : Candidates must possess Master's Degree in their respective subjects along with a B.Ed degree.

How to Apply : Eligible candidates may apply online through the website https://dsssbonline.nic.in.

Union Public Service Commission

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for the Indian Forest Service Examination-2025.

Last Date for Submission of Online Applications : February 11, 2025.

Age Limit : A candidate must have attained the age of 21 years and must not have attained the age of 32 years on 1st August, 2025 *i.e.*, he must have been born not earlier than 2nd August, 1993 and not later than 1st August, 2004. Relaxation in upper age limit will be conceded as per the UPSC norms.

Minimum Educational Qualifications : A candidate must hold a Bachelor's degree with at least one of the subjects namely Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Science, Botany, Chemistry, Geology, Mathematics, Physics, Statistics and Zoology or a Bachelor's degree in Agriculture, Forestry or in Engineering of any of Universities incorporated by an Act of the Central or State Legislature in India or other educational institutions established by an Act of Parliament or declared to be deemed as a University under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956, or possess an equivalent qualification.

Scheme of Examination : The Indian Forest Service Examination will consist of two successive stages:

Stage 1 : Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination (Objective type) for the selection of candidates for the Indian Forest Service (Main) Examination.

Stage 2 : Indian Forest Service (Main) Examination (Written and Interview).

How to Apply : Candidates are required to apply Online only by using the website https://upsconline.gov.in. It is essential for the applicant to register himself/herself first at One Time Registration (OTR) platform, available on the Commission's website and then proceed for filling up the online application for the examination.

Candidates applying for Indian Forest Service Examination should note that they are required to appear in the Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination and qualify the same for going to the second stage of Indian Forest Service (Main) Examination (Written and Interview).

Candidates desirous of applying for Indian Forest Service Examination as well as for Civil Services Examination can apply through a common online application form subject to meeting the requisite eligibility criteria by them.

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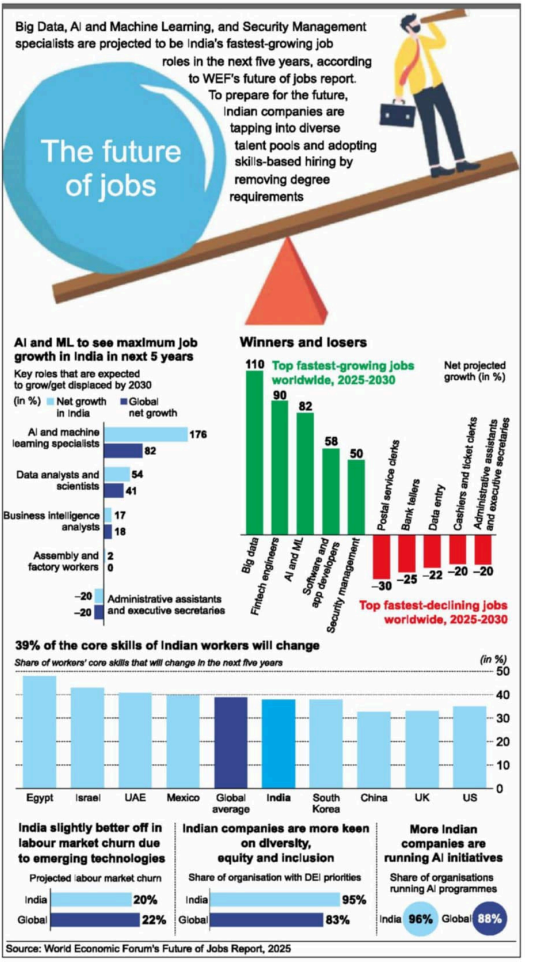
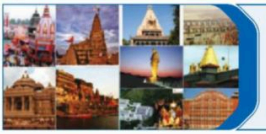




Memorable Points

NATIONAL

- Who has been appointed as the new Director General of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) ? —**Gyanendra Pratap Singh**
  - Gyanendra Pratap Singh, a 1991-batch IPS officer from the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, was on January 18, 2025 appointed as the new Director General of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) by the Central government. Prior to this assignment as DG of CRPF, he was Director General of Police (DGP) of Assam. The new CRPF DG has previously served in the Special Protection Group (SPG) and the National Investigation Agency (NIA), among other senior roles in the state police.
- Who has been appointed as the new Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) ? —**Sanjiv Ranjan**
  - Sanjiv Ranjan, a member of the 1993 batch of IFS officers was appointed as the next Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). The Indian Ocean Rim Association is a regional organization that connects countries bordering the Indian Ocean, fostering collaboration in areas such as economic cooperation, sustainable development and regional security. He assumed the role on January 1, 2025 for a tenure of 3 years. His appointment marks the beginning of a new chapter for IORA which promotes cooperation among Indian Ocean Rim Member states, Dialogue Partners and other International Stakeholders.
- Where was the 27th International Congress on Glass, 2025 Conference organized ? —**Kolkata**
  - The 27th International Congress on Glass (ICG) 2025 conference was organized from January 20 to 24, 2025 at the Biswa Bangla Convention Center in Kolkata, India. The conference organized by CSIR-Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute (CSIR-CGCRI), was inaugurated by Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology. The theme of the congress was "Glass : A Smart and Indispensable Material for Sustainable Society". Glass's critical role in space, defence and other sectors was highlighted. More than 550 delegates, including 150 international participants, attended ICG 2025.
- Who has been conferred on the Gangadhar National Award for Poetry 2023 ? —**Odia poet Prativa Satpathy**
  - Noted Odia poet Prativa Satpathy was on January 5, 2025 conferred on the Gangadhar National Award for Poetry 2023 by the Sambalpur University on the occasion of its 58th foundation day on January 5. Satpathy, a recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award, came into prominence in the 1960s with 'Sesha Janha'. Her writings in Odia have been translated into several Indian and foreign languages. Named after renowned Odisha poet Gangadhar Meher, the award, instituted by the university in 1989, is presented every year during its foundation day function. The award carries a citation, shawl and cash prize of ₹ 1,00,000.
- Which cross-border payment firm got RBI approval in January 2025 to operate as a Payment Aggregator-Cross Border (PA-CB) entity ? —**Skydo**
  - Bengaluru-based cross-border payments firm Skydo on January 21, 2025 received an in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as a Payment Aggregator-Cross Border (PA-CB) entity. At present, only five entities have received final approval from the banking regulator to operate as PA-CB. These include Adyen India Technology Services, Amazon Pay (India), Cashfree Payments, IndiaIdeas.com, and Pay10 Services.
- Which financial institution organized the Grameen Mahotsav 2025 ? —**NABARD**
  - Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the Grameen Mahotsav 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi from January 4-9, 2025. It was organized by NABARD in collaboration with the Department of Financial Services. The theme of the event was 'Building a Resilient Rural India for a Viksit Bharat 2047'. The event brought together government officials, thought leaders, rural entrepreneurs and stakeholders from various sectors to collaborate on initiatives that foster sustainable rural growth.
- What is the name of FM channel dedicated to Mahakumbh 2025 ? —**Kumbhvani**
  - On January 10, 2025, UP CM Shri Yogi Adityanath launched a special FM channel of All India Radio Kumbhvani (103·5 MHz), dedicated to Maha Kumbh 2025, at Circuit House, Prayagraj. He also inaugurated the Kumbh Mangal Dhwani. The live commentary on Kumbhvani, initiative of Prasar Bharati, will be beneficial for those who would not be able to participate in the Kumbh. It will also disseminate important information to the devotees and make them feel the cultural vibes at their homes.
- Who has been named Chairman of Working Group for the base revision of WPI ? —**Prof. Ramesh Chand**
  - On January 2, 2025, the Union Government constituted a Working Group for base revision of the current series of Wholesale Price Index (WPI) from base 2011-12 to 2022-23. Prof. Ramesh Chand, Member, NITI Aayog, has been named Chairman of the Working Group, with 5 non-official members and Deputy Director General, DPIIT, as Member-Secretary. The Working Group will suggest the commodity basket of WPI and PPI with base year 2022-23 in the light of structural changes in the economy, along with other term of references.

INTERNATIONAL

- Which great footballer has been presented US Presidential Medal of Freedom recently ? **—Lionel Messi**
  - The then US President Joe Biden presented the US Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honour in the United States of America, to Lionel Messi from Argentina, in a ceremony on January 4, 2025. Messi became the first men's footballer (soccer player) to receive the honour and the second from the sport after Megan Rapinoe, who received it in 2022. The then US President Joe Biden presented the award, with the Argentine being one of the 19 recipients. The medal is presented to individuals who have contributed to the prosperity, values, or security of the United States, world peace, or other significant societal, public or private endeavours.
- Which African country joined BRICS group as its 9th partner country ? **—Nigeria**
  - Nigeria on January 17, 2025 joined BRICS group as its partner country, bringing the total number of BRICS partner countries to nine, joining Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Thailand, Uganda and Uzbekistan. The announcement was made by Brazil's Foreign Ministry, highlighting Nigeria's significant role in strengthening South-South cooperation and advocating for global governance reforms.
- Which country became full member of BRICS group ? **—Indonesia**
  - Brazil, the Presiding country of BRICS group in 2025, on January 6, 2025 announced Indonesia's entry as the full member of BRICS group. Indonesia's membership was approved at the Johannesburg Summit in August 2023 and formalized after the formation of the country's new government, which waited for the conclusion of the presidential elections in 2024 to confirm its interest. It is the first South-East Asian country to join the BRICS.
- What was the theme of the World Hindi Day 2025 ? **—'A Global Voice of Unity and Cultural Pride'**
  - World Hindi Day was observed on January 10, 2025. It is an important day that celebrates the promotion of the Hindi language at a global level. In 2025, the theme of the World Hindi Day was "A Global Voice of Unity and Cultural Pride. This theme aims to focus on Hindi as a language for international communication and cultural exchange. It aims to promote Hindi in various forums at a global level, as it helps bring unity among various cultures. World Hindi Day was first observed on January 10, 2006, following an initiative by the Government of India. This date commemorates the inaugural World Hindi Conference held in Nagpur in 1975, which marked a pivotal moment for the Hindi language on the international stage.
- Who has been honoured with the Singapore Honorary Citizen Award this year ? **—Tarun Das**
  - Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam conferred the Singapore Honorary Citizen Award, the highest recognition for non-Singaporeans, to former Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Director General Tarun Das for his outstanding contribution to strengthening bilateral relations during a ceremony in New Delhi on January 15, 2025. Highlighting Das's role as one of Singapore's 'strongest advocates in India', Singapore's ministry of foreign affairs said that Das first led a delegation of Indian industrialists to Singapore in 1993 as part of India's 'Look East' policy.
- Who emerged winner of the 2024 FIDE World Blitz Chess Championship title ? **—Magnus Carlsen and Ian Nepomniachtchi**
  - Grandmasters Magnus Carlsen and Ian Nepomniachtchi emerged joint winners of the 2024 FIDE World Blitz Chess Championship title on December 31, 2024 in New York. With nothing to separate the duo after 7 games, the reigning world blitz champion - Carlsen, made a never-seen-before proposal to his opponent - that they should share the title. Nepomniachtchi agreed without hesitation and created history. Carlsen claimed his eighth World Blitz title, while Nepomniachtchi earned his first. This marks the first time in chess history that a World Championship title has been shared.
- Which country retained its top position on the Global Fire Power Index 2025 ? **—USA**
  - The United States of America (USA) retained its top position on the Global Fire Power Index 2025 released in January 2025 by a website Globalfirepower.com. India has been ranked as the 4th most powerful military in the world according to the Global Firepower Index 2025. Russia and China secured second and third ranks on the list like last year edition. The Global Firepower Index compares 145 countries military power based on their war-making capabilities and excludes a country's nuclear weapon capability. Bhutan ranked lowest at 145th.
- Who have been chosen for the WEF Crystal Awards 2025 ? **—Riken Yamamoto, Diane von Furstenberg and David Beckham**
  - Riken Yamamoto, Diane von Furstenberg and David Beckham were on January 9, 2025 chosen for the 31st Annual Crystal Awards 2025 by World Economic Forum (WEF). Renowned architect and 2024 Pritzker Prize laureate Riken Yamamoto, celebrated fashion designer, philanthropist and champion of women's rights Diane von Furstenberg, and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and global advocate for children's rights David Beckham got the honours for their significant contributions to advancing social, environmental and creative progress worldwide.
- Who became the new Prime Minister of Ireland ? **—Micheál Martin**
  - Micheál Martin became Ireland's Taoiseach (Prime Minister) for the second time in his political career on January 23, 2025. Fianna Fail Party leader Micheál Martin is one of the longest serving TDs (MPs) in the Dáil having been first elected in 1989 to the constituency of Cork south central and was previously Taoiseach between 2020 and 2022.



Science & Technology

SpaDex : ISRO's Space Docking Mission

On December 30, 2024, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX), aboard PSLV C60 rocket in 475 km circular orbit, making it the 99th launch from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.

Overview of the Mission

Objectives :

- **Primary objective :** Develop and demonstrate the technology needed for rendezvous, docking, and undocking of two small spacecraft—SDX01 (named as Chaser), and SDX02 (named as Target) in a low-Earth circular orbit. Both the satellites are androgynous in nature *i.e.*, either of the spacecraft can act as chaser (active spacecraft) during docking.
- **Secondary objective :** Demonstrate the transfer of electric power between the docked spacecraft; composite spacecraft control; and payload operations after undocking.

Mission's Operation

- Launching of Chaser and Target in the Low Earth Circular Orbit, simultaneously but separately. Both the satellites to be separated by 20 km with identical velocity and similar orbit to achieve Far Rendezvous.
- Chaser to approach Target with progressively reduced inter-satellite distances of 5 km, 1·5 km, 500 m, 225 m, 15 m, and 3 m, ultimately leading to the docking of the two spacecraft. It will be followed by demonstrating electrical power transfer between the two satellites.
- Undocking and separation of both the satellites and operating their respective payloads with expected mission life of up to two years.
- The Chaser satellite has a high-resolution camera on board—a miniature version of a surveillance camera. The Target is carrying a multispectral payload that will be used for monitoring natural resources and vegetation along with a radiation monitor that will study space radiation and create a database.

Space Rendezvous is accomplished when two spacecrafts attain the same position vector and velocity vector at the same time. On December 15, 1965, Gemini VI and VII of NASA met for the first rendezvous in space.

Key Technologies

- Inter-satellite communication link (ISL) for autonomous communication between spacecraft, incorporated with inbuilt intelligence to know the states of the other spacecraft.
- GNSS-based Novel Relative Orbit Determination and Propagation (RODP) processor to determine the relative position and velocity of the other spacecraft.
- Laser Range Finder (LRF), Rendezvous Sensor (RS), and Proximity & Docking Sensor (PDS) for precise measurement of distance and altitude.
- Mechanism Entry Sensor (MES) for initiating docking and Video Monitor (VM) for real time imaging of docking operations.
- Other technologies are : Docking mechanism, Power Transfer Technology, autonomous rendezvous and docking strategy.

Important Payloads of PS4-Orbital Experiment Module (POEM-4)

- Compact Research Module for Orbital Plant Studies (CROPS), developed by VSSC, is a 5 to 7 day experiment to demonstrate seed germination and plant sustenance until the two-leaf stage in a microgravity environment.
- Relocatable Robotic Manipulator-Technology Demonstrator (RRM-TD), also known as the Walking Robotic Arm, is India's first space robotic manipulator with walking capability, developed by the ISRO Inertial Systems Unit (IISU), Thiruvananthapuram.
- Debris Capture Robotic Manipulator, developed by VSSC, to demonstrate the capturing of tethered debris by a robotic manipulator using visual servoing and object motion prediction in the space environment.
- Amity Plant Experimental Module in Space (APEMS), developed by Amity University in Mumbai, to study growth-related changes in plant callus using the 'Spinacia oleracea' model under microgravity in space.
- The RVSat-1 payload is developed by RV College of Engineering, Bengaluru, to perform a microbiological experiment under microgravity conditions in Low Earth Orbit.
- RUDRA 1·0 HPGP, developed by Bellatrix Aerospace, to demonstrate a high-performance Green Propulsion System.
- BGS ARPIT (Amateur Radio Payload for Information Transmission), developed by Karnataka's SJC Institute of Technology, is a multimode message transmitter payload that can transmit audio, text, and image messages from a satellite to the ground using FM modulation and the VHF band.
- The Varuna payload is developed by Piersight Space, Ahmedabad. It is an in-orbit demonstration of a Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) in a CubeSat form factor.

Significance of the SpaDeX Mission

- The demonstration of the space docking technology is essential for ISRO's future missions such as Chandrayaan-4, building and operation of the Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS) by 2035 and sending Indian astronaut to the Moon by 2040.
- It is also the 4th POEM Mission (POEM-4), of which 14 payloads are from ISRO and its centres, and 10 payloads from Non-Government Entities, received through IN-SPACe.

- First ISRO's mission carrying a biological experiment-CROPS- developed by Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC).

Injectable Hydrogel for Targeted Breast Cancer Therapy

Researchers from IIT Guwahati-led by Professor Debapratim Das, in collaboration with the Bose Institute, Kolkata, have developed an advanced injectable hydrogel for localized breast cancer treatment. The study was published in the Materials Horizons journal of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

Effectiveness of the Treatment : During pre-clinical trials conducted on a murine model of breast cancer, a single injection of the hydrogel loaded with Doxorubicin, a chemotherapy drug, achieved approximately 75 per cent tumour size reduction within 18 days. The hydrogel remained localised, releasing the drug steadily without impacting other organs, demonstrating its safety profile.

How the Injectable Hydrogel-based Cancer Therapy Functions ?

- Hydrogels are made from ultra-short peptides, which are biodegradable and biocompatible components of proteins.
- These Hydrogels are designed to remain insoluble in biological fluids, ensuring it stays localised and stable at the injection site.
- It activates in response to elevated Glutathione (GSH) levels which is found in higher concentrations within the tumour cells.
- Once activated, the hydrogel releases the drug in a controlled manner directly into the tumour, reducing its impact on healthy cells and minimising systemic side effects.

What are Hydrogels ?

- They are three-dimensional (3D) structured networks, of crosslinked hydrophilic polymer molecules such as Hydroxyl (–OH), Carboxyl group (–COOH), Amide group (–CONH–), Amine group (–NH_2), Sulphonic Acid (SO_3H), etc., which facilitates their structural integrity and prevents their immediate dissolution in the aqueous environment.
- Their ability to entrap and preserve a substantial amount of water or biological solutions, and the unique combination of softness and flexibility are similar to natural soft tissues and thus make them promising materials for biomedical applications.
- For the treatment of cancers or tumours, the drugs are incorporated within a hydrogel and injected directly into the tumour site or adjacent areas, restricting the toxicity of the drugs to the localized area where tumour cells persist.

Advantages of Hydrogel-based Cancer Therapy

- It has the potential to revolutionise localised cancer treatment, offering a safer and more effective alternative to traditional therapies, such as chemotherapy which destroys healthy tissues as well.
- It also improves drug uptake by cancer cells, induces cell cycle arrest and triggers programmed cell death, making it potent on several fronts in cancer treatment.
- It helps in minimizing toxicity by enhancing the drug's effectiveness while reducing the required dosage.
- The hydrogel's ability to synchronise with the biological environment makes it a promising tool for precision drug delivery.

Parker Solar Probe Makes Closest Pass to Sun

On December 24, 2024, NASA's Parker Solar Probe made history by flying closer to the Sun than any other spacecraft. It broke its previous record by flying 3·8 million miles (about 6 million km) above the surface of the Sun, at a speed of 430,000 miles per hour (692017·92 km/hr), which is faster than any human-made object has ever moved.

Parker Solar Probe was launched on August 12, 2018 as part of NASA's 'Living With a Star' program to explore aspects of the Sun-Earth system that directly affect life and society on Earth. It has four instrument suites to study heating of the Sun's Corona, trace the flow of energy and to explore what accelerates the solar wind. The probe is expected to complete 24 orbits of the sun over its seven year lifespan. Over the years, it has completed 21 orbits around the Sun.

How Parker Probe Endures High Temperature ?

- It is fitted with 4·5-inch-thick carbon-composite shield—a carbon composite foam sandwiched between two carbon plates.
- It protects the instruments fitted behind the heat shield which remains at 29·4°C, despite the front side of the shield exposed to the very high temperature–1,371°C.
- In addition, the probe circulates a single gallon of water through its solar panels, absorbing heat and radiating it back into space.

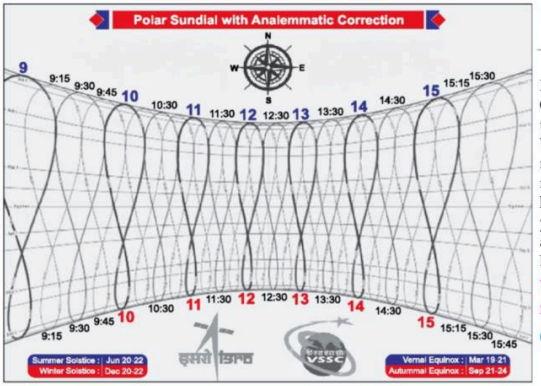
Unravelling Mysteries : Significance of Parker Probe

Data and measurements from Parker Solar Probe help in finding answers for :

- Origin and acceleration of solar winds which affects space environment and life on the Earth.
- Reason for high temperature of Corona as compared to the Photosphere of the Sun.
- Formation of Coronal Mass Ejections, which are massive clouds of plasma that hurl through space.
- Sources of the high-energy solar particles.
- Forecasting space weather which the orbits of satellites, shorten their lifetimes, or interfere with onboard electronics.

Polar Sundial at VSSC Space Museum

In November 2024, a team consisting of members from the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) successfully designed and installed an accurate and fully functional sundial at the Rocket Garden of VSSC Space Museum, Thumba in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. Being among the exclusive few analemma-corrected sundials in the world, it features a unique design that enables simultaneous time and date reading throughout the year using a single dial and pointer.



VSSC's Polar Sundial : Features and Structure

- As compared to the conventional sundials which have straight hour lines to indicate the local time, the polar sundial of VSSC has inverted analemma curves. This built-in 'analemmatic correction' automatically converts local solar time to mean solar time throughout the year.
- An additional longitude correction is applied, shifting the curves westward by 22·53 minutes, based on the local longitude of Thumba, to obtain the exact Indian Standard Time (IST) as seen on clocks and watches all across India.
- The analemmatic correction enables the sundial indicating the date : the horizontal declination curves indicate the start of each month, with the northern & southern extremes marking the solstices, and the central line marking the equinoxes.
- Instead of hour and minute lines, every 15 minutes shows a complete analemma with the path from December to June in red and from June back to December in blue. Red and Blue colours indicate which halves of the analemma curves are to be used in each season, enabling round-the-year measurements.
- The sundial adopts a polar configuration, in which the sundial plate is parallel to the Earth's polar axis, with the style parallel to the equatorial plane of the Earth.
- The sundial plate is affixed to the wedge-shape structure, whose angle is determined by the latitude of the location. In case of Thumba (8·53°N, 76·86°E), the sundial face is the top of a wedge with an angle of 8·53°. The 'style'—the upright section which casts the shadow on the sundial—is a 1·6 ft tall, 3D-printed miniature of the Rohini series RH200 sounding rocket.

Analemma' is the figure-eight pattern made by the sun in the sky over the course of a year, generated by a combination of the Earth's tilt and its elliptical orbit.

Willow Chip : A Giant Leap in the Quantum Computing

On December 9, 2024, Hartmut Neven, Founder and Lead, Google Quantum AI, announced the launch of the state-of-the-art quantum chip named Willow. It was able to solve the complex mathematical problem in just five minutes, which supercomputers would have taken around 10 septillion (10^{25}) years to complete. It has been developed at the Google's Quantum Lab at Santa Barbara, California.

Willow's Quantum Error Correction

- Qubits, the basic unit of quantum computing, is prone to error as they are highly sensitive to fluctuation in environment, making integrity of the calculations difficult.
- According to the study published in journal Nature, Google tested ever-larger arrays of physical qubits, and achieved exponential reduction in the error rate.
- It was able to cut down errors while scaling up the number of qubits, achieving below threshold, and allowing the chip to perform larger computations with fewer errors.

Unlike classical computers, quantum computer uses quantum bits, or qubits, which can be 0 or 1 or both at the same time. It allows quantum chips to handle complex calculations much faster than traditional computers, which use bits to represent information as 0 or 1.

Other Scientific Breakthroughs

- Willow is one of the first examples of real-time error correction on a superconducting quantum system.
- It has also demonstrated 'Beyond Breakeven', in which arrays of qubits have longer lifetimes than the individual physical qubits.
- Willow operates using superconducting transmon qubits—tiny electrical circuits exhibiting quantum behaviour at extremely low temperatures, just above absolute zero to minimise vibrations and other disturbances that could introduce errors in calculations.
- Willow's ability to outperform supercomputers in the Random Circuit Sampling (RCS), which evaluates quantum computer performance in the presence of noise, specifically their ability to outperform classical supercomputers.

GenCast : Google's AI-based Weather Prediction Model

GenCast, an AI-based weather prediction model, was developed by the Google DeepMind. It is trained on a diffusion model approach and is trained on historical reanalysis data from 1979-2018.

It performs better than the traditional numerical weather prediction systems, and produces forecast for several atmospheric variables such as temperature, pressure, wind speed and humidity. It improves the accuracy

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Economic Scenario

- *Q2 FY 25 : Current Account Deficit at 1·2% of GDP; BoP Surplus at $ 18·6 Billion*
- *India's Share of Global Trade in Textiles and Apparel Stands at 3·9%*
- *Cabinet Approves Extension of One-time Special Package on Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) Beyond the NBS Subsidy*
- *Cabinet Approves Modification in the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme*
- *Government Amends Foreign Trade Policy, 2023*
- *Rural Poverty Ratio Drops Below 5% for the First Time in FY 24 : SBI Report*
- *'Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2024' : Report*
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- *2025 Welcomes 'Generation Beta'*
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- *Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal Launches National Turmeric Board*
- *IREDA, SJVN, GMR and NEA Seal Partnership for 900 MW Upper Karnali Hydropower Project in Nepal*
- *Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for Raw Jute for 2025-26 Season*
- *Odisha Fiscally Healthiest; Punjab, AP, WB Laggards : NITI Aayog Report*

Q2 FY25 : Current Account Deficit at 1·2% of GDP; BoP Surplus at $ 18·6 Billion

India's Current Account Deficit (CAD) marginally narrowed to $ 11·2 billion (1·2 per cent of GDP) during the July-September quarter of FY 2025 (Q2FY25) from $ 11·3 billion (1·3 per cent of GDP) a year ago, amid a rise in service exports.

- Sequentially, the CAD widened from $ 9·7 billion in the April-June quarter (Q1) {1·1 per cent GDP}.
- Merchandise trade deficit increased to $ 75·3 billion in the second quarter of FY2024-25 from $ 64·5 billion during the same period of last year.

Balance Sheet : Current Account Profile ($ billion)

	Q2 FY 24	Q2 FY25
Current account balance	– 11·3	– 11·2
Current account balance as % of GDP	– 1·3	– 1·2
Goods	– 64·5	– 75·3
Services	39·9	44·5
Primary income	– 11·6	– 9·5
Secondary income	24·9	29·1

Source : RBI

- Net services receipts increased to $ 44·5 billion in Q2 : 2024-25 from US $ 39·9 billion a year ago. Services exports have risen on a Y-o-Y basis across major categories such as computer services, business services, travel services and transportation services.
- Net outgo on the primary income account, primarily reflecting payments of investment income, decreased to $ 9·5 billion in Q2 of 2024-25 from $ 11·6 billion during the same period of last year.
- Private transfer receipts, mainly representing remittances by Indians employed overseas, rose to $ 31·9 billion in Q2 : 2024-25 from $ 28·1 billion in Q2 : 2023-24.
- Non-resident deposits (NRI deposits) recorded net inflows of $ 6·2 billion, higher than $ 3·2 billion a year ago. Net inflows under foreign portfolio investment surged to $ 19·9 billion from $ 4·9 billion in the year ago period.
- Net inflows under External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) in the country was $ 5 billion in Q2 as against outflows of $ 1·9 billion in the corresponding period a year ago.
- India's balance of payments was a surplus of $ 18·6 billion in July-September, compared with a surplus of $ 2·5 billion in the year ago period.
- There was an accretion of $ 18·6 billion to the foreign exchange reserves (on a BoP basis) in Q2 of 2024-25, higher than $ 2·5 billion in Q2 of 2023-24.
- For the half year, CAD was $ 21·4 billion or 1·2 per cent of GDP in April-September as compared with $ 20·2 billion or 1·2 per cent of GDP during the same period of last year.

India's Share of Global Trade in Textiles and Apparel Stands at 3·9%

- Ready Made Garments (RMG) with export of $ 8,733 million has the largest share (41%) in the total exports ($ 21,358 million) followed by Cotton Textiles (33%, $ 7,082 million), Man-Made Textiles (15%, $ 3,105 million) during the period of April-October of FY 2024-25.
- Import of textiles and apparel products by India during FY 2023-24 ($ 8,946 million) has decreased by approximately 15% in comparison to FY 2022-23 ($ 10,481 million).

- India was the 6th largest exporter of Textiles & Apparel in the world in 2023.
- The share of Textile and Apparel (T&A) including handicrafts in India's total exports stands at a significant 8·21% in 2023-24.
- India has a share of 3·9% of the global trade in textiles and apparel.
- Major textile and apparel export destinations for India are USA and EU and with around 47% share in total textile and apparel exports.
- India is a major textile and apparel exporting country and enjoys trade surplus.
- Bulk of import takes place for re-export or for industry requirement of raw material.

It is noteworthy that export is a function of demand and supply and depends on factors such as global demand, internal consumption and demand, order flow, logistics etc. Exports also gets affected by many geopolitical situations (such as Red Sea crisis, Bangladesh crisis etc.). Export in FY 2024 was initially low mainly due to the geopolitical crises around Red Sea, which affected export movement during January, February and March 2024.

- The overall export of Textiles & Apparel (incl. handicrafts) marked a growth of 7% during April-October period of FY 2024-25 ($ 21,358 million) compared to same period of FY 2023-24 ($ 20,007 million).
- Ready Made Garments (RMG) category with export of $ 8,733 million has the largest share (41%) in the total exports ($ 21,358 million) during the period of April-October of FY 2024-25, followed by Cotton Textiles (33%, $ 7,082 million), Man- Made Textiles (15%, $ 3,105 million).
- Growth of exports is observed in all principal commodities during the period of April-October of FY 2024-25 compared to corresponding period of FY 2023-24, except wool and handloom which decline by 19% and 6% respectively.
- Import of textiles and apparel products by India during FY 2023-24 ($ 8,946 million) has decreased by approximately 15% in comparison to FY 2022-23 ($ 10,481 million).
- The overall import of Textiles & Apparel (incl. handicrafts) declined 1% during April-October period of FY 2024-25 ($ 5,425 million) compared to same period of FY 2023-24 ($ 5,464 million).
- Man-made Textiles category with import of $ 1859 million has the largest share (34%) in the total imports ($ 5,425 million) during the period of April-October of FY 2024-25, as there is demand supply gap in this sector.
- Growth of imports is observed majorly in Cotton Textiles mainly on account of import of long staple cotton fibre and such trends of import indicates towards an increase in production capacity of the country amidst rising consumption and self-reliance.

Cabinet Approves Extension of One-time Special Package on Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) Beyond the NBS Subsidy

The Union Cabinet, on January 1, 2024, has approved the proposal of the Department of Fertilizers for extension of One-time Special Package on Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) beyond the NBS subsidy @ ₹ 3,500 per MT for the period from 01.01.2025 till further orders to ensure sustainable availability of DAP at affordable prices to the farmers. The tentative budgetary requirement for above would be approximately upto ₹ 3,850 crore.

Background

28 grades of P&K fertilizers are made available to farmers at subsidized prices through fertilizer manufacturers/importers. The subsidy on P&K fertilizers is governed by NBS Scheme w.e.f., 01.04.2010. Continuing top most priority in keeping farmers' welfare in firm focus, Government of India has extended a massive relief to farmers in keeping the price of Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) fertilizer unchanged. Inspite of geopolitical constraints and volatility of global market conditions, Government kept its commitment towards farmer friendly approach by ensuring availability of DAP to farmers at affordable prices for Kharif and Rabi 2024-25. Cabinet in July, 2024 had approved one-time Special Package on DAP beyond the NBS subsidy @ ₹ 3,500 per MT from 01.04.2024 to 31.12.2024 with approximate financial implication of ₹ 2,625 crore. The Cabinet in its meeting held on 1.1.2025 approved to extend the Special Package on DAP with approximate financial implication upto ₹ 3850 crore. With this the total amount of special package approved for DAP since April 2024 would be more than ₹ 6,475 crore to ensure availability of DAP at affordable price to farmers.

Benefits : Availability of DAP to farmers at subsidized, affordable and reasonable prices will be ensured.

Implementation Strategy and Targets : The Special package on DAP @ ₹ 3,500 per MT will be provided for the period 01.01.2025 till further orders over and above the approved NBS subsidy to ensure smooth availability of DAP fertilizer to the farmers at affordable price.

Cabinet Approves Modification in the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme

The Union Cabinet on January 1, 2025 approved continuation of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme till 2025-26 with an overall outlay of ₹ 69,515·71 Crore from 2021-22 to 2025-26. The decision will help in risk coverage of crops from non-preventable natural calamities for farmers across the country till 2025-26.

In addition to the same, for large scale technology infusion in implementation of the scheme leading to increasing transparency and claim calculation and settlement, the Union Cabinet has also approved creation

of Fund for Innovation and Technology (FIAT) with a corpus of ₹ 824·77 crore.

The fund will be utilised towards funding technological initiatives under the scheme namely, YES-TECH, WINDS, etc. as well as Research and Development studies.

Yield Estimation System using Technology (YES-TECH) uses Remote Sensing Technology for yield estimation with minimum 30% weightage to Technology based yield estimates. 9 Major States are currently implementing YES-TECH (namely AP, Assam, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, MP, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu & Karnataka). Other States are also being on-boarded expeditiously. With wider implementation of YES-TECH, crop cutting experiments and related issues will be gradually phased out. Under YES-TECH claim calculation and settlement has been done for 2023-24. Madhya Pradesh has adopted 100% technology based yield estimation.

Weather Information and Network Data Systems (WINDS) envisages setting up Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) at block level and Automatic Rain Gauges (ARGs) at panchayat level. Under WINDS, 5 times increase in current network density is envisaged to develop hyper local weather data. Under the initiative, only data rental costs are payable by Central and State governments. 9 Major States are in the process of implementing WINDS (namely Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh Puducherry, Assam, Odisha, Karnataka, Uttarakhand & Rajasthan are in progress), while other States have also expressed willingness to implement.

Union Cabinet has approved 2024-25 as the first year of implementation of WINDS to give benefit to State governments with higher central fund sharing in 90:10 ratio.

Government Amends Foreign Trade Policy, 2023

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) on January 3, 2025 notified amendment in the Foreign Trade Policy, 2023 to include Para 1·07A and 1·07B to bring legal backing in the FTP to make it necessary to do consultation with stakeholders to seek views, suggestions, comments or feedback from relevant stakeholders, including importers / exporters / industry experts concerning the formulation or amendment of the Foreign Trade Policy.

It also provides the mechanism to inform reasons for not accepting views, suggestions, comments or feedback concerning the formulation or amendment of the Foreign Trade Policy, 2023.

The latest amendments in the Foreign Trade Policy, 2023 reflect upon the Central Government's commitment towards strengthening the scope of Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) in India by encouraging stakeholder and expert participation through consultation in the decision-making process.

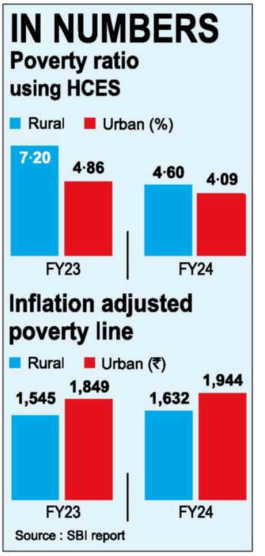
The key objective of the amendments is to encourage the participation of all stakeholders in the decision-making process before introducing or changing policy and procedures affecting the importation, exportation, and transit of goods along with a reasonable opportunity to comment and contribute in the process.

The Government is committed to ensuring due consideration is given to every valuable opinion/ feedback which is received from stakeholders. However, at the same time, the Government has to remain cognizant of the fact that multiple stakeholders may offer different opinions on the same subject and in such cases for smooth functioning of business the government ought to reserve to itself the right to take a final call. It is only to deal with exceptional circumstances such as this, that the right to *suo moto* formulate policies has been reserved with the government.

The notification needs to be read in the light of the overall inclusiveness it is ushering into decision-making, the exception to the notification which provides for *suo moto* decision-making to meet contingencies has after all to be seen in the broader sovereign power of the Government.

Rural Poverty Ratio Drops Below 5% for the First Time in FY 24 : SBI Report

Poverty declined faster in rural areas during FY24 as the poverty ratio dipped below 5 per cent for the first time, reaching 4·86 per cent from 7·2 per cent in FY23, according to a study by SBI Research released on January 3, 2025. In comparison, the poverty ratio in urban areas fell to 4·09 per cent from 4·6 per cent during the same period.



- This decline in the rural poverty ratio is due to higher consumption growth in the 0-5 per cent fractile, leading to a shift in the poverty line from the 5-10 per cent fractile in FY23 to the 0-5 per cent fractile in FY24.
- Enhanced physical infrastructure is scripting a new story in rural mobility, as it is one of the reasons for the increasingly shrinking horizontal income gap between rural and urban areas and the vertical income gap within rural income classes, the study by the government-run

Economic Reforms Steered by Dr. Manmohan Singh

As Finance Minister :

1991 :

- India pledged gold with the Bank of England and UBS to increase foreign currency reserves in the face of an imminent external payments crisis.
- Rupee was devalued in two stages by about 18 per cent.
- Many chapters of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act of 1969 repealed, allowing greater freedom to companies to expand existing capacity or to set up new units.

1991-92 :

- Quantitative restrictions on imports abolished. Chief Controller of Imports and Exports replaced by Directorate General of Foreign Trade.
- Mutual fund industry opened to the private sector.

1992 :

- Capital markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) became a statutory body.
- National Stock Exchange established in Mumbai.

1993-94 :

- RBI issued licenses to 10 private sector banks.
- Five year tax holiday offered to units set up in software technology parks and electronic hardware technology parks.
- Nationalised banks allowed to tap the capital market to strengthen their capital base.
- Rupee was made convertible on the current account.
- Introduction of Service Tax : Broadened the tax base by taxing services, marking a shift in India's taxation policy.

1995 : Banks allowed to fix their own interest rates on domestic term deposits.

1996 : Minimum Alternate Tax reintroduced for companies.

As Prime Minister **:**

2005 :

- Right to Information Act (RTI) passed to empower citizens to seek information from public authorities, promoting transparency.
- National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) was launched to strengthen healthcare delivery in rural areas.
- Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Act passed to boost exports through incentives and simplified processes.
- National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) passed, guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment annually to rural households.
- Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission was launched to improve the quality of life in Indian cities.

2007 : National Food Security Mission (NFSM) was launched to increase production of rice, wheat and pulses.

2008 : Farm loan waiver was introduced to provide debt relief to millions of farmers.

2009 :

- Right to Education Act passed, made free and compulsory education a fundamental right for children aged 6-14 years.
- Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) initiated as a mega industrial project to enhance connectivity and boost industrial growth.

2010 : Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) rolled out Aadhaar to improve service delivery through biometric identification.

2012 : Significant increase in Foreign Direct Investment limits in telecom, retail, broadcasting, civil aviation and insurance sectors.

2013 :

- Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) launched cash transfer schemes to reduce leakages in welfare programmes.
- Food Security Act enacted to provide subsidised food grains to nearly two-thirds of India's population.
- Parliament passed Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) Act, opened the pension sector to private players.
- Companies Act, 2013 was enacted to significantly improve corporate governance norms.
- Lokpal and Lokayukta Act created an anti-corruption ombudsman at the central level.

bank, based on the latest Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) results, noted.

- Further, the report also notes that another reason for the declining rural-urban gap was the rise in government scheme transfers, such as Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
- Adjusting for decadal inflation and the imputation factor in the poverty line fixed by Professor Suresh Tendulkar, the SBI report estimated the new poverty line for FY24 at ₹ 1,632 for rural areas and ₹ 1,944 for urban areas.
- Earlier, in 2011-12, an expert group headed by Professor Tendulkar had estimated the poverty line at ₹ 816 for rural areas and ₹ 1,000 for urban areas.
- Separately, the report also mentions that the poverty rate in India could now be in the range of 4 per cent to 4·5 per cent.
- The report also notes that changes in food items, despite a declining share in spending, had a significant impact on consumption. Higher inflation translated into lower consumption across the board. This impact was more pronounced in rural areas of low-income states.

'Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2024' : Report

"Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2024" report was launched on January 3, 2025 by Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal. In LEADS 2024, the report evaluates logistics performance across four key pillars: Logistics Infrastructure, Logistics Services, Operating and Regulatory Environment, and the newly introduced Sustainable Logistics. It further highlights initiatives undertaken by various States and UTs across these pillars and identifies State/UT-specific opportunities to enable informed decision-making.

States in LEADS Report 2024			
Category of States/UTs	**Achievers**	**Fast Movers**	**Aspirers**
Coastal Group	Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu	Andhra Pradesh, Goa	Kerala, West Bengal
Landlocked Group	Haryana, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand	Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan	Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand
North-Eastern Group	Assam, Arunachal Pradesh	Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura	Manipur
Union Territories	Chandigarh, Delhi	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Jammu and Kashmir, Lakshadweep, Puducherry	Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ladakh

'Logistics Excellence, Advancement and Performance Shield (LEAPS) 2024'

The felicitation function of the 'Logistics Excellence, Advancement, and Performance Shield (LEAPS) 2024' was held on January 3, 2025. The function was presided over by Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal.

LEAPS 2024 showcases leadership and innovation within the logistics sector, celebrating exceptional contributions through a transparent evaluation process backed by a comprehensive and rigorous assessment.

Winners of LEAPS 2024 Include

Core Logistics :

- *Air Freight Service Provider* : Kerry Indev Logistics Private Limited.
- *Maritime Freight Service Provider* : Visakha Container Terminal Pvt. Ltd.
- *Multimodal Transport Operators* : Avana Logistek Limited.
- *Rail Freight Service Provider* : DP World Rail Logistics Private Limited.
- *Road Freight Service Provider* : CJ Darcl Logistics Ltd.
- *Warehouse Service Provider (Industrial and Consumables)* : APM Terminals India Private Limited.
- *Warehouse Service Provider (Agriculture)* : Globus Warehousing and Trading Private Limited.

Startups :

- *Logistics Operations* : Myzek Logistics Pvt. Ltd.
- *Logistics Technology* : Sarvodaya Infotech Pvt. Ltd.

MSMEs :

- *Logistics Service Provider* : Shipwaves Online Limited.

Institutions :

- *Education and Skill Development in the Logistics Sector* : Indian Institute of Management, Mumbai.

Special Categories :

- *Logistics service delivery for e-commerce operations* : Delivery Limited.
- *Multimodal logistics service provider* : Pushpak Logistics Solutions LLP.

India's External Debt as at End of September 2024

The major developments relating to India's external debt as at end-September 2024 are presented below:

Highlights :

1. At end-September 2024, India's external debt was placed at US $ 711·8 billion, recording an increase of US $ 29·6 billion over its level at end-June 2024.
2. The external debt to GDP ratio stood at 19·4 per cent as at end-September 2024, as against 18·8 per cent as at end-June 2024.
3. Valuation effect due to the depreciation of the US dollar vis-à-vis some major currencies, such as, Japanese Yen, Euro, UK Pound and SDR2 was placed at US $ 6·7 billion. Excluding the valuation effect, the increase in external debt would have been US $ 23·0 billion instead of US $ 29·6 billion as at end-September 2024 over end-June 2024.
4. At end-September 2024, long-term debt (with an original maturity of above one year) was placed at US $ 578·2 billion (81·23%), recording an increase of US $ 28·7 billion over its level at end-June 2024.
5. The share of short-term debt (with original maturity of up to one year) in total external debt decreased to 18·8 per cent as at end-September 2024 from 19·4 per cent at end-June 2024. Similarly, the ratio of short-term debt (original maturity) to foreign exchange reserves decreased to 18·9 per cent at end-September 2024 from 20·3 per cent at end-June 2024.
6. Short-term debt on residual maturity basis (*i.e.*, debt obligations that include long term debt by original maturity falling due over the next twelve months and short-term debt by original maturity) constituted 42·4 per cent of total external debt as at end September 2024 (44·0 per cent at end-June 2024) and stood at 42·8 per cent of foreign exchange reserves (46·0 per cent at end-June 2024) .
7. The US dollar denominated debt remained the largest component of India's external debt with a share of 53·4 per cent at end-September 2024, followed by Indian Rupee (31·2 per cent), Japanese Yen (6·6 per cent), SDR (5·0 per cent) and Euro (3·0 per cent).
8. The outstanding external debt of general Government as well as non-Government sector increased at end-September 2024 over its level at end-June 2024.
9. The share of outstanding debt of non-financial corporations in total external debt was 36·6 per cent, followed by deposit-taking

corporations (except the central bank) (27·9 per cent), general government (22·8 per cent) and other financial corporations (8·2 per cent).

10. Loans were the largest component of external debt, with a share of 33·7 per cent, followed by currency and deposits (23·1 per cent), trade credit and advances (18·3 per cent) and debt securities (17·2 per cent).
11. Debt service (principal repayments plus interest payments) stood at 6·7 per cent of current receipts as at end-September 2024 as compared with 6·6 per cent at end-June 2024).

South Indian Cities Rank High in Liveability for Women : AVTAR Report

Sixteen of the top 25 cities ranked based on their women-friendly career opportunities, infrastructure, security and empowerment, are in South India. This is revealed by Avtar Top Cities for Women in India (TCWI) 2024 report. Tamil Nadu dominates the list with eight cities, followed by Kerala (3), Karnataka (2), Telangana (1), Andhra Pradesh (1) and Puducherry (1).

The TCWI 2024 report by AVTAR analysed 120 cities across India, using an inclusivity index that evaluates various indicators such as crime rate, safety, infrastructure, career opportunities, and empowerment. The analysis assigned ratings based on three key parameters : City Inclusion Score (CIS), Social Inclusion Score (SIS) and Industrial Inclusion Score (IIS).

In 2024, Bengaluru topped the list with a CIS of 47·15, followed by Chennai (46·31), Mumbai (41·11), Hyderabad (38·89) and Pune (36·88). Interestingly, Chennai, which had held the top position for the past two years, slid to second place this year.

Region-wise Trend

A region-wise analysis reveals that South India leads in all three parameters compared to other regions of India. South India ranks first with a SIS of 25.06, CIS of 18·56, and IIS of 10·11. West India follows in second place, with an SIS of 22·78, CIS of 16·92, and IIS of 9·99.

In the top ten cities with the highest IIS, Bengaluru (81·33), Mumbai (62·96) and Chennai (61·40) take the lead. Other cities in group were Chennai (45·31), Pune (37·73) and Bengaluru (36·72). Among the top five cities with the highest average CIS, four are from South India. Kerala (20·89), Telangana (20·57) and Maharashtra (19·93) achieved the highest average CIS in the list.

Disparities Abound

The TCWI report stated that, "The regional analysis of the City Inclusion Score (CIS), Social Inclusion Score (SIS) and Industrial Inclusion Score (IIS) highlights significant disparities across India. The South emerges as the most inclusive region, scoring comparatively higher in all three metrices with a high SIS of 25·06 and an IIS of 10·11, reflecting its well-rounded approach to both social and industrial inclusion."

Women's ratings of their inclusion experiences in major cities were assessed across categories such as Skilling and Employment, Care giving Support, Infrastructure, Efficiency of Government Bodies, Quality of Life and Safety. In the Skilling and Employment category, Mumbai scored 7·60, followed closely by Bengaluru with 7·54. Meanwhile, in the Quality of Life category, Pune led with a score of 7·50, while Chennai scored 7·05.

2025 Welcomes 'Generation Beta'

Children born, across the world, on and after January 1, 2025, will now be termed as Generation Beta or Gen Beta. The last time the world went through a generational shift was in 2010 when Gen Alpha babies were born, with 2024 marking the last year of that generation.

2025 will welcome a whole new generation of babies who will shape the world in their own ways. *The kids born between 2025 and 2039 will be known as Gen Beta.* The children born this year are expected to account for 13% to 16% of the world population.

These kids will live in a world dominated by artificial intelligence and virtual reality, witnessing many technological advancements.

However, experts are worried about this generation as they believe this generation might lack creativity and interpersonal skills.

According to experts, Gen Beta will work more in the direction of sustainability as they will inherit a world grappling with challenges like climate change, population explosion and other environmental concerns.

Being born in the digital-centric era, this generation will grow up in a world of constant connectivity, building friendships, learning and working in an era where digital interaction is the norm.

This generation will reportedly find a balance between being connected and expressing themselves.

Mark McCrindle, social researcher and futurist, believes that Gen Beta will build safe and thoughtful digital identities with their parent's guidance to develop a strong sense of individuality, both online and in real life.

Gen Beta is expected to grow up in an environment that fosters curiosity and inclusivity.

Year-wise Generations

The Greatest Generation (GI Generation)—Born 1901–1927 : This generation grew up during the Great Depression and went on to fight in World War II, earning the title, called the 'Greatest Generation' for their resilience and sacrifice.

This generation was majorly shaped by hardship, patriotism and community spirit. The key traits of this generation were selflessness, duty and a commitment to rebuilding the world after war.

The Silent Generation—Born 1928–1945 : The Silent Generation is known for its disciplined and conformist tendencies, as this generation grew up during World War II and the early stages of the Cold War.

They valued hard work, loyalty, and stability, often shying away from open rebellion or activism. Many were instrumental in the civil rights movement, though in quieter roles.

Baby Boom Generation—Born 1946–1964 : Born after World War II, during a time of economic prosperity, this generation is characterized by optimism, ambition and individualism.

The Baby Boom Generation witnessed the civil rights movement, the moon landing and the Vietnam War. This generation played a vital role in shaping modern culture and the economy.

Generation X—Born 1965–1980 : This generation is also known as the 'latchkey generation'. Gen X grew up during a time of economic uncertainty, divorce rates rising, and the end of the Cold War.

People born in generation were known for their independence, scepticism and entrepreneurial spirit. They witnessed the rise of personal computers and MTV, making them the bridge between analogue and digital eras. Gen X also experienced the rise of LGBTQ+ rights.

Millennial Generation or Generation Y—Born 1981–1996 : The millennial generation was the first one to grow up with the internet, making them tech-savvy, socially conscious, and a generation that values experiences over material possessions.

The thoughts of millennials are majorly shaped by events like 9/11, the Great Recession, and the rise of social media; they are often characterized as collaborative and values-driven, with a focus on work-life balance.

Generation Z or iGen—Born 1997–2010 : As digital natives, Gen Z has grown up in a world dominated by smartphones, social media, and streaming platforms. They are diverse, entrepreneurial, and politically aware, often leading conversations around climate change, equality, and mental health. Events like the COVID-19 pandemic have significantly influenced their outlook.

Generation Alpha—Born 2010–2024 : The youngest generation to date, Gen Alpha is being raised in a hyper connected world of Artificial Intelligence, smart devices and immersive technologies.

Gen Alpha is believed to be the most educated generation yet, with a global perspective shaped by rapid technological and environmental changes. They are growing up with voice assistants, virtual reality and personalized learning.

Generation Beta—Born 2025–2039 : Generation Beta is the latest generation which will be expected to live in a world dominated by advanced artificial intelligence, quantum computing and further integration of technology into daily life.

Environmental challenges and potential solutions will play a significant role in their formative years. They are predicted to redefine global norms, embracing sustainability and technological innovation from birth.

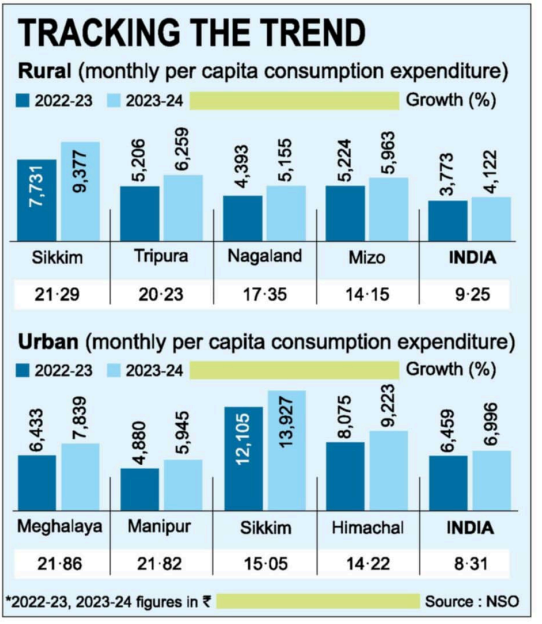
NE States-led Growth in Consumption Expenditure During 2023-24 : NSO

Rural areas of Sikkim and urban areas of Meghalaya led the growth in Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) during the August 2023-July 2024 period, analysis of the recently released Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) data shows.

Data showed that average MPCE in rural Sikkim grew by 21·3 per cent to ₹ 9,377 during the period. This was followed by growth in the MPCE in rural Tripura (20·2 per cent), Nagaland (17·4 per cent) and Mizoram (14·2 per cent).

Meanwhile, in urban Meghalaya, MPCE grew by 21·9 per cent to ₹ 7,839 during the same time period, followed by Manipur (21·8 per cent) and Sikkim (15·1 per cent).

The Gini coefficient, which is taken as a measure of consumption inequality, has declined further from the level of 2022-23. The Gini coefficient declined to 0·237 in 2023-24 from 0·266 in 2022-23 for rural areas and to 0·284 in 2023-24 from 0·314 in 2022-23 for urban areas.



Gini Coefficient			
	NSS 68th Round (2011-12)	HCES 2022-23	HCES 2023-24
Rural	0·283	0·266	0·237
Urban	0·363	0·314	0·284

Note : Household consumption expenditure survey.
Source : NSO

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal Launches National Turmeric Board

Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal on January 14, 2025 inaugurated the National Turmeric Board. Palle Ganga Reddy is its first Chairperson. The headquarters of the Board has been set up at Nizamabad, Telangana.

Adding that turmeric is also known as 'Golden Spice', he pointed out that the newly formed Board will pay special attention to the welfare of the turmeric farmers spread across 20 states, including Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya and others.

Functions of National Turmeric Board

- New Board will promote research and development of new turmeric products.
- It will look into the value addition of turmeric related products for marketing abroad.
- The Board will look into creating awareness on the essential and medical properties of turmeric, ways to increase its yield and boost logistics and supply chain to foster trade into newer markets.
- Board will ensure quality and safety standards of turmeric production and exports.

Last year, 2023-24, an area of 3·05 lakh hectare was under turmeric cultivation in India with a production of 10·74 lakh tonnes. India was responsible for over 70% of global turmeric production. There are 30 varieties of turmeric produced in India. India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of turmeric in the world. India has more than 62% share of world trade. During 2023-24, 1·62 lakh tonnes of turmeric and turmeric products valued at 226·5 million USD was exported.

The National Turmeric Board will provide leadership, augment efforts and facilitate coordination with other Government Departments/Agencies in matters pertaining to the turmeric sector and facilitate growth and development of the Turmeric sector in the country. It will help bring focus to efforts of tapping the vast potential that exists for increasing trade of turmeric and its products, especially in view of the health and wellness benefits of turmeric.

IREDA, SJVN, GMR and NEA Seal Partnership for 900 MW Upper Karnali Hydropower Project in Nepal

Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA) has finalized a Joint Venture Agreement with SJVN Ltd., GMR Energy Ltd., and Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) for the development of the 900 MW Upper Karnali Hydroelectric Project in Nepal. This strategic initiative aims to strengthen regional energy security and accelerate renewable energy growth.

The joint venture agreement lays out a comprehensive framework for the project development, construction, operation, and maintenance under a Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) model, with 25 years project term from the Commercial Operation Date (COD).

Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for Raw Jute for 2025-26 Season

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA has approved the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) of Raw Jute for Marketing season 2025-26.

The MSP of Raw Jute (TD-3 grade) has been fixed at ₹ 5,650 per quintal for 2025-26 season. This would ensure a return of 66·8 per cent over the all India weighted average cost of production of jute. The approved MSP of raw jute for Marketing season 2025-26 is in line with the principle of fixing MSP at a level of at least 1·5 times all India weighted average cost of production as announced by the Government in the Budget 2018-19.

The MSP of Raw Jute for Marketing season 2025-26 is an increase of ₹ 315 per quintal over the previous Marketing season 2024-25. Government of India has increased MSP of Raw jute from ₹ 2400 per quintal in 2014-15 to ₹ 5,650 per quintal in 2025-26, registering an increase of ₹ 3250 per quintal (2·35 times).

The Jute Corporation of India (JCI) will continue as Central Government Nodal Agency to undertake Price Support Operations and the losses incurred, if any, in such operations, will be fully reimbursed by the Central Government.

Odisha Fiscally Healthiest; Punjab, AP, WB Laggards : NITI Aayog Report

Odisha and Chhattisgarh are India's fiscally healthiest states, with states such as Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, West Bengal and Kerala lagging (classified as 'aspirational states'), the NITI Aayog, central-government think tank, said on January 25, 2025.

The Aayog, using data from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), released its first Fiscal-Health Index (FHI) report for 18 states (excluding special-category states), which contribute 85 per cent of the cumulative gross domestic product of all states.

The index focuses on five sub-indices and covers the period from 2022-23—the quality of expenditure, revenue mobilisation, fiscal prudence, debt index and debt sustainability.

Odisha excels in fiscal health with the highest overall index score of 67·8. It tops the Debt Index (99·0) and Debt Sustainability (64·0) rankings with better than average scores under Quality of Expenditure and Revenue Mobilization. The state has maintained low Fiscal Deficits, a good debt profile, and an above average Capital Outlay/GSDP ratio.

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The Present and the Future Prospects



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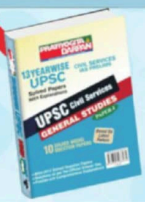



Address by the Hon'ble President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu to Parliament

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Honourable President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu addressed the joint budget session of the Parliament on January 31, 2025. This was her fourth address in the new Parliament building. Earlier three addresses took place on January 31, 2024; June 27, 2024 and November 26, 2024.

Key Highlights of President's address are following :

Just two months ago, India celebrated the 75th anniversary of adoption of the Constitution, and only a few days ago, the Indian Republic completed 75 years of its journey.

Government of India is infusing new energy through unprecedented achievements in this Amrit Kaal of India's development journey. Today, the nation is witnessing major decisions and policies being implemented at an extraordinary speed, with the highest priority given to the poor, the middle class, the youth, women and farmers.

In the third term of this Government, concrete steps have been taken to achieve the goal of providing **'Housing for All'.** Extending the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, the GoI has decided to provide new homes to an additional three crore families. A budget of ₹ 5,36,000 crore has been allocated for this purpose.

The government is committed to granting ownership rights of residential land to the rural poor and promoting financial inclusion. Under the **SVAMITVA scheme**, the government has issued 2·25 crore property cards so far, of which approximately 70 lakh property cards have been distributed in the last six months alone.

Under the **PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme**, ₹ 41,000 crore has been disbursed to crores of farmers in recent months.

The '**Dharti Aaba Tribal Village Utkarsh**' campaign has been launched for the upliftment of five crore people from tribal communities, with an allocation of ₹ 80,000 crore for this initiative.

Under the **Ayushman Bharat scheme**, six crore senior citizens aged 70 years and above will receive health insurance, with a health cover of ₹ 5 lakh per year.

For small entrepreneurs, the loan limit under the **MUDRA scheme** has been increased from ₹ 10 lakh to ₹ 20 lakh.

The government has placed special focus on education for the youth and creating new employment opportunities for them. The **PM Vidyalakshmi scheme** has been introduced to provide financial assistance to meritorious students for higher education. Additionally, one crore youth will be given internship opportunities in the top 500 companies. A new law has been enacted to prevent incidents of paper leaks and ensure transparency in recruitment.

Following the spirit of prosperity through cooperation, the government has approved the proposal to establish the **'Tribhuvan' Cooperative University**.

Under the fourth phase of the **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana**, the government has sanctioned ₹ 70,000 crore to connect 25,000 habitations. As the country celebrates the centenary year of Atal Ji's birth, the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana continues to embody his vision.

Currently, **71 Vande Bharat, Amrit Bharat and Namo Bharat** trains are operational across the country, with 17 new Vande Bharat trains and one Namo Bharat train added in the past six months.

The government has also made swift progress on critical issues like **'One Nation-One Election' and the 'Waqf Act Amendment'.**

The decade-long tenure of the government has infused new energy into the journey of a '**Viksit Bharat'.**

In the vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' there is the collective strength of public participation, a roadmap for the nation's economic progress, the power of technology in the form of a digital revolution, and the foundation of modern infrastructure. The government is steering India towards becoming the world's third-largest economy.

To ensure that the journey towards 'Viksit Bharat' continues to be guided by the ideals of our Constitution, the government has placed **four key principles—service, good governance, prosperity and pride**—at the core of its governance.

The government is making rapid advances in its commitment to **reform, perform and transform.**

The guiding mantra of the government is **"Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas"** and its goal is the creation of a 'Viksit Bharat'.

Development is truly meaningful when its benefits reach the person standing at the last rung of society. This is the essence of Antyodaya, to which the government has been unwaveringly committed. When poor people are provided with a dignified life, it instils a sense of empowerment that helps them fight poverty.

Initiatives like the construction of 12 crore toilets under the **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan,** 10 crore free LPG connections under the **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana**, ration for 80 crore needy citizens, the **Saubhagya Yojana**, and the **Jal Jeevan Mission** have given poor the confidence that they can live with dignity. Due to such efforts, 25 crore people have overcome poverty and are moving forward in life. They have formed a Neo Middle Class, a group that is infusing new energy into India's growth journey.

Government employees are significant representatives of the middle class. Recently, GoI decided to constitute the **Eighth Pay Commission for the welfare of govern-**

ment employees. This decision will lay the foundation for substantial salary increase for government employees in the coming years.

Additionally, the Central government has decided to provide 50% assured pension to lakhs of employees under the **Unified Pension Scheme**, which has been widely welcomed.

Through the **'Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik' (UDAN) scheme**, about 1·5 crore people have fulfilled their dream of flying in airplanes. **Jan Aushadhi Kendras**, offering medicines at 80% concessional rates have helped save more than ₹ 30,000 crore for citizens.

Acknowledging the role of taxpayers in nation-building, my government has simplified tax-related processes. The introduction of **faceless assessments** has enhanced transparency and reduced tax disputes. Senior citizens aged 75 years and above who get only pension now have the choice of deciding about filing their income tax returns.

The government firmly believes in empowering the nation through women-led development :

- The **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam**, which provides reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, is a significant step in this direction.
- Under the **National Rural Livelihood Mission**, more than 91 lakh Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are being empowered, connecting over 10 crore women across the country. These groups have received over ₹ 9 lakh crore through bank linkages.
- The government has set a goal of 3 crore Lakhpati Didis. Today, over 1·15 crore Lakhpati Didis are leading dignified lives, with about 50 lakh becoming Lakhpati Didis in just the past six months. These women are contributing to their family incomes as entrepreneurs.
- With the spirit of **'Insurance for All'**, the **Bima Sakhi campaign** was launched a few months ago. **Banking and Digi-Payment Sakhis** are playing a crucial role in connecting remote areas with the financial system. Meanwhile, **Krishi Sakhis** are promoting natural farming and **Pashu Sakhis** are strengthening our livestock resources.
- The **Drone Didi Yojana** has become a medium for the economic and technological empowerment of women.
- It is a matter of pride for this Parliament that India's daughters are now flying fighter jets, joining the police force and leading corporate companies. Following the government's decision, girls have started enrolling in National Military Schools and National Defence Academy as cadets.

Over the past decade, India's youth have come forward to take up the responsibility of driving every major national effort. Today, Indian youth are making the country proud in every field, from start-ups and sports to space exploration. Lakhs of young people are actively participating in nation-building efforts through the **MY Bharat Portal.**

- Initiatives like **Make in India, Atmanirbhar Bharat, Startup India, Stand-Up India, and Digital India** have created numerous employment opportunities for the youth. In the past two years, the government has provided a record 10 lakh permanent government jobs.
- To enhance skills and create new opportunities for the youth, the government has approved a 2 lakh crore rupee package.
- An internship program for 1 crore youth will provide them with hands-on experience in real-world work environments.
- India now has over 1·5 lakh start-ups, which are emerging as pillars of innovation.
- To boost the space sector, a ₹ 1,000 crore venture capital fund has been launched.
- In the **QS World Future Skills Index 2025**, India has risen to second place globally, showcasing leadership in AI and digital technology adoption in the Future of Work category.
- India's rank in the **Global Innovation Index** has improved significantly, moving up from 76th to 39th position.

Through the **National Education Policy**, the government is establishing a modern education system for students :

- To ensure no one is deprived of education, opportunities for learning in mother tongues are being provided. Additionally, various recruitment exams are being conducted in 13 Indian languages, eliminating language barriers.
- To foster innovation among children, over 10,000 Atal Tinkering Labs have been established in schools.
- For enhancing the Ease of Doing Research, the **One Nation-One Subscription Scheme** has recently been introduced, offering free access to international research materials.
- Over the past decade, the number of higher education institutions has increased significantly, and their quality has also improved. In the QS World University Asia Rankings, 163 Indian universities have been included.
- The inauguration of the new **Nalanda University** campus has revived India's ancient glory in education.
- The day is not far when an Indian citizen will travel to space aboard the indigenously developed Gaganyaan spacecraft. The recent success in space docking has further paved the way for India to establish its own space station.
- Just a few days ago, ISRO conducted its 100th launch, successfully placing the satellite in orbit. The President congratulated ISRO and all the citizens of the country for this achievement.

The government has taken significant steps to create a world-class sports ecosystem in the country. Initiatives like the **Khelo India Scheme, the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS**), and the establishment of the National Sports University are contributing to this vision :

- A special sports centre for Divyang athletes has been opened in Gwalior.

- India's teams, whether at the Olympics or the Paralympics, have consistently delivered outstanding performances. Recently, India also achieved remarkable success at the World Chess Championship.
- Through the **Fit India Movement**, country is building a strong and empowered youth force.

In building a 'Viksit Bharat', the role of research along with the role of farmers, soldiers and science is of immense importance. Our goal is to establish India as a **global innovation powerhouse :**

- To promote research in educational institutions, the **National Research Foundation** has been established with an outlay of ₹ 50,000 crore.
- Additionally, ₹ 10,000 crore is being invested to foster innovation in science and technology under the **Vigyan Dhara Yojana**.
- India's contribution in the field of Artificial Intelligence is being elevated through the launch of the **India AI Mission**.
- The **National Quantum Mission** aims to position India among the leading nations in the field of frontier technology.
- The government has introduced the BioE3 Policy to boost biomanufacturing. This policy will serve as the facilitator for the next industrial revolution. The focus of bio-economy is on the efficient utilization of natural resources to create new employment opportunities while preserving the environment.

The government has worked with strong determination to lift the economy out of a state of policy paralysis. Despite global concerns such as the COVID-19 pandemic, its aftermath, and war-related uncertainties, the Indian economy has demonstrated remarkable stability and resilience, proving its strength :

- The government has implemented several significant measures to promote Ease of Doing Business.
- With the spirit of **'One Nation, One Tax', the GST system** was introduced, which has been benefiting all states across the country.
- Due to policies like Make in India, many major global brands now proudly display the label **'Made in India'** on their products.

India's small traders, from villages to cities, play a vital role in driving economic progress. Government of India considers small entrepreneurs as the backbone of the economy and is committed to providing them with new opportunities for self-employment :

- The **Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs** and the establishment of e-commerce export hubs are promoting various industries.
- The loan limit under the **Mudra scheme** has been increased from ₹ 10 lakh to ₹ 20 lakh, benefiting crores of small entrepreneurs.
- For decades, our brothers and sisters earning their livelihoods as street vendors remained excluded from the formal banking system. Today, they are benefiting from the **PM SVANidhi Yojana**, which allows them to access additional loans to expand their businesses based on their digital transaction records.
- The **ONDC initiative** has made digital commerce more inclusive. Small businesses now have equal opportunities to grow in the online shopping ecosystem.

Government of India, in the past ten years, has written new chapters of progress, one of which is the golden milestone of **India's digital revolution** :

- Today, India has emerged as a major global player in the field of digital technology. The launch of 5G services in India, alongside other leading nations, stands as a significant milestone in this journey.
- India's UPI technology has also impressed many developed countries. More than 50% of the world's real-time digital transactions now take place in India.
- The government has utilized digital technology as a tool for social justice and equality. Digital payments are no longer confined to select individuals or classes.
- Banking services and world class technology such as UPI are now accessible in villages as well. Over the last ten years, more than 5 lakh Common Service Centres have been established, providing citizens with access to dozens of government services online.
- DigiLocker has enabled individuals to access and display their important documents anytime, anywhere.
- The government is continuously working to ensure competence in cybersecurity. As a result of these efforts, India has achieved Tier-1 status in the Global Cybersecurity Index.

The modern **infrastructure** of any country not only provides its citizens with a better quality of life and gives the nation a new identity but also instils a renewed sense of confidence in the country :

- The **PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan** has accelerated the pace of project completion.
- Ten years ago, the budget for capex was around ₹ 2 lakh crore, which has now increased to over ₹ 11 lakh crore in the last budget.
- The foundation has been laid for India's first **deep-water mega port at Vadhavan.** This port, being built at a cost of ₹ 76,000 crore, will rank among the top ten ports in the world.
- **Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link** project has been completed, connecting the nation from Kashmir to Kanyakumari through railway line. Under this ambitious project, the Chenab Bridge has been constructed, which is the highest railway bridge in the world. Additionally, India's first rail cable bridge, the Anji Bridge, has been completed.
- Work on the Shinkun La tunnel is also progressing successfully. Upon completion in the near future, it will be the world's highest tunnel, ensuring year-round connectivity between Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh.

- India's aviation sector is growing rapidly. The country's airline companies have placed orders for more than 1,700 new aircraft.

To accelerate the journey towards a Viksit Bharat, it is essential to make our cities future-ready :

- The government has focused on **modernizing urban amenities** and making them energy-efficient. Simultaneously, the foundation is being laid for the development of new cities.
- The government has decided to invest approximately ₹ 28,000 crore to establish 12 industrial nodes and build 100 industrial parks near cities across the country.
- **Metro projects** in Delhi, Pune, Thane, and Bengaluru, along with the recently launched **Namo Bharat Rapid Rail Services** on the Ahmedabad-Bhuj route, are shaping the cities of a Viksit Bharat.
- In 2014, the total metro network in Delhi-NCR was less than 200 kilometres. Now, it has more than doubled.
- India's metro network has crossed the milestone of 1,000 kms. India has now become the third largest country in the world in terms of metro networks.
- Additionally, the decision to deploy 52,000 electric buses in the country, at an estimated cost of ₹ 8,000 crore, will provide smooth and clean urban transportation. This initiative will also create numerous employment opportunities.
- To enhance connectivity and promote urban tourism, work is also underway on 15 ropeway projects across the nation.

Government of India has consistently worked on policies of **multi-dimensional and inclusive development**. Therefore, while emphasizing on physical infrastructure, equal efforts have also been made by the government for a social infrastructure revolution :

- To ensure that better healthcare services reach citizens, 1,75,000 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs have been established across the country.
- Nearly 9 crore women have been screened for cervical cancer.
- Due to the efforts of the government, significant progress has been made in combating encephalitis, with the mortality rate due to this disease reduced to 6%.
- Under the **National TB Eradication Programme**, the number of TB patients has also decreased.
- To ensure tracking of vaccination programmes for pregnant women and children, the **U-WIN portal** has been launched. So far, around 30 crore vaccine doses have been recorded on this platform.,

A modern and **self-reliant agricultural system** in India is our goal. The government is working with dedication to ensure fair prices of crops to farmers and to increase their income :

- In 2023-24, India achieved a record production of 332 million tons of foodgrains. Today, **India is the largest producer of milk, pulses and spices in the world.**
- The government has consistently increased the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for both Kharif and Rabi crops.
- Over the past decade, spending on the procurement of rice, wheat, pulses, oilseeds and coarse grains has tripled.
- In the past six months, 109 climate-resilient, bio-fortified, and high-yielding advanced crop varieties have been released to farmers.
- To strengthen agricultural infrastructure, the scope of the **Agriculture Infrastructure Fund Scheme** has been expanded. This initiative will boost employment opportunities in rural areas.
- To enhance oilseed production and achieve self-reliance in edible oils, a **National Mission on Oilseeds** has been approved.
- A National Mission is also being implemented to promote Natural Farming.
- To promote fisheries, 11 Integrated Aqua Parks are being established.

A few weeks ago, the India Meteorological Department completed 150 years. To build a weather-ready and climate-smart India, the government has launched the **'Mission Mausam'** at a cost of ₹ 2,000 crore, which will also benefit our farmers.

The **Ken-Betwa Link Project**, with a cost of over ₹ 44,000 crore, will benefit millions of brothers and sisters in rural areas of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

The revised **Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal Link Project** will address irrigation and drinking water needs in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

An additional ₹ 12,000 crore has been sanctioned to expedite the completion of the **Polavaram Irrigation Project**.

When we discuss the nation's development and achievements, we are essentially highlighting the capabilities and accomplishments of its citizens. Today, there is collective participation of all in the development of the nation and that is why we are able to realize its true potential :

- The greatest beneficiaries of the government's efforts have been the Dalit, backward and tribal communities.
- The **'Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan'** and the **'PM-JANMAN Yojana'** are direct examples of this initiative.
- Nearly 1·25 lakh tribal children are receiving quality education through more than 470 **Eklavya Model Residential Schools**.
- In the last 10 years, 30 new medical colleges have been established in tribal-dominated areas.
- A special National Mission is addressing health issues related to sickle cell within tribal communities, with screening of around 5 crore individuals already completed.
- The government has undertaken several initiatives to preserve tribal heritage. This year, the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda is being celebrated across the country as Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh.

A significant measure of 'Viksit Bharat' is **balanced development** of the country. No region should feel left behind in the journey of progress :

- GoI is conscious of the aspirations of the people of the North East and has worked to eliminate their sense of alienation. Through more than 10 peace agreements, several factions have been brought on to the path of peace.
- To showcase the potential of the eight states of the North East to the entire country, the first-ever **Ashtalakshmi Mahotsav** was organized.
- Along with the development of the North East, the government has initiated a comprehensive development plan for the **'Purvodaya'** or the eastern states, which will also create new employment opportunities.
- In Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep, several developmental projects have been launched, according these regions a crucial role in the nation's progress.
- After the abrogation of Article 370, there is a conducive environment for development in Jammu & Kashmir. Both the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections were conducted in a peaceful manner in Jammu & Kashmir. The people of Jammu & Kashmir deserve commendation for this achievement.

The success of a nation or society is **inclusive** and all-encompassing only when it is guided by principles. In the light of the Constitution, the primary ideological inspiration of the government is 'Service'.

- To provide easy loans to the backward sections of society and sanitation workers, the scope of the PM-Suraj Yojana has been expanded.
- To ensure the benefits of government schemes reach differently-abled individuals, over 1 crore Divyang ID cards have been issued.
- The **'Namaste Yojana'**, launched for sanitation workers, has been extended to include all those who take up the noble responsibility of cleanliness.

The past decade has been a period of revival of India's cultural consciousness :

- This year, India will celebrate the 125th birth anniversary of **Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee**, who said, "True nationalism lies not only in the physical unity of India but in strengthening its cultural unity."
- In the same spirit, the **2,550th Nirvana Mahotsav of Lord Mahaveer** was celebrated with reverence, and the **525th birth anniversary of Sant Mirabai** was enthusiastically observed across the country.
- Cultural centres are being established in several countries in memory of the great poet-saint **Thiruvalluvar**.
- The government is promoting national unity through cultural initiatives like Kashi-Tamil Sangamam, Kashi-Telugu Sangamam and Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam.

A significant pillar of the nation's heritage is our rich linguistic culture. The government has granted **Classical Language status** to Assamese, Marathi, Pali, Prakrit and Bengali. For easy communication in all languages of India, the language platform Bhashini powered by AI is being widely used by the citizens of the country.

For India's development, my government has established three **strong pillars of Reform, Perform and Transform**.

- So far, the government has repealed more than 1,500 obsolete laws. By removing colonial-era laws, a 'Nyaya Sanhita' has been introduced in place of the Penal Code.
- With **'Jan Vishwas' (public trust) and 'Jan Bhagidari' (people's participation)**, the government is working to make the lives of citizens better.
- The 'Vivad se Vishwas' initiative has been launched to resolve disputes.
- The government has initiated the **Aspirational Districts Programme** in the country's most backward areas, implementing a unique experiment in good governance.
- Inspired by this success, the government has now launched a campaign for the holistic development of 500 **aspirational blocks**.
- Focusing on good governance, the **i-GOT Karmayogi Digital Platform** has been created, encouraging government employees to enhance their skills and become true Karmayogis.

This year, the country is celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Inspired by his vision, my government is moving ahead with the principle of 'Nation First'.

Along with securing the borders, the development of border areas is also a key component of our strategy. Roads in border areas, along with modern infrastructure like the **Atal Tunnel, Sela Tunnel and Sonamarg Tunnel**, have enhanced both defence capabilities and tourism. The Vibrant Villages Programme has been launched in the country's first villages located along the border.

In an environment of global instability, India is emerging as **a pillar of economic, social and political stability**, setting an example for the world. Whether it is the G7 Summit, QUAD, BRICS, SCO, or G20, the world has placed its trust in India's strength, policy and intent.

GoI is making decisions keeping in mind not only the present generation but also the future generations. We are steering the nation towards a green future and green jobs :

- Several significant decisions have been taken in the last six months towards achieving the target of **500 GW non-fossil fuel energy capacity by 2030.**
- Under the **PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana**, rooftop solar systems are being installed at a cost of ₹ 75,000 crore. So far, over 7·5 lakh homes have installed rooftop solar systems, creating numerous job opportunities.
- The **National Green Hydrogen Mission** will have an investment of ₹ 8 lakh crore and generate over 6 lakh jobs.
- The government has introduced the **Vehicle Scrapping Policy** to ensure scientific disposal of old vehicles, which will also generate new employment opportunities.

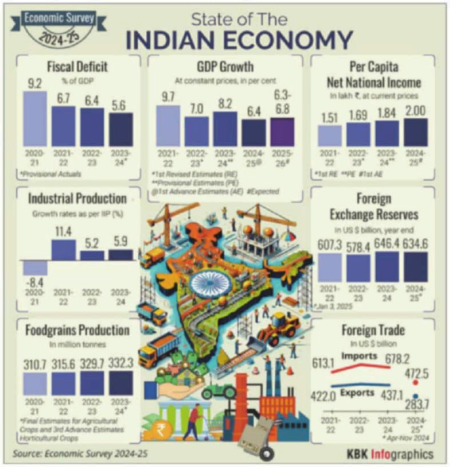
In line with this, the 'Ek Ped Maa ke Naam' campaign was launched on World Environment Day 2024.



Economic Survey 2024-25

Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, presented the Economic Survey 2024-25 in the Parliament on January 31, 2025. The Economic Survey has forecasted real GDP growth in FY2025-26 between 6·3 and 6·8 per cent.

In 1950-51, the first Economic Survey of India was presented as a component of the Union Budget documents. Since its separation from the Union Budget in 1964, it is presented one day prior to the Union Budget during the Budget Session of the Parliament. It is prepared by the Economic Division of the Department of Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Finance under the guidance of the Chief Economic Advisor (CEA.) It is presented in both the Houses of the Parliament by the Union Finance Minister.



The Economic Survey 2024-25 noted that India faces limitations in producing critical goods at the scale and quality required to serve the infrastructure and investment needs of an aspiring economy. The **single-source concentration risk** in several product areas exposes India to potential supply chain disruptions, price fluctuations and currency risks.

The Economic Survey points out the political and economic uncertainties in Europe and its impact on global economy. According to the Survey, Europe's biggest economic engine, Germany, experienced economic contraction for two successive years. In general, Europe is facing competitiveness pressures amidst much higher energy costs caused, in part, by the transition towards renewable energy. To a large extent, these developments have affected the global economy.

The reopening of the Chinese economy after the Covid shutdown has not led to a spurt in economic growth rate as overcapacity and financial strains in the real estate sector have come to the fore. Recent strength in the US dollar and rethinking in the Federal Reserve about the path of policy rates in America have caused emerging market currencies to weaken.

Fiscal strains and low real rates relative to history have led to rapid erosion of value in some currencies compared to others. Borrowing costs for sovereigns are also rising as financial markets re-evaluate the outlook for inflation, policy rates and fiscal prudence.

Amidst the global uncertainties, the Survey recommended to attract, promote and facilitate further domestic and foreign investments that India needs to become a competitive and innovative economy. It placed equal importance on investing in and strengthening domestic supply-chain capability and resilience which will be the hallmarks of strategic and long-term thinking on the part of the private sector.

The Economic Survey has highlighted the positive correlation between states that score on the 'Ease of Doing Business' parameters and the level of industrial activity.



PD/March/2025/63

The Survey noted the need for a calibrated and careful approach for climate change and energy transition. Public policy will have to recognise the role of Energy Security and Energy Affordability in enhancing and maintaining competitiveness.

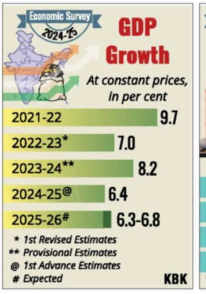
It will also require appropriate skilling and education for India's youth to take advantage of technological advances such as Artificial Intelligence. The Survey also examined the impact of work culture, lifestyle and eating habits on mental health. For women, Survey recommended that governments around the country will have to eliminate legal and regulatory hurdles that hold back their participation in the labour force besides undertaking facilitative measures.

The Key Highlights of the Economic Survey are as follows :

State of the Economy : Getting Back into the Fast Lane

The global economy exhibited steady yet uneven growth across regions in 2024. Slowdown in global manufacturing, especially in Europe and parts of Asia, was due to supply chain disruptions and weak external demand. However, India displayed steady economic growth, and economic prospects for FY26 are balanced. Rural demand backed by a rebound in agricultural production, an anticipated easing of food inflation and a stable macro-economic environment provide an upside to near-term growth. Overall, India will need to improve its global competitiveness through grassroots-level structural reforms and deregulation to reinforce its medium-term growth potential against geopolitical and trade uncertainties and commodity price shocks.

- India's real GDP growth is estimated at 6·4 per cent in FY25 (as per first advance estimates of national income), which equates nearly to its decadal average.
- Real gross value added (GVA) is also estimated to grow by 6·4 per cent FY25.
- The global economy on an average grew by 3·3 per cent in 2023 against the IMF projection of 3·2 per cent growth in the next five years.
- The real GDP growth in FY26 is expected to grow between 6·3 and 6·8 per cent, keeping in mind the upsides and downsides to growth.
- Thrust on grassroots-level structural reforms and deregulation to reinforce the medium-term growth potential and boost global competitiveness of Indian economy.
- Geopolitical tensions, ongoing conflicts and global trade policy risks continue to pose significant challenges to the global economic outlook.
- Retail headline inflation has softened from 5·4 per cent in FY24 to 4·9 per cent in April–December 2024.
- Capital expenditure (CAPEX) improved continuously from FY21 to FY24. Post general elections, CAPEX grew YOY by 8·2 per cent during July–November 2024.
- India accounts for seventh-largest share in global services exports, underscoring India's global competitiveness in the sector.
- During April to December 2024, non-Petroleum and non-Gems & Jewellery exports went up by 9·1 per cent reflecting resilience of India's merchandise exports amid volatile global conditions.
- From an aggregate demand perspective, private final consumption expenditure at constant prices is estimated to grow by 7·3 per cent, driven by a rebound in rural demand.
- On the supply side, the real gross value added (GVA) is estimated to grow by 6·4 per cent. The agriculture sector is expected to rebound to a growth of 3·8 per cent in FY25.
- The industrial sector is estimated to grow by 6·2 per cent in FY25. Strong growth rates in construction activities and electricity, gas, water supply and other utility services are expected to support industrial expansion.





- Growth in the services sector is expected to remain robust at 7·2 per cent, driven by healthy activity in financial, real estate, professional services, public administration, defence, and other services.

Monetary and Financial Sector Developments : The Card and the Horse

India's monetary and financial sectors have performed well in the first nine months of FY25. It has been characterized by rise in Bank Credit and CRAR, decline of GNPA, strong performance of capital markets, increase in share of consumer credit and rise in non-bank financing options. However, rise in consumer debt, the expansion of unsecured lending, and the growing number of young investors underscore the need for balancing growth and stability.

- Bank credit has grown at a steady rate with credit growth converging towards deposit growth.
- Profitability of Scheduled Commercial Banks improved, reflected in a fall in Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPAs) and rise in capital to risk weighted asset ratio (CRAR).
- Credit growth outpaced nominal GDP growth for two successive years. The credit-GDP gap narrowed to (–)0·3 per cent in Q1 of FY25 from (–)10·3 per cent in Q1 of FY23, indicating sustainable bank credit growth.
- Banking sector exhibits improvement in asset quality, robust capital buffers and strong operational performance.
- The Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPAs) of Scheduled Commercial Banks declined to a 12-year

low of 2·6 per cent of gross loans and advances at the end of September 2024.

- Under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, ₹ 3·6 lakh crore realized in resolution of 1,068 plans till September 2024. It amounts to 161 per cent against the liquidation value and 86·1 per cent of the fair value of the assets involved.
- Indian stock markets outperformed its emerging market peers despite election-driven market volatility challenges.
- The total resource mobilisation from primary markets (equity and debt) stands at ₹ 11·1 lakh crore from April to December 2024, five per cent more than the amount mobilised during FY24.
- BSE stock market capitalisation to GDP ratio stood at 136 per cent at the end of December 2024, far higher than other Emerging Market Economies like China (65 per cent) and Brazil (37 per cent).
- India's insurance market continued its upward trajectory, with total insurance premiums growing by 7·7 per cent in FY24, reaching ₹ 11·2 lakh crore.
- India's pension sector experienced significant growth, with the total number of pension subscribers growing by 16 per cent (YoY) as of September 2024.
- The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) is poised to play a pivotal role in India's vision for 2047. As a unified regulator, IFSCA is responsible for developing and regulating financial institutions, services and products within India's International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs).
- Equity-based financing has gained popularity, with the number of initial public offerings (IPOs) increasing sixfold between FY13 and FY24.
- Various financial innovations such as UPI, Open Credit Enablement Network (OCEN) and T+1 settlement have significantly eased access to credit in India.
- Cyber threats, ranging from phishing and ransomware to Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks, SMSing, and fake/malicious mobile applications, pose serious challenges to the financial system's stability.
- One critical risk to guard against is the dominance of financial markets in shaping policy and macroeconomic outcomes, a phenomenon known as 'financialisation'.

External Sector : Getting FDI Right

India's external sector continued to display resilience amidst global headwinds of economic and trade policy uncertainties. The evolving global trade dynamics, marked by gradual shifts towards greater protectionism, require assessing the situation and developing a forward-looking strategic trade roadmap. To strengthen its competitiveness and further integrate into global supply chains, the country can focus on reducing trade-related costs and enhancing export facilitation to create a more vibrant export sector.

- Overall exports (merchandise + services) grew by 6 per cent (YOY) in the first nine months of FY25. Services sector grew by 11·6 per cent during the same time.
- India commands 10·2 per cent of the global export market in 'Telecommunications, Computer, & Information Services', ranking 2nd largest exporter in the world, as per UNCTAD.
- India exported textile items worth USD 34 billion in 2023, with apparel constituting 42 per cent of the export basket (USD 14·6 billion), followed by raw materials/semi-finished materials at 34 per cent (USD 11·7 billion) and finished non-apparel goods at 30 per cent (USD 7·8 billion).
- Europe and the US consumed nearly 66 per cent of India's apparel exports, 58 per cent of finished non-apparel goods and 12 per cent of raw materials/semi-finished materials.
- India's B2C e-commerce market was worth USD 83 billion in 2022, and it is anticipated to grow to USD 150 billion by 2026, showing a CAGR of 15·9 per cent.
- India's Current Account Deficit (CAD) stood at 1·2 per cent of GDP in Q2 of FY25, supported by rising net services receipts and an increase in private transfer receipts.
- Gross Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows recorded a revival in FY25, increasing from USD 47·2 billion in the first eight months of FY24 to USD 55·6 billion in the same period of FY25, a YoY growth of 17·9 per cent.
- Over the long term, FDI inflows into India have surpassed the USD 1 trillion mark from April 2000 to September 2024, solidifying the country's position as a safe and significant global investment destination.
- From a sectoral perspective, the services sector90 remains the largest recipient of FDI, accounting for 19·1 per cent of total equity inflows in H1 of FY25.
- India's FOREX reserves stood at USD 640·3 billion as of the end of December 2024, sufficient to cover 10·9 months of imports and approximately 90 per cent of the country's external debt.



- India's external debt remained stable over the past few years, with the external debt to GDP ratio standing at 19·4 per cent at the end of September 2024.
- Uncertainty in the global markets and profit taking by foreign portfolio investors led to capital outflows. However, strong macroeconomic fundamentals, a favourable business environment, and high economic growth have kept FPI flows positive overall.



- According to the World Bank's Relative CBAM Exposure Index, India has a score of 0·03, reflecting a high exposure to CBAM.

Prices and Inflation : Understanding the Dynamics

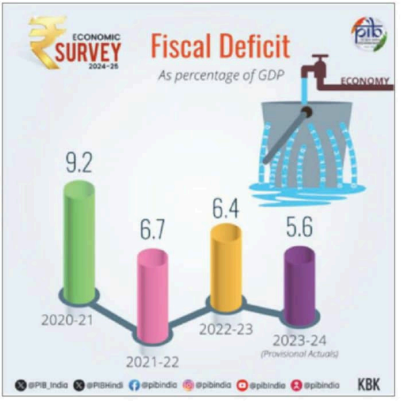
While global inflation peaked in 2022 due to supply chain disruptions and geopolitical tensions, it has declined since then, aided by policy measures. In India, retail inflation eased in FY25 due to timely interventions by the government and the Reserve Bank of India. Core inflation reached its lowest point in a decade, while food inflation was affected by supply chain disruptions and adverse weather conditions. Long-term price stability could be achieved by robust data systems for monitoring prices, developing climate-resilient crops, reducing crop damage and post-harvest losses.

- As per the IMF, the global inflation rate moderated to 5·7 per cent by 2024 from its peak of 8·7 per cent in 2022.
- Retail inflation in India saw a reduction from 5·4 per cent in FY24 to 4·9 per cent in FY25 (April-December 2024).
- Onion and tomato prices are affected by the decline in production, partly due to extreme weather conditions and monsoon-induced supply chain disruptions.
- On pulses, despite being a major producer, India faces a gap in demand and supply. The government has undertaken several measures to rein in the prices of vegetables like onion and tomato which included procurement and buffer stocking of onion under price stabilisation fund and subsidised sale of onion and tomato.
- Also, many administrative measures have been taken-up to address the price pressures in pulses such as subsidised retail sale, stock limits and easing imports.
- RBI and the IMF project India's consumer price inflation to gradually align with the target of around 4 per cent in FY26.
- As per World Bank's Commodity Markets Outlook, October 2024, commodity prices are expected to decrease by 5·1 per cent in 2025 and 1·7 per cent in 2026., potentially easing core and food inflation.

Medium-Term Outlook : Deregulation Drives Growth

Fundamental shifts in global economic engagement are underway with the proliferation of trade and investment restrictions. The impact of this shift is reflected in global trade growth, which has slowed down significantly, and signs of secular stagnation in the global economy are beginning to emerge. India is in the middle of a change that represents an unprecedented economic challenge and opportunity. Enhancing economic freedom for individuals and small businesses is arguably the most important policy priority to bolster India's medium-term growth prospects.

- Indian economy is in the middle of a change that represents an unprecedented economic challenge and opportunity. Geo-Economic Fragmentation (GEF) is replacing globalization leading to imminent economic realignments and readjustments.
- To realize the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047 India will need to achieve a growth rate of around 8 per cent at constant prices, on average, for about a decade or two.
- The Medium-term growth outlook for India must consider the new global realities—GEF, China's manufacturing prowess, and dependency of efforts for energy transition on China.
- India to focus on systematic deregulation to reinvigorate the domestic levers of growth and empower individuals and organisations to pursue legitimate economic activity with ease.
- Systemic deregulation or enhancing economic freedom for individuals and small businesses is arguably the most important policy priority to bolster India's medium-term growth prospects.
- Focus of reforms and economic policy must now be on systematic deregulation under Ease of Doing Business 2·0 and creation of a viable Mittelstand, *i.e.*, India's SME sector.



- Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) 2·0 must be state government-led initiative focusing one labour welfare, electricity, and mechanical vehicles.
- In the next step, States must work on liberalising standards and controls, setting legal safeguards for enforcement, reducing tariffs and fees, and applying risk-based regulation.

Investment and Infrastructure : Keeping it Going

Building infrastructure – physical, digital and social - has been a central focus area for the Government in the last five years. The efforts of the Union Government would need to be supplemented with the public-private partnerships for upgrading the country's infrastructure commensurate with the requirements of Viksit Bharat@2047.

- The Union Government's capital expenditure on key infrastructure sectors has grown at a rate of 38·8 per cent from FY20 to FY24.
- Under railway connectivity, 2031 km of railway network was commissioned between April and November, 2024. Between April and October 2024, 17 new pairs of Vande Bharat trains were introduced to the network, and 228 coaches were produced.
- Under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, 1337 stations have been identified for redevelopment; work has started in 1197 of them. One Station One Product Scheme is operational at 1,900 stations, featuring 2,163 outlets that benefit 79,380 local artisans by providing sales opportunities for their products.
- Under road network, 5853 km of National Highways was constructed in FY25 (April-December).
- Under National Industrial Corridor Development Programme, a total of 383 plots covering 3788 acres have been allotted for industrial use for various sectors in phase 1 in four cities/townships—Dholera in Gujarat, Shendra Bidkin in Maharashtra, Greater Noida in Uttar Pradesh and Vikram Udyogpuri in Madhya Pradesh.
- Work has started in another four cities, namely Tumakuru in Karnataka, Krishnapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, Nangal Choudhary in Haryana and Dadri in Uttar Pradesh.
- In addition, 12 new industrial cities have been approved for development, incorporating Industry 4·0 standards.
- Under the Regional Connectivity Scheme-UDAN, 619 routes connecting 88 airports, including two water aerodromes and 13 heliports, have been operationalised so far. The airport's cargo handling capacity has been increasing, reaching 8·0 million MT in FY24.
- Operational efficiency improved reduction in average container turnaround time in major ports from 48·1 hours in FY24 to 30·4 hours during FY25 (April-November), significantly improving port connectivity.
- Urban Waterways Projects, valued at ₹ 1,303 crore, are underway, with 16 of the 30 projects already completed. These developments have benefited over 35 lakh passengers while facilitating the transport of more than five lakh vehicles and one lakh cargo trucks.
- The share of renewable energy in India's total installed capacity now stands at 47 per cent.
- By the end of December 2024, the country's total renewable energy installed capacity increased by 15·8 per cent year-on-year, reaching 209'4 GW, up from 180·8 GW in December 2023.
- Government's schemes like the DDUGJY and the SAUBHAGYA improved electricity access in rural areas, electrifying 18,374 villages and providing electricity to 2·9 crore households.
- The daily average power supply has improved from 22.1 hours in FY14 to 23·4 hours in FY24 in the urban areas and from 12·5 hours in FY14 to 21·9 hours in the rural areas. The gap between energy demand and supply has also declined from 4·2 per cent in FY14 to a mere 0·1 per cent by December 2024.

Achievements of Smart Cities Mission
(As on November 18, 2024)

Integrated Command and Control Centres	Operational in 100 cities. Used for urban management in crime tracking, safety, transport, disaster management, etc.
Public Safety	83,000 + CCTV cameras, 1884 emergency call boxes, public address systems and traffic enforcement tools installed.
Public Safety	1,200 + projects completed, 318 km of waterfronts developed, 484 heritage sites conserved.
Water Supply	17,000 km of water supply monitored via SCADA in 31 cities, reducing water loss and leaks.
Solid Waste Management	ICCCs and 9,000 RFID-enabled vehicles in 48 cities optimized waste collection.
Streetlights	16 lakh solar/LED streetlights installed across 79 cities.
Mobility	1700 km of smart roads, shared bicycles (23,000), buses (1,500 +), bus stops (2,000+), ITMS in 35 cities.
Affordable Housing	35,000 + affordable housing units built in 23 cities.
Smart Solutions	9,400 Wi-Fi hotspots and 83000 CCTV cameras created.
Health	3,100 + hospital beds, 172 e-health centers, 155 health ATMs and 300 sports facilities added.
Education	9,400 smart classrooms in 2,300 schools, digital libraries, and Anganwadis developed.
PPP Projects	199 projects worth ₹ 9,200 crore implemented in 50 + cities.
Economic Hubs	Incubation projects and skill centers developed, supporting 1,400 + startups and 20,000 + vendors.

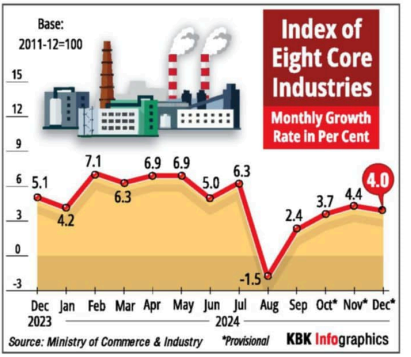
- Currently, 5G services are available in 779 out of 783 districts.
- Efforts to provide 4G mobile services to remote areas under the Universal Service Obligation Fund (now Digital Bharat Nidhi) have made significant strides, with over 10,700 villages covered by December 2024.
- Under the Jal Jeevan Mission, over 12 crore families have gained access to piped drinking water since its launch in 2019.
- Eight states, namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Telangana and Mizoram, and three union territories, namely, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra Nagar Haveli & Daman Diu and Puducherry have achieved 100 per cent coverage.
- Under Phase II of the Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen, during April to November 2024, 1·92 lakh villages were incrementally declared ODF Plus under the model category, taking the total number of ODF Plus villages to 3·64 lakh.
- In urban areas, the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana has completed over 89 lakh houses.
- City transportation network is expanding rapidly, with metro and rapid rail systems operational or under construction in 29 cities, covering over 1,000 kilometers.
- As of 13 January, 2025, 8,058 projects worth 1·64 lakh crore have been proposed, with 7,479 projects worth 1·50 lakh crore completed under the Smart Cities Mission.
- India currently operates 56 active space assets, including 19 communication satellites, nine navigation satellites, four scientific satellites and 24 earth observation satellites.
- The National Infrastructure Pipeline and National Monetisation Pipeline has been established to facilitate private sector involvement in infrastructure. Currently, it encompasses over 9,766 projects and schemes across 37 sub-sectors.

Industry : All About Business Reforms

There have been serious challenges to global manufacturing in terms of persistent geopolitical tensions, aggressive industrial and trade policies, supply chain disruptions, and global trade slowdown. This has posed a challenge to export demand for India's manufactured products.

Industries such as steel, cement, chemicals, and petrochemicals have stabilized industrial growth, while consumer-focused sectors like automobiles, electronics, and pharmaceuticals have emerged as growth drivers. As we progress, fostering R&D investments, innovations, enhancing the growth and formalisation of smaller manufacturers will drive growth across various sectors.

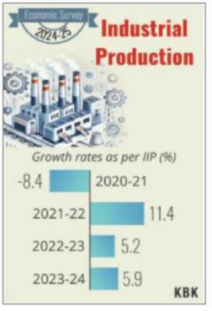
- India's share is 2·8 per cent of the global share in manufacturing, compared to China's 28·8 per cent.
- The industrial sector expected to grow by 6·2 per cent in FY-25 (first advance estimates), driven by robust growth in electricity and construction.
- Four states—the western states of Gujarat and Maharashtra and the southern states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu—account for about 43 per cent of the total industrial GSVA.
- Six Northeast states (excluding Sikkim and Assam), account for only 0·7 per cent of the industrial GVA. There is a need for focus on industrial strategies appropriate to unique geographies like the North East.
- The mining sector contributes about 8 per cent to the total industrial output. Mining activity is highly concentrated with top five states that is Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Odisha, accounts for about 60% of the all-State mining GSVA.
- Currently, India is the second largest cement producer in the world after China, with cement production of around 427 million tonnes in FY24.
- In April-November of FY25, the country's crude steel and finished steel production registered a growth of 3·3 per cent and 4·6 per cent, driven by expansion in end-user sectors and the implementation of policies like the National Steel Policy and Production-Linked Incentive schemes.
- The share of chemicals and chemical products sector in the GVA of manufacturing sector (at 2011-12 prices) was 9·5 per cent during FY23. The country is a net importer of these products, with a dependence on imports of around 45% of petrochemical intermediates.



- The government has been actively promoting Smart Manufacturing and Industry 4·0, supporting the establishment of SAMARTH Udyog centres.
- In FY24, the Indian automobile domestic sales grew by 12·5 per cent.
- The domestic production of electronic goods has grown at a CAGR of 17·5 per cent from FY15 to FY24.
- 99 per cent smartphones now manufactured domestically, drastically reducing India's dependence on imports. In FY24, the country produced approximately 33 crore mobile phone units, with over 75 per cent of the models being 5G enabled. The key drivers of growth have been the large

domestic market, the availability of skilled talent, and low-cost labour.

- After having recorded a high of USD 44·44 billion in FY22, India's export of textiles and apparel, including handicrafts, stood at USD 35·87 billion in the FY24, compared to export of USD 36·69 billion in FY23.
- India's technical textile industry is rapidly growing, ranking fifth globally. Indian technical textiles market stands at US $ 26·8 billion in FY24. India is a net exporter of technical textiles, with exports valuing US $ 2·58 billion in FY24.
- The total annual turnover of pharmaceuticals in FY24 was ₹ 4·17 lakh crore, growing at an average rate of 10·1 per cent in the last five years.
- The medical devices industry in India is experiencing rapid growth, with a CAGR of approximately 15 per cent.
- Currently, India holds an estimated 1·5 per cent share of the global medical devices market. Within Asia, India ranks fourth in terms of market size, following Japan, China and South Korea. On a global scale, India is recognised as one of the top twenty medical device markets.
- As per the WIPO Report 2022, India ranks sixth among the top 10 patent filing offices globally.
- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector has emerged as a highly vibrant sector of the Indian economy.
- To provide equity funding to MSMEs with the potential to scale up, the government launched the Self-Reliant India Fund with a corpus of ₹ 50,000 crore.
- The government is implementing the Micro and Small Enterprises-Cluster Development Programme to develop clusters across the country.
- To provide equity funding to MSMEs with the potential to scale up, the government launched the Self-Reliant India (SRI) Fund with a corpus of ₹ 50,000 crore. The fund has a provision of ₹ 10,000 crore from the government and ₹ 40,000 crore through private equity/venture capital funds.
- MSME Samadhan and the Champions (Creation and Harmonious Application of Modern Processes for Increasing the Output and National Strength) portal has been launched for providing easy credit to MSME.
- Over 2·39 crore informal micro enterprises have been formalized through the Udyam Assist Platform (UAP), making them eligible for priority sector lending benefits.

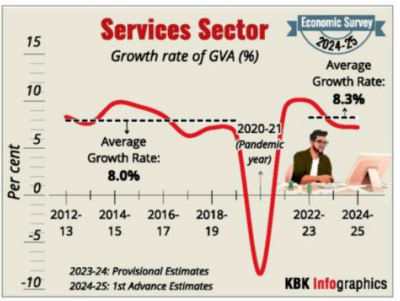


Services-New Challenges for the Old War Horse

The critical role of services exports in strengthening India's external balance and the increasing 'servicification' of the industrial sector adds to its importance to the Indian economy. Logistics services have regained their pre-pandemic momentum. Equipping the labour force with requisite skills and creating an enabling environment through simple and transparent processes of grassroots level governance will go a long way in realising the full potential of commercial services and building resilience to global headwinds.

- Services value added accounts for about 62 per cent of the global GDP.
- The service sector's contribution to total GVA has risen from 50·6 per cent in FY14 to 55·3 per cent in FY25 (First Advance Estimates), providing employment to approximately 30 per cent of the workforce.
- The average growth rate of the services sector was 8 per cent in the pre-pandemic years (FY13-FY20). It stood at 8·3 per cent in the post-pandemic period (FY23–FY25).
- For FY23, Karnataka and Maharashtra account for more than one fourth of the total service sector GSVA of all the states.
- India held a 4·3 per cent share in global services exports in 2023, ranking seventh worldwide.
- India's services export growth surged to 12·8 per cent during April–November FY25, up from 5·7 per cent in FY24.
- Information and computer-related services grew at a trend rate of 12·8 per cent over the last decade (FY13–FY23), increasing their share of overall GVA from 6·3 per cent to 10·9 per cent.
- Within the service sector, computer software and professional services recorded the highest YoY credit growth at 22·5 and 19·4 per cent respectively.
- FDI equity inflows stood at USD 29·8 billion in FY25 (April- September), while the services sector witnessed USD 5·7 billion inflow in the same period.
- In FY25 (April-September), insurance services received the highest FDI inflows of over 62 per cent, followed by the financial sector, which received over 18 per cent of the total FDI equity inflows to the services sector.
- Over the previous year, Indian Railways recorded an 8 per cent growth in passenger traffic originating in FY24. Revenue-earning freight in FY24 grew by 5·2 per cent.
- As of date, a total of 325 trips of Bharat Gaurav trains carrying 1,91,033 tourists have been operated covering various tourist destinations.
- Road transport generates the highest GVA within transport services. During FY23, road transport accounted for 78 per cent of the total GVA of transport services.

- As of October 31, 2024, India has seen a notable rise in drone activities, with 140 remote pilot training organisations, 18,862 remote pilot certificates issued, 26,659 registered drones, and 82 approved drone models (DGCA type certificates). About ₹ 60·6 crore have been disbursed under the PLI scheme to support drone manufacturing.
- The cargo movement at major ports in FY24 was 819 MT. In FY25, in line with the annual target of 870 MT, around 622 MT has been handled upto December 2024.
- As of October 2024, the country has 26 operational waterways of more than 4,800 km. Passenger movement on national waterways in Q2 of FY25 was more than 3·36 crore, increasing from approximately 67 lakh passengers in Q2 of FY24.
- The tourism sector's contribution to GDP returned to its pre-pandemic level of 5 per cent in FY23.
- The Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act has brought numerous improvements in the real estate sector, including protection against fraud, increased transparency, timely project deliveries, and measures to prevent misuse of funds.
- The number of Global Capability Centres (GCCs) has grown from approximately 1430 in FY19 to over 1700 in FY24. As of FY24, GCCs in India employ nearly 1·9 million professionals. Over the past more than 400 new GCCs and around 1100 new units established.



Agriculture and Food Management : Sector of the Future

In recent years, the agriculture sector in India has shown robust growth, averaging 5 per cent annually from FY17 to FY23, demonstrating resilience despite challenges. It is primarily attributed to improved conditions, potentially driven by favourable weather patterns, advancements in agricultural practices, and government initiatives to enhance productivity and sustainability within the sector. Climate variability can present significant challenges; however, allied activities such as animal husbandry, fisheries or agroforestry, can enable the farmers to mitigate the risks effectively.

- The 'Agriculture and Allied Activities' sector contributes approximately 16 per cent of the country's GDP for FY24 (PE) at current prices.
- High-value sectors like horticulture, livestock and fisheries have become key drivers of overall agricultural growth.
- Agricultural income has increased at 5·23 per cent annually over the past decade, compared to 6·24 per cent for non-agricultural income and 5·80 per cent for the overall economy.
- As a major global cereal producer, India accounts for 11·6 per cent of the world's total output. However, crop yields are considerably lower compared to other leading producers.
- Andhra Pradesh was the leading performer with a CAGR of 8·8 per cent in agriculture and allied sectors, excluding forestry and logging. Madhya Pradesh followed with 6·3 per cent, and Tamil Nadu came in third with 4·8 per cent among major states.
- Kharif foodgrain production for 2024 is expected to reach 1647·05 LMT, an increase of 89·37 LMT from the previous year.
- For the fiscal year 2024-25, the MSP for Arhar and Bajra has been increased by 59 per cent and 77 per cent over the weighted average cost of production, respectively.
- The slower growth rate of oilseeds at 1·9 per cent raises concerns, especially considering India's heavy reliance on imports to satisfy domestic edible oil demands.
- In allied sectors, the fisheries sector has shown the highest compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8·7 per cent, followed by livestock with a CAGR of 8 per cent.
- Total fish production (both inland and marine) has surged to 184·02 lakh tonnes in FY 23, up from 95·79 lakh tonnes in FY14. Furthermore, India's seafood exports have risen from ₹ 46,662·85 crore in FY-20 to ₹ 60523·89 crore in 2023-24, reflecting a growth of 29·70 per cent.
- For the fiscal year FY25, the MSP for arhar and bajra has been increased by 59 per cent and 77 per cent over the weighted average cost of production, respectively. Moreover, the MSP for Masur has risen by 89 per cent, while rapeseed has seen an impressive increase of 98 per cent.
- National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013 and the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) marked a fundamental shift in the approach to food security.
- The provision of free food grains under PMGKAY for another five years, reflects the long-term commitment towards food and nutrition security.
- As of 31st October, over 11 crore farmers have benefitted under PM-KISAN, while 23·61 lakh farmers are enrolled under PM Kisan Mandhan.
- There has been an increase in the frequency of dry spells during the summer monsoon season, which are 27 per cent more common from 1981 to 2011 compared to 1951 to 1980.
- In central India, the frequency of extreme daily rainfall events exceeding 150 mm has increased by about 75 per cent from 1950 to 2015.

- The coverage of irrigation area has increased between FY16 and FY21 from 49·3 per cent to 55 per cent of the gross cropped area (GCA), while irrigation intensity has risen from 144·2 per cent to 154.5 per cent. Despite this, only about 55 per cent of the net sown area receiving irrigation.
- As of March 2024, the country has 7·75 crore operational KCC accounts with a loan outstanding of ₹ 9·81 lakh crore. As of 31 March, 2024, 1·24 lakh KCC and 44·40 lakh KCC were issued to fisheries and animal husbandry activities, respectively.
- As of October 31, 2024, 48611 storage infrastructure projects have been sanctioned, with ₹ 4,795·47 crore disbursed in subsidies.
- As of October 31, 2024, over 1·78 crore farmers and 2·62 lakh traders have registered on the e-NAM portal.
- In the fiscal year FY24, the value of agri-food exports, which includes processed food exports, reached USD 46·44 billion, constituting roughly 11·7 per cent of India's total exports.



Climate & Environment : Adaptation Matters

India faces challenges in deploying renewable energy, particularly due to a lack of storage technology and access to minerals. Given India's vulnerability to climate change, a strong adaptation strategy is essential. The Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) initiative, designed to encourage sustainable practices and circular economy, will play a transformative role in the development process. The flow of international finance has remained grossly inadequate, with much of the action being financed from domestic resources.

- India's total expenditure related to adaptation in FY22 was 5·6 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), an increase from 3·7 per cent in FY16.
- India has installed electricity generation capacity of 2,13,701 megawatts from non-fossil fuel sources, which accounts for 46·8 per cent of the total capacity as of 30 November, 2024.
- As per the latest Forest Survey of India 2023, India is estimated to have a total carbon sink of 30·43 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent in 2023, as compared to 2005, when the carbon sink was estimated to be 28·14 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent.
- The India-led global movement, Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE), aims to enhance the country's sustainability efforts.
- By 2030, it is estimated that LiFE measures could save consumers around USD 440 billion globally through reduced consumption and lower prices.

Social Sector-Extending Reach and Driving Empowerment

The government's focus is on empowering citizens through education, healthcare, skill development, and social infrastructure development. Additionally, prioritising mental health in the workplace not only matters for overall well-being and a harmonious society but can also enhance worker productivity. A strong focus on preventing non-communicable diseases combined with the use of technology can be economically effective, significantly reducing the cost burden on healthcare systems.

- The social services expenditure of the government (combined for Centre and States) increased at a compound annual growth rate of 15 per cent from FY21 to FY 25.
- Gini coefficient, a measure of inequality in consumption expenditure, is declining. For rural areas it declined to 0·237 in 2023-24 from 0·266 in 2022-23, and for urban areas, it fell to 0·284 in 2023-24 from 0·314 in 2022-23.
- Various fiscal policies of the government are aiding in reshaping the income distribution.
- Government health expenditure increases from 29·0 per cent to 48·0 per cent; share of out-of-pocket expenditure in total health expenditure declines from 62·6 per cent to 39·4 per cent, reducing financial hardship endured by households.
- The Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) has played a decisive role in the significant reductions in expenditure with over ₹ 1·25 lakh crore in savings being recorded.
- The strategy of Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has been adopted to ensure that budgets at the Gram Panchayat levels align with the SDG objectives.

Employment and Skill Development : Existential Priorities

According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey, the unemployment rate has significantly declined over time, alongside positive trends in labour force participation and the worker population ratio. To fully capitalise on the demographic dividend, creating quality jobs that offer sustainable livelihoods is crucial. Further, by prioritizing reskilling, upskilling, and new-skilling, the government is aiming to align the workforce with global demands, enhancing both domestic and international employability. Additionally, sectors like the digital economy and renewable energy offer vast potential for creating high-quality jobs, which is essential for achieving the Viksit Bharat's vision.

- Indian labour market indicators have improved with unemployment rate declining to 3·2 per cent in 2023-24 (July-June) from 6·0 per cent in 2017-18 (July-June).
- With around 26 per cent of the population in the age group of 10-24 years, India stands at the cusp of a unique demographic opportunity, as one of the youngest nations globally.
- To give a fillip to women's entrepreneurship, the government has launched several initiatives in terms of easier access to credit, marketing support, skill development, and support to women start-ups, etc.
- The growing digital economy and renewable energy sectors are providing enhanced opportunities for job creation, essential for achieving the Viksit Bharat's vision.
- The government is establishing a resilient and responsive skilled ecosystem to keep pace with emerging global trends such as automation, generative AI, digitalisation, and the effects of climate change.
- The Government has implemented measures to boost employment, foster self-employment, and promote worker welfare.
- The recently launched PM-Internship Scheme is emerging as a transformative catalyst for employment generation.
- The net payroll additions under EPFO have more than doubled in the past six years, signalling healthy growth in formal employment.

Labour in the AI Era : Crisis or Catalyst ?

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents both unprecedented opportunities and significant challenges for labour markets worldwide. However, achieving these benefits requires significant investments in education and workforce skilling, supported by enabling, insuring and stewarding institutions. By fostering collaboration between policymakers, the private sector, and academia, India can align AI-driven innovation with societal goals.

- AI is anticipated to surpass human performance in critical decision-making across various fields, including healthcare, research, criminal justice, education, business, and financial services.
- Barriers to large-scale AI adoption persist in the present, which include concerns over reliability, resource inefficiencies, and infrastructure deficits. These challenges, along with AI's experimental nature, create a window for policymakers to act.
- Fortunately, due to AI presently being in its infancy, India is afforded the time necessary to strengthen its foundations and mobilise a nation-wide institutional response.
- Leveraging its young, dynamic, and tech-savvy population, India has the potential to create a workforce that can utilise AI to augment their work and productivity.
- The future revolves around 'Augmented Intelligence', where the workforce integrates both human and machine capabilities. This approach aims to enhance human potential and improve overall efficiency in job performance, ultimately benefiting society as a whole.
- Collaborative effort between government, private sector, and academia essential to minimise adverse societal effects of AI-driven transformation.

Memorable Facts

- India's GDP expected to grow between 6·3 and 6·8 per cent in FY26.
- Real GDP estimated at 6·4 per cent in FY25, close to its decadal average.
- Real GVA estimated to grow by 6·4 per cent in FY25.
- Capex grew at 8·2 per cent in July–November 2024 and expected to pick up further pace.
- Retail headline inflation softened to 4·9 per cent in April-December 2024.
- India's Consumer Price Inflation to align with the target of around 4 per cent in FY26.
- Overall exports grew 6·0 per cent (Y-O-Y) during April-December 2024.
- India's services export growth surged to 12·8 per cent during April–November FY25, up from 5·7 per cent in FY24.
- Gross FDI inflows increased from USD 47·2 billion in first eight months of FY24 to USD 55·6 billion in the same period of FY25, a Y-O-Y growth of 17·9 per cent.
- Forex stood at USD 640·3 billion as of end of December 2024, sufficient to cover 10·9 months of imports and approximately 90 per cent of external debt.
- Capacity addition in solar and wind power increased 15·8 per cent year-on-year in December 2024.
- BSE stock market capitalisation to GDP ratio stood at 136 per cent at the end of December 2024, far higher than China (65 per cent) and Brazil (37 per cent).
- ₹ 50,000 crore Self-Reliant India fund launched to provide equity funding to MSMEs.
- Agriculture expected to grow at 3·8 per cent in FY25. Key drivers of agricultural growth are horticulture, livestock & fisheries.
- Industrial sector estimated to grow by 6.2 per cent in FY25.
- Social services expenditure registered an annual growth rate of 15 per cent between FY21 and FY25.
- Government health expenditure increased from 29·0 per cent to 48·0 per cent; share of out-of-pocket expenditure in total health expenditure declined from 62·6 per cent to 39·4 per cent between FY15 and FY22.
- Unemployment rate declined to 3·2 per cent in 2023-24 (July-June) from 6·0 per cent in 2017-18 (July-June).
- Collaborative effort between government, private sector, and academia essential to minimise adverse AI societal effects.

OBJECTIVE TYPE QUESTIONS

(On Economic Survey)

1. In FY2025-26, the India's real GDP is expected to grow by :
   (A) 6%-6·4% (B) 6·2%-6·6%
   (B) 6·3%-6·5% (D) 6·3%-6·8%

2. Consider the following statements in relation to the NSO's First Advance Estimates of FY2024-25 :
   I. The Real GDP growth for FY2024-25 is estimated to be 6·4%.
   II. The Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) (at constant prices) for FY 2024-25 is estimated to grow by 6·4%.
   III. The Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCF) (at constant prices) for FY 2024-25 is estimated to grow by 6·4%.
   IV. The Real Gross Value Added (GVA) for FY 2024-25 is estimated to grow by 7·3%.
   Choose the correct option from the codes given below :
   (A) Only I, II and III are correct
   (B) Only II, III and IV are correct
   (C) Only I and II are correct
   (D) All I, II, III and IV are correct

3. Consider the following pairs of sectors and their respective growth rates in FY2024-25 as per the First Advance Estimates (FAE) of 2024-25 :
   I. Agriculture : 3·8%
   II. Industrial sector : 7·2%
   III. Services sector : 6·2%
   Choose the correct option :
   (A) Only I is correct
   (B) Only II and III are correct
   (C) Only III is correct
   (D) All I, II and III are correct

4. Consider the following statements :
   I. The implementation of the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) will start at the end of 2025.
   II. EUDR for small businesses will start from 2026.
   III. EUDR seeks to regulate the consumption of products derived from deforested land.
   Choose the correct option based on following codes :
   (A) Only I is correct
   (B) Only I and II are correct
   (C) Only II and III are correct
   (D) All I, II and III are correct

5. Consider the following statements :
   I. Retail headline inflation, as measured by the change in CPI, decreased from 5·4% in FY24 to 4·9% in April–December 2025.
   II. The core inflation declined by 0·9% between FY24 and April–December 2025.
   Choose the correct option :
   (A) Only statement I is correct
   (B) Only statement II is correct
   (C) Both statements I and II are correct. Statement II is correct explanation of Statement I
   (D) Both statements I and II are correct. But, statement II is not a correct explanation of statement I

6. Consider the following statements :
   I. The global economy grew by 3·3% in 2023.
   II. IMF has projected global growth of 3·3% in 2025.
   III. Global growth is expected to average around 3·2% over the next 5 years.
   Choose the correct option :
   (A) Only I and II are correct
   (B) Only II is correct
   (C) Only I and III are correct
   (D) All I, II and III are correct

7. Consider the following statements :
   I. Between FY20 and FY24, the capital expenditure of the Union Government on key infrastructure sectors grew at a rate of 38·8%.
   II. Between April and November 2024, 2031 km of railway network was commissioned.
   III. Railways, Road Transport and Defence accounted for 75% of capital expenditure until November 2024.
   IV. Under road network, 5853 km of National Highways was constructed in FY25 (April-December).
   Choose the correct option :
   (A) Only I, II and III are correct
   (B) Only I, II and IV are correct
   (C) Only II, III and IV are correct
   (D) All I, II, III and IV are correct

8. Consider the following statements in relation to India's Foreign Exchange Reserves (FOREX) :
   I. As on January 3, 2025, India's foreign exchange reserves stood at USD 634·6 billion.
   II. India's FOREX reserves have increased by USD 70·3 billion since September 2024.
   III. As on January 2025, India's FOREX reserves are sufficient to cover 90% of external debt.
   Choose the correct option :
   (A) Only I is correct
   (B) Only I and II are correct
   (C) Only I and III are correct
   (D) All I, II and III are correct

9. Consider the following statements :
   I. The gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) in the Scheduled Commercial Bank have declined to a 12 year low of 2·6%, at the end of September 2024.
   II. The capital to risk weighted assets ratio (CRAR) for Schedule Commercial Banks stands at 16·7% as of September 2024.

III. As of the end of November 2024, the Y-o-Y growth in aggregate deposits of SCBs stood at 11·1%.

IV. The profitability of SCBs improved during H1 of FY25, with Profit After Tax (PAT) surging by 22·2 per cent (YoY).

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I is correct

(B) Only I, II and III are correct

(C) Only II, III and IV are correct

(D) All I, II, III and IV are correct

10. At the end of March 2024, the Financial Inclusion Index of India stood at :

(A) 64·2 (B) 53·9

(C) 55·4 (D) 44·5

11. Consider the following statements :

I. India's share in global IPO listings surged to 30% in 2024, up from 17% in 2023.

II. The total resource mobilisation from primary markets (equity and debt) stands at ₹ 11·1 lakh crore from April to December 2024, 5% more than the amount mobilised during entire FY24.

III. BSE market capitalization to GDP ratio stood at 136% at the end of December 2024.

IV. Investor participation in capital markets grew from 4·9 crore in FY20 to 13·2 crore as of 31 December, 2024.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I and II are correct

(B) Only II and III are correct

(C) Only I, II and III are correct

(D) All I, II, III and IV are correct

12. Consider the following statements :

I. The total insurance premium grew by 7·7% in FY24 and reached ₹ 11·2 lakh crore.

II. The overall insurance penetration in India was below the global average of 7%.

III. Total number of pension subscribers grew by 16% Y-o-Y basis in September 2024.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I and II are correct

(B) Only II and III are correct

(C) All I, II and III are correct

(D) All I, II and III are incorrect

13. Consider the following statements :

I. Non-fossil fuel sources accounts for 46·8% of the total installed electricity generation capacity.

II. Between 2005 and 2023, an additional carbon sink of 2·29 billion tonnes CO_2 equivalent has been created.

III. By 2030, measures under the Mission LiFE could save consumers around USD 440 billion globally.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I is correct

(B) Only I and II are correct

(C) Only II and III are correct

(D) All I, II and III are correct

14. Consider the following statements :

I. RBI expects headline inflation to be 4·2 per cent in FY26.

II. IMF has projected an inflation rate of 4·4 per cent in FY25 and 4·1 per cent in FY26 for India.

III. Contribution of vegetables and pulses to the overall inflation stood at 32·3 per cent in FY25 (April to December).

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I and II are correct

(B) Only III is correct

(C) Only II is correct

(D) All I, II and III are correct

15. Consider the following statements :

I. As per the 2023-24 annual PLFS report, the unemployment rate for individuals aged 15 years and above declined from 6% in 2017-18 to 3·2% in 2023-24.

II. In Q2 FY25, the urban unemployment rate for people aged 15 years and above improved to 6·4% compared to 6·6% in Q2 FY24.

III. EPFO subscriptions more than doubled from ₹ 61 lakh in FY19 to ₹ 131 lakh in FY24.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I is correct

(B) Only I and II are correct

(C) Only III is correct

(D) All I, II and III are correct

16. Consider the following statements :

I. Total exports (merchandise and services) registered a steady growth of 6% in the first nine months of Financial Year 2024-25.

II. Growth in services and goods exports, excluding petroleum and gems and jewellery, was 10·4%.

III. Total imports during the same period registered a contraction of 6·9%.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I is correct

(B) Only I and II are correct

(C) Only III is correct

(D) All I, II and III are correct

17. Consider the following statements :

I. The Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) affect 19·3% of the product lines, covering 67·1 per cent of the global trade as of December 2024.

II. Export-related measures affects 31·6% of the product lines and covering 31·2% of the global trade as of December 2024.

III. Sectors most affected by Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) include agriculture, manufacturing and natural resources.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I is correct

(B) Only I and II are correct

(C) Only III is correct

(D) All I, II and III are correct

18. Consider the following statements :

I. India's B2C e-commerce market was worth USD 83 billion in 2022.

II. It is expected to grow to USD 150 billion by 2030.

III. Apparel constituted 42% of the India's exported textile items worth USD 34 billion in 2023.

Choose the correct option :
(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) Only I and III are correct
(C) Only II and III are correct
(D) All I, II and III are correct

19. Consider the following statements :
I. The western states of Gujarat and Maharashtra and the southern states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu—account for about 43 per cent of the total industrial GSVA.
II. 6 states of the Northeast (excluding Sikkim and Assam), account for only 0·7 per cent of the industrial GVA.
Choose the correct option :
(A) Only I is correct
(B) Only II is correct
(C) Both I and II are correct
(D) Both I and II are incorrect

20. Consider the following statements in relation to the agriculture sector :
I. Agriculture sector grew 3·5% in the second quarter of 2024-25.
II. It recorded 5% annual average growth during FY17 to FY23.
III. Agricultural income grew by 5·23% annually over a past decade.
IV. Kharif foodgrain production in 2024 is projected to reach 1647·05 lakh metric tonnes.
Choose the correct option :
(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) Only II, III and IV correct
(C) Only III and IV are correct
(D) All I, II, III and IV are correct

21. Consider the following statements :
I. The Survey highlights that India's school education system serves 24·8 crore students across 14·72 lakh schools with 98 lakh teachers.
II. Government schools comprises 69% of the total, enrolling 50% of students and employing 51% of teachers.
III. Private schools account for 22·5%, enrolling 32·6% of students and employing 38% of teachers.
Choose the correct option :
(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) Only II and III are correct
(C) Only III is correct
(D) All I, II and III are correct

22. Consider the following statements :
I. Domestic production of electronic goods increased substantially from ₹ 1·90 lakh crore in FY15 to ₹ 9·52 lakh crore in FY24, growing at a CAGR of 17·5%.
II. Textile industry accounts for about 11% of India's manufacturing GVA.
III. As per the WIPO Report 2022, India ranks sixth among the top 10 patent filing offices globally.
IV. Total annual turnover of pharmaceuticals in FY24 was ₹ 4·17 lakh crore, growing at an average rate of 10·1 per cent in the last five years.
Choose the correct option :
(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) Only II and III are correct
(C) Only III is correct
(D) All I, II and III are correct

23. Consider the following statements :
I. The service sector provides employment to approximately 30% of the workforce.
II. The average services growth in the post-pandemic Year, *i.e.*, FY23 to FY25 has risen to 8·3%.
III. In April-November FY25, services imports grew by 13·9%.
Choose the correct options :
(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) Only II and III are correct
(C) Only III is correct
(D) All I, II and III are correct

24. Consider the following statements :
I. As of November 26, 2024, MSMEs have reported employing 23·24 crore individuals.
II. Government has launched the Self-Reliant India (SRI) Fund with a corpus of ₹ 50,000 crore.
III. SRI Fund has a provision of ₹ 10,000 crore from the government and ₹ 40,000 crore through private equity/venture capital funds.
Choose the correct options :
(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) Only II and III are correct
(C) Only III is correct
(D) All I, II and III are correct

25. What is India's score according to the World Bank's Relative CBAM Exposure Index ?
(A) 0·3
(B) 0·03
(C) 0·003
(D) 3·0

Answers

1. (D) 2. (C) 3. (A) 4. (D) 5. (C)
6. (D) 7. (D) 8. (C) 9. (D) 10. (A)
11. (D) 12. (C) 13. (D) 14. (D) 15. (D)
16. (B) 17. (C) 18. (B) 19. (C) 20. (D)
21. (D) 22. (D) 23. (D) 24. (D) 25. (B)

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I, Rahul Jain hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

RAHUL JAIN
Publisher



Union Budget 2025-26

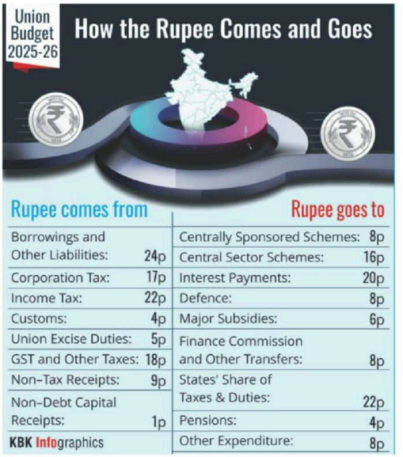
Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented a record eighth consecutive Union Budget 2025-26 on February 1, 2025 in the Lok Sabha. This the first full budget of Modi-3. The budget is expected to contain measures that ease the burden on the middle class struggling with high prices and stagnant wage growth while being fiscally prudent. Key highlights of the budget are following :

PART 'A'

Budget continues Government's efforts to : (a) accelerate growth, (b) secure inclusive development, (c) invigorate private sector investments, (d) uplift household sentiments and (e) enhance spending power of India's rising middle class.

Budget Theme

- The Finance Minster described the concept of 'Viksit Bharat' in the following manner by quoting the great Telugu poet and playwright Gurajada Appa Rao who said, 'Desamante Matti Kaadoi, Desamante Manushuloi'; meaning, 'A country is not just its soil, a country is its people.'
- For government Viksit Bharat, encompasses : (a) zero-poverty; (b) hundred per cent good quality school education; (c) access to high-quality, affordable and comprehensive healthcare; (d) hundred per cent skilled labour with meaningful employment; (e) seventy per cent women in economic activities; and (f) farmers making our country the 'food basket of the world'.



- In this Budget, the proposed development measures span ten broad areas focusing on **Garib, Youth, Annadata and Nari. These are :** (1) Spurring Agricultural Growth and Productivity; (2) Building Rural Prosperity and Resilience; (3) Taking Everyone Together on an Inclusive Growth path; (4) Boosting Manufacturing and Furthering Make in India; (5) Supporting MSMEs; (6) Enabling Employment-led Development; (7) Investing in people, economy and innovation; (8) Securing Energy Supplies; (9) Promoting Exports and (10) Nurturing Innovation.
- For this journey of development : (a) The four powerful engines are : Agriculture, MSME, Investment, and Exports; (b) The fuel is : Reforms; (c) The guiding spirit is : Inclusivity; (d) The destination is : Viksit Bharat.

Aim of the Budget

This Budget aims to initiate transformative reforms across six domains. During the next five years, these will augment our growth potential and global competitiveness. The domains are :

(1) Taxation;
(2) Power Sector;
(3) Urban Development;
(4) Mining;
(5) Financial Sector; and
(6) Regulatory Reforms.

Agriculture as the 1st Engine

Keeping in mind the importance and plight of the farmers, the Finance Minister proposed following initiatives in the budget to boost the agricultural economy :

- **Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana - Developing Agri Districts Programme :** 'Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana' will be launched in partnership with States, through the convergence of existing schemes and specialized measures. The programme will cover 100 districts with low productivity, moderate crop intensity and below-average credit parameters. The programme aims to : (1) enhance agricultural productivity, (2) adopt crop diversification and sustainable agriculture practices, (3) augment post-harvest storage at the panchayat and block level, (4) improve irrigation facilities, and (5) facilitate availability of long-term and short-term credit. This programme is likely to help 1·7 crore farmers.
- A comprehensive multi-sectoral **'Rural Prosperity and Resilience' programme** will be launched in partnership with states. This will address underemployment in agriculture through skilling, invest-

ment, technology and invigorating the rural economy. The goal is to generate ample opportunities in rural areas so that migration is an option, but not a necessity. The programme will focus on rural women, young farmers, rural youth, marginal and small farmers and landless families. In Phase-1, 100 developing agri-districts will be covered.

- The Government will launch a 6-year **'Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses'** with a special focus on **Tur, Urad and Masoor**. Central agencies (NAFED and NCCF) will be ready to procure these 3 pulses, as much as offered during the next 4 years from farmers who register with these agencies and enter into agreements.
- A comprehensive **programme for Vegetables and Fruit**s to promote production, efficient supplies, processing and remunerative prices for farmers will be launched in partnership with states.
- A **Makhana Board** will be established in Bihar to improve production, processing, value addition, and marketing of makhana.
- A **National Mission on High Yielding Seeds** will be launched, aimed at : (1) strengthening the research ecosystem, (2) targeted development and propagation of seeds with high yield, pest resistance and climate resilience, and (3) commercial availability of more than 100 seed varieties released since July 2024.
- India ranks second-largest globally in fish production and aquaculture. Seafood exports are valued at ₹ 60 thousand crore. To unlock the untapped potential of the marine sector, the Government will bring in an enabling framework for sustainable harnessing of **fisheries** from Indian Exclusive Economic Zone and High Seas, with a special focus on the Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands.
- The government will launch a **'Mission for Cotton Productivity'**. This 5-year mission will facilitate significant improvements in productivity and sustainability of cotton farming and promote extra-long staple cotton varieties. The best of science & technology support will be provided to farmers. Aligned with government's integrated 5F vision for the textile sector, this will help in increasing incomes of the farmers, and ensure a steady supply of quality cotton for rejuvenating India's traditional textile sector.
- The loan limit under the **Modified Interest Subvention Scheme** will be enhanced from ₹ 3 lakh to ₹ 5 lakh for loans taken through the **Kisan Credit Cards (KCC).**
- To further **augment urea supply**, a plant with annual capacity of 12·7 lakh metric tons will be set up at Namrup, Assam.
- **India Post** with 1·5 lakh rural post offices, complemented by the India Post Payment Bank and a vast network of 2·4 lakh Dak Sevaks, will be repositioned to act as a catalyst for the rural economy.

MSMEs as the 2nd Engine

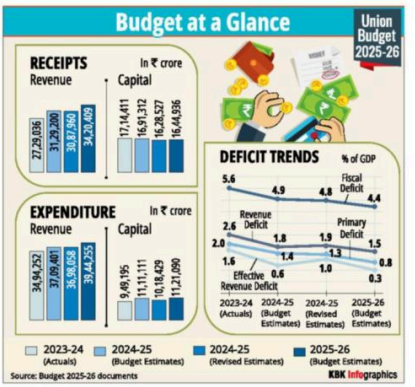
A number of steps has been announced in the budget for MSME sector, which has about 5·7 crore units across the country :

Currently, over 1 crore registered MSMEs, employing 7·5 crore people, and generating 36 per cent of country's manufacturing and are responsible for 45 per cent of exports. To help them achieve higher efficiencies of scale, technological upgradation and better access to capital, the investment and turnover limits for classification of all MSMEs will be enhanced to 2·5 and 2 times respectively.

Revised Classification of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

Category	Investment (₹ Crore)		Annual Turnover (₹ Crore)	
	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed
Micro Enterprises	1	2·5	5	10
Small Enterprises	10	25	50	100
Medium Enterprises	50	125	250	500

- To improve access to credit, the **credit guarantee cover** will be enhanced : (a) For Micro and Small Enterprises, from ₹ 5 crore to ₹ 10 crore, leading to additional credit of ₹ 1·5 lakh crore in the next 5 years; (b) For Startups, from ₹ 10 crore to ₹ 20 crore, with the guarantee fee being moderated to 1 per cent for loans in 27 focus sectors important for Atmanirbhar Bharat; and (c) For well-run exporter MSMEs, for term loans up to ₹ 20 crore.
- **Customized Credit Cards** will be issued with a ₹ 5 lakh limit for micro enterprises registered on Udyam portal. In the first year, 10 lakh such cards will be issued.
- A new **Fund of Funds**, with expanded scope and a fresh contribution of another ₹ 10,000 crore will be set up.



Budget at a Glance

(In ₹ crore)

		2023-24 Actuals	2024-25 Revised Estimates	2025-26 Budget Estimates
1.	Revenue Receipts	2729036	3087960	3420409
2.	Tax Revenue (Net to Centre)	2327251	2556960	2837409
3.	Non Tax Revenue	401785	531000	583000
4.	Capital Receipts	1714411	1628527	1644936
5.	Recovery of Loans	26646	26000	29000
6.	Other Receipts	33122	33000	47000
7.	Borrowings and Other Liabilities	1654643	1569527	1568936
8.	Total Receipts (1+4)	4443447	4716487	5065345
9.	Total Expenditure (10+13)	4443447	4716487	5065345
10.	On Revenue Account of which	3494252	3698058	3944255
11.	Interest Payments	1063872	1137940	1276338
12.	Grants in Aid for creation of Capital Assets	303916	299891	427192
13.	On Capital Account	949195	1018429	1121090
14.	Effective Capital Expenditure (12+13)	1253111	1318320	1548282
15.	Revenue Deficit (10–1)	765216 (2·6)	610098 (1·9)	523846 (1·5)
16.	Effective Revenue Deficit (15–12)	461300 (1·6)	310207 (1·0)	96654 (1·3)
17.	Fiscal Deficit [9–(1+5+6)]	1654643 (5·6)	1569527 (4·8)	1568936 (4·4)
18.	Primary Deficit (17–11)	590771 (2·0)	431587 (1·3)	292598 (0·8)

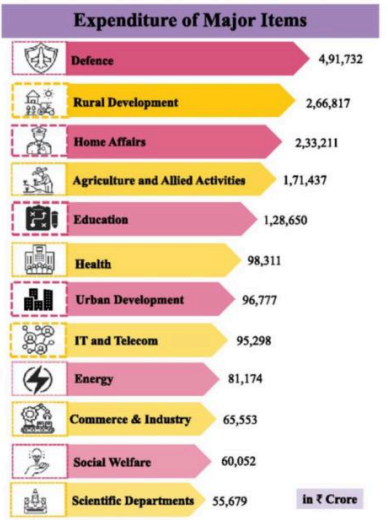
- A new scheme will be launched for 5 lakh women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes first-time entrepreneurs. This will provide term loans up to ₹ 2 crore during the next 5 years.
- To enhance the productivity, quality and competitiveness of India's footwear and leather sector, a **focus product scheme** will be implemented. The scheme is expected to facilitate employment for 22 lakh persons, generate turnover of ₹ 4 lakh crore and exports of overs. ₹ 1·1 lakh crore.
- Building on the **National Action Plan for Toys**, the government will implement a scheme to make India a global hub for toys.
- In line with government's commitment towards 'Purvodaya', a **National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management** will be established in Bihar.
- The Government will set up a **National Manufacturing Mission** covering small, medium and large industries for furthering 'Make in India' by providing policy support, execution roadmaps, governance and monitoring framework for Central ministries and States. The Mission will support clean Tech Manufacturing, which will aim to improve domestic value addition and build country's ecosystem for solar PV cells, EV batteries, motors and controllers, electrolyzers, wind turbines, very high voltage transmission equipment and grid scale batteries.

Investment as the 3rd Engine

It has been made clear in the budget that the government is fully committed towards investing in people, investing in the economy and investing in innovation :

(A) Investing in People :

- The cost norms for the nutritional support will be enhanced appropriately under **Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2·0 programme.**
- Fifty thousand **Atal Tinkering Labs** will be set up in Government schools in next 5 years to cultivate the spirit of curiosity and innovation, and foster a scientific temper among young minds.
- **Broadband connectivity** will be provided to all Government secondary schools and primary health centres in rural areas under the Bharatnet project.



- **Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme** will be implemented to provide digital-form Indian language books for school and higher education.
- Five **National Centres of Excellence for skilling** will be set up with global expertise and partnerships to equip our youth with the skills required for 'Make for India, Make for the World' manufacturing.
- Additional infrastructure will be created in the 5 IITs started after 2014 to facilitate education for 6,500 more students. Hostel and other infrastructure capacity at IIT, Patna will also be expanded.

- A **Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence for education** will be set up with a total outlay of ₹ 500 crore.
- In the next year, 10,000 additional seats will be added in medical colleges and hospitals, towards the goal of adding 75,000 seats in the next 5 years.
- The Government will facilitate setting up of **Day Care Cancer Centres in all district hospitals** in the next 3 years. 200 Centres will be established in 2025-26.
- A scheme for socio-economic upliftment of urban workers will be implemented to help them improve their incomes, have sustainable livelihoods and a better quality of life.
- **PM SVANidhi** scheme will be revamped with enhanced loans from banks, UPI linked credit cards with ₹ 30,000 limit, and capacity building support.
- The Government will arrange for Gig workers' identity cards and registration on the e-Shram portal. They will be provided healthcare under PM Jan Arogya Yojana.

(B) Investing in the Economy :

- Each infrastructure-related ministry will come up with a 3-year pipeline of projects that can be implemented in PPP mode. States will also be encouraged to do so and can seek support from the IIPDF (India Infrastructure Project Development Fund) scheme to prepare PPP proposals.
- An outlay of ₹ 1·5 lakh crore has been proposed for the **50-year interest free loans to states for capital expenditure and incentives for reforms**.
- **Second Plan of Asset Monetization** for 2025-30 will be launched to plough back capital of ₹ 10 lakh crore in new projects.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission** will be extended until 2028 with an enhanced total outlay.
- The Government will set up an **Urban Challenge Fund** of ₹ 1 lakh crore to implement the proposals for 'Cities as Growth Hubs', 'Creative Redevelopment of Cities' and 'Water and Sanitation' announced in the July, 2025 Budget. This fund will finance up to 25 per cent of the cost of bankable projects with a stipulation that at least 50 per cent of the cost is funded from bonds, bank loans, and PPPs. An allocation of ₹ 10,000 crore is proposed for 2025-26.
- For an active partnership with the private sector towards the goal of Development of at least 100 GW of nuclear energy by 2047, amendments to the Atomic Energy Act and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act will be taken up.
- A **Nuclear Energy Mission for research & development of Small Modular Reactors (SMR)** with an outlay of ₹ 20,000 crore will be set up. At least 5 indigenously developed SMRs will be operationalized by 2033.
- The Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Policy will be revamped to address cost disadvantages.
- For long-term financing for the maritime industry, a **Maritime Development Fund** with a corpus of ₹ 25,000 crore will be set up.
- **Modified UDAN scheme** will be launched to enhance regional connectivity to 120 new destinations and carry 4 crore passengers in the next 10 years. The scheme will also support helipads and smaller airports in hilly, aspirational, and North East region districts.
- **Greenfield airports will be facilitated in Bihar** to meet the future needs of the State. These will be in addition to the expansion of the capacity of Patna airport and a brownfield airport at Bihta in Patna District.

Expenditure of Major Items

(In ₹ crore)

	2023-24 Actuals	2024-25 Revised Estimates	2025-26 Budget Estimates
Pension	238328	275103	276618
Defence	444699	456722	491732
Subsidy :			
Fertiliser	188292	171299	167887
Food	211814	197420	203420
Petroleum	12240	14700	12100
Agriculture and Allied Activities	145995	140859	171437
Commerce and Industry	49809	56502	65553
Development of North East	1628	4006	5915
Education	123365	114054	128650
Energy	52405	63403	81174
External Affairs	28915	25277	20517
Finance	23403	63512	62924
Health	81594	88032	98311
Home Affairs (including Union Territories)	196872	220371	233211
Interest	1063872	1137940	1276338
IT and Telecom	82277	117869	95298
Rural Development	241193	190675	266817
Scientific Departments	24657	29831	55679
Social Welfare	42065	46482	60052
Tax Administration of which Transfer to	191327	207968	186632
GST Compensation Fund	145000	153440	130641
Transport	526765	541384	548649
Urban Development	68565	63670	96777
Others	403367	450008	482653
Net additional resources transferred to (+)/met from (–) dedicated reserve funds	—	39400	– 23000
Grand Total	**4443447**	**4716487**	**5065345**

- Financial support will be provided for the **Western Koshi Canal** ERM Project benefitting a large number of farmers cultivating over 50,000 hectares of land in the Mithilanchal region of Bihar.
- **Special Window for Affordable and Mid-Income Housing (SWAMIH) Fund 2** will be established as a blended finance facility with contribution from the Government, banks and private investors. This fund of ₹ 15,000 crore will aim for expeditious completion of another 1 lakh units.

- Top 50 tourist destination sites in the country will be developed in partnership with states through a challenge mode. Land for building key infrastructure will have to be provided by states. Hotels in those destinations will be included in the infrastructure HML.
- Finance Minister proposed the following measures to boost **employment-led growth** : (1) Organizing intensive skill-development programmes for our youth including in Institutes of Hospitality Management; (2) Providing MUDRA loans for homestays; (3) Improving ease of travel and connectivity to tourist destinations; (4) Providing performance-linked incentives to states for effective destination management including tourist amenities, cleanliness, and marketing efforts; and (5) Introducing streamlined e-visa facilities along with visa-fee waivers for certain tourist groups.

(C) Investing in Innovation :

- ₹ 20,000 crore has been allocated in the budget to implement private sector driven Research, Development and Innovation initiative announced in the July 2025 Budget.
- **A Deep Tech Fund of Funds** will also be explored to catalyze the next generation startups as a part of this initiative.
- In the next five years, under the **PM Research Fellowship scheme**, the government will provide ten thousand fellowships for technological research in IITs and IISc with enhanced financial support.
- The **2nd Gene Bank** with 10 lakh germplasm lines will be set up for future food and nutritional security.
- The government will start a **National Geospatial Mission** to develop foundational geospatial infrastructure and data.
- A **Gyan Bharatam Mission** for survey, documentation and conservation of our manuscript heritage with academic institutions, museums, libraries and private collectors will be undertaken to cover more than 1 crore manuscripts.
- The government will set up a **National Digital Repository of Indian knowledge systems** for knowledge sharing.

Exports as the 4th Engine

The Finance Minister announced following measures in the budget to enhance export led growth of the economy :

- Government will set up an **Export Promotion Mission**, with sectoral and ministerial targets, driven jointly by the Ministries of Commerce, MSME, and Finance.
- A digital public infrastructure, **'Bharat Trade Net'** (BTN) for international trade will be set-up as a unified platform for trade documentation and financing solutions. This will complement **the Unified Logistics Interface Platform**. The BTN will be aligned with international practices.
- Support will be provided to develop domestic manufacturing capacities for India's economy's integration with global supply chains.
- A national framework will be formulated as guidance to states for promoting Global Capability Centres in emerging tier 2 cities.

Reforms as the Fuel for the Growth Engine

The Finance Minister announced the following measure to give a fresh doze of reforms in various sectors of the economy :

- The FDI limit for the insurance sector will be raised from 74 to 100 per cent.
- The services of India Post Payment Bank will be deepened and expanded in rural areas.
- NaBFID will set up a 'Partial Credit Enhancement Facility' for corporate bonds for infrastructure.
- Public Sector Banks will develop 'Grameen Credit Score' framework to serve the credit needs of SHG members and people in rural areas.
- A forum for regulatory coordination and development of pension products will be set up.
- The revamped Central KYC Registry will be rolled out in 2025. The government will also implement a streamlined system for periodic updating.
- Requirements and procedures for speedy approval of company mergers will be rationalized.
- To encourage sustained foreign investment and in the spirit of 'first develop India', the current model BIT will be revamped and made more investor-friendly.
- A High-Level Committee for Regulatory Reforms will be set up for a review of all non-financial sector regulations, certifications, licenses, and permissions.
- An Investment Friendliness Index of States will be launched in 2025 to further the spirit of competitive cooperative federalism.
- Under the Financial Stability and Development Council, a mechanism will be set up to evaluate impact of the current financial regulations and subsidiary instructions.
- Government will now bring up the Jan Vishwas Bill 2·0 to decriminalize more than 100 provisions in various laws.

Revised Estimates 2024-25

- Total receipts other than borrowings : ₹ 31·47 lakh crore, of which the
- Net tax receipts ₹ 25·57 lakh crore.
- Total expenditure : ₹ 47·16 lakh crore, of which the
- Capital expenditure : ₹ 10·18 lakh crore
- Revised Estimate of the fiscal deficit : 4·8 per cent of GDP.

Budget Estimates 2025-26

- Total receipts other than borrowings : ₹ 34·96 lakh crore.
- Net tax receipts: ₹ 28·37 lakh crore.
- Total expenditure : ₹ 50·65 lakh crore.
- The gross market borrowings are estimated at ₹ 14·82 lakh crore.
- Capex Expenditure of ₹ 11·21 lakh crore (3·1% of GDP).
- Fiscal deficit : 4·4 per cent of GDP.

Tax Receipts

(In ₹ crore)

	2023-24 Actuals	2024-25 Revised Estimates	2025-26 Budget Estimates
Gross Tax Revenue	3465519	3853455	4270233
(a) Corporation Tax	911055	980000	1082000
(b) Taxes on Income	1044757	1257000	1438000
(c) Wealth Tax & Commodity Transaction Tax	422	—	—
(d) Customs	233119	235000	240000
(e) Union Excise Duties	305362	305000	317000
(f) Service Tax	425	100	100
(g) GST	957208	1061899	1178000
– CGST	820622	908459	1010890
– IGST	– 4850	—	—
– GST Compensation Cess	141436	153440	167110
(h) Taxes of Union Territories	9242	9456	10133
(i) Other Taxes	3929	5000	5000

PART 'B'

Indirect Taxes

Rationalisation of Customs Tariff Structure for Industrial Goods :

Union Budget 2025-26 proposes to :

- Remove seven tariff rates. This is over and above the seven tariff rates removed in 2023-24 budget. After this, there will be only eight remaining tariff rates including 'zero' rate.
- Apply appropriate cess to broadly maintain effective duty incidence except on a few items, where such incidence will reduce marginally.
- Levy not more than one cess or surcharge. Therefore, Social Welfare Surcharge on 82 tariff lines that are subject to a cess, exempted.

Revenue of about ₹ 2600 crore in indirect taxes will be forgone :

Relief on import of Drugs/ Medicines :

- 36 lifesaving drugs and medicines fully exempted from Basic Customs Duty (BCD).
- 6 lifesaving medicines to attract concessional customs duty of 5%.
- Specified drugs and medicines under Patient Assistance Programmes run by pharmaceutical companies fully exempted from BCD; 37 more medicines added along with 13 new patient assistance programmes.

Support to Domestic Manufacturing and Value Addition :

- **Critical Minerals :** Cobalt powder and waste, the scrap of lithium-ion battery, Lead, Zinc and 12 more critical minerals fully exempted from BCD.
- **Textiles :** Addition of two more types of shuttle-less looms to the list of fully exempted textile machinery. BCD rate on knitted fabrics revised from '10% or 20%' to '20%' or ₹ 115 per kg, whichever is higher.
- **Electronic Goods :** BCD on Interactive Flat Panel Display (IFPD) increased from 10% to 20%. BCD reduced to 5% on Open Cell and other components. BCD on parts of Open Cells exempted.
- **Lithium Ion Battery :** 35 additional capital goods for EV battery manufacturing, and 28 additional capital goods for mobile phone battery manufacturing exempted.
- **Shipping Sector :** Exemption of BCD on raw materials, components, consumables or parts for the manufacture of ships extended for another ten years. The same dispensation to continue for ship breaking.
- **Telecommunication :** BCD reduced from 20% to 10% on Carrier Grade ethernet switches.

Export Promotion :

- **Handicraft Goods :** Time period for export extended from six months to one year, further extendable by another three months, if required. Nine items added to list of duty-free inputs.
- **Leather sector :** BCD on Wet Blue leather fully exempted. Crust leather exempted from 20% export duty.
- **Marine products :** BCD reduced from 30% to 5% on Frozen Fish Paste (Surimi) for manufacture and export of its analogue products. BCD reduced from 15% to 5% on fish hydrolysate for manufacture of fish and shrimp feeds.
- **Domestic MROs for Railway Goods :** Railways MROs to benefit similar to the aircraft and ships MROs in terms of import of repair items. Time limit extended for export of such items from 6 months to one year and made further extendable by one year.

Trade Facilitation :

- **Time Limit for Provisional Assessment :** For finalising the provisional assessment, time-limit of two years fixed, extendable by a year.
- **Voluntary Compliance :** A new provision introduced to enable importers or exporters, after clearance of goods, to voluntarily declare material facts and pay duty with interest but without penalty.
- **Extended Time for End Use :** Time limit for the end-use of imported inputs in the relevant rules extended from six months to one year. Such importers to file only quarterly statements instead of a monthly statement.

Direct Taxes

- No personal income tax payable upto income of ₹ 12 lakh (*i.e.*, average income of ₹ 1 lakh per month other than special rate income such as capital gains) under the new regime.
- This limit will be ₹ 12·75 lakh for salaried tax payers, due to standard deduction of ₹ 75,000.
- Revenue of about ₹ 1 lakh crore in direct taxes will be forgone.

- **Revised Tax Rate Structure :** The Budget proposes revised tax rate structure under the new tax regime as follows :

Total Income per annum	Rate of Tax
₹ 0 – 4 Lakh	NIL
₹ 4 – 8 Lakh	5%
₹ 8 – 12 Lakh	10%
₹ 12 – 16 Lakh	15%
₹ 16 – 20 Lakh	20%
₹ 20 – 24 Lakh	25%
Above ₹ 24 Lakh	30%

- **TDS/TCS Rationalization for Easing Difficulties :** Rationalization of Tax Deduction at Source (TDS) by reducing number of rates and thresholds above which TDS is deducted. The limit for tax deduction on interest for senior citizens doubled from the present ₹ 50,000 to ₹ 1 lakh. The annual limit of ₹ 2·40 lakh for TDS on rent increased to ₹ 6 lakh. The threshold to collect tax at source (TCS) on remittances under RBI's Liberalized Remittance Scheme (LRS) increased from ₹ 7 lakh to ₹ 10 lakh. The provisions of the higher TDS deduction will apply only in non-PAN cases. Decriminalization for the cases of delay of payment of TCS up to the due date of filing statement.
- **Reducing Compliance Burden :** Reduction of compliance burden for small charitable trusts/ institutions by increasing their period of registration from 5 years to 10 years. The benefit of claiming the annual value of self-occupied properties as nil will be extended for two such self-occupied properties without any condition.
- **Ease of Doing Business :** Introduction of a scheme for determining arm's length price of international transaction for a block period of three years. Expansion of the scope of safe harbour rules to reduce litigation and provide certainty in international taxation. Exemption of withdrawals made from National Savings Scheme (NSS) by individuals on or after the 29th of August, 2024. Similar treatment to NPS Vatsalya accounts as is available to normal NPS accounts, subject to overall limits.
- **Employment and Investment Tax certainty for electronics manufacturing Schemes** : Presumptive taxation regime for non-residents who provide services to a resident company that is establishing or operating an electronics manufacturing facility. Introduction of a safe harbour for tax certainty for non-residents who store components for supply to specified electronics manufacturing units.
- **Tonnage Tax Scheme for Inland Vessels :** The benefits of existing tonnage tax scheme to be extended to inland vessels registered under the Indian Vessels Act, 2021 to promote inland water transport in the country.
- **Extension for Incorporation of Start-ups :** Extension of the period of incorporation by 5 years to allow the benefit available to start-ups incorporated before April 1, 2030.
- **Alternate Investment Funds (AIFs) :** Certainty of taxation on the gains from securities to Category I and Category II AIFs which are undertaking investments in infrastructure and other such sectors.
- **Extension of investment date for Sovereign and Pension Funds :** Extension of the date of making investments in Sovereign Wealth Funds and Pension Funds by five more years, to 31st March, 2030, to promote funding from them to the infrastructure sector.

Indian Railways in the Union Budget 2025-26

The Union Budget 2025-26 has allocated ₹ 2,52,000 crore for the financial year (FY) 2025-26 as gross budgetary support to Ministry of Railways.

Indian Railways is all set to expand faster, safer & comfortable rail travel for all across the country. The country can expect 200 new Vande Bharat trains, 100 Amrit Bharat trains, 50 Namo Bharat rapid rail and 17,500 general non-AC coaches in next two to three years' time. The new trains & modern coaches will go a long way in serving the low- & middle-class people.



The Union Budget 2025-26 mentions infrastructure development projects of railways to the order of four lakh sixty thousand crore rupees.

It has allocated one lakh sixteen thousand crore rupees for expenditure to augment the safety of Indian Railways through various projects.

Earlier, Government besides allocating Indian Railways, same allocation of ₹ 2,52,000 crore as was done in last fiscal year also provided for ₹ 10,000 crore from extra budgetary resources to meet its expenses & modernize it, thus taking the Capital Expenditure (Capex) to ₹ 2,62,000 crore. This means expenditure on assets, acquisition, construction and replacement will be met out of funds from not only Gross Budgetary Support (including Railway Safety Fund and Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh), but the General Revenues of Indian Railways. Provision of ₹ 200 crore out of Nirbhaya Fund is also there in the

budget. Railways will mobilize additional ₹ 3,000 crore from its internal resources.

Reimbursement of losses on operation of strategic lines has been kept at ₹ 2739·18 crore in Budget Estimate 2025-26 as against ₹ 2602·81 crore in last fiscal's Revised Estimates 2024-25. An amount of ₹ 706 crore is provided in this fiscal year towards debt servicing of market borrowings for National Projects. With this, the net revenue expenditure of Indian Railways is placed at ₹ 3,02,100 crore in this year's Budget Estimate as against ₹ 2,79,000 crore in revised estimate of last fiscal. This fiscal's gross budgetary support is almost 9 times of what it was only ₹ 28,174 crore in 2013-14.

Indian Railways is all set to become the second highest freight carrying Railway touching 1·6 billion tonnes of cargo by the end of FY2025-26.

On the high-speed trains, India aims to have 7000 km of high-speed rail network supporting the speed of 250 km per hour by 2047.

India Railways will achieve 100 per cent electrification by the end of FY 2025-26.

Besides as the Budget announced Small Modular reactors as a source of non-fossil energy, Indian Railways will take lead in our electrification efforts.

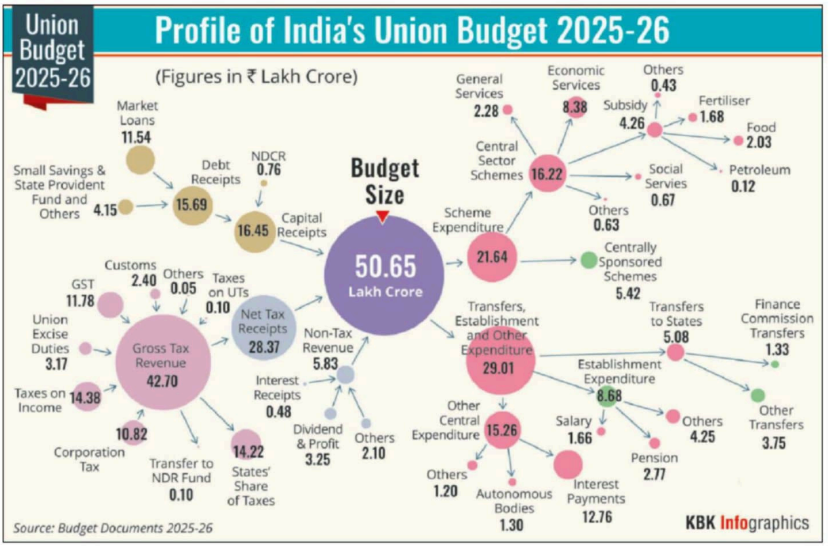
The Union Budget 2025-26 has allowed timebound import of foreign origin goods at a concessional duty for domestic maintenance, repair and operations for railway goods.

Allocation to developing customer amenities in Indian Railways has continued to decline from ₹ 15,510 crore in FY 2024-25 (budget estimate) to ₹ 12,993·97 crore (revised estimates) and now to ₹ 12,118·39 crore in the FY 2025-26.

Also, the allocation for investment in Public Sector Units (PSU) and Joint Ventures (JV) has gone down from the revised estimate of ₹ 27,570·77 crore in FY 2024-25 to ₹ 22,444·33 crore in FY 2025-26. Allocation to Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India, which is a Public Sector Unit (PSU) of the Indian Railways has decreased from ₹ 5,499 crore in FY 2024-25 (revised estimate) to ₹ 500 crore in FY 2025-26.

- The Budget allocation for Indian Railways for FY 2025-26 stands at ₹ 2·65 lakh crore, the same as last year's allocation.
- 200 new Vande Bharat trains, 100 Amrit Bharat trains, 50 Namo Bharat rapid rail and 17,500 general non-AC coaches to revolutionize travel experience for masses in next 2 to 3 years.
- Indian Railways to become the second highest freight carrying Railways in the world aiming to touch target of 1·6 billion tonnes of cargo by the end of FY 2025-26.
- India Railways will achieve 100 per cent electrification by the end of FY 2025-26.
- ₹ 4·6 lakh crore has been allocated for infrastructure development projects in the Indian Railways.
- 1·16 lakh crore has been allocated for augmenting the safety of the Indian Railways.
- India aims to have 7000 km of high-speed rail network supporting the speed of 250 km per hour by 2047.
- The Indian Railways has targeted to earn ₹ 3·02 lakh crore in 2025-26, raking in ₹ 1·88 lakh crore from freight operations 4% higher than fiscal 2024-25.
- The Indian Railways expects to more than double its net earnings in fiscal 2025-26 (to ₹ 3041·31 crore) on the back of improved passenger, freight and sundry earnings and nil growth in government capital expenditure.

PDarpan



OBJECTIVE TYPE QUESTIONS

Magazines @ 60/m WhatsApp To 8969469464 **(On Union Budget, 2025-26)**

1. In Budget 2025-26, the proposed development measures are focusing on :
   I. Garib
   II. Youth
   III. SCs/STs/OBCs
   IV. Annadata
   V. Nari
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I, II, III and IV
   (B) Only I, II,IV and V
   (C) Only I, III, IV and V
   (D) All I, II, III, IV and V

2. In Budget 2025-26, the proposed development measures span ten broad areas. Which of the following are included in these broad areas ?
   I. Spurring Agricultural Growth and Productivity.
   II. Boosting Manufacturing and Furthering Make in India.
   III. Enabling Employment-led Development.
   IV. Investing in people, economy and innovation.
   V. Development of Physical and digital Connectivity.
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I, II, III and IV
   (B) Only II, III, IV and V
   (C) Only I, III, IV and V
   (D) All I, II, III, IV and V

3. For the journey of development powerful engines are :
   I. Agriculture
   II. MSME
   III. Investment
   IV. Exports
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I, II and III
   (B) Only II, III and IV
   (C) Only I, III and IV
   (D) All I, II, III and IV

4. Size of the Union Budget 2025-26 is :
   (A) ₹ 5065345 crore
   (B) ₹ 4716487 crore
   (C) ₹ 4213879 crore
   (D) ₹ 4013568 crore

5. Union Budget 2025-26 aims to initiate transformative reforms across many domains. During the next five years, these will augment country's growth potential and global competitiveness. The domains are :
   I. Taxation
   II. Power Sector
   III. Infrastructure Development
   IV. Mining
   V. Financial Sector
   VI. Regulatory Reforms
   Correct code :
   (A) Only I, II, III, IV and V
   (B) Only II, III, IV, V and VI
   (C) Only I, II, IV, V, VI
   (D) All I, II, III, IV, V and VI

6. For Assessment Year 2026-27 there will be zero income tax upto the income of :
   (A) ₹ 10 lakh
   (B) ₹ 12 lakh
   (C) ₹ 13 lakh
   (D) ₹ 14 lakh

7. For the assessment year 2026-27 standard deduction for salaried employees will be :
   (A) ₹ 50000
   (B) ₹ 75000
   (C) ₹ 100000
   (D) ₹ 125000

8. Fiscal deficit, as per cent of the GDP, has been estimated at :
   (A) 5·0 per cent
   (B) 4·5 per cent
   (C) 4·4 per cent
   (D) 4·0 per cent

9. Union Budget 2025-26 marks a significant shift in strategy by the government from capital expenditure driven growth to :
   (A) Export - driven growth
   (B) Consumption - driven growth
   (C) Employment - driven growth
   (D) Balanced growth

10. As per the announcement in the Union Budget 2025-26 the highest tax rate of 30 per cent will kick in only on income above :
    (A) ₹ 20 lakh (B) ₹ 24 lakh
    (C) ₹ 25 lakh (D) ₹ 30 lakh

11. Maximum number of schemes/projects has been announced for which state in the Union Budget 2025-26 ?
    (A) Andhra Pradesh
    (B) Maharashtra
    (C) Bihar
    (D) West Bengal

12. In which of the following sectors Foreign Direct Investment Limit has been hiked to 100% from 75% in the Union Budget 2025-26 ?
    (A) Telecommunication
    (B) Aviation
    (C) Insurance
    (D) Shipping

13. Which of the following proposals has/have been announced for Bihar in the Union Budget 2025-26 ?
    I. National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management
    II. National Makhana Board
    III. Greenfield Airports in addition to the expansion of Patna Airport
    IV. West Kosi Canal Project in Mithilanchal
    V. 2400-MW power project at Pirpainti
    Correct code is :
    (A) Only I, II, III and IV
    (B) Only II, III, IV and V
    (C) Only I, III, IV and V
    (D) All I, II, III, IV and V

14. Consider the following schemes in relation to the announcement in Union Budget 2025-26 :
    I. 'Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana'
    II. 'Rural Prosperity and Resilience' programme

III. Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme

Which of the above scheme has been announced in the Union Budget 2025-26 ?

(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) All I, II and III

15. Which of the following missions have been announced in Union Budget 2025-26 ?

I. Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses
II. National Mission on High Yielding Seeds
III. 'Mission for Cotton Productivity'
IV. National Manufacturing Mission

Correct code is :

(A) Only I and III
(B) Only II and IV
(C) Only II, III and IV
(D) All I, II, III and IV

16. As per the proposal of the Union Budget, the loan limit under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme will be enhanced from .....for loans taken through the Kisan Credit Card (KCC).

(A) ₹ 3 lakh to ₹ 4 lakh
(B) ₹ 3 lakh to ₹ 5 lakh
(C) ₹ 3 lakh to ₹ 6 lakh
(D) ₹ 3 lakh to ₹ 5 lakh

17. As per the announcement of the classification criteria of the MSMEs in the Union Budget 2025-26 investment in plants and machinery limits of Micro, Small and Medium enterprises have been revised in the following manners :

I. For micro enterprises ₹ 1 crore to ₹ 2·5 crore
II. For Small enterprises ₹ 10 crore to ₹ 25 crore
III. For Medium enterprises ₹ 50 crore to ₹ 125 crore

Correct code is :

(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) All I, II and III

18. As per the revised classification criteria of the MSME, annual turnover limits of these enterprises have been fixed as under :

I. For micro enterprises : From ₹ 5 crore to ₹ 10 crore
II. For small enterprises : From ₹ 50 to ₹ 100 crore
III. For Medium enterprise : From ₹ 250 to ₹ 500 crore

How many pairs given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None of the above

19. Union Finance Minister announced in the Union Budget 2025-26 the setting of following funds :

I. Urban Challenge Fund
II. Maritime Development Fund
III. SWAMIH Fund 2
IV. Deep Tech Fund of Funds

Correct code is :

(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only II, III and IV
(C) Only I, III and IV
(D) All I, II, III and IV

20. As per the announcements of the Union Budget, which of the following missions will be established ?

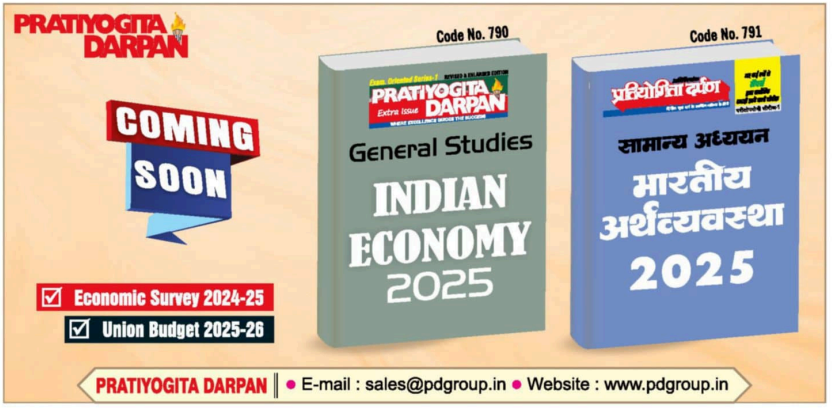
I. Nuclear Energy Mission
II. National Geospatial Mission
III. Gyan Bharatam Mission
IV. Export Promotion Mission

Correct code is :

(A) Only I and II
(B) Only III and IV
(C) Only I, III and IV
(D) All I, II, III and IV

Answers

1. (B) 2. (A) 3. (D) 4. (A) 5. (C)
6. (B) 7. (B) 8. (C) 9. (B) 10. (B)
11. (C) 12. (C) 13. (D) 14. (D) 15. (D)
16. (B) 17. (D) 18. (C) 19. (D) 20. (D)





New Schemes Announced in the Union Budget 2025-26

The Union Budget 2025-26 presented in the Lok Sabha on February 1, 2025, recognizes four powerful engines to achieve the goals of Viksit Bharat. These engines are Agriculture, MSME, Investment, and Exports. Various schemes announced under these four powerful engines are as follows :

Agriculture (First Engine)

Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana - Developing Agri Districts Programme : The programme envisages convergence of existing schemes and specialized measures agriculture sector, covering 100 districts with low productivity, moderate crop intensity and below-average credit parameters. It aims to enhance agricultural productivity, adopt crop diversification and sustainable agriculture practices, augment post-harvest storage at the panchayat and block level, improve irrigation facilities, and facilitate availability of long-term and short-term credit.

Motivated by the success of the Aspirational Districts Programme, the Union Government will undertake a 'Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana' in partnership with states. This programme is likely to benefit 1·7 crore farmers.

Rural Prosperity and Resilience Programme : A comprehensive multi-sectoral programme to be launched in partnership with states for addressing under-employment in agriculture through skilling, investment, technology and invigorating the rural economy. It will focus on rural women, young farmers, rural youth, marginal and small farmers and landless families. The goal is to generate ample opportunities in rural areas so that migration is an option, but not a necessity.

> Rural Prosperity and Resilience Programme will focus on catalyzing enterprise development, employment and financial independence for **rural women**; accelerating creation of new employment and businesses for **young farmers** and **rural youth**; nurturing and modernizing agriculture for productivity improvement and warehousing, especially for **marginal and small farmers**; and diversifying opportunities for **landless families**.

Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses : A 6 year mission with special focus on Tur, Urad and Masoor. Central agencies (NAFED and NCCF) will procure these 3 pulses, as much as offered during the next 4 years from farmers who register with these agencies and enter into agreements.

> Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses will place emphasis on: development and commercial availability of climate resilient seeds, enhancing protein content, increasing productivity, improving post-harvest storage and management, and assuring remunerative prices to the farmers.

Comprehensive Programme for Vegetables and Fruits : A comprehensive programme to promote production, efficient supplies, processing, and remunerative prices for farmers will be launched in partnership with states. Appropriate institutional mechanisms for implementation and participation of farmer producer organizations and cooperatives will be set up.

National Mission on High Yielding Seeds : It aims for strengthening the research ecosystem; targeted development and propagation of seeds with high yield; pest resistance and climate resilience; and commercial availability of more than 100 seed varieties released since July 2024.

Mission for Cotton Productivity : 5 year mission to facilitate significant improvements in productivity and sustainability of cotton farming and promote extra-long staple cotton varieties. The best of science & technology support will be provided to farmers. The mission, aligned with 5F vision for the textile sector, will help in increasing incomes of the farmers, and ensure a steady supply of quality cotton for rejuvenating India's traditional textile sector.

> The '5F' vision of the textile sector encompasses—Farm to fibre; fibre to factory; factory to fashion; fashion to foreign.

MSME (Second Engine)

New Investment and Turn-over Limit for All MSMEs : To help MSMEs achieve higher efficiencies of scale, technological upgradation and better access to capital, the investment and turnover limits for classification of all MSMEs enhanced to 2·5 and 2 times respectively.

Credit Cards for Micro Enterprises : Customized Credit Cards with ₹ 5 lakh limit for micro enterprises registered on Udyam portal to be introduced. In the first year, 10 lakh cards will be issued.

Scheme for First-time Entrepreneurs : A new scheme will be launched for 5 lakh women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes first-time entrepreneurs. This will provide term loans up to ₹ 2 crore during the next 5 years.

Focus Product Scheme for Footwear & Leather Sectors : It will support design capacity, component manufacturing and machinery required for production of non-leather quality footwear, besides the support for leather footwear and products. The scheme is expected to facilitate employment for 22 lakh persons, generate turnover of ₹ 4 lakh crore and exports of over ₹ 1·1 lakh crore. It will enhance the productivity, quality and competitiveness of India's footwear and leather sector.

Measures for the Toy Sector : The scheme will focus on development of clusters, skills, and a manufacturing ecosystem that will create high-quality, unique, innovative, and sustainable toys that will represent the 'Made in India' brand.

National Manufacturing Mission : It will cover small,

medium and large industries for furthering 'Make in India' by providing policy support, execution roadmaps, governance and monitoring framework for Central Ministries and States. It will also support Clean Tech manufacturing which will aim to improve domestic value addition and build our ecosystem for solar PV cells, EV batteries, motors and controllers, electrolyzers, wind turbines, very high voltage transmission equipment and grid scale batteries.

Investment (Third Engine)

Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme : It aims to provide digital-form of Indian language books for school and higher education. This aims to help students understand their subjects better.

Urban Challenge Fund : The Government will set up an Urban Challenge Fund of ₹ 1 lakh crore to implement the proposals for 'Cities as Growth Hubs', 'Creative Redevelopment of Cities' and 'Water and Sanitation' announced in the July 2024-25 Budget. The fund will finance up to 25 per cent of the cost of bankable projects with a stipulation that at least 50 per cent of the cost is funded from bonds, bank loans and PPPs. **An allocation of ₹ 10,000 crore is proposed for 2025-26.**

Nuclear Energy Mission : A Nuclear Energy Mission for research & development of Small Modular Reactors (SMR) with an outlay of ₹ 20,000 crore will be set up. At least 5 indigenously developed SMRs will be operationalized by 2033.

Maritime Development Fund : A Maritime Development Fund with a corpus of ₹ 25,000 crore for distributed support and promoting competition. The fund have up to 49% contribution by the Government and the balance will be mobilized from ports and private sector.

SWAMIH Fund 2 : It will be established as a blended finance facility with contribution from the Government, banks and private investors. This fund of ₹ 15,000 crore will aim for expeditious completion of another 1 lakh units in stressed housing projects. SWAMIH stands for Special Window for Affordable and Mid-Income Housing.

Deep Tech Fund of Funds will be explored to catalyze the next generation startups.

2nd Gene Bank with 10 lakh germplasm lines will be set up for future food and nutritional security. It will provide conservation support to both public and private sectors for genetic resources.

National Geospatial Mission : It will be launched to develop foundational geospatial infrastructure and data. Using PM Gati Shakti, this Mission will facilitate modernization of land records, urban planning and design of infrastructure projects.

Gyan Bharatam Mission : Gyan Bharatam Mission for survey, documentation and conservation of India's manuscript heritage with academic institutions, museums, libraries and private collectors will be undertaken to cover more than 1 crore manuscripts.

The Government will set up a National Digital Repository of Indian knowledge systems for knowledge sharing.

Export (Fourth Engine)

Export Promotion Mission : It will facilitate easy access to export credit, cross-border factoring support, and support to MSMEs to tackle non-tariff measures in overseas markets. The mission will have sectoral and ministerial targets, driven jointly by the Ministries of Commerce, MSME and Finance.

Bharat Trade Net : A digital public infrastructure, 'Bharat Trade Net' (BTN) for international trade will be set-up as a unified platform for trade documentation and financing solutions. It will complement the Unified Logistics Interface Platform, and will be aligned with international practices.

India Post as a Catalyst for the Rural Economy

India Post with 1·5 lakh rural post offices, complemented by the India Post Payment Bank and a vast network of 2·4 lakh Dak Sevaks, will be repositioned to act as a catalyst for the rural economy. It will be transformed as a large public logistics organization to meet the rising needs of Vishwakarmas, new entrepreneurs, women, self-help groups, MSMEs and large business organizations.

The expanded range of services will include :

- rural community hub colocation;
- institutional account services;
- DBT, cash out and EMI pick-up;
- credit services to micro enterprises;
- insurance; and
- assisted digital services.

PDarpan

Reforms Announced in the Union Budget 2025-26

Financial Sector Reforms and Development	• The FDI limit for the insurance sector will be raised from 74 to 100 per cent. • NaBFID will set up a 'Partial Credit Enhancement Facility' for corporate bonds for infrastructure. • Public Sector Banks will develop 'Grameen Credit Score' framework to serve the credit needs of SHG members and people in rural areas. • A forum for regulatory coordination and development of pension products will be set up.
Regulatory Reforms	• A High-Level Committee for Regulatory Reforms will be set up for a review of all non-financial sector regulations, certifications, licenses and permissions. • An Investment Friendliness Index of States will be launched in 2025 to further the spirit of competitive cooperative federalism. • Jan Vishwas Bill 2·0 to be brought to decriminalize more than 100 provisions in various laws. • Under the Financial Stability and Development Council, a mechanism will be set up to evaluate impact of the current financial regulations and subsidiary instructions. It will also formulate a framework to enhance their responsiveness and development of the financial sector.

Fresh Arrivals

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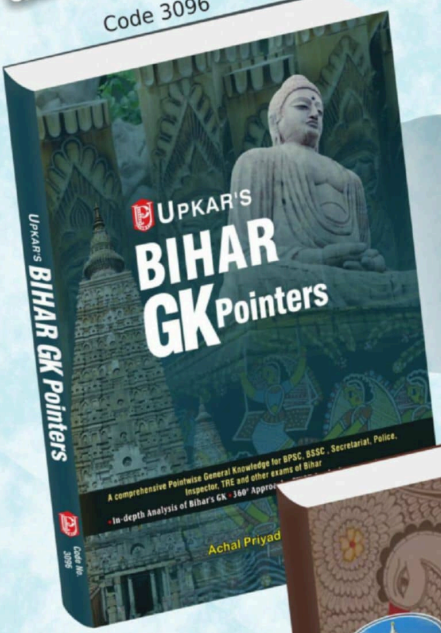

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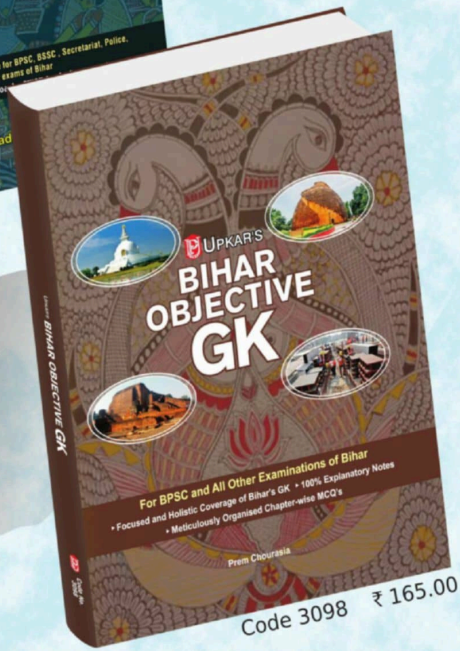

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Environment, Ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change

State of E-Waste in India

Between 2019-20 and 2023-24, the electronic waste (e-waste) generation in India soared by 72·54%, according to the reply given by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in the Rajya Sabha on December 16, 2024.

Financial Year	E-Waste Generation (Metric Ton)
2019-20	10,14,961
2020-21	13,46,496
2021-22	16,01,155
2022-23	16,09,117
2023-24	17,51,236

According to the data, the surge in e-waste generation between 2019-20 and 2020-21 was largely driven by increasing demand of electronic products for supporting work from home and remote learning during COVID-19 lockdowns.

Though the share of recycled e-waste in India rose from 22% in 2019-20 to 43% in 2023-24, however, about 990,000 metric tonnes, comprising 57% of total e-waste remained unprocessed. More than 60% of e-waste was generated by 65 cities and 70% of e-waste was generated by 10 states. E-waste is dominated by informal sector lacking environmental safeguards.

Global Status of E-waste

- The United Nations Institute of Training and Research (UNITAR) **Global E-Waste Monitor 2024** reports generation of 62 million tonnes of e-waste in 2022, which has increased 82% from 2010; and rising by 2·6 million tonnes annually, to reach 82 million tonnes by 2030.
- E-waste is rising 5 times faster than documented e-waste recycling. Only 22·3% of the e-waste was collected and recycled in 2022. The report forecasts drop in collection and recycling rate from 22·3% in 2022 to 20% by 2030.
- Just 1% of rare earth element demand is met by e-waste recycling.
- According to the World Health Organisation, Lead is the common substance released into the environment when e-waste is recycled, stored or dumped using informal activities, including open burning. Children and pregnant women are particularly vulnerable.

Challenges

- **Environmental Challenges :** Informal e-waste recycling based on open burning and acid leaching, releases toxic and harmful chemicals such as Lead, Mercury, Dioxins and Cadmium. These chemicals pollute soils, groundwater, and air which poses threat to health and the environment.
- **Unscientific Waste Collection :** Insufficient infrastructure such as lack of collection points and recycling plants results in dumping of e-waste in landfills, or open burning. Dominance of informal sector in e-waste recycling aggravates the problem of e-waste.
- **Lack of Awareness :** Due to lack of awareness, e-waste are dumped and mixed with other wastes, significantly hampering its segregation and scientific disposal.
- **Low Recycling Rate :** The recycling rate for e-waste remains low due to the authorities' inability to effectively engage the various stakeholders involved, including informal sector.

Way Out

- Experts have expressed urgent need to integrate the informal sector with formal recycling systems to improve collection efficiency and ensure proper treatment of hazardous materials.
- The informal sector's extensive last-mile coverage should be harnessed to facilitate the collection and proper channelling of e-waste to formal, registered recycling facilities.
- Sustainable recycling practices and tax incentives are needed to encourage manufacturers to design eco-friendly, recyclable products.

Salient Features of (E-Waste Management) Rules, 2022

1. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for the producers of electrical or electronic equipment as given in Schedule-I for meeting recycling targets as per Schedule-III and Schedule-IV, only through registered recyclers of E-Waste to ensure environmentally sound management of such waste.
2. 106 EEEs under seven categories have been covered.
3. Focuses on recycling—E-Waste recycling targets as EPR Obligation to Producers in terms of end products of recycling.
4. Provision for generation of EPR certificate on the EPR Portal based on E-Waste recycled in terms of four end products (gold, copper, aluminium, iron).
5. Producers to fulfil their EPR obligation by proportionately purchasing of EPR certificate on the Portal from registered recyclers.
6. Encouraging re-use of EEEs, through generation of Refurbishing Certificate.
7. Management of Solar photo-voltaic modules or panel or cells, included in the schedule however, no recycling target only storage till 2034-35.
8. Provision for imposition and collection of environmental compensation charges in case of violation of any of the provision of these rules.
9. Quarterly and Annual Returns by Producers.
10. Audit of stakeholders.

Net Zero Banking Alliance

The Net Zero Banking Alliance is a group of leading global banks committed to aligning their lending, investment and capital markets activities with net zero green house gas emissions by 2050. It is the climate accelerator for UNEP FI's Principles for Responsible Banking (PRB).

Six Principles of Responsible Banking

- **Alignment :** Aligning business strategies to meet goals as per the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Paris Climate Agreement, etc.
- **Impact and Target Setting :** To continuously increase positive impact and reducing negative impact, and managing the risks to people and environment, resulting from their activities, products and services.
- **Clients and Customers :** Working responsibly with clients and customers to encourage sustainable practices and enable economic activities.
- **Stakeholders :** Proactively and responsibly consult, engage and partner with relevant stakeholders to achieve society's goals.
- **Governance and Culture :** Implementing principles through effective governance and a culture of responsible banking.
- **Transparency and Accountability :** Being transparent and accountable for actions having positive or negative impacts.

Under these six principles, established in 2019, groups of banks come together to build robust and ambitious commitments, alliances and communities to fast-track action on climate accelerators :

Net Zero Banking Alliance : Established in April 2021, the alliance brings together over 100 banks, the majority of which are PRB (Principles of Responsible Banking) signatories, are committed to aligning their lending and investment portfolios with net-zero emissions by 2050, consistent with a 1·5°C ambition. It supports members to design, set, and achieve credible science-based net-zero targets for 2030 or sooner that deliver value for their investors and clients. Banks agree to set targets that are :

1. **Robust :** Targets must identify carbon reductions across priority economic sectors.
2. **Ambitious :** Targets must align with the 1·5°C warming ambition of the Paris Agreement.
3. **Science-based :** Targets must follow a pathway that allows for no/low overshoot of the 1·5°C ambition, as defined by the best-available science-based climate scenarios.

Six US Banks to withdraw from NZBA : Since December 2024, six big US Banks have announced to withdraw from NZBA. These banks are : Citigroup, Bank of America, Morgan Stanley, Wells Fargo, Goldman Sachs and J.P. Morgan. After the announcements of withdrawal, the total membership of NZBA was 141.

Analysts have said the withdrawals are an attempt to shield from attacks from rightwing US politicians, which are expected to escalate during Donald Trump's second Presidential term set to begin from January, 2025.

Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet

The Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP) was launched by the Rockefeller Foundation at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), at Glasgow, the United Kingdom, to promote universal energy access and meet critical climate goals. It provides country-level support to 7 foundation countries, focuses on replicable and scalable solutions in an additional 13 countries and reaches more than 80 countries.

Three Themes

- Distributed Renewable Energy
- Green Grids
- Green Economy

7 Foundation Countries : Congo, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, South Africa and Vietnam are the seven foundation countries which have been prioritized based on the scale of potential impact and existing government commitments to clean energy.

GEAPP and Asian Development Bank (ADB) : In June 2023, ADB established the GEAPP Energy Access and Transition Trust Fund (GEATTF) to accelerate the transition to clean energy and scale inclusive energy access for poor and vulnerable populations through the provision of grants and blended finance in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and Vietnam.

An MoU was signed during 2023 COP28 (Dubai, UAE) to set up a finance partnership to mobilize concessional capital from the philanthropic and public sectors, de-risk projects, and crowd in private capital to finance energy transition projects in Asia.

GEAPP and India : GEAPP announced a Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) in collaboration with the International Solar Alliance to mobilise US $ 100 million for high-impact solar projects. Initiatives like DUET and ENTICE 2·0 to address financing gaps in India's clean energy transition.

Digitalization of Utilities for Energy Transition (DUET) : Digitalisation of grid systems for real-time tracking of voltage, current and phase data to reduce transmission and distribution losses.

Energy Transitions Innovation Challenge (ENTICE) : Launched in 2023 for boosting innovations for the energy transition by facilitating access to funding, market linkages and mentorship. ENTICE 2·0 is expected to start from January 2025.

Ocean Anoxic Event

Oceanic Anoxic Event (OAE) are geologically abrupt phases of extreme oxygen depletion in the oceans that disrupted marine ecosystems and brought about evolutionary turnover.

Oceanic Anoxic Event 1a occurred frequently during the last phase of Mesozoic Era *i.e.*, 183 to 85 million years ago. It lasted for 1·5 million years, and was associated with the breakup of continents and widespread large igneous province volcanism.

How OAE Takes Place ?

- Oceanic Anoxic Event (OAE) is triggered by large scale volcanic eruptions which releases massive amount of carbon dioxide.
- OAEs are associated with global warming which intensifies the hydrological cycle and chemical weathering on the oceans. It leads to enhanced primary production and burial of organic matters in the oceans, forming organic-rich black shales.
- These processes result in substantial decrease in oxygen concentration in the oceans. It created anoxic marine basins, where oxygen is absent.

Impact of OAE

- Extinction of several marine species, particularly plankton, due to reduced oxygen levels resulting from interaction of carbon dioxide and seawater forming carbonic acid, and dissolving marine organisms' shells.
- Formation of anoxic marine basins with low or nil oxygen level, inhibiting survival of anaerobic life forms.
- It helps in long term carbon sequestration because the decomposition rate of organic matter decreases due to absence of oxygen. Several examples of anoxic basins in the world are : Black Sea; Cariaco Trench, Orca Basin.

Recent Study about OAE 1a

- A recent study published in the Science Advances, scientists have refined the timing and duration of Ocean Anoxic Event 1a, based on analysis of prehistoric rocks and fossils from the Mount Ashibetsu, Hokkaido, Japan.
- According to the study, the event began 119·5 million years ago and lasted for 1·1 million years.
- The study also warns that rapid warming of the Earth driven by increasing concentration of carbon dioxide could potentially disrupt marine ecosystems which could lead to Holocene extinction event.

Masali Village of Gujarat Becomes India's First Solar Border Village

Masali village of Suigam taluka in Gujarat's Banaskantha district became the first border solar village of India. Located nearly 40 kms away from the international border of India-Pakistan, the village with the population of 800, and 119 households is receiving 225·5 kilowatts of electricity generated from the houses which exceeds the combined electricity needs of the village.

About the Project : It was a collaborative effort involving the Revenue Department, Uttar Gujarat Vij Company Limited (UGVCL), banks and solar companies. It received substantial subsidies under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, public contributions and CSR funds.

India's first solar village : Modhera (Mehsana District, Gujarat)

India's first solar city : Sanchi (Madhya Pradesh)

India's first carbon-neutral Panchayat : Palli (Samba District, U.T. of J&K)

PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana : Launched in February, 2024, it is the world's largest domestic rooftop solar initiative, aiming to supply solar power to 1 crore households by March 2027. It offers a subsidy of up to 40% to households, making renewable energy affordable and accessible.

Chhattisgarh's Green GDP Initiative

Chhattisgarh has become the first state in India linking its forest ecosystem with the Green Gross Domestic Product. The scientists will assess the essential ecosystem services the forests provide to estimate their economic value, based on :

Clean Air : Amount of CO_2 absorbed by trees and converted into Oxygen will be quantified and its market value will be added to Green GDP.

Water Conservation : The water provided by forest through rivers, springs will be calculated for its economic impact.

Biodiversity : The contribution of forest fauna (animals, birds, insects) to maintain ecological balance and aiding farming.

Significance

According to Indian State of Forest Report 2023, the forest cover in the State is 55,610·57 sq km which is 41·14 % of its geographical area. It is the top state with maximum increase in forest and tree cover (684 square km.) It is the third state with largest forest cover.

- Forest products like tendu leaves, lac, honey and medicinal plants contribute significantly to the rural economy of the state. The forests contribute to employment through eco-tourism activities, such as jungle safaris and camping in popular National Parks of the State.
- By linking forest-derived benefits to the Green GDP, Chhattisgarh intends to improve budget planning and create policies prioritising economic growth and ecological sustainability.

Supreme Court Recognises Oran Lands as 'Forests'

On December 18, 2024, the three judges' bench of the Supreme Court recognized Oran lands as 'Forests' under the Forest Conservation Act, 1980. The bench also directed the Rajasthan government to carry out the district-wise survey of sacred groves for classifying them as forests, to identify 'traditional communities' that have historically protected sacred groves and designate these areas as a 'community forest resource' under Section 2(a) of the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

The bench also formed a five member committee to recommend the inclusion of other desert ecosystems such as Dev-van and Rundh within the definition of 'deemed forests.'

Background of the case : In *T.N. Godavarman Thirumalpad Vs. Union of India* (1996), the Supreme Court held that the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 is applicable to all forests, irrespective of their classification. In 2018, the Supreme Court had directed the Rajasthan government to implement the recommendation of

the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) which classified sacred groves as 'forests', except for small, fragmented areas that are difficult to manage. However, the Rajasthan Forest Policy, 2023, lacks provisions defining the roles, responsibilities, and rights of local communities in conserving Orans, Dev-vans and Rundhs.

Orans of Rajasthan

'Oran' is a derivative word of the Sanskrit word 'Aranya.' There are about 25,000 Orans in Rajasthan covering an area of about 6,00,000 hectares. About 1100 major Oran's spread out in an area of more than 1,00,000 hectares in Rajasthan provide livelihood to the rural population of the State. Species that are primarily found in most of the Orans are Prosopis cineraria, Zizyphus mauritiana and Salvadora sp., Zizyphus sp., Caparris aphylla and Calotropis procera.

Piplantri Model : A Case Study

Supreme Court Judge Sandeep Mehta cited Piplantri model in which an initiative was started by the Sarpanch of Piplantri Village (Rajsamand District, Rajasthan) to plant 111 trees for every girl child born. It had several positive benefits, such as :

- Over 40 lakh trees have been planted which raised the water table by 800-900 feet and reduced the ambient temperature by 3-4°C.
- It has improved local bio-diversity and protected the land from adverse effects of soil degradation and desertification.
- Increased economic opportunities through aloe vera processing, furniture making and other businesses, especially for women.
- The model has helped eliminate harmful practices like female feticide. Piplantri has a rare distinction of a higher female population ratio *i.e.*, 52 per cent and ensures that all girls receive education.

What are Sacred Groves ?

Sacred groves are patches of forest or clusters of trees holding deep cultural or spiritual significance for the local communities that protect and sustain them. They are known by different names across different regions : Devban in Himachal Pradesh, Devarakadu in Karnataka, Kavu in Kerala, Sarna in Madhya Pradesh, Oran in Rajasthan, Devrai in Maharashtra, Umanglai in Manipur, Law Kyntang/Law Lyngdoh in Meghalaya, Devan/Deobhumi in Uttarakhand, Gramthan in West Bengal and Pavithravana in Andhra Pradesh.

They reflect ancient traditions of forest conservation, where nature is respected and protected, helping preserve biodiversity and ecological balance. For example, Living Root Bridges of Meghalaya (a UNESCO recognised World Heritage Site), locally recognized as Jingkieng Jri, and built by the Khasi tribes, exemplifies traditional knowledge, where Ficus trees are carefully grown to form strong, living structures.

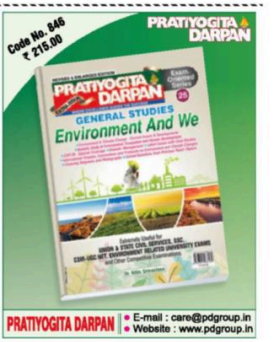
Though, India has the highest concentration of sacred groves in the world numbering over 1 lakh, it is threatened by the increasing demand for timber, urban expansion, deforestation for agriculture and the pressure to extract natural resources.

2024 is the First Year to Exceed 1·5°C : C3S

European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) confirmed 2024 as the first calendar year to exceed the 1·5°C average global temperature. Human-induced climate change was the primary driver of extreme air and sea surface temperatures; while other factors, such as the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO), also contributed to the unusual temperatures observed during the year.

Key Highlights :

- 2024 was the warmest year-1·60°C above an estimate of the 1850-1900 temperature. It was warmest year for all continents, except Antarctica and Australia.
- Each of the past 10 years from 2015 to 2024 was one of the 10 warmest years on record.
- Daily global average temperature reached 17·16°C on 22 July, 2024.
- Annual average sea surface temperature (SST) over the extra-polar ocean reached 20·87°C, 0·51°C above the 1991–2020 average.
- Atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide and methane reached record annual levels in 2024, at 422 parts per million (ppm) and 1897 parts per billion (ppb) respectively.
- In 2024, atmospheric water vapour reached 5% above the 1991–2020 average. 44% of the globe was affected by 'strong' to 'extreme heat stress' on July 10, 2024.
- The sea ice extent in Antarctica reached record low values during large part of 2024. In Arctic, sea ice extent fell below average after July 2024.
- The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said 2024 was the warmest year on record in India since 1901, with the average minimum temperature settling 0·90°C above the long-period average. The annual mean temperature in 2024 was 25·75°C, 0·65°C above the long-period average, and highest since 1901. The average maximum temperature stood at 31·25°C, 0·20°C above normal, which was fourth highest since 1901.
- Long-term temperature goal of the Paris Agreement not yet dead but in grave danger. To restrict global warming to 1·5°C, GHG emissions must decline 43% by 2030.



Fresh Arrival

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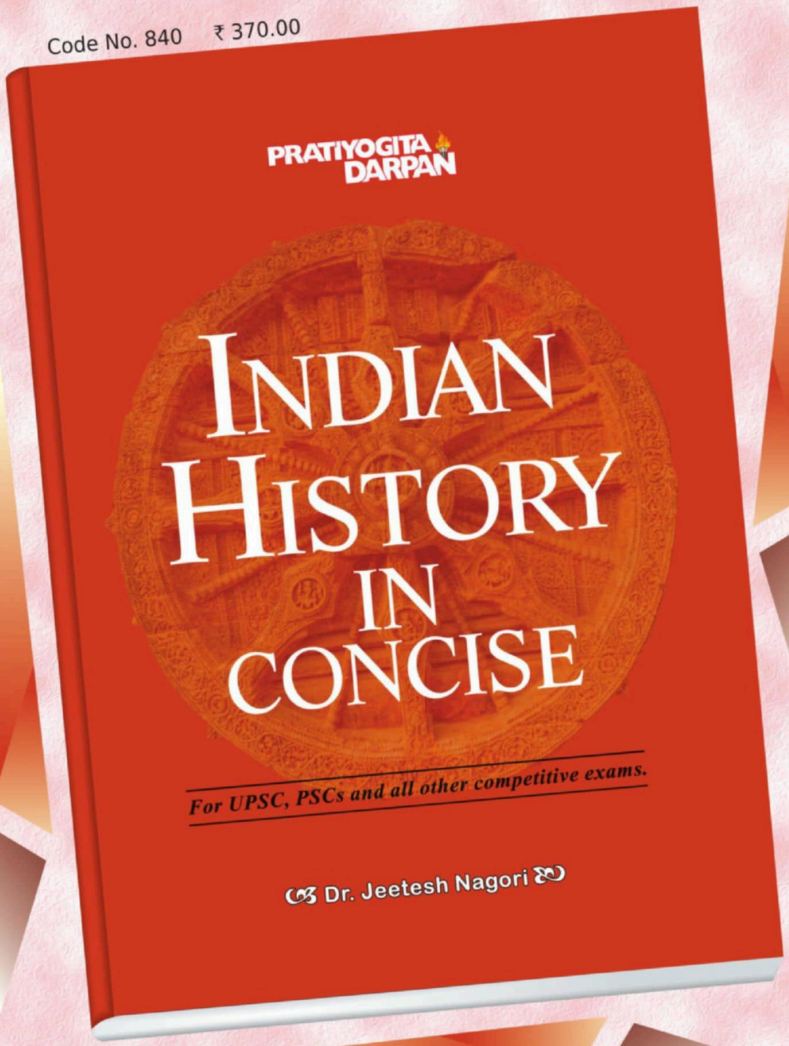

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FOCUS 1

Jobless Growth in India : Myth or Reality

—Dr. S.S.S. Chauhan

Jobless growth is a phenomenon in an economy in which new jobs are not created in proportionate to increase in growth rate of the national income. In India, joblessness is compounded by a large informal sector and the growing dilution of contractual obligations in the formal sector. Youth are increasingly pushed into precarious, low-paying jobs with no social protection. Unemployment is often discussed in terms of its economic impacts—reduced household income, decreased consumption and an overall drag on the economy. No don't India has witnessed significant employment growth over the years. With the employment increasing by nearly 36%, adding around 170 million jobs during 2016-17 and 2022-23, India's economic trajectory demonstrates sustained job creation across key sectors. With a robust democracy, dynamic economy and a culture that celebrates unity in diversity, India's journey towards becoming a global powerhouse continues to inspire the world.

Recent data and economic analysis challenge the notion of 'jobless growth' in India, a concept that suggests GDP growth occurs without corresponding increase in the employment. A recent report from Observer Research Foundation titled **'Busting the myth of jobless growth : Insights from data, theory and logic'** explains the employment trends in India over the years to present a different story.

Table 1 : Unemployment Trends in India

Year	Worker Participation Ratio (WPR) (%)	Unemployment Rate (%)
2017-18	46·8	6·0
2018-19	47·3	5·8
2019-20	50·9	4·8
2020-21	52·6	4·2
2021-22	52·9	4·1
2022-23	56·0	3·2

Source : Press Information Bureau.

Key Highlights of the Report

1. India's Employment Growth : Contrary to the claims of 'jobless growth', data shows that employment in India increased by 36% (170 million jobs) between 2016-17 and 2022-23. During the same period, GDP grew at an average rate of over 6·5%.

2. KLEMS Database Consistency : Employment data from the Reserve Bank of India's KLEMS database, which relies on surveys like the Employment and Unemployment Survey (EUS) and Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), indicates a steady rise in employment since the 1980s.

3. Worker Population Ratio (WPR) : The PLFS data from 2017 to 2023 also suggests that Worker Population Ratio (WPR) has increased by 9 percentage points or almost 26 per cent during this period. Therefore, the rhetoric of 'joblessness' really does not hold water in terms of cross-comparison of databases.

4. Consumption - Driven Growth : India's growth has been driven by consumption, which is closely tied to employment. A rise in consumption implies that employment generation is occurring, as consumption would decline if employment were predominantly in unpaid or low-wage jobs.

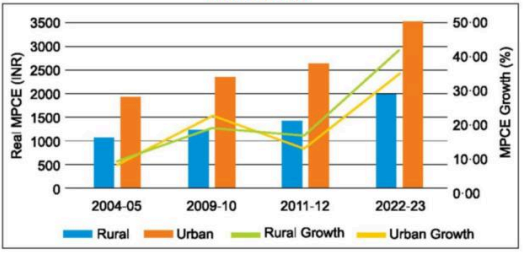
The diagram given below shows continuous increase in Real Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure between 2004-05 and 2022-23. Although, growth rates of Real Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure dipped during 2011-12, both in Rural and Urban areas, but the decline was more sharp in urban areas as compared to rural areas. Growth rate of RMPCE lifted during 2022-23 in both rural and urban areas, but it surpassed the rural areas as compared to urban areas.

Table 2 : Worker Population Ratio (In percentage)

WPR	Rural			Urban			Rural+Urban		
PLFS	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person
2023-24	56·3	34·8	45·6	56·4	20·7	38·9	56·4	30·7	43·7
2022-23	54	30	42·3	55·6	18·7	37·7	54·4	27	41·1
2021-22	54·7	26·6	40·8	55	17·3	36·6	54·8	24	39·6
2020-21	54·9	27·1	41·3	54·9	17	36·3	54·9	24·2	39·8
2019-20	53·8	24	39·2	54·1	16·8	35·9	53·9	21·8	38·2
2018-19	52·1	19	35·8	52·7	14·5	34·1	52·3	17·6	35·3
2017-18	51·7	17·5	35	53	14·2	33·9	52·1	16·5	34·7

Source : Press Information Bureau.

Real Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure and its Growth Rate



5. Employment Elasticity : Employment elasticity is a rational measure for checking the causal relation between growth and employment generation in an economy. The report's estimates, based on a linear econometric model, show that for the period 2017-23, there was a 1·11 per cent increase in jobs for a per cent increase in value added.

6. Sectoral Observations : The labour-capital ratio in the economy as a whole is around 1·11 and that for the services sector is 1·17. Thus, the supply-side argument that services fail to generate jobs due to their low labour intensity is not corroborated by these observations—rather it is the other way around. Hence, from both the supply and demand-side, India's economic orientation is inconsistent with any form of joblessness.

In conclusion, India's employment growth, linked to its consumption-driven economic model, disproves the joblessness myth!

Economic Survey of India : Another View of Employment Generation

The Economic Survey 2023-24 highlights significant improvements in employment and skill development. The survey provides data that aligns with the findings of the report that employment is on the rise in India. Key trends of Economic Survey include :

1. Improved Labour Market : Indian labour market indicators have improved significantly with the unemployment rate declining to 3·2 per cent in 2022-23.

2. Sectoral Employment : Agriculture remains dominant, employing over 45% of the workforce, though there is a gradual shift toward manufacturing and services.

3. Youth Employment : According to PLFS, youth (age 15-29 years) unemployment rate has declined from 17·8 per cent in 2017-18 to 10 per cent in 2022-23.

4. Female Workforce Participation : The female labour participation rate has steadily increased due to supportive policies.

5. Manufacturing Recovery : Factories employing over 100 workers experienced 11·8% growth between FY18 and FY22, indicating that larger industrial units are creating more jobs than smaller ones.

6. Wage Growth : During FY15-FY22, the wages per worker in rural areas grew at 6·9 per cent CAGR vis-à-vis a corresponding 6·1 per cent CAGR in urban areas. This growth reflects the rising demand for labour in rural industries such as construction and manufacturing, as well as public employment programs like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

7. EPFO Payroll Growth : The yearly net payroll additions to the EPFO have more than doubled from 61·1 lakh in FY19 to 131·5 lakh in FY24, driven by new job creation and greater formalization of employment.

8. Gig Economy : India's gig economy is expanding rapidly, with the workforce in this sector expected to grow to 2·35 crore by 2029-30.

9. Manufacturing and AI : The manufacturing sector remains shielded from automation, offering continued job growth opportunities.

India's economic performance in FY 2023-24 reflects robust growth. Real GDP has been estimated to grow by 8·2% in FY 2023-24 as compared to the growth rate of 7·0% in FY 2022-23. Nominal GDP has witnessed a growth rate of 9·6% in FY 2023-24 over the growth rate of 14·2% in FY 2022-23. Real Gross Value Added (GVA) has grown by 7·2% in 2023-24 over 6·7% in 2022-23. This GVA growth has been mainly due to significant growth of 9·9% in manufacturing sector in 2023-24 over – 2·2% in 2022-23 and growth of 7·1% in 2023-24 over 1·9% in 2022-23 for Mining & Quarrying sector. Real GVA and Real GDP have been estimated to grow by 6·3% and 7·8% respectively in Q4 of FY 2023-24. Real GDP is estimated to attain a level of ₹ 173·82 lakh crore in the year 2023-24, against the First Revised Estimates (FRE) of GDP for the year 2022-23 of ₹ 160·71 lakh crore.

However, data from the First Advance Estimates for the FY 2024-25 paint a downward trend in the growth of the GDP, both in real terms as well as in nominal terms. Real GDP has been estimated to grow by 6·4% in FY 2024-25 as compared to the growth rate of 8·2% in Provisional Estimate (PE) of GDP for FY 2023-24. Nominal GDP has witnessed a growth rate of 9·7% in FY 2024-25 over the growth rate of 9·6% in FY 2023-24.

Real GDP or GDP at Constant Prices is estimated to attain a level of ₹ 184·88 lakh crore in the financial year 2024-25, against the Provisional Estimate of GDP for the year 2023-24 of ₹ 173·82 lakh crore. The growth rate in Real GDP during 2024-25 is estimated at 6·4% as compared to 8·2% in 2023-24. Nominal GDP or GDP at Current Prices is estimated to attain a level of ₹ 324·11 lakh crore in the year 2024-25, against ₹ 295·36 lakh crore in 2023-24, showing a growth rate of 9·7%.

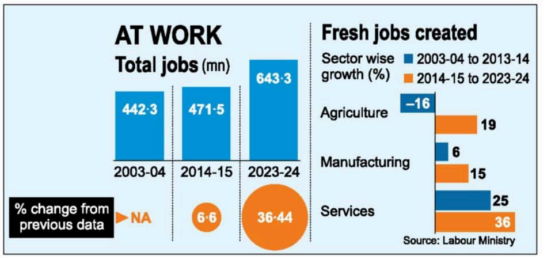
Data Vs. Reality

Any downfall in the real GDP will result into creation of fewer jobs. Data from the government agencies paint a rosy picture in terms of higher growth and creation of more jobs. But, the real picture is altogether different. Rising number of applicants for different posts of Central and State Governments—right from the group D vacancies of Indian Railways to the recruitments of police constables/teachers / ministerial staffs upto the lucrative jobs in the administration, shows the real picture of unemployment, particularly the educated youths' employment.

A bigger picture of unemployment in India emerges in rural areas where a large number of people are facing disguised and seasonal unemployment. Several studies have confirmed that the industrial sector of the Indian economy has failed to absorb surplus labour from agriculture.

Government Paints a Rosy Picture

India created nearly 172 million fresh jobs between 2014 and 2024, of which 46 million were created in 2023-24, said Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, citing the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) latest KLEMS database. This database provides insights into five key inputs in production: capital (K), labour (L), energy (E), materials (M) and services (S). The KLEMS database covers 27 industries aggregated into six sectors.



A sector-wise analysis showed that the services sector led growth with a 36 per cent rise in fresh jobs created, followed by agriculture (19 per cent) and manufacturing (15 per cent).

On the youth employment front, the minister cited the recently released India Skills Report 2025 launched by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The report highlighted that youth employability (graduates) has grown from 33·95 per cent in 2013 to 54·81 per cent in 2024.

Youth employment rose from 31·4 per cent in 2017-18 to 41·7 per cent in 2023-24. Meanwhile, youth unemployment dropped from 17·8 per cent in 2017-18 to 10·2 per cent in 2023-24.

In addition, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) data shows that between September 2017 and September 2024, a net 47 million youth (aged 18-28 years) joined the EPFO fold.

Paradoxical Situation

Employment generation in India presents a paradoxical situation. The structural transformation process has been weak and deficient. Though, there is movement of labour taking place away from farms even if stalled, possibly, temporarily. But that surplus labour isn't moving to higher value-added non-farm activities, specifically manufacturing and modern services. The share of manufacturing (and mining) in total employment has actually fallen along with that of agriculture. The surplus labour pulled out from the farms is being largely absorbed in construction and services. While the services sector includes relatively well-paying industries such as information technology, business process outsourcing, telecommunications, finance, healthcare, education and public administration—the bulk of the jobs in this case are in petty retailing, small eateries, domestic help, sanitation, security staffing, transport and similar other informal economic activities. This is also evident from the low, if not declining, share of employment in organised enterprises, defined as those engaging 10 or more workers.

Conclusion

Concludingly, jobless growth growth is a myth in terms of claims and projections of the government, on the contrary the youths, struggling to find a suitable jobs according to their educational qualifications and skill , feel that the jobless growth is a reality in India. Independent thinkers and politicians sitting in opposition allege that high growth of the economy and policies of the government failed completely to address the unemployment problem. India's employment landscape has not moved in desired manner. Government has tried its best through government policies, skilling programs to create more jobs with higher economic growth. But, quality of jobs deteriorated considerably during the post reforms era. As India leverages its demographic dividend, further investments in education, health, and skill development will be critical for sustaining this positive employment trajectory.

PDarpan

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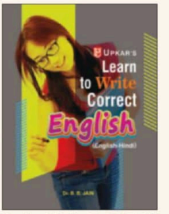
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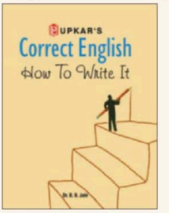
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FOCUS 2

The Indian Rupee's Depreciation : Decoding the Exchange Rate Dynamics

—Dr. Vikram Singh

The Indian rupee slumped to a fresh lifetime low of ₹ 86 per dollar mark on January 10, 2025, breaching the psychological level for the first time ever. Rupee declined 18 paise to settle for the day at 86·04 provisionally as it failed to resist pressure from :

I. Stronger US Dollar
II. Huge outflow of foreign funds
III. Surging crude oil prices overseas
IV. Negative sentiment in domestic equity markets.

Negative sentiments in capital market fueled the larger than expected outflow of foreign exchange from India. The benchmark S&P/BSE Sensex fell 241·30 points, or 0·31 per cent, to 77,378·91 as the dollar continued its strength and US bond yields remained elevated ahead of the all-important US jobs report due later in the day. The broader NSE Nifty index dropped 95 points, or 0·4 per cent to 23,431·50. Also, dollar strengthened on increased demand amid the anticipation of restrictive trade measures by the new US administration after Donald Trump takes over as President on January 20, 2025.

This gradual decline in the past few weeks is a good sign. Such depreciation was long overdue and it is welcome that the Reserve Bank of India is now willing to allow it to happen. The financial markets should not be allowed to think that the RBI is maintaining any sort of unofficial peg to a particular dollar value. RBI has itself insisted that it does not do that but only smoothens out volatility in the exchange rate. However, the size of RBI's intervention in both the spot and the forward markets for the rupee has given rise to many questions. Financial markets can respond to such questions by launching speculative attacks on a currency which usually ends with some of the foreign exchange reserves being transferred to their bank accounts and the currency sliding anyway.

Five Largest Downfalls of the Indian Rupee

Effective Date	Downfall of Rupee (in paise)
August 13, 2018	108
August 3, 2022	62
October 19, 2022	61
June 4, 2024	45
October 7, 2022	32

The fact, however, is that the rupee weakened by less than 3 per cent in 2024, which is considerably less than its peers (Figure 1). A small poll of market participants by experts suggested that the general view was that the value of the rupee would decline further in coming months, driven in part by a further strengthening of the dollar due to slower monetary easing by the United States Federal Reserve. The rupee has faced persistent headwinds over recent weeks, including a stronger dollar and tepid capital flows alongside concerns about India's slowing economic growth and falling FDI inflow.

The rupee has a lot of catching up to do because its slide has been postponed when compared to its peer currencies and competitors. The effects on domestic liquidity of active management of the rupee are also beginning to be felt. A persistent liquidity deficit in the banking system caused short-term borrowing costs to rise in the last quarter of 2024 to the highest they have been in more than three months, with some estimates putting the liquidity shortage at about ₹ 1·1 trillion.

It is unclear what may have caused the RBI to revise its view on rupee management. Domestic-growth challenges must have played a part. An overvalued rupee is a drag on export and on growth. At a time when it has become clear that increasing the value of exports is the key to restoring growth momentum to the broader economy, maintaining an overvalued currency can be dangerously counter-productive. In fact, recent work by a team of RBI economists has shown that historically, in India, allowing depreciation in the Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER) has had a significant effect on the trade balance. As former Chief Economic Advisor Arvind Subramanian and others have pointed out earlier, the rupee's REER since 2019 has stabilised at a much higher level.

Estimates suggest Indian rupee is still overvalued by about 9 per cent. This must be brought back in line with real conditions if India is to regain competitiveness. Without liquidity in the banking system, with exporters fighting off an overvalued rupee, and with the threat of a speculative attack always hanging over the macro-economy, the task of reviving growth will become too difficult. A more flexible approach to the rupee's value is overdue. This will be critical because the promised policies of US President elect Donald Trump might strengthen the dollar further, at least in the foreseeable future.

Depreciation of Rupee and its Peer Currencies

The Indian rupee ended at a record closing low on January 9, 2025, pressured by a decline in the Chinese Yuan, and logged a ninth straight week of losses due to the relentless rise in the US dollar. The rupee ended at ₹ 85·91 to the dollar, compared to its previous close of ₹ 85·75.

China's Yuan declined past the key 7·3 threshold to a 14 month low against the dollar on January 3, 2025 as crumbling yields, rate cut expectations and the looming threat of tariffs from incoming US President-elect Donald Trump's administration dented sentiment. The Chinese Yuan closed the onshore trading session down 0·14 per cent at 7·3093 on January 3, 2025, its weakest level since November 3, 2023.

Other Asian currencies were broadly lower. All emerging market currencies were hit by the surge in

dollar in the last quarter of 2024 (Fig. 1), on US optimism over Donald Trump becoming the President. A sharp increase in foreign portfolio outflows in October and November 2024, expansion in trade deficit and high inflation numbers also added to the pressure on the rupee in recent months. Yet, the rupee has fared well compared with most other emerging market currencies including the Brazilian Real (down 21·50 per cent), Russian Ruble (20·20 per cent), the Mexican Peso (18 per cent) and the South Korean Won (11·6 per cent) against the US Dollar in 2024. RBI's active intervention in the forex market seems to have helped rupee record lower depreciation *vis-a-vis* its emerging market peers.

A slide in the Yuan exacerbated the rupee's woes. Rupee declined further despite halfheartedly intervention. The currency has been under pressure over the past few weeks due to a broad dollar rally.

The dollar index reached 109, rising 0·3% on January 9, 2025, while Asian currencies showed mixed performance. The 10 year US Treasury yield climbed to 4·73% on January 8, 2025, its highest since April 2024, before slightly declining during Asian trading.

Major currencies against US Dollar

	Dec 31, '24	Y-o-Y chg in %
Malaysian ringgit	4·47	2·7
Hong Kong dollar	7·77	0·6
British pound	0·80	-1·5
China renminbi	7·30	-2·7
Indian rupee	85·61	-2·8
Indonesian rupiah	16,132·00	-4·5
Euro	0·96	-5·7
Japanese yen	156·78	-10·0
Russian ruble	112·12	-20·2
Brazil real	6·18	-21·5

Global currencies against ₹

	Dec 31, '24	Y-o-Y chg in %
Argentine peso	0·08	24·0
Brazil real	13·85	23·8
Japanese yen	0·55	7·6
Euro	89·20	3·1
Indonesian rupiah	0·53	1·8
China Renminbi	11·72	0·0
British pound	107·49	-1·6
Hong Kong dollar	11·03	-3·4
Malaysian ringgit	19·15	-5·4

Fig. 1. Movement of Major Currencies of the World Against the US Dollar

The dollar and US bond yields have risen in recent weeks due to expectations of cautious rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve and the potential inflationary effects of incoming US President Donald Trump's policies.

The release of the Fed's December meeting minutes on January 8, 2025 highlighted growing concerns about inflation, with uncertainty surrounding Trump's policies adding to the economic outlook's volatility.

Expectations of fewer Federal Reserve rate cuts in 2025 and the view that the US economy will continue to outperform the rest of its global peers has kept the dollar well bid.

Trends in External Value of Indian Rupee

It has been a tumultuous time for the Indian Rupee even as the Reserve Bank of India has been actively stepping into the foreign exchange market to stem its free fall in pursuit of what it calls an 'orderly' exchange movement. The RBI has been fairly successful in allowing the Indian rupee to move in an orderly manner over the last decade. The compounded annual depreciation in the rupee has remained around 3 per cent between 2015 and 2024. But the rupee has recorded losses in nine out of the last ten years, implying that the Central Bank is comfortable about allowing the rupee to depreciate.

The Indian rupee ended 2024 at a fresh closing low of 85·61 per US Dollar, slipping 0·09 per cent on December 31, 2024. This marked the seventh straight year of depreciation against the greenback (US Dollar).

After a 10 per cent fall in 2022 following the Russia-Ukraine war in Europe, the Reserve Bank of India intervened to keep the rupee in a tight range, resulting in a modest 0·6 per cent decline in 2023.

Till mid-September 2024, the rupee remained one of the most stable currencies. However, it came under pressure in the final quarter of 2024 due to two major global developments :

1. US Federal Reserve interest rate cut.
2. Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election.

In the October-December 2024 period, the Indian rupee depreciated by 1·8 per cent, including a 1·31 per cent drop in December 2024.

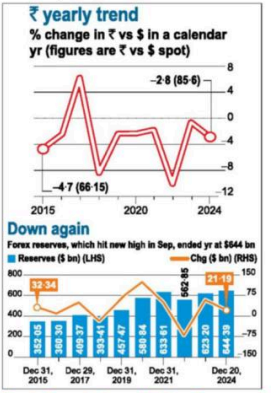


Fig. 2. Depreciation of Indian Rupee and Trend in Foreign Exchange Reserves

India's foreign exchange reserves fell by nearly $ 70 billion in the past three months as the RBI intervened to curb volatility.

The Foreign Exchange Reserves, which touched an all-time high of $ 705 billion in September, 2024, ended the year 2024 at $ 644·4 billion and further declined to US $ 634·58 billion on January 3, 2025. Despite the decline, India's reserves remain the fourth-largest globally, covering 99 per cent of the country's external debt or nearly a year of merchandise imports as of September-end, 2024.

Implications of Depreciation of Rupee

It is often said that depreciation of domestic currency (say rupee) helps the monetary authorities to correct mismatch in balance of payment. With the every doze of depreciation, imports become costlier and exports become cheeper in the international market. It leads to fewer imports and more exports, thereby bridging the trade deficit.

When the rupee falls, it becomes weaker compared to the dollar, meaning we need more rupees to buy a single dollar than we did before. For instance, a year ago, it required ₹ 74 to purchase $ 1, compared to ₹ 86 now. This depreciation means imported products will

become costlier. So, an importer that brings in an item costing $ 100, will now have to shell out ₹ 8,600 compared to ₹ 7,400 a year ago.

On a macro scale, the impact of rupee fall tends to be directly on inflation. But it also has cascading impact : for instance, costlier crude oil, will increase transportation costs, which will impact prices of other goods.

Besides, the effect of depreciation of rupee can also be seen on various classes of people and businesses in specific ways.

Impact on expenses : Higher inflation ultimately means common men's household budget gets tighter. Plus, households pay more for everything, from groceries and clothing to transport. Even electronics such as phones and laptops will become costlier since most of the components for these devices are imported.

Exports bring more foreign exchange : A positive impact of currency devaluation is that exports become cheaper in external market. This is because export companies receive payments in dollars, which they exchange for more rupees. Hence, export-oriented sectors such as pharmaceuticals, IT, auto, gems and jewellery will benefit from the depreciating rupee.

Impact on investment : A fall in the rupee essentially means investors are selling rupee-based investments to buy dollar-based ones. This means the domestic stock market is likely to take a hit. However, if domestic investors have exposure in US equities, they may appreciate as the dollar strengthens.

Role of the RBI

Reserve Bank of India has been using a variety of tools, including intervention in the interbank Over the Counter (OTC) market through large PSU banks, positions in domestic and overseas forward market, and through domestic exchange traded derivatives, to manage the external value of rupee. With intervention in the OTC market depleting forex reserves and reducing domestic liquidity, the RBI has been taking large positions in the forwards market in the last quarter of 2024. Outstanding short positions of RBI in the forward market jumped to $ 49·1 billion towards October-end 2024, registering an increase of 237 per cent over net short positions towards the end of September 2024.

> A short position in dollars implies that the RBI will have to buy dollars in the future, which will apply downward pressure on the rupee.

However, RBI had decided not to roll over some of these positions in December 2024, contributing to the turbulence in rupee in the last week of December 2024.

What Next ?

Keeping in mind the 6·4 per cent growth, as has been projected in the First Advance Estimates of National Income for the FY 2024-25, moderate growth in exports and FDI inflow, Indian rupee is most likely to feel heat through higher demand for the US Dollar. With the depleting foreign exchange reserves, RBI should apply a well thought cautious approach to maintain the external value of the rupee.

P.Darpan

Continued from Page 48

of short-term and medium-term weather forecasts. Forecasts are run out to 15 days, taking 8 minutes on a single processor called a Tensor Processor Unit (TPU).

Machine-learning based weather forecasting systems are not useful for climate projections because :

- Climate projections require dynamic modelling of changing conditions at sea ice, land and oceans. GenCast provides short-term weather predictions (up to 15 days), assuming static conditions for ocean, land and sea ice.
- Weather prediction which are reliant on current weather details is irrelevant for climate projections which rely on the statistics of the climate decades into the future.
- Phenomena such as El-Nino, which develops slowly than the weather, is crucial for climate projection. It is a 'small data' problem with relatively less data available. However, weather prediction is a 'big data' problem, which is needed to train a complex machine learning model.

Cubic Kilometre Neutrino Telescope (KM3NeT)

Located at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea, it is a European research infrastructure which has the next-generation neutrino telescope with a volume of at least one cubic kilometre.

Key Components

- **Astroparticle Research with Cosmics in the Abyss (ARCA)** for searching neutrinos from distant astrophysical sources such as supernovae, gamma ray bursters or colliding stars.
- **Oscillation Research with Cosmics in the Abyss (ORCA)** for studying neutrino properties exploiting neutrinos generated in the Earth's atmosphere.
- The sensor modules to detect the Cherenkov light generated in the sea water by charged particles created in neutrino induced interaction with the water.
- The facility will also house instrumentation for Earth and Sea sciences for long-term and on-line monitoring of the deep-sea environment and the sea bottom at depth of several kilometers.

Neutrino, belonging to lepton family, is a subatomic particle very similar to an electron, with no electrical charge and negligible mass. Though, most abundant particles in the universe, they are difficult to detect due to very little interaction with matter. Hence, they are known as the *ghost particles*. 3 types flavours of neutrinos are electron neutrino, muon neutrino and tau neutrino. Neutrinos change between types as they travel, something scientists call neutrino oscillation. The Indian Neutrino Observatory is a multi-institutional effort, with following components- Underground Laboratory at Bodi West Hills in Theni (Tamil Nadu), Magnetized Iron Calorimeter (ICAL) detector, and establishment of the Inter Institutional Centre for High Energy Physics (IICHEP) at Madurai. Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai is a nodal centre of the project, with the European Council for Nuclear Research (CERN), Europe, as the partner agency.

P.Darpan

FOCUS 3

India's Foreign Trade During April-December 2024

—Dr. Manish Dev

Key Highlights

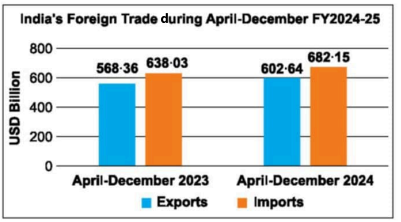
- The cumulative exports (merchandise & services) during April-December 2024 is estimated at USD 602·64 billion, as compared to USD 568·36 billion in April-December 2023, an estimated growth of 6·03%.
- The cumulative value of merchandise exports during April-December 2024 was USD 321·71 billion, as compared to USD 316·65 billion during April-December 2023, registering a positive growth of 1·6%.
- The cumulative Non-Petroleum exports in April-December 2024 valued at USD 272·70 billion registered an increase of 7·05% as compared to USD 254·74 billion in April-December 2023.

Data of India's foreign trade during April-December 2024-25 was released on January 15, 2025. As per these data, India's total exports during April-December 2024* is estimated at USD 602·64 billion registering a positive growth of 6·03 per cent. Total imports during April-December 2024* is estimated at USD 682·15 billion registering a growth of 6·91 per cent.

Trade During April-December 2024*

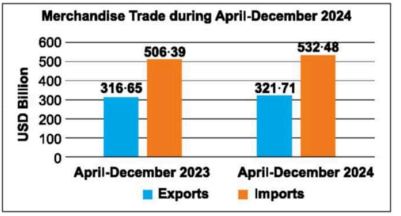
		April-Dec. 2024 (USD Billion)	April- Dec. 2023 (USD Billion)	% change
Merchandise	Exports	321·71	316·65	1·60
	Imports	532·48	506·39	5·15
Services*	Exports	280·94	251·71	11·61
	Imports	149·67	131·64	13·70
Total Trade (Merchandise + Services) *	Exports	602·64	568·36	6·03
	Imports	682·15	638·03	6·92
	Trade Balance	– 79·5	– 69·67	14·11

* **Note :** (i) The latest data for services sector released by RBI is for November 2024. The data for December 2024 is an estimation, which will be revised based on RBI's subsequent release. (ii) Data for April-December 2023 and April-September 2024 has been revised on pro-rata basis using quarterly balance of payments data.



Merchandise Trade

- Merchandise exports during April-December 2024 were USD 321·71 billion as compared to USD 316·65 billion during April-December 2023.
- Merchandise imports during April-December 2024 were USD 532·48 billion as compared to USD 506·39 billion during April-December 2023.
- Merchandise trade deficit during April-December 2024 was USD 210·77 billion as compared to USD 189·74 billion during April-December 2023.
- Non-petroleum and non-gems & jewellery exports in April-December 2024 were USD 251·34 billion, compared to USD 230·43 billion in April-December 2023.
- Non-petroleum, non-gems & jewellery (gold, silver & precious metals) imports in April-December 2024 were USD 336·09 billion, compared to USD 320·63 billion in April-December 2023.
- Services exports is estimated to grow by 11·61 per cent during April-December 2024* over April-December 2023.
- Services exports is estimated to grow by 11·61 per cent during April-December 2024* over April-December 2023.



Trade Excluding Petroleum and Gems & Jewellery During April-December 2024

	April-Dec. 2024 (USD Billion)	April-Dec. 2023 (USD Billion)	% change
Non-petroleum exports	272·7	254·74	7·05
Non-petroleum imports	394·17	376·42	4·72
Non-petroleum & Non-Gems & Jewellery exports	251·34	230·43	9·07
Non-petroleum & Non-Gems & Jewellery imports	336·09	320·63	4·82

Note : Gems & Jewellery Imports include Gold, Silver & Pearls, precious & Semi-precious stones.

Quick Estimates for Exports of Selected Major Commodities for April-December 2024

(Value in US $ million)

S. No.	Commodities	Apr. 2023-Dec. 2023	Apr. 2024-Dec. 2024	Apr. 2024-Dec. 2024 (%change)
1.	Coffee	876·84	1246·63	42·17
2.	Tobacco	1110·57	1530·25	37·79
3.	Electronic Goods	20308·96	26117·29	28·60
4.	Rice	7318·58	8725·37	19·22
5.	Tea	607·98	689·02	13·33
6.	Plastic & Linoleum	5928·68	6696·84	12·96
7.	Handicrafts excl. Hand-made Carpet	1172·21	1319·12	12·53
8.	RMG of all Textiles	10141·67	11316·09	11·58
9.	Carpet	1037·94	1149·50	10·75
10.	Cereal Preparations & Miscellaneous Processed Items	2089·38	2301·93	10·17
11.	Meat, Dairy & Poultry Products	3309·89	3646·26	10·16
12.	Engineering Goods	79329·49	87216·31	9·94
13.	Jute Mfg. Including Floor Covering	258·93	283·93	9·66
14.	Spices	2909·24	3160·55	8·64
15.	Drug& Pharmaceuticals	20400·67	21698·94	6·36
16.	Fruits & Vegetables	2512·50	2655·58	5·69
17.	Man-made Yarn/Fabs./ Made-ups etc.	3428·34	3610·27	5·31
18.	Organic & Inorganic Chemicals	20231·12	21236·39	4·97
19.	Cotton Yarn/Fabs./ made-ups, Handloom Products etc.	8670·08	8914·73	2·82
20.	Mica, Coal & Other Ores, Minerals Including Processed Minerals	3427·81	3521·50	2·73
21.	Cashew	249·44	254·92	2·20
22.	Leather & Leather Products	3253·29	3310·70	1·76
23.	Oil seeds	1031·51	1009·42	– 2·14
24.	Marine Products	5852·32	5677·02	– 3·00
25.	Ceramic products & glassware	3265·34	2999·76	– 8·13
26.	Gems & Jewellery	24306·33	21363·50	– 12·11
27.	Oil Meals	1227·04	1015·13	– 17·27
28.	Petroleum Products	61910·09	49009·63	– 20·84
29.	Iron Ore	2648·50	1490·84	– 43·71
30.	Other Cereals	454·60	190·02	– 58·20
	Sub-Total	**299269·34**	**303357·47**	**1·37**
	Grand Total	**316649·87**	**321708·66**	**1·60**

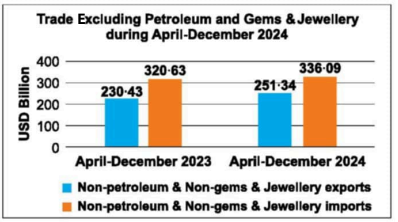
Notes : 1. Exports include Re-exports, 2. Grand total is inclusive of component 'other'.

Quick Estimates for Imports of Selected Major Commodities for April-December 2024

(Value in US $ million)

S. No.	Commodities	Apr. 2023-Dec. 2023	Apr. 2024-Dec. 2024	Apr. 2024-Dec. 2024 (%change)
1.	Cotton Raw & Waste	498·81	918·69	84·18
2.	Pulses	2467·93	3788·95	53·53
3.	Sulphur & Unroasted Iron Pyrites	171·18	213·51	24·73
4.	Gold	35951·24	42087·65	17·07
5.	Machine tools	3572·08	4173·14	16·83
6.	Vegetable Oil	11638·03	13519·28	16·16
7.	Metaliferrous ores & Other Minerals	7138·85	8206·77	14·96
8.	Non-ferrous metals	16404·55	18791·54	14·55
9.	Silver	2413·24	2754·47	14·14
10.	Fruits & Vegetables	2176·89	2401·52	10·32
11.	Electronic goods	65432·34	72126·03	10·23
12.	Pulp and Waste paper	1413·79	1555·27	10·01
13.	Professional instrument, Optical goods, etc.	5729·02	6216·79	8·51
14.	Machinery, Electrical & Non-electrical	36908·58	39671·89	7·49
15.	Wood&Wood products	4907·66	5260·29	7·19
16.	Medicinal & Pharmaceutical products	6221·18	6620·77	6·42
17.	Petroleum, Crude & Products	129973·68	138308·19	6·41
18.	Transport equipment	21519·27	22877·46	6·31
19.	Organic & Inorganic Chemicals	20704·70	21526·80	3·97
20.	Textile Yarn Fabric, made-up articles	1747·04	1804·21	3·27
21.	Artificial resins, plastic materials, etc.	17156·64	17212·64	0·33
22.	Leather & Leather products	748·54	750·01	0·20
23.	Project goods	774·91	772·63	– 0·29
24.	Newsprint	347·23	339·22	– 2·31
25.	Iron & Steel	18005·60	17038·72	– 5·37
26.	Fertilisers, Crude & Manufactured	9002·09	8173·68	– 9·20
27.	Chemical material & products	10275·42	8904·73	– 13·34
28.	Coal, coke & Briquettes, etc.	29290·43	24095·60	– 17·74
29.	Dyeing/tanning/ colouring materials	4021·91	3221·05	– 19·91
30.	Pearls, precious & Semi-precious stones	17424·45	13243·60	– 23·99
	Sub-Total	**484037·26**	**506575·09**	**4·66**
	Grand Total	**506391·81**	**532481·79**	**5·15**

Notes : 1. Imports include Re-Imports, 2. Grand total is inclusive of component 'other'.



Services Trade

- The estimated value of service exports during April-December 2024* is USD 280·94 billion as compared to USD 251·71 billion in April-December 2023.
- The estimated value of service imports during April-December 2024* is USD 149·67 billion as compared to USD 131·64 billion in April-December 2023.
- The services trade surplus for April-December 2024* is USD 131·27 billion as compared to USD 120·07 billion in April-December 2023.
- Services exports is estimated to grow by 11·61 per cent during April-December 2024* over April-December 2023.

Quick Estimates for Exports to Selected Countries for April-December 2024

(Value in US $ million)

S. No.	Countries	Apr. 2023-Dec. 2023	Apr. 2024-Dec. 2024	Apr. 2024-Dec. 2024 (% change)
1.	USA	56768·36	59928·98	5·57
2.	UAE	24733·90	26927·78	8·87
3.	Netherland	15594·54	17888·19	14·71
4.	UK	9492·35	10828·51	14·08
5.	China PRP	11946·75	10441·50	– 12·60
6.	Singapore	8929·29	10398·52	16·45
7.	Saudi Arabia	8021·20	8739·39	8·95
8.	Bangladesh PR	7892·60	8259·30	4·65
9.	Germany	7131·27	7702·60	8·01
10.	Australia	6401·03	6284·13	– 1·83
11.	France	5254·94	5905·08	12·37
12.	Malaysia	4991·76	5892·26	18·04
13.	Italy	6127·58	5829·17	– 4·87
14.	South Africa	6265·52	5826·34	– 7·01
15.	Nepal	5296·66	5315·65	0·36
16.	Brazil	4699·69	5225·80	11·19
17.	Belgium	5846·71	4678·24	– 19·99
18.	Japan	3807·79	4476·28	17·56
19.	Hong Kong	6085·66	4450·55	– 26·87
20.	Mexico	3973·35	4375·98	10·13
	Sub-Total	**209260·96**	**219374·26**	**4·83**
	Grand Total	**316649·87**	**321708·66**	**1·60**

Notes : 1. Grand total is inclusive of all countries.
2. The figures for December 2024 are provisional.



Quick Estimates for Imports from Selected Countries for April-December 2024

(Value in US $ million)

S. No.	Countries	Apr. 2023-Dec. 2023	Apr. 2024-Dec. 2024	Apr. 2024-Dec. 2024 (% change)
1.	China PRP	76949·34	84163·93	9·38
2.	Russia	45087·83	48836·89	8·32
3.	UAE	32796·14	44957·99	37·08
4.	USA	32777·98	33402·89	1·91
5.	Saudi Arabia	23194·61	21923·77	– 5·48
6.	Iraq	21557·57	21604·28	0·22
7.	Indonesia	17416·94	17816·82	2·30
8.	Switzerland	16387·09	17018·75	3·85
9.	Korea RP	16159·36	15850·23	– 1·91
10.	Singapore	16458·20	15509·24	– 5·77
11.	Japan	13198·15	14322·51	8·52
12.	Germany	13202·89	13660·24	3·46
13.	Hong Kong	15386·22	13480·55	– 12·39
14.	Australia	12502·00	10905·02	– 12·77
15.	Malaysia	9835·70	9572·52	– 2·68
16.	Thailand	7581·99	9284·80	22·46
17.	Qatar	8805·68	9153·07	3·95
18.	South Africa	8266·92	8065·47	– 2·44
19.	Taiwan	5659·75	8019·96	41·70
20.	Vietnam SOC REP	6967·53	7772·03	11·55
	Sub-Total	**400191·89**	**425320·96**	**6·28**
	Grand Total	**506391·81**	**532481·79**	**5·15**

Notes : 1. Grand total is inclusive of all countries.
2. The figures for December 2024 are provisional.

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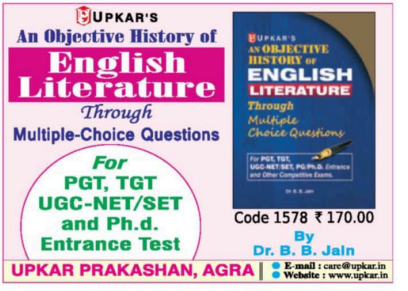



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Questions from Yojana Magazine

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Q. 1. The process of decolonizing the mind involves reclaiming cultural and intellectual autonomy. Discuss the role of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in fostering self-reliance and national identity. (250 Words)

Ans. The concept of decolonizing the mind, emphasizes reclaiming cultural and intellectual sovereignty from colonial influences. In India, the revival of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) plays a pivotal role in this process.

- **India as a Knowledge Hub :** India, historically referred to as *Gyan-Bhoomi* (land of knowledge), has contributed immensely to fields like astronomy, medicine (Ayurveda), philosophy, and literature. Ancient texts such as the Vedas, Upanishads, and Upvedas embody a structured and systematic knowledge framework that transcends traditions, fostering intergenerational knowledge transfer.
- **Role of IKS in Self-Reliance :** IKS promotes self-reliance by emphasizing indigenous systems such as Ayurveda which offer sustainable healthcare solutions and ancient mathematical contributions such as zero and calculus underpin modern scientific advancements. It also reinforces national identity by reconnecting India with its rich intellectual heritage, challenging the Eurocentric narratives imposed during the colonial period.
- **Contemporary Relevance of IKS :** The relevance of IKS in contemporary times lies in its ability to address global challenges like climate change and sustainable development through its traditional practices, such as ecological conservation embedded in Vedic literature. In Agriculture—traditional practices emphasize organic and ecological farming. Integrating IKS with modern education systems enhances India's soft power globally and aligns with the vision of *Atmanirbhar Bharat* (self-reliant India).

In conclusion, the Indian Knowledge System is not merely a cultural legacy but a transformative tool for intellectual empowerment fostering a sense of pride, self-reliance and global leadership rooted in India's civilizational ethos.

Q. 2. India has emerged as a global leader in Global Capability Centres (GCCs). Discuss the factors contributing to this leadership and its economic impact. (150 Words)

Ans. India has become the hub of Global Capability Centres (GCCs), hosting over 1,800 centers, accounting for more than half of the global GCCs. Employing over 19 lakh people, the sector's market size reached $ 60 billion in 2022–23, with an annual growth rate of 11·4%.

Factors Contributing to India's GCC Leadership

1. Favourable Policies : Initiatives like *Ease of Doing Business*, *Make in India* and *Digital India* attract global companies.

2. Skilled Workforce : A large pool of professionals drives innovation and productivity.

3. Infrastructure : Robust digital and physical infrastructure supports global operations.

4. Business-Friendly Laws : Acts like *SPICe+* and *Jan Vishwas Act* enhance ease of setup.

Economic Impact

- Generates $ 3 in economic activity for every dollar invested.
- Creates five times more local jobs, boosting real estate, retail and transportation sectors.

India's leadership in GCCs highlights its role as a global innovation hub, contributing significantly to economic growth and employment generation.

Questions from Kurukshetra Magazine

Q. 3. Discuss the role of satellite-based early warning systems in managing droughts and floods in India. How can these systems contribute to sustainable agricultural practices ? (250 Words)

Ans. India frequently experiences droughts and floods, which pose significant challenges to agriculture, food security, and rural livelihoods. Satellite-based early warning systems (EWS) offer a transformative solution by providing precise data for disaster management and fostering sustainable agricul-tural practices.

Role of Satellite-Based Early Warning Systems

Satellite-based EWS utilize advanced technology to monitor climatic conditions, soil health and water availability and provide real-time data that enable accurate predictions of droughts and floods. Early warnings empower farmers and local authorities to prepare for disasters, reducing potential losses. For instance, ISRO's satellite programs have significantly improved disaster forecasting in India.

Moreover, satellite data helps in resource management, such as optimizing irrigation and water storage. It aids in identifying drought-prone or flood-prone areas, enabling targeted interventions like crop insurance or relief measures.

Contribution to Sustainable Agriculture

Satellite-based EWS assist farmers in adopting climate-resilient crops and efficient water-use techniques. These systems support precision farming, reducing dependency on chemical fertilizers and pesticides and ensure long-term environmental sustainability and community resilience.

Satellite-based EWS enhances disaster preparedness and support sustainable agriculture, contributing to rural economic stability and food security and building climate-resilient ecosystems.

Q. 4. Discuss the role of space technology in bridging the rural-urban gap and its impact on societal well-being. (150 Words)

Ans. Space technology, led by ISRO, has revolutionized sectors like agriculture, disaster management, communication and environmental monitoring. It serves as a critical tool for enhancing rural development and reducing the rural-urban divide.

Role of Space Technology

1. Communication Connectivity : Satellites like GSAT bridge the digital divide, enabling e-learning, telemedicine and e-governance in rural areas.

2. Agricultural Applications : Satellites such as RISAT provide real-time data for crop monitoring, soil analysis and weather prediction, aiding farmers in improving productivity.

3. Disaster Management : Remote sensing helps in early warning systems and efficient disaster response.

4. Education and Literacy : Satellite-based services facilitate digital education in rural areas, promoting societal progress.

5. Environmental Monitoring : Space technology assists in tracking deforestation, water resources, and climate change.

Space technology has transformed governance, agriculture, and education, bridging the rural-urban divide effectively and ensuring inclusive growth.

Questions from Down to Earth Magazine

[January (1-15) issue]

Q. 5. Why is it important to revive the languages of tribal communities ? Discuss with examples. (250 Words)

Ans. Languages of tribal communities are essential repositories of cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and identity. However, many of these languages, face the threat of extinction.

Significance of Reviving Tribal Languages

1. Safeguarding Traditional Knowledge : Tribal languages carry invaluable knowledge about local ecosystems, medicinal practices, and sustainable living. Losing the language means losing centuries of wisdom.

2. Preserving Cultural Heritage : Tribal languages reflect the community's history, traditions and connection with nature. For example, the Korku language incorporates

words derived from natural elements, such as 'Kasde' (river bank) and 'Devda' (behind paddy).

3. Promoting Education and Inclusion : Integrating tribal languages into education improves learning outcomes by engaging children in their mother tongue. In Khalwa block, posters and materials in Korku have made education accessible and exciting for children.

4. Strengthening Community Identity : Reviving languages instills pride among tribal communities and strengthens their sense of identity. It empowers marginalized groups to have their voices recognized in mainstream society.

In Conclusion, Reviving tribal languages is vital for preserving cultural diversity and fostering inclusive development. Efforts like documenting Korku words and incorporating them into education exemplifies targeted initiatives safeguard linguistic heritage while empowering tribal communities socially and educationally, enabling sustainable, culturally inclusive growth.



Q. 6. Discuss the paradox of immigration and depopulation in the context of global demographic trends. How might immigration emerge as an existential necessity for developed countries in the future ? (150 Words)



Ans. Immigration and depopulation represent a critical paradox in global demographics. While international migrants form just 3·6% of the global population, their movement significantly **impacts labour markets, economies, and demographic structures** in both origin and destination countries.

Global Demographic Trends

1. Declining Populations in Developed Countries : The UN predicts population decline in 61 countries by 2050 due to low fertility rates and high emigration, 2/3rd of the global population lives in regions with fertility rates below the replacement level of 2·1.

2. Population Growth in Developing Nations : Countries like India continue to grow naturally, with births exceeding deaths. Africa experiences booming populations but lacks a skilled workforce.

Immigration as a Necessity

1. Economic Drivers : Migration will provide a skilled and youthful workforce to fill labour gaps in developed countries to sustain economies and support ageing population.

2. Policy Implications : Nations may reopen borders to manage labour shortages. Mechanisms to regulate legal and illegal immigration will become essential.

In conclusion, Immigration will shift from being a political controversy to an existential necessity for developed nations, offering a pragmatic solution to economic challenges posed by aging populations, ensuring demographic and workforce sustainability. Effective migration policies will be key to balancing global demographic disparities.

[December (16-31) issue]



Q. 7. Illegal riverbed mining in Jammu and Kashmir is causing ecological and socio-economic challenges. Discuss the impact of such activities and suggest measures to mitigate them. (250 Words)



Ans. Illegal riverbed mining in Jammu and Kashmir has led to ecological degradation, water scarcity, and socio-economic challenges. Despite regulations, unchecked mining for construction materials has intensified, severely affecting local ecosystems and communities.

Impact of Illegal Riverbed Mining

1. Ecological Impact : Destruction of natural springs like Arbal Nag, increased waster turbidity, altered river morphology has led to loss of aquatic biodiversity, including destruction of traditional water bodi sources.

2. Water Scarcity : Drying up of streams like Doodh Ganga and Sukh Nag, critical for irrigation and drinking water supply. Wells and springs now require deeper drilling due to lowered water tables.

3. Economic Impact : Agricultural activities dependent on irrigation face severe threats. Infrastructure projects are driving unsustainable demand for riverbed materials.

Measures to Mitigate Illegal Mining

1. Strict Enforcement : Effective implementation of regulations like the Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 2016, and installation of CCTV cameras at mining sites.

2. Community Participation : Involving local stakeholders in monitoring and reporting illegal activities.

3. Sustainable Alternatives : Promoting alternative materials for construction and scientific replenishment studies.

Q. 8. Discuss the causes, consequences, and lessons learned from the Bhopal Gas Tragedy of 1984. (150 Words)

Ans. The Bhopal Gas Tragedy occurred on December 3, 1984, when 40 tonnes of methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas leaked from the Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) pesticide plant in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. The leakage was caused by a combination of technical negligence, poor safety standards and inadequate maintenance.

- The immediate impact was catastrophic, with over 3,000 deaths within days and long-term health issues for over 500,000 people. Victims suffered from respiratory ailments, organ damage and birth defects. The environment also faced severe contamination of soil and groundwater.
- The tragedy highlighted the need for stricter industrial safety regulations, effective disaster management and corporate accountability, which eventually led to the enactment of the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

The tragedy serves as a grim reminder of the importance of balancing industrial development with safety and ethical responsibilities, ensuring the welfare of vulnerable communities.

Questions from Science Reporter Magazine

Q. 9. Explain the concept of the quantum model, its significance in scientific advancements and how it differs from classical physics. (250 words)

Ans. Max Planck laid the foundation of quantum model in 1900, broad on his study of blackbody radiation, in which he proposed energy exists as discrete packets called quanta, rather than a continuous wave, as postulated in classical physics.

- Processes such as the heating of solids and the photoelectric effect couldn't be explained based on Newtonian principles of classical physics. Quantum physics filled this gap by combining particle and wave nature, fundamentally altering the understanding of energy and matter.
- Key principles of quantum theory include wave-particle duality, Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, and quantization of energy levels. For example, electrons in atoms occupy discrete energy states, explaining atomic spectra and enabling technological advancements such as semiconductors, lasers, and quantum computing.
- Quantum physics has catalyzed breakthroughs in fields like cryptography, nanotechnology and medical imaging. Technologies like MRI machines, solar cells and quantum computers are direct outcomes. Furthermore, it offers insights into the behaviour of subatomic particles, paving the way for innovations in artificial intelligence and sustainable energy.

In essence, the quantum model introduced a paradigm shift, transcending the deterministic framework of classical physics. Its emphasis on probabilistic outcomes and discrete energy interactions underpins modern science and technology, making it indispensable in understanding the universe at its most fundamental level.

Q.10. Highlight the major science and technology breakthroughs of 2024 and discuss their potential impact on society. (150 words)

The year 2024 witnessed transformative advancements in science and technology. marking a new era of innovation. One notable breakthrough was the world's first single-piece 3D-printed engine, revolutionizing manufacturing processes by enhancing efficiency and reducing costs. Another milestone was the first genetically edited pig kidney transplant, offering hope for addressing organ shortages and advancing medical science.

The development of the world's first nuclear clock promises unprecedented precision in timekeeping, crucial for applications like GPS and telecommunications. Meanwhile, laser-cooled positronium marked a significant step in antimatter research, potentially unlocking new frontiers in physics and energy generation.

These achievements highlight humanity's ingenuity and their potential to reshape various sectors. For instance, 3D printing could transform aerospace and healthcare industries, while breakthroughs in genetic editing may revolutionize transplantation medicine. Such innovations not only enhance global scientific progress but also inspire solutions to pressing societal challenges, propelling sustainable development forward.



World Panorama

India's Neighbourhood First Policy : Signs of Backsliding

—Arunoday Bajpai

As the year 2024 ended, India's foreign policy looks like a mix of sterling success amidst signs of backsliding in neighbourhood. India has steered clear from the tricky game of balancing between the US and European powers on the one hand and Russia on the other about the ongoing Ukraine conflict. India has given the message of peace as the Indian PM Narendra Modi has reiterated numerous times that it is not the time of War. While addressing the gathering of foreign delegates during the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention in Bhubaneshwar on 9 January, 2025, he said future of humanity lies not in *Yuddha* (war) but in Buddha (peace). India also scored well in strengthening her ties in the Middle East countries like UAE, Kuwait, Iran, Qatar and Israel. It adopted a balance position in Gaza conflict by criticizing the terror attack by Hamas in Israel in October, 2023 on the one hand, but at the same time upholding the cause of independent Palestine State on the other. India's Act East Policy has also gained momentum. Finally, India has moved towards cautious normalization with China after multiple dialogues at military and diplomatic levels. However, her policy in South Asia has been facing new challenges in Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and later Bangladesh.

India's Neighbourhood Policy : Mandate

India's neighbourhood consists of eight members of SAARC, namely, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and India. The Neighbourhood First policy was first conceived in 2008. It was conceived to bolster relations with neighbouring countries on priority basis (Report of Standing Committee of Parliament on External Affairs, 2023). However, the policy was launched with much vigour from 2014. India invited all the heads of Government/State of SAARC member countries during the swearing in ceremony of PM Modi in May, 2014. Indian PM also made his foreign visit to Bhutan in June 2014, followed by second visit to Nepal in August same year to highlight the importance of South Asia in India's foreign policy.

The 'Neighbourhood First' policy is the basic framework of India's policy in South Asia, which guides the management of India's relations with countries in its immediate neighbourhood. The policy mainly aims at creating mutually beneficial, people-oriented, regional frameworks for stability and prosperity, including through the building of physical, digital and people-to-people connectivity. India engages with these countries on a consultative, non-reciprocal and outcome-oriented basis, driven by the principles of S4-Samman (respect), Samvad (dialogue), Shanti (peace) and Samriddhi (prosperity). As part of India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy, India has been extending necessary developmental assistance and capacity building initiatives, as per needs and aspirations of the neighbouring countries, thereby contributing towards holistic economic development of their countries. India' Lines of Credit or Soft Loans (LOC) to its neighbours increased from $ 3·3 billion in 2014 to $ 14·7 billion in 2020. In this development assistance, India's gives top priority to South Asia as 50 per cent of India's global soft lending goes to its neighbours. India has launched number of development projects in neighbouring countries such Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Maldives.

Backsliding in Neighbourhood Policy in 2024

The Neighbourhood policy of India is well designed with broader objectives of peace and prosperity in South Asia though India's non-reciprocal development partnership and mutually beneficial relations. However, this policy is facing challenges at present in Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. This needs elaboration.

Maldives

India and Maldives have maintained good relations for long time. The bilateral ties extend to trade, investment, security, culture and tourism. The former President Ibrahim Solih followed the policy of 'India First' policy to consolidate and expand mutually beneficial ties with India. However, following the November, 2023 elections, Mohammad Muizzu assumed the charge of new President of Maldives. Muizzu belongs to Peoples National Congress party and contested the November, 2023 election on the plank of 'India Out' campaign. During election campaign, Muizzu accused Solih government of developing close ties with India at the cost of Maldives' sovereignty. Hence, after assuming the charge as the new President of Maldives, Muizzu followed pro-China and India Out policies and postures. Muizzu's anti-India tirade has long list. For example, he asked Indian military personnel to be taken back to India. India's 77 security persons were deployed to operate three aerial platforms that were gifted for emergency evacuations and aerial surveillance of the nation's ocean territory for drug-smuggling and other criminal activities. The Indian Prime Minister met Muizzu during COP 28 climate summit in Dubai in December, 2023, but the deadlock on the return of Indian military personnel continued. Finally, India had to withdraw her military personnel in May, 2024. Also, breaking the past tradition of

Maldives Presidents making their maiden foreign visits to India, Muizzu first visited Turkey in December, 2023 and later a paid a high profile visit to China in January 2024 and both signed 20 key agreements during his China's visit. Muizzu's anti-India tirade did not stop here. He called for the suspension of the Hydrographic Survey Agreement signed between the two countries in 2019 during Modi's visit to Maldives. Under this agreement, India was allowed to conduct a comprehensive study of territorial waters of Maldives including its atolls and coastlines. During these events, India did not raise hue and cry, but silently monitored the evolving situation. It paid off well.

Finally good sense prevailed and Muizzu visited India from 6-10 October, 2024 and showed inclination to bring bilateral ties on the right track. Muizzu's visit to India had special significance as it involves a turn-around in Maldives ***'India Out'*** Policy, which was pursued with zeal by Muizzu ever since he came to power as President of Maldives in November, 2023 elections. Yet, the China factor looms large over India-Maldives bilateral ties.

Nepal

Nepal is a textbook example of failure of India's neighbourhood policy due to domestic politics of Nepal and China's deeper influence in the region. Nepal is known for political uncertainty now. The last parliamentary elections were held in 2022 and Prachanda-led communist government was formed. However, the coalition government fell in July 2024. Following this fall, another Communist leader K.P. Sharma assumed charge as Prime Minister in July 2024. During his previous regime (2017-2021), Oli had adopted many anti-India steps including fomenting Kalapani border dispute by inserting controversial map Nepal in the Constitution of Nepal, which shows India territory of Kalapani as part of Nepal. It was during his time that China made deep inroads in Nepal. Nepal Joined China's BRI in 2017 and both countries signed transit agreement for exporting and importing Nepal's goods through Chinese ports. However, this project did not take off due its financial and geographical non-viability. China has emerged as the major trading and investment partner of Nepal. Chinese tourists and language both have seen upswing during this period. The Oli's communist party and China's communist party have close ideological affinity. These steps of Nepal under Oli have led to deterioration of India-Nepal relations. During the last decade, India has launched many small development projects in Nepal but these projects are facing uncertain future in Nepal. Though, India tries time to time to normalize the ties but, China's influence on Nepal becomes a great hurdle for Indian efforts. There is least possibility of improvement in bilateral relations between the two nations during Oli's government in Nepal.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is another example, where India's Neighbourhood First policy is not likely to produce desired impact. Two years back in 2022, Sri Lanka faced an acute financial crisis, characterized by high inflation rate, paucity of consumer goods and default on sovereign loans. This resulted in wide ranging popular protests resulting in the fall of government. The latest presidential elections in Sri Lanka were held on 21 September, 2024, in which Anura Kumara Dissanayake of National People's Power (NPP) won the election and became the new President of Sri Lanka. In the parliamentary elections held in November, 2024, NPP again got the majority in Parliament. It should be noted that the main constituent of NPP is ***Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna*** (JVP) a strong nationalist party which has been opposed to India's involvement in resolving Tamil problem in Sri Lanka. The JVP has socialist and communist leaning. Anura is the leader of this party.

Anura Dissanayake visited India on 15-17 December, 2024, but he was non-committal on reducing China's influence in Sri Lanka or granting political autonomy to Sri Lanka Tamils; which has been a key concern for India. Dissanayake was scheduled to visit China on 14-17 January, 2025 to balance ties between India and China. Anura has communist background, which may facilitate their ties in future. It should be noted that in last decade during the rule of Mahinda Rajapaksa (2005-2025), Sri Lanka and China developed close strategic and economic ties. Later in 2017, Sri Lanka handed over strategic Hambantota port to China on 99 year lease as she was not able to pay back loans to China. China has made huge investments in Sri Lanka under the BRI, which also include high profile Colombo Port City project. India faces uphill task to balance the China's strategic influence in Sri Lanka.

Bangladesh

The sudden change in political power in Bangladesh in August, 2024 has raised concerns in India about the future of bilateral ties between India and Bangladesh. Amidst the popular student protests supported by opposition groups, Sheikh Hasina, had to resign and leave the country in distress on 5 August, 2024. She landed in India same day and was given political shelter by the Government of India. Mohammad Yunus, a Noble Prize winner in Economics, became the head of interim Government in Bangladesh. Following the fall of Hasina regime, there were incidents of attack on minority Hindu community and their temples. Hindus of Bangladesh organized a huge protest march to demand their security. India has asked Bangladesh to provide security to minority Hindu community. In fact, Fundamentalists have gained upper hand in Bangladesh following Hasina's ouster from power.

Also, there are reports that Bangladesh is trying to restore close ties with Pakistan and China. Bangladesh has also adopted non-cooperative attitude in relations with India. In January, 2025, the delegation of Bangladesh was invited to participate in the global conference to be organized by the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) on the occasion of its 150th anniversary. But Bangladesh refused to send its delegation citing financial constraints. Also, the new interim government of Bangladesh has asked to extradite

Sheikh Hasina, to criminal charges imposed after her ouster. Though, India and Bangladesh have signed an Extradition Treaty in 2013, but India does not seem to extradite Sheikh Hasina due to political nature of charges against her.

It should be noted that during Sheikh Hasina' long regime (2008 to August 2024), India-Bangladesh relations witnessed upswing both economically, strategically and in other spheres. She had been sensitive to India's security concerns and maintained a reasonable distance from China. During her regime, India and Bangladesh solved the problem of exchange of enclaves which was pending since the formation of Bangladesh in 1971 with India's active participation. After her departure many development, energy and connectivity projects launched with India's financial assistance face uncertain future.

Why India's Neighbourhood First Policy Faces Challenge in South Asia ?

There is nothing inherently wrong in the contents of the policy. The policy is well intentioned. We know that any policy works in given political environment. The two factors in the political environment of South Asia have undermined the performance of this policy in last one decade or so.

The first factor is domestic politics of India's neighbours, which often becomes polarized around pro and anti-India groups and parties in these countries. Bangladesh, Nepal and Maldives are examples of this domestic politics affecting India's relations with these countries. For example, in Nepal, the Nepali Congress favours close ties with India, but the communist groups favour close ties with China. In Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina's Awami League is pro-India, but opposition BNP is not in favour of close ties with India. Similarly, in Maldives, Muizzu's People's National Congress party has been so far anti-India and the opposition Maldivian Democratic Party has adopted India First policy. This kind of domestic political polarization in neighbouring countries works against India.

The Second factor is China's growing strategic inroads in South Asia. China has offered a political and economic option for these countries. Except India and Bhutan, all the countries of South Asia have joined China's BRI project in lure of development finance on easy terms. China wants to checkmate India in South Asia to limit her regional and global influence. It should be noted that these two factors do not operate in isolation, rather they reinforce each other. Thus, it is the cocktail of domestic politics of neighbouring countries with China's eagerness to infiltrate in South Asia, which undermines the present success of India's neighbourhood policy.

Conclusion

In view of the above facts, it makes sense that India should take into consideration the operating environment in South Asia while implementing her Neighbourhood First Policy. The first lesson is keep distance from the political groups and concentrate on government to government ties, so that if there is leadership change in these countries India's interest are not affected. Also, India should further strengthen her development partnership with these countries on reciprocal basis, to avoid their trap in Chinese design. China's debt prone and land grabbing policies under the BRI projects are now exposed. There is less enthusiasm among the recipients in comparison to what it was during last decade.

19th G-20 Summit and India

The 19th Summit of the G-20 was held on 18-19 November, 2024 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The 17th Summit of G-20 was held in Indonesia in 2022 and 18th Summit was held in New Delhi, India in September, 2023. The next summit in 2025 will be held in South Africa. Thus, it is a rare coincidence that the leadership of world's premier economic forum lies in the hands of developing countries of Global South for four years (2022-25). The issues affecting the Global South has gained mainstream during these summits. It was during 18th Summit in India that African Union was admitted as 21st member of G-20, though its name remains unchanged. India has made serious efforts to mainstream Global South issues in the G-20 agenda. India convened the first Voice of Global South Summit in January 2023 to discuss the pressing issues of Global South like poverty, sustainable development, climate change etc. to be included in the agenda of the summit. These efforts are likely to impart new orientation to G-20 profile, which is otherwise known as forum of twenty largest economies.

G-20 continues to be premier global forum for the management and addressing the challenges of global economy. If we view the economic and demographic profile of G-20, it emerges that the G-20 countries represents the 90 per cent of the global GDP, 80 per cent of the global trade and 2/3rd of the world population.

G-20 : A Background

The Group of Twenty or G-20 is a group of twenty-one largest economies of the world. It was established in 1999 in the wake of financial crisis of late 1997 faced by four fast growing economies-Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore. These economies a were known as Asian Tigers, because of their spectacular eco-nomic performance. The rich countries were not able to address this challenge by the existing forum of G-7, which did not include Asian Tigers as their members. Meanwhile, following the globalization, the locus of world economy was shifting from the west to the east as new emerging economies like China, South Korea, Brazil and South Africa improved their standing in the global economy. Thus, it was decided to convene a meeting of 20 largest economies to manage an address the challenges of global economy. This is how the idea of

G-20 came into being. The inaugural meeting of the G-20 took place in Berlin, on December 15-16, 1999. It was attended by the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors of member countries. The primary objective of G-20 is to bring together systemically important industrialized and developing economies to discuss key issues in the global economy. The G-20 assumed significance in view of the global financial crisis which started in 2008 with the crash of the US banking system. In view of the seriousness of the ongoing financial crisis, G-20 was elevated to the consultation at Summit level. Thus, its first Summit Meeting was held in November 2008 in Washington, US. The Summits are attended by the apex leaders of the member countries. In view of the financial crisis, initially its summits were held at the interval of 6 months. However, since 2011, it has adopted the format of annual summits. The Summit is the highest decision-making body of the G-20. So far 19 summits of G-20 have been held. The 20th meeting is scheduled to be held in South Africa in 2025. The G-20 does not have any formal structure, office and constitution. Its activities are managed by the three countries-the outgoing Chair country, the present Chair country and the coming Chair country. The three are collectively known as Troika. Also each member country designates a senior official to coordinate the activities of G-20 activities. This official is called Sherpa.

The G-20 consists of 19 countries and two regional organizations : European Union and African Union. It should be noted that African Union was admitted during the 2023 New Delhi Summit of G-20 organized by India. African Union is the only new member admitted in the G-20 since its inception in 1999. The 19 member countries of the G-20 are : Argentina; Australia; Brazil; Canada; China; France; Germany; India; Indonesia; Italy; Japan; Mexico; Russia; Saudi Arabia; South Africa; Republic of Korea; Turkey; United Kingdom; and United States of America.

The Managing Director of IMF and the President of the World Bank, plus the chairs of the International Monetary and Financial Committee and Development Committee of the IMF and World Bank, also participate in G-20 meetings. It is done to ensure that global economic forums and institutions work together in coordinated manner.

Objectives of G-20

The G-20 does not have any formal structure and laid down aims and objectives. On the basis of its activities and the nature of issued raised by it so far, we can assume its fundamental purposes, which are given below :

1. It acts as a premier forum for international economic development and management of global economy. It helps to support growth and development across the globe.
2. It promotes open and constructive discussion between industrial and emerging-market countries on key issues related to global economic stability.
3. The G-20 makes efforts to strengthen international financial architecture and provides opportunities for dialogue on national policies, international co-operation and international financial institutions.
4. It promotes coordination among the financial and economic policies of the nations for the global financial stability and economic growth.

Major Achievements of G-20

1. The scope of financial regulation has been largely broadened, and prudential regulation and supervision have been strengthened.
2. It has promoted policy coordination among member countries to enhance macroeconomic cooperation. This will encourage a strong, sustainable and balanced growth and help in minimizing the impact of financial crisis.
3. The G-20 has been able to make timely intervention to address the challenges faced by the global economy from time to time like financial crises of 1997 and 2008, rising global recession or inflation, corruption and problems of financing sustainable development, food and energy security an disruption in global supply chains.
4. The G-20 has ambitious reforms of the governance of the IMF and the World Bank. This will take into account the needs of emerging economies and improve the effectiveness of global financial governance. India, China, Brazil and South Africa have been in the forefront to demand restructuring of IMF and World Bank.
5. The G-20 is no more a financial management organization as its agenda has expanded to include non-economic and non-financial issues such as climate change, women empowerment, protection of biodiversity and environment and the role of youth in public affairs.
6. In recent years, the G-20 has become more inclusive as it has focused on the issues affecting the developing countries, also known as Global South. Such issues are : poverty and hunger, financing climate change measures or promoting sustainable development goals.

Outcome of 19th G-20 Summit

The 19th G-20 Summit was organized in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 18-19 November, 2024. The main theme of this Summit was Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet. The host Brazil gave priority to the following three issues in the agenda of the Summit :

1. Social Inclusion and fight against hunger.
2. Transition towards clean energy and sustainable development in the background of social, economic and environmental conditions.
3. The reforms of the institutions of global governance like International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization.

Following the extensive discussion on the issues included in the agenda the leaders issued Rio Declaration, which contains the following important points :

1. In the very first session of the G-20 summit, the leaders accepted the proposal of Brazil on 'Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty'. This proposal includes three strategies to eliminate hunger and poverty-cash transfer to poor people; meals to students in schools; and enabling access of poor to microfinance on easy terms.

2. The leaders resolved to implement progressive taxation regime. The progressive taxation has many benefits like reduction in domestic inequalities; Monetary stability; inclusive Budget; and promotion to sustainable and inclusive development programmes.

3. The leaders noted that inequalities within nations and among nations are the root cause of many contemporary global challenges. Hence, it is necessary to reduce inequalities at both levels to realize the goal of sustainable development.

4. One of the important points in the agenda was the reforms of institutions of global governance. In this regard, the leaders underlined the need for reforms in UN system to make it effective in facing contemporary global challenges. The multilateral system of the UN should be made more representative. With respect to global financial institutions, the declaration calls for making IMF and World Bank more inclusive and representative. A Roadmap was prepared for reforms in Multilateral Banks, so that they play effective role in realizing the sustainable development goals. They also emphasized the reforms in the WTO so that trade is made as engine of growth and prosperity for all.

5. With respect to sustainable development and clean energy transition, the leaders resolved to take immediate actions with respect to targets of Paris Agreement and address the problems of biodiversity, land erosion and desertification. The leaders also called for increasing finances for the developing countries to address the challenge of climate change. For this purpose a Task force was set up on the proposal of Brazil. G-20 countries resolved to triple the clean energy production and double the energy efficiency rate in their respective countries.

6. G-20 also discussed some other pressing international problems. They underlined that respect for the territorial integrity of nations as outlined in the UN Charter. Countries should avoid use of force or threat of force in their relations against each other. This proposal seems relevant to Ukraine conflict as Russia has occupied a large chunk of Ukrainian territory. They expressed concerns over the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in the Middle East and new tensions in Lebanon. They also supported the cause of separate independent state for Palestinians. The leaders avoided making any controversial statement on Ukraine in view of such experience during New Delhi Summit. However, they expressed concern over rising inflations and challenges to food and energy security as well as global supply chain caused by Ukraine conflict.

India and the G-20 Summit, 2024

India has emerged a leading player in G-20 activities mainly after the successful conclusion of the 2023 New Delhi summit of G-20. The Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in this Summit and addressed two sessions of the Summit :

(A) Modi addressed on 18 November, 2024 the first session on Social inclusion and fight against Hunger and poverty. He highlighted the following points in his address :

1. He reiterated India's resolve on 'One Earth, One family and One Future' and focus on Global South is relevant in Rio Summit also as these were during New Delhi Summit in 2024.
2. He underlined that India has lifted 250 million people out of poverty in last decade and India is providing free food ration to 80 crore people. He also emphasized on women led development process going on in India.
3. He highlighted the need for addressing challenges of hunger in African continent. He suggested that the priority should be given to food and energy security challenge faced by the countries of Global South due to the ongoing conflicts in the world.

(B) On 19 November, 2024, Modi also addressed the session on Sustainable Development and Clean Energy Transition' and underlined the following points :

1. He appreciated the G-20 resolve to triple the clean energy production and double the energy efficiency rate.
2. Modi highlighted that India is the first country to fulfill all commitments made under the Paris Climate Agreement in 2015. He told that India has fixed the target of 500 GW of clean energy by the year 2030, out of which the target of 200 GW has been achieved so far. He underlined the major initiatives taking by India with respect to climate change—International Solar Alliance, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, Mission Life, One Sun One World, One Grid and Global Bio fuel Alliance. He also underlined that the third Voice of Global South Summit held by India has adopted the Global Development Compact, which is in tune with the core interests of global south countries.

Conclusion

The 19th Summit of G-20 was dominated by the issues and concerns of the Global South. In fact, these issues were raised and articulated during the New Delhi Summit of G-20 held in September, 2023. It underlines India's contribution to the global cause. The focus on addressing the challenges of hunger and poverty, food security and energy security, realization of the goal of sustainable development, reforming the global governance institutions by making them more representative, inclusive and effective and addressing the challenges of climate change with clean energy transition and other measures are some of the highlights of G-20 Summit held in Rio de Janeiro. In addition the summit rightly highlighted the challenge of rising inequalities among and within nations. India also agreed with and highlighted these issues during the Rio summit. In a way, the Rio summit is another step in carrying forward the issues and challenges outlined during New Delhi Summit, particularly the focus on the issues of Global South.

UPSC-CSE : Project Yourself as a 'Man on Mission' !

—Atul Kapoor

The wait is over; the notification for UPSC-CSE 2025 was released on 22nd January, 2025 and 979 vacancies have been notified for this year for 23 services that include All India Services, Group A and B services.

As I have been talking about the significance of notification and have dedicated one chapter in my book 'Unlocking Success UPSC-CSE', this notification has been such that no one would have missed it and would have scanned it minutely.

It contains lots of new things such as :

1. Implementation of a new registration and online application form for the Civil Services Examination 2025 after registering themselves through One Time Registration (OTR). There is no need to re-register and can directly fill the Online Application Form.

2. In One Time Registration (OTR), candidates have been asked to upload photographs not older than 10 days from the start of the online application process. Moreover, the face of the candidates should also occupy three-fourths of the space in the photograph. Also, the name of the candidate and the date on which the photograph was taken must be clearly mentioned on the photograph.

3. It is a detailed Application Form that is to be filled in four steps :

- One Time Registration (OTR)
- Online Application Form I
- Online Application Form II
- Online Application Form III

4. Candidates are asked to submit supporting documents towards various claims such as date of birth, category, educational qualification and services preference along with the Online Application form (OAF).

5. Another key change is that once the date of birth has been submitted and entered in records of commission no changes will be allowed subsequently or at any other examination of the commission on any ground whatsoever.

6. Candidates are required to mandatorily indicate order of preferences only for those Services which are participating in the Civil Services Examination 2025.

7. The Indian Railway Management Services (IRMS) now includes three categories; *i.e.*, Traffic, Personnel and Accounts.

8. Online Application Form (OAF) has asked some information and documents upfront which were previously required at the time of submitting DAF I (after Prelims) and DAF II (after Mains).

9. Final year graduation students who are yet to pass their qualifying exam will also become eligible to write the UPSC CSE Main Exam. However, candidates declared qualified by the Commission for Personality Test (Interview), will be required to produce proof of passing of the requisite qualifying examination. Earlier, such information was part of Detailed Application Form-I for the Main Examination.

10. After the Preliminary Exam result, a 10 days window will allow the qualified candidates to spell out their Cadre preference.

11. After the Mains Exam, a 15 day window will allow candidates to update their educational qualifications and upload necessary documents, including degree certificates and mark sheets.

While some of the changes are aimed to enhance transparency and to prevent fraudulent claims, some are going to give comfort to candidates for submitting their graduation proofs. With most of the important documents with them, UPSC will have more time for verification of these documents.

Let's Quickly Revisit the Exam-Plan

Preliminary Examination : This stage consists of two papers :

- General Studies Paper I
- General Studies Paper II (CSAT)

Mains Examination : This stage includes nine papers, with two qualifying papers (compulsory language papers) and seven papers to be counted for merit; 4 papers of General Studies (250 marks each), Essay (250 marks) and 2 Optional Subject Papers (250 marks each); to totalling 1750 marks.

Interview/Personality Test : 275 marks.

The Final Result will be based on Mains (Written) plus Interview marks.

1750 + 275 = 2025 marks

Ground Work for CSE 2025 : I sincerely hope that majority of candidates preparing with a long-term approach would have built a strong foundation with help of NCERT books and relevant standard textbooks.

Till now, the focus would have been on Main Exam oriented General Studies and even on the optional subject. Optional Subject should be chosen after a rational decision and should be one in which you have genuine interest and a subject that you are comfortable with. You should be ready to make extra efforts to satisfy the specific needs of the subject.

Along with static portion of the syllabus, you must have been updating current affairs with help of daily newspapers and magazines.

With help of Previous Years' Questions, you must have acquainted yourself with the current trends and would have understood examiners expectations.

As a part of periodic assessment, with help of Mock Test for Prelims and Test-Series for Main Exam, you would have assessed your preparation and get accustomed to the things to come.

Now, Time to Change Gears —Focus on Prelims

With Prelims slated to be held on 25th May, 2025, focus of the

ongoing preparation needs to be shifted to Preliminary Examination. You have to maintain consistency and have to work on a result oriented plan.

You will have to re-arrange your resource and add something that helps you stay updated with the current affairs. But for your static part, avoid fresh books and study material at this stage.

Concentrate on the study resource you have and revise them multiple times. It is the time to hit the quick, crispy notes with important facts and figures and some key points. You would have made these throughout your preparation and now, these will prove to be handy.

How to Maximize the Returns ?

With self-assessment, you know your strengths and weaknesses. After diligent studies, you would have identified key areas of syllabus and high-yielding topics with the help of PYQs. Preliminary Examination is all about revision and practice.

Quality mock-test will give you a feel of the thing coming. You have to practice and analyse. It will help you in managing time well. After practicing 10-12 mock-tests, you will start realizing that you are able to solve specific number of questions correct in one go. You will ascertain your hit-rate that approximately. How many questions you answer correct out of total number of questions attempted.

This will determine at least how many questions you need to attempt to survive in the game. More the effort, better the results.

Those Starting from Notification would have a Tough Time

There are some candidates who commence preparation only after notification. They will have to be on toes and will have to follow strict study routine.

They have to manage things in such a way that while preparing for Preliminary Examination; they will have to devote some time for Main Examination related studies.

Allocating specific hours for each subject and strict adherence to the study-plan only can raise some hopes. They will have to resort to quick revision and with regular evaluation, they will have to ensure retention of knowledge and recall at the time when needed.

While mock-tests will enhance speed with accuracy, mistakes will identify the areas that need improvement. Accordingly, attention will have to be given to those areas.

Whatever the situation you may be in, you have to stay positive and remain motivated.

Have a Balanced Approach

You should allocate specific hours to each constituent of the General Studies' syllabus. Don't forget to keep some hours specifically dedicated to GS Paper II (CSAT) preparation.

Taking of GS Paper I, subjects like History, Polity, Economy, Geography and Environment need to be given priority. You need a strong foundation in these subjects.

By following this balanced approach and integrating both static and dynamic portions into your daily study routine, you'll be well-prepared for the Preliminary Examination. Ability to integrate current affairs with the static portion will give you an edge.

You will have to work on specific areas from where questions are asked in paper. You will have to update on recent important events, fresh government initiatives, schemes and policies.

Whatever you spot as very important, jot it down in play card type of crisp notes. You can make these events-wise or even month-wise. Maintain balance in such notes for all subjects; this will make things clearly marked. Periodic assessment after regular revision will ensure a grip over the syllabus.

Give Due Attention to GS Paper II (CSAT)

You will have to be extra cautious and will have to put in some extra efforts to prepare for Paper II.

A large number of candidates overlook the importance of General Studies Paper II (CSAT), as they inaccurately measure their level of preparation and think that this is just a qualifying paper so, doesn't require much attention. Such ignorance becomes the reason for many candidates' downfall in the UPSC Civil Services Exam.; Preliminary Examination.

Even for those otherwise deserving candidates who excel in General Studies Paper I, this misconception often leads to disastrous consequences.

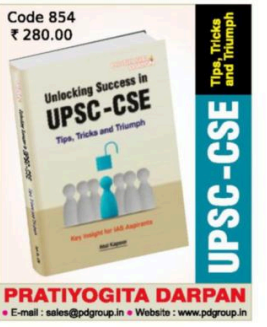
Accept the reality that General Studies Paper II (CSAT) is not a cakewalk. Engineers, doctors and candidates with professional degrees who are otherwise adept at aptitude tests can still struggle if they underestimate this paper.

The UPSC exam is designed to test a wide range of skills and CSAT is a crucial component. Neglecting it can sabotage your overall performance and ruin your chances of success.

As I just mentioned, your GS Paper I preparation may be commanding, still to ensure you're fully prepared to crack Preliminary Examination, you need to invest the necessary time and effort into mastering CSAT.

It is about learning some skills and practicing regularly. Seek guidance if you feel you have some problem with some area. Take mock-tests and solving previous years' questions (PYQs) is going to be beneficial. This will not only boost your confidence, it will remove the fear and will significantly improve your chances of clearing the prelims with flying colours.

Continued on Page 127



Year End Review 2024

Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MOPNG) plays a vital role in the exploration, production, refining, distribution, and marketing of oil and natural gas, as well as the import, export, and conservation of petroleum products. Given the crucial role of oil and gas in India's economy, the Ministry has undertaken several initiatives to increase production, improve energy access, efficiency, sustainability and security. The following is a review of the progress made by the Ministry in the year 2024 :

1. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)

Key Achievements :

- 10·33 crore households benefitting from PMUY.
- 222 crore LPG refills delivered to PMUY households, with 13 lakh refills daily.
- Targeted subsidy of ₹ 300 per cylinder provided to Ujjwala beneficiaries.
- Increase in LPG consumption : Per Capita Consumption (PCC) of 14·2 kg domestic LPG cylinder increased from 3·01 in 2019-20 to 3·95 in 2023-24. For the current year (upto October 2024), PCC reached 4·34 (Pro-rata).

2. LPG Coverage

Progress :

- **LPG Connections :** Growth from 14·52 crore in April 2014 to 32·83 crore as of 1st November, 2024, a growth of over 100%.
- **PAHAL Scheme :** Approx. 30·43 crore LPG consumers enrolled under the scheme. 1·14 crore customers voluntarily gave up their LPG subsidy under the 'Give it Up' campaign.
- **LPG Distributors :** Number of distributors increased from 13,896 to 25,532 by 1st November, 2024. Over 90% of new distributors are serving rural areas.

3. Facilities at Retail Outlets (ROs)

Key Developments :

- **Digital Payment Infrastructure :** 1,03,224 e-wallet facilities at 84,203 ROs across the country by 1st December, 2024. 84,203 ROs enabled with BHIM UPI.
- **Swachh Bharat Mission :** 83,618 ROs with toilet facilities, including 66,026 with separate male and female toilets.
- **Door to Door Delivery (DDD) :** 3,097 DDD Bowsers commissioned through dealers and start-ups.
- **Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations :** 17,939 EV charging stations and 206 battery swapping stations installed at OMC ROs by 1st December, 2024.

4. Natural Gas Pipelines

Key Achievements :

- **Operational Pipelines :** Length of natural gas pipelines increased from 15,340 km in 2014 to 24,945 km as of 30th September, 2024.
- **Pipeline Development :** 10,805 km of pipeline under execution. Completion of these pipelines will form a national gas grid connecting all major demand and supply centers across India, ensuring easy availability of natural gas and promoting uniform economic & social progress.

5. Unified Pipeline Tariff

Overview :

- **PNGRB Amendments :** Amendments to the PNGRB (Determination of Natural Gas Pipeline Tariff) Regulations to implement a unified tariff for natural gas pipelines.
- **Unified Tariff :** A levelized unified tariff of ₹ 80·97/ MMBTU applicable from 1st July, 2024. The tariff is divided into three zones :
  - Zone 1 : Up to 300 km from gas source.
  - Zone 2 : 300-1200 km.
  - Zone 3 : Beyond 1200 km.
- **Entities Involved** : The national gas grid is operated by several entities, including IOC, ONGC, GAIL, Reliance Gas Pipelines, and others.
- **Benefits :** The reform benefits consumers in far-flung areas, where additive tariffs are currently applicable. Facilitates gas market development and increases gas utilization across India.

6. City Gas Distribution (CGD) Coverage

Progress :

- **Geographical Area Authorization :** 307 Geographical Areas (GAs) authorized for CGD infrastructure development, covering nearly 100% of the country's area and population.
- **PNG and CNG Stations :** 1·36 crore PNG (Domestic) connections and 7,259 CNG stations operational as of 30th September, 2024.

7. SATAT Initiatives (Compressed Bio Gas-CBG)

Key Developments :

- **Launch and Progress :** SATAT initiative launched on 1st October, 2018 to promote Compressed Bio Gas (CBG) production and utilization. 80 CBG plants commissioned, and 72 plants are under construction as of 30th November, 2024.
- **CBG Integration with CNG :** Guidelines issued for synchronization of CBG with CNG in the CGD Network. A scheme for developing pipeline infrastructure (DPI) to inject CBG into the CGD network has been launched, with financial support for pipeline extension.
- **Obligations and Timelines :** The phase-wise CBG selling obligation (CBO) is currently voluntary, with mandatory selling starting in FY 2025-26.

The CBO will be 1% in FY 2025-26, increasing to 5% from 2028-29 onwards. The CBO for CNG/PNG consumption will be 1%, 3%, and 4% in the years 2025-2028.

8. Review of Domestic Gas Allocation for CGD Entities

To meet the rising demand in the City Gas Distribution (CGD) sector and shield consumers from the price fluctuations in the gas market, the government introduced revised guidelines for domestic gas allocation to CGD entities. The key features of the new allocation guidelines are :

- **Increased Allocation :** The allocation of gas for the PNG (Domestic) segment has been increased to 105% of the consumption in the previous quarter, ensuring better supply to meet the growing demand.
- **Pro-rata Allocation for CNG (T) :** The remaining available gas is now being supplied to the CNG (Transport) sector on a pro-rata basis, which ensures an equitable distribution of the resource across different sectors.
- **Reduction in Allocation Lag :** Previously, there was an average lag of 6 months between the gas allocation and the reference period, but under the new guidelines, this lag has been reduced to an average of 3 months. This change ensures that the allocation reflects more accurate and timely consumption data, benefiting both consumers and the CGD entities.
- **Protection from Price Volatility :** By streamlining the allocation process, the government aims to stabilize gas prices for consumers and reduce the impact of market volatility. This is especially important for households and businesses dependent on CGD services.

The implementation of these changes ensures a more efficient and transparent gas distribution mechanism, which will help improve the accessibility and affordability of natural gas for CGD consumers across the country.

9. Domestic Gas Pricing

The government revised domestic gas pricing guidelines in April 2023 to ensure that gas prices reflect market dynamics while protecting consumers from excessive price hikes. The revised framework applies specifically to natural gas produced from nomination fields of ONGC/OIL, as well as gas from New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) blocks and pre-NELP blocks, where the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) provides for government approval of prices. The key points are :

- **Price Determination :** The price of gas from these sources is set at 10% of the monthly average of the Indian Crude Basket, which is a combination of global crude oil prices. This approach ensures that domestic gas prices are aligned with international oil price trends, offering a market-driven yet controlled pricing mechanism.
- **Price Range :** The gas price will have a floor and ceiling (a minimum and maximum limit), ensuring that the price does not fluctuate too drastically in response to short-term movements in crude oil prices. This pricing mechanism strikes a balance between protecting consumers and ensuring that gas producers remain incentivized to continue production.
- **Positive Impact on Key Sectors :**

  Fertilizer Sector : The reduced gas price will significantly benefit the fertilizer sector, which relies heavily on natural gas as a feedstock for manufacturing urea and other fertilizers. Lower gas prices will help reduce the cost of production and consequently bring down the price of fertilizers, benefitting farmers.

  Power Sector : Power plants that use natural gas as a fuel will also see reduced operational costs, translating into lower electricity prices for consumers. This will have a positive cascading effect on the economy, particularly in sectors like manufacturing, which depend on affordable energy.
- **Broader Economic Impact :** The reduction in gas prices will have wider economic benefits, as lower fuel costs typically lead to lower production costs in various industries. Additionally, it will improve the competitiveness of domestic industries in the global market, helping India maintain a strong economic growth trajectory.
- **Consumer Relief :** These measures will provide direct relief to households, particularly those using gas for cooking (through LPG) and for other domestic energy needs. By stabilizing the price of natural gas, the government aims to safeguard consumers against the volatility of the global oil market.

10. Biofuels and Ethanol Blending

- **Ethanol Blending :** Increased from 38 crore liters in 2013-14 to 707·4 crore liters in 2023-24, achieving 14·60% blending. By December 2024, blending had improved to 16·23%.
- **OMC Initiatives :** Public sector OMCs now dispense E20 petrol (20% ethanol) at over 17,400 retail outlets.
- **Impact :** In last 10 years, Forex savings of ₹ 1,08,600 crore, CO_2 reduction of 557 LMT, and ₹ 92,400 crore paid to farmers.
- **Biodiesel :** 36·68 crore liters procured in April-November 2024 for blending, compared to 29·25 crore liters in 2023's corresponding months.
- **Green Hydrogen :** PSU refineries planning 900 KTPA Green Hydrogen projects by 2030.

11. Refining Capacity

- **Current Capacity :** 256·8 MMTPA across 22 refineries (18 public, 3 private, 1 joint venture).
- **Expansion :** Expected increase to 309·5 MMTPA by 2028 through capacity expansion and new grassroots refineries.

12. Exploration and Production

- **Hydrocarbon Exploration Licensing Policy (HELP) :** Launch of Open Acreage Licensing Program (OALP) in 2016 to increase exploration. 144 blocks allocated in eight rounds, with investments of approximately $ 3·137 billion.
- **OALP Achievements :** 13 hydrocarbon discoveries, one of which is producing gas in Gujarat.

- **OALP Round IX :** 1,36,596 km² offered for bidding, with high interest received.
- **Exploration Achievements :** 741 wells drilled in 2023-24. Gas production increased from 34.45 BCM in 2022-23 to 36·44 BCM in 2023-24. 12 discoveries made in FY 2023-24. 42,944 Flight LKM of 2D seismic data acquired. Significant progress in airborne gravity and seismic surveys.

13. International Cooperation

- **Diversification of Oil & Gas Sources** : In FY 2023-24, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas implemented strategies to reduce India's dependency on specific oil and gas regions, strengthening energy security. Notably, Indian Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) like IOCL and GAIL entered long-term LNG supply agreements with ADNOC from the UAE. These agreements ensure the procurement of approximately 2·7 MMT of LNG annually, diversifying energy sources to support India's transition to a gas-based economy.
- **Global Biofuels Alliance** : The Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA), launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister in September 2023 during the G20 Summit, aims to promote clean energy solutions globally. Since its inception, the alliance has grown rapidly, with 28 member countries and 12 international organizations joining. In October 2024, the GBA signed a Headquarters Agreement with the Government of India to establish the GBA Secretariat in India, reinforcing India's position as a global leader in clean energy innovation.
- **Engagement with Neighbouring Countries** : India has strengthened energy ties with its neighbouring countries. Notably, in May 2023, India and Nepal signed a Government-to-Government (G2G) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance petroleum infrastructure. This was followed by a B2B agreement between IOCL and Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) in October 2024. Moreover, India signed a landmark MoU with Bhutan for the supply of petroleum products, further cementing regional energy cooperation.
- **International Partnership on Clean Energy and Hydrocarbon Sector** : India has significantly advanced clean energy collaborations, especially through the Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP) with the United States. The September 2024 Ministerial Meeting marked key developments in clean energy. In November 2024, during the Prime Minister's state visit, India and Guyana signed a landmark agreement to strengthen cooperation in the hydrocarbon sector. India's commitment to green hydrogen, sustainable biofuels, and 2G/3G biofuels is reflected in its partnership with Italy on these emerging technologies. Additionally, India's focus on Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) was highlighted through joint statements issued by India's Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Brazil's Minister of Mines and Energy.

14. Strategic Petroleum Reserves

- In February 2019, the Prime Minister inaugurated Phase-I of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), with a capacity of 5·33 MMT across three facilities : Mangalore (1·5 MMT), Padur (2·5 MMT) and Visakhapatnam (1·3 MMT).
- Phase II of the SPR program, approved in July 2021, will expand storage capacity by 6·5 MMT, with underground facilities at Chandikhol (4 MMT) and Padur (2·5 MMT), developed through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP).
- Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve Limited (ISPRL) completed feasibility studies and geotechnical surveys for the Chandikhol site. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was carried out by NEERI. In December 2022, the Government of Odisha recommended re-exploring the Chandikhol site, which could lead to further development of these strategic reserves.

15. Hydrocarbon Projects & Investments

- As of October 2024, 283 projects costing ₹ 5·70 lakh crore are under implementation by Oil & Gas CPSEs, including refinery projects, biorefineries, exploration and production (E&P) projects, marketing infrastructure, pipelines, and city gas distribution (CGD) projects. Out of these, 89 major projects worth ₹ 5·51 lakh crore have been planned.
- In FY 2024-25, the anticipated expenditure on these projects was ₹ 79,264 crore, with actual spending at ₹ 37,138 crore as of October 2024.
- The Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Program has seen significant success, with ethanol blending reaching 14·6% in the Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2023-24. This initiative has led to savings of over ₹ 1·08 lakh crore in foreign exchange, and CO_2 reduction of approximately 557 lakh metric tonnes.
- The Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) initiative promotes the use of Compressed Bio Gas (CBG) as an alternative fuel, contributing to reducing India's energy dependence.
- **Financial Performance of Oil PSUs** : For FY 2024-25, the total budgeted expenditure for Oil PSUs was ₹ 1,18,499 crore, with actual expenditure standing at ₹ 97,667 crore (82·4% of the budget). This indicates a positive fiscal performance compared to the previous year, where actual expenditure was 70·9% of the budgeted amount.

Continued on Page 210



Inclusive Growth Article

Cooperatives in India : Challenges and Opportunities for Inclusive Growth

—Deepanita Mishra

Cooperatives have been a vital part of India's socio-economic landscape, representing the values of collective responsibility, participatory decision-making and inclusive growth. These organizations have been central to uplifting communities, especially in rural areas, by providing employment opportunities and supporting economic self-sufficiency.

With India having recently hosted the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) General Assembly for the first time, global attention is now focused on the country's cooperative movement. Additionally, the designation of 2025 as the 2nd International Year of Cooperatives highlights the growing recognition of cooperatives as key drivers of inclusive development.

Historical Context and Significance

Origins and Growth

The foundation of India's cooperative movement dates back to the enactment of the Cooperative Societies Act in 1904, aimed at addressing the credit needs of farmers. Over time, cooperatives diversified into sectors such as dairy, fisheries, housing and consumer goods.

In 2002, the National Policy on Cooperatives was enunciated to further bolster the sector. This policy emphasized the modernization of cooperatives, ensuring their democratic functioning and enhancing their competitiveness in an increasingly globalized economy. As a result, cooperatives have grown into a significant part of India's rural and agricultural economy, with networks at local, regional, state, and national levels, which have aided in sectors like agriculture, dairy, fisheries and housing.

A notable example of cooperatives' success in agriculture is the role they have played in agricultural marketing. Cooperatives facilitate the marketing of products like food grains, cotton, milk, fruits, and sugar, providing farmers with better access to markets and ensuring fair prices.

One of the most successful cooperative ventures is Amul, which revolutionized the dairy industry in India. Operating under the 'Anand Pattern', Amul has made India the world's largest milk producer. By involving small farmers in the cooperative structure, Amul ensures that profits are distributed fairly, with a large portion of the sale price returning to the farmers.

Cooperatives are also a major player in India's sugar industry, where many sugar mills are owned by local cooperative societies. These cooperatives have become an important political and economic force, particularly in states like Maharashtra. While, they have contributed to the growth of local economies, there are concerns over inefficiencies, often resulting from subsidies and political influence, that affect the long-term sustainability of some sugar cooperatives.

Beyond agriculture, cooperatives have significantly contributed to banking in India, particularly in rural areas. Cooperative banks provide essential financial services to communities that would otherwise have limited access to banking facilities. They play a key role in supporting the rural economy by providing credit and financial services to farmers and small businesses.

In the realm of Khadi production, cooperatives play an essential role in preserving traditional industries and providing livelihoods in rural areas. The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) supports thousands of cooperative societies involved in the production of Khadi, offering both economic and social benefits to rural communities.

Legal and Constitutional Provisions :

The 97th Constitutional Amendment, 2011, introduced Part IXB to provide a structured framework for cooperatives to operate in a democratic and autonomous manner. This amendment seeks to enhance the role of cooperatives as independent institutions while aligning their purpose with the principles of socio-economic justice as outlined in the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP).

It emphasizes member participation and transparency to promote accountability within cooperative organizations. Additionally, since cooperatives are listed under the State List in the Schedule VII of the Indian Constitution, State governments have been granted the responsibility to regulate and manage their functioning. This arrangement ensures both operational freedom for cooperatives and oversight to maintain their efficiency and alignment with public welfare goals.

The Role of Cooperatives in Inclusive Growth

Economic Contributions

- **Agriculture and Rural Development :** Organizations like IFFCO and NAFED have empowered small-scale farmers by providing better access to inputs, credit and markets. Cooperatives have also played a significant role in improving agricultural productivity and ensuring food security.
- **Employment Generation** : With about 8 lakh cooperatives in operation, they create substantial employment opportunities, particularly in rural areas, contributing to poverty alleviation.
- **Financial Inclusion :** Cooperative banks and credit societies extend essential financial services to communities often

excluded by mainstream banking, thereby promoting economic participation.

Social Empowerment

- **Women's Participation :** Cooperatives such as SEWA and various self-help groups (SHGs) have enabled women to achieve economic independence and social empowerment, reducing gender disparities.
- **Bridging Inequalities** : By distributing resources and benefits equitably, cooperatives reduce socio-economic disparities, contributing to social harmony.

Sustainability and Environment

- **Ecological Stewardship :** Forestry and fisheries cooperatives adopt sustainable practices that contribute to environmental conservation.
- **Renewable Energy Initiatives :** By promoting decentralized energy solutions, cooperatives support India's commitments to the Paris Agreement and contribute to the nation's renewable energy targets.

Key Challenges

Structural and Organizational Issues

- **Fragmentation :** Many cooperatives remain small-scale and struggle to compete with large private enterprises.
- **Managerial Limitations :** The absence of professional expertise often hampers efficiency, innovation and growth.

Governance and Autonomy

- **Political Influence :** Excessive interference by state authorities compromises the independence of cooperatives, undermining their democratic functioning.
- **Weak Accountability :** Poor financial management and lack of internal oversight lead to inefficiencies, corruption, and loss of member trust.

Market and Financial Constraints

- **Insufficient Capital :** Limited access to funding restricts operational scalability and innovation.
- **Competitive Pressures :** The liberalization of markets has increased competition from domestic and global players, posing challenges to traditional cooperative models.

Technological Barriers

- **Low Adoption Rates :** Many cooperatives fail to utilize digital tools for operations, marketing and member engagement.
- **Digital Divide :** Limited access to technology among marginalized groups exacerbates inequities and limits the reach of cooperative benefits.

Policy and Regulatory Gaps

- **Fragmented Framework :** Variations in state-specific cooperative laws create inconsistencies in governance and operations.
- **Implementation Gaps :** Programs like the **Cooperation for Transformation** initiative often fall short of their potential due to inadequate execution and monitoring.

Opportunities for Growth

Policy and Institutional Initiatives

- **Strengthening the NCDC :** Enhanced funding and targeted capacity-building programs can bolster cooperative structures, enabling them to scale up and modernize.
- **Role of the Ministry of Cooperation :** Established in 2021, this ministry is instrumental in formulating cohesive policies and providing strategic guidance to the cooperative sector.

Leveraging Technology

- Platforms like e-NAM (National Agriculture Market) can revolutionize market access for farmers, enabling them to secure better prices for their produce.
- Emerging technologies like block-chain offer transparency and efficiency in cooperative operations, particularly in financial transactions and supply chain management.

Global Engagement

- Hosting the ICA Assembly has opened avenues for learning from international best practices and fostering collaborations.
- Collaborative partnerships can attract investments and expertise to modernize Indian cooperatives and expand their global footprint.

Sectoral Innovations

- **Expanding Dairy Models :** Replicating successful initiatives like Amul in underdeveloped regions can enhance rural incomes and self-reliance.
- **Healthcare Solutions :** Establishing cooperative healthcare models can improve access to affordable and quality healthcare services in under served areas.
- **Tourism Development :** Community-based tourism initiatives through cooperatives can promote rural economies and preserve cultural heritage.

Alignment with Global Goals

- Cooperatives are pivotal to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to poverty alleviation, gender equality and environmental sustainability.
- Their alignment with India's G20 priorities underscores their relevance in fostering inclusive and sustainable growth on a global scale.

The Way Forward

Enhancing Governance

- Implement the recommendations of the Vaikunth Mehta Committee to professionalize cooperative management.
- Strengthen accountability mechanisms and introduce transparency measures to build trust among members and stakeholders.

Education and Skill Development

- Establish specialized training institutes to develop managerial and operational expertise tailored to the needs of cooperatives.
- Promote awareness campaigns to encourage active participation in cooperatives and highlight their socio-economic benefits.

Financial and Technological Access

- Forge partnerships with banks, fin-tech companies, and development agencies to improve credit availability and financial sustainability.

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Governance Article

Innovate to Govern : Navigating Technology's Role in Shaping Good Governance

—Neelam Kejriwal

The technological evolution has paved the way for shaping good governance with enhanced efficiency in working, transparency, responsibility and inclusivity of the citizens in policy making. The integration of governance and technology has improved government's interaction with people which helped in streamlining administrative processes for the benefit of people.

The World Bank Report 1992 titled 'Governance and Development', defines Good Governance as the manner in which power is exercised in management of a country's economic and social resources for development. It outlines eight characteristics of Good Governance, *viz*, participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. The technological advancement has helped to align the governance with these 8 pillars to achieve the welfare of society. Let's delve deeper to understand the integration of technology in the Indian Governance system.

E-governance

The use of technology and digital platforms in governance has upswing the key sectors like health, education, law enforcement mechanisms. The Digital India Initiative launched in 2015 is a crucial aspect for leveraging technology for governance. The government has launched various online platforms like Government e-Marketplace (GeM), Digilocker, National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), MyGov, etc which has helped in improving the access of government service to the people. It allowed the people to participate in policy making and give their feedback on the policy matters. Further, social media platforms created a more accessible platform for government and citizens to interact.

Transparency and Accountability

Good Governance also focuses on building a transparent process of working of government. The digital platform to file online Right to Information applications makes the information more easily accessible to people and the governance process becomes transparent. It helps in monitoring and auditing the work of the government agencies which streamline the process. The use of the Public Fund Management System has ensured transparency in public fund management. From EVMs to Blockchain, technology is revolutionising India's electoral process. Introduction of VVPAT has increased the transparency in elections. The National Land Record Modernization Program (NLRMP) has helped in digitizing land records and made the data easily available for resolving land related disputes.

Technology in Public Delivery System

Technological development has helped the government services in the field of health, education and information to reach even the remote areas. The government uses the digital platform to provide healthcare benefits to economically disadvantaged families through Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY). Similarly, Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) stores and shares the health records in electronic format with healthcare service providers. This helps in seamless transfer and storage of data. The introduction of e-portals for issuing Government ID proofs, birth certificates, ration cards, etc have eliminated the unnecessary delays in procuring these services while simultaneously reducing the paperwork. With the launch of Aadhar, the direct benefit transfer becomes easier for the government. GST Network platform (GSTN) facilitates the tax filing and compliance process more transparent and accountable.

Data Analysis and Governance

The development of tools to analyze huge quantum of data in a short span of time has helped the government to make better policy decisions by analyzing the present situation and predicting future requirements. The National Data and Analytics Platform (NDAP), launched by NITI Aayog in 2022, ensures the accessibility of the government data at one place which helps in improving the policy decisions and reduce the time taken to assess the effect of implementation of the policies.

The use of technology and Artificial Intelligence can help in analyzing the patterns of policy decisions and take corrective actions, if need be. But at the same time, it can be open to misuse as well. In order to protect the interest of all the stakeholders, government has enacted/ proposed various legislations :

(1) The Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 : It is the first comprehensive legislation which legalized electronic transactions. It provides a comprehensive framework against cyber crimes, digital record keeping, and promoting government service delivery through online mode.

(2) The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 : Through this Act, the government is trying to seek a balance between digital innovations and the right of privacy of people. It allows the data to be kept protected unless and until it is required for making some policy decisions.

(3) The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 : These Rules aims to regulate the online platforms and provide a

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Social Issues Article

Empowering Minorities : Building Inclusive India !

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—Dixita Mistry

In a nation as diverse as India, the empowerment of minority communities stands as both a constitutional mandate and a moral imperative. While legal frameworks like the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions Act, 2004, provide the foundational structure for protecting minority rights, the journey from paper to practice remains complex and challenging. As India continues to evolve as a multicultural democracy, the focus must shift from mere tokenistic representation to creating meaningful pathways for minority communities to fully participate in the nation's growth story

Who is Considered a Minority Citizen in India ?

The designation of minority communities in India is determined by the Central government under the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992. Minority status is exclusively granted to religious groups that are officially recognized under Section 2(c) of this legislation.

The Current Landscape

As per the 2011 Census, religious minorities constitute about 19·3% of India's population. Muslims, the largest minority group, represent 14·2%, followed by Christians (2·3%), Sikhs (1·7%), Buddhists (0·7%), and Jains (0·4%). However, there is widespread disparity in the socio-economic indicator among the minority communities in India.

- According to 2011 Census, only 2·75% of the total Muslim population in India was graduate or above. The corresponding figure for Jain community was 25·65%.
- As per Census 2011, the literacy rate of the Minority Communities namely Christians, Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists is higher than the National Average of 72·98% except Muslims which is 68·54%.
- Based on the analysis of past PLFS data, there was 6·8% decline in share of wage employees of Muslim community between 2018-19 and 2022-23. Christian community saw decline of 3·2% in share of wage employees between 2018-19 and 2022-23. The Sikh community saw the decline of 2·5% in regular wage employment between 2018-19 and 2022-23.

Constitutional Framework

While the Indian Constitution doesn't explicitly define 'Minority', it comprehensively outlines minority rights, specifically addressing religious and linguistic minorities.

The Constitution's Preamble holds special significance for religious minorities, guaranteeing all citizens liberty of thought, belief and worship, along with equality of status and opportunity, in short declaring the state 'secular'.

- **Article 29(1) :** Right of 'any section of the citizens' to 'conserve' its 'distinct language, script or culture'.
- **Article 29(2) :** Restriction on denial of admission to any citizen, to any educational institution maintained or aided by the State, 'on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them'.
- **Article 30(1) :** Right of all Religious and Linguistic Minorities to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.
- **Article 30(2) :** Freedom of Minority-managed educational institutions from discrimination in the matter of receiving aid from the State.
- **Article 350A :** Provision for facilities for instruction in mother-tongue at primary stage.
- **Article 350B :** Provision for a Special Officer for Linguistic Minorities and his duties.

Institutions to Safeguard Minorities

India's institutional framework for minority protection, established post-independence, safeguards minority rights guaranteed under Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution. These institutions work to ensure constitutional protections are implemented effectively, maintaining India's secular fabric and protecting minority communities' distinct identities.

The National Commission for Minorities (NCM), granted statutory status in 1992, serves as the primary watchdog for minority interests, while specialized bodies like the Ministry of Minority Affairs (2006) coordinate targeted welfare programmes. The ministry's mandate includes policy formulation, coordination, evaluation and oversight of development programmes for these communities.

In 1993, India established the National Minority Commission under which five religious groups were officially designated as minority communities : Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Zoroastrians (also known as Parsis). Then in 2014, Jains were also notified as a minority community.

Key Initiatives for the Empowerment of Minorities by the Government of India

Prime Minister's 15-Point Programme for Minorities :

- The Prime Minister's 15-Point Programme, launched in 2006 serves as a comprehensive framework for minority welfare.
- It is a comprehensive programmes that encompasses various schemes and initiatives and aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for the underprivileged and marginalized sections of six centrally notified minority communities.

- It includes measures like improving education infrastructure, providing scholarships, and ensuring fair representation in government jobs.

UGC and CSIR Fellowship Schemes

- Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) scheme of UGC and CSIR are open to candidates from minorities communities also. Additionally, they are covered under the fellowship schemes of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Minority of Tribal Affairs.
- This fellowship aims to bridge the gap in higher education participation among minority communities.

Scholarships for Minority Students

- Various scholarship schemes, such as the Pre-Matric, Post-Matric, and Merit-cum-Means Scholarships, are provided to minority students to help them pursue education from the pre-school to university level.
- These initiatives aim to increase literacy and educational opportunities among minority communities.

Employment and Economic Empowerment Schemes

Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS) focuses on skill development; entrepreneurship and leadership of minority women and education support for school dropouts. It has subsumed Seekho Aur Kamao, Nai Manzil, USTTAD Hamari Dharohar and Nai Roshni schemes.

Financial Inclusion

- Although not specifically aimed at minorities, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana has had a positive impact on financial inclusion across all sections of society, including minority communities. The scheme aims to provide universal access to banking services, including financial literacy, opening of bank accounts, and access to credit.
- The National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) has provided financial support through a variety of schemes. It released ₹ 765·45 crore as concessional credit in FY 2023-24.
- **Credit Line :** The NMDFC offers term loans up to ₹ 30 lakh and micro-financing of up to ₹ 1·5 lakh, empowering individuals and small businesses to establish and expand their enterprises.
- **Educational Loans :** Providing educational loans at a low-interest rate of 3% has made higher education more accessible to students from minority communities, paving the way for long-term socio-economic advancement.
- NMDFC organised 2nd Lok Samvardhan Parv from 27th January to 2nd February, 2025, for benefits of artisans.

Quality of Life

The Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) focuses on enhancing the quality of life in minority-concentrated areas. Its key developments include :

- **Expanded Coverage :** It covers 1300 identified areas of the country. ensuring that critical infrastructure and development programs reach a significantly larger portion of the minority population.
- **Increased Allocation :** With an allocation of ₹ 5,000 crores for the period 2021-26, the program is driving infrastructure improvements, such as schools, healthcare facilities, roads, and public utilities.

Transformation of Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh, through PMJVK interventions :

- Modern Tool Rooms were established, enhancing productivity and innovation.
- The Export Turnover of the region's lock manufacturing cluster doubled from ₹ 580 crore in 2019 to ₹ 1,200 crore in 2023.
- 12,000 new jobs were created, significantly improving the livelihoods of the local population.

Digital Empowerment

The Cyber Gram Yojana intends to cover students of class VI to Class X of minority communities to provide hands on training in computers and to enable them to acquire basic ICT skills. It would empower the students to :

- become digitally literate.
- actively participate in knowledge-based activities.
- access financial, social and government services.
- use internet for communications.
- reinforcing the learning of trained beneficiaries by providing free internet access for 30 hours.

Success Story

Kerala Model : Kerala's Minority Welfare Department has achieved remarkable success through its educational initiatives. The state reported a 94·3% literacy rate among minorities in 2021, significantly higher than the national average. The key initiatives include :

- Educational scholarships reaching 2·8 lakh students annually.
- 'Smart Class' projects in minority-concentrated areas.
- Skill development centers in 140 assembly constituencies.

Delhi's 'Mission Buniyaad'

In a move to improve the education system for minority students, the Delhi government launched the 'Mission Buniyaad' program, which has shown remarkable results in a short period :

- Reading proficiency among students improved by 38% in one year.
- Mathematics scores saw an impressive increase of 42%.
- Parental engagement in the educational process rose by 65%, reflecting the program's effectiveness in fostering a collaborative learning environment.

Challenges and Way Forward

Despite significant efforts by the Government of India to empower minority communities through various initiatives and welfare schemes, challenges remain that hinder the full realization of these objectives. Addressing these issues is crucial for ensuring that minority communities are included in India's growth narrative and rapidly evolving society.

- **Strengthening Implementation in Minority-Concentrated Areas :** Prioritize infrastructure development and governance reforms in underserved regions, including setting up dedicated task forces for minority welfare at the district level. Additionally, the government should consider incentivizing local administrators to meet targets related to minority welfare schemes.
- **Increasing Awareness and Outreach :** Launch targeted awareness campaigns in local languages and use community leaders to spread information about available welfare schemes. Expanding mobile apps and digital platforms, while ensuring that they are accessible in remote areas with poor internet connectivity, is another key area for improvement.
- **Reducing Red Tapeism :** Simplify the process for fund disbursement by introducing online portals for real-time fund tracking, reducing paperwork, and increasing inter-departmental coordination. Additionally, the government should establish dedicated grievance redressal cells to address any administrative bottlenecks quickly.
- **Improving Monitoring and Accountability :** Develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system for all minority welfare schemes. This should include real-time data tracking, beneficiary feedback systems and transparent reporting mechanisms. Ensuring that local communities are involved in the monitoring process will also help make the system more accountable and efficient.

Conclusion

As India moves towards its vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047, minority empowerment needs to be seen not as welfare but as an investment in human capital. The success stories from Kerala and Aligarh demonstrate that targeted interventions can create sustainable change.

The path to true inclusion lies in moving beyond tokenism towards meaningful empowerment. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "A nation's greatness is measured by how it treats its weakest members." In this context, minority empowerment becomes not just a constitutional obligation but a moral imperative for building a truly inclusive India.

Practice Questions for Prelims :

Q.1. Consider the following statements regarding the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) :

1. It received statutory status in 1992.
2. Five religious communities were notified as minorities in 1993.
3. Jains were the first community to be added to the minority list.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None of the above

Ans. (B)

Q.2. With reference to Constitutional provisions for minorities in India, which of the following statements is/are correct ?

1. The term 'Minority' is explicitly defined in the Constitution of India.
2. Article 30(2) ensures non-discrimination in receiving state aid for minority educational institutions.
3. Article 350A provides for mother-tongue instruction at primary stage.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

(A) Only 1 and 3
(B) Only 2 and 3
(C) Only 1
(D) All of the above

Ans. (B)

Practice Question for Mains

Q. "Minority empowerment in India requires a shift from welfare-based approaches to rights-based empowerment." Critically analyze this statement in light of recent government initiatives and their outcomes.

(250 words)

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The quality of expenditure is calculated by finding the ratio of developmental expenditure to a state's expenditure, and the ratio of capital outlay to its gross state domestic product.

Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have a good score under Quality of Expenditure, but they rank lower with regard to Revenue Mobilization.

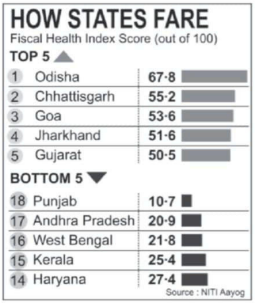
Karnataka performs well across most indices but it ranks amongst the three aspirational states in Debt Sustainability.

Odisha and Chhattisgarh have performed well under Revenue Mobilization, with their Own Non-Tax Revenue growing significantly due to high revenue collection from mining. However, regarding Debt Sustainability, Chhattisgarh ranks lower compared to some other states.

The think tank cautioned that states like West Bengal and Punjab witnessed growing debt burdens, increasing debt-to-GDP ratios and raising serious concern about debt sustainability.

Interest payment in West Bengal accounts for 20·47 per cent of revenue receipts in 2022-23, constraining the ability of the state to allocate funds for development.

In Kerala may focus on enhancing revenue mobilization through effective tax and Non-Tax strategies, optimizing resource efficiency, increasing Capital Expenditure in the Social Services Sector are increased, and rationalizing expenditures to improve its fiscal health.



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Skill Development Article

Envisioning India as a Global Skill Supplier

—Anuj Kumar

Several recent developments like government initiatives to position India as a hub for skilled manpower in global value chains. Skill India International Centres (SIICs) seek to facilitate the global mobility of skilled workers, the government announced to establish 30 SIICs across the country in FY 24 Interim Budget.

Global Capability Centres (GCCs) : India's GCC market is projected to grow significantly, reaching $105 billion by 2030 from $ 64·6 billion in FY 2024.

Advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and International Collaborations : The Indian government is engaging in serious negotiations for dual degree and joint degree programs with foreign institutions.

These developments underscore India's strategic efforts to become a leading global supplier of skilled labour, meeting the increasing demand for expertise across various industries worldwide.

With a demographic dividend, expanding educational infrastructure, and governmental initiatives to promote skill development, the country holds immense potential to cater to the world's workforce requirements. The article outlines key aspects, challenges, and pathways for realizing this vision.

1. India's Demographic Advantage

- **Youthful Population :** India has over 50% of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65% below 35, ensuring a steady supply of young, energetic workers.
- **Largest Workforce Potential :** By 2030, India's working-age population is expected to reach approximately 1 billion, surpassing many developed and developing nations.

2. Rising Global Demand for Skilled Labour

- **Ageing Population in Developed Nations :** Countries like Japan, Germany, and the US are experiencing declining work forces, creating a demand for skilled immigrants.
- **Emergence of Knowledge-Based Economies :** Rapid technological advancements require a workforce skilled in Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics, data science, and renewable energy.
- **Post-Pandemic Workforce Realignments :** The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for remote and digitally skilled workers worldwide.

3. Government Initiatives Supporting Skill Development

- **Skill India Mission :** Launched in 2015, it aims to train over 400 million individuals in market-relevant skills.
- **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) :** Plays a pivotal role in coordinating private-sector participation and establishing sector skill councils.
- **PMKVY (Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana) :** Provides short-term skill train-ing and certification, enhancing employability.
- **Study in India Initiative :** Encourages foreign students to pursue education in Indian institutions, promoting the global recognition of Indian skills.
- **Skill India International Centres (SIICs) :** Establishing 30 centers across the country to provide international certifications and align with global workforce requirements.
- **PM Vishwakarma :** It is a Central Sector scheme launched by Ministry of MSME to provide holistic and end-to-end support to artisans and craftsmen through access to collateral free credit, skill training, modern tools, incentives for digital transactions and market linkage support.

4. Key Sectors for Skill Export

- **Information Technology and Digital Skills :** India's IT industry, contributing over $194 billion to GDP, can supply software engineers, AI specialists, and cybersecurity experts.
- **Healthcare Professionals :** Indian doctors, nurses, and paramedics are highly valued worldwide. Programs like the AYUSH initiative also boost India's presence in traditional medicine.
- **Construction and Infrastructure :** Indian workers, especially in the Gulf region, dominate construction and infrastructure projects due to their cost-effectiveness and expertise.
- **Renewable Energy and Sustainability:** India's push for green energy provides a competitive edge in training and exporting experts in solar, wind, and bio-energy sectors.
- **Vocational Skills :** Fields such as carpentry, plumbing, and electricians see significant demand globally, especially in developed economies.
- **Emerging Technologies :** Fields like AI, block-chain, and space technology represent areas where India can create a skilled workforce to lead globally.

5. Challenges to Realizing the Vision

- **Skill Mismatch :** A lack of alignment between skills taught and global industry requirements.
- **Language Barriers :** Insufficient proficiency in international languages like English can limit global opportunities.
- **Quality Concerns :** Standardization and quality assurance in

training and certification remain a challenge.

- **Infrastructure Deficit :** Inadequate training centers and technological resources hinder the scaling of skill development initiatives.
- **Policy Bottlenecks :** Visa restrictions and protectionist policies in destination countries can restrict the free movement of skilled labour.
- **Brain Drain :** A significant portion of skilled professionals emigrating from India can lead to a talent deficit within India.
- **Social Equity Issues :** Bridging the urban-rural divide in skill access is crucial to ensure inclusivity.

6. Strategies to Transform India into a Global Skill Hub

- **Enhancing Curriculum and Training :**
  - ❑ Align training programs with international standards and market needs.
  - ❑ Introduce vocational training in school curricula to foster early skill acquisition.
- **Leveraging Technology :**
  - ❑ Utilize AI, virtual reality, and digital platforms to deliver skill training.
  - ❑ Establish online skill development platforms to ensure accessibility.
- **Fostering International Collaborations :**
  - ❑ Partner with global institutions for skill certification.
  - ❑ Sign bilateral agreements to streamline workforce mobility.
- **Promoting Regional Skill Hubs :**
  - ❑ Develop state-specific skill clusters focusing on regional strengths, such as IT in Karnataka or healthcare in Kerala.
- **Language and Soft Skills Training :**
  - ❑ Emphasize English and other foreign language proficiency.
  - ❑ Provide training in interpersonal and cultural adaptability skills.
- **Incentivizing Skill Retention :**
  - ❑ Develop policies to retain top talent while ensuring outbound workforce mobility.

7. Role of the Private Sector

- **Corporate Training Programs :** Major corporations can offer on-the-job training aligned with international requirements.
- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) :** Collaborations between industry and government can improve funding, infrastructure, and curriculum relevance.
- **Startups and Skill Innovation :** Encourage startups focusing on EdTech and skill-based education to innovate and expand training methodologies.
- **Global Capability Centres (GCCs) :** Expansion of GCCs can create more opportunities for Indian workers to support global business functions.

8. Impact of India as a Global Skill Supplier

- **Economic Growth :**
  - ❑ Increased remittances from overseas workers, boosting foreign exchange reserves.
  - ❑ Enhanced global competitiveness through a diversified economy.
- **Geopolitical Leverage :**
  - ❑ Strengthened bilateral ties with countries reliant on Indian workers.
  - ❑ Enhanced global recognition of India's soft power.
- **Social Benefits :**
  - ❑ Reduction in unemployment and underemployment within the country.
  - ❑ Improved standards of living for skilled workers and their families.
- **Technological Advancements :**
  - ❑ Spurring innovation and research through international exposure of skilled professionals.

9. Case Studies and Success Stories

- **IT Industry Leadership :** Indian IT giants like TCS, Infosys, and Wipro have established a strong global presence, employing lakhs of skilled professionals overseas.
- **Healthcare Achievements :** Indian doctors and nurses are in demand in countries like the US, UK, and Gulf nations, creating a reliable brand image.
- **Gulf Workforce :** A significant portion of the Gulf region's labour force comprises skilled and semi-skilled Indian workers.
- **AI and Emerging Technologies :** Rapid adoption of AI and digital solutions in industries highlights India's potential in futuristic fields.

Conclusion

India's journey toward becoming a global supplier of skilled manpower is both an opportunity and a challenge. By harnessing its demographic dividend, investing in quality education and training, and fostering global partnerships, India can position itself as an indispensable part of the global workforce ecosystem. However, achieving this vision requires sustained efforts from the government, private sector, and society at large, ensuring that India not only meets but also exceeds global expectations in skill excellence.

Practice Question for Prelims :

Q. Consider the following statements :

1. ASSOCHAM released the 'India GCC Landscape' Report.
2. According to the report, Indian GCCs generated $ 64·6 million in FY 2024.
3. Indian GCCs employed over 1·9 million people.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

(A) Only 1 and 2
(B) Only 1 and 3
(C) Only 2 and 3
(D) Only 1

Ans. (C)

Practice Question for Mains

Q. Evaluate the role of government initiatives like Skill India Mission and Skill India International Centres (SIICs) in preparing Indian youth for global workforce opportunities. What policy interventions are required to overcome international barriers ?

(250 words)

PDargaan

Indian Economy Article

Indian Economy Estimated to Grow at Slower Pace in FY 2024-25

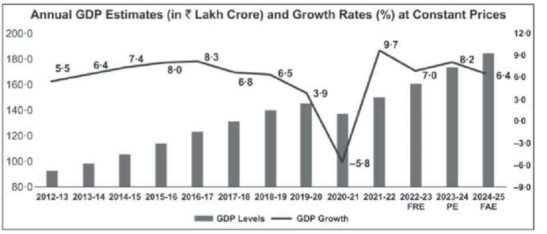
India's Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is seen growing at a four year low of 6·4 per cent in FY 2024-25, primarily due to weak industrial and investment growth, the first advance estimates for FY25 released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) on January 7, 2025 showed. The National Statistics Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released, the First Advance Estimates of Annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the Financial Year (FY) 2024-25 along with its expenditure components both at Constant (2011-12) and Current Prices.

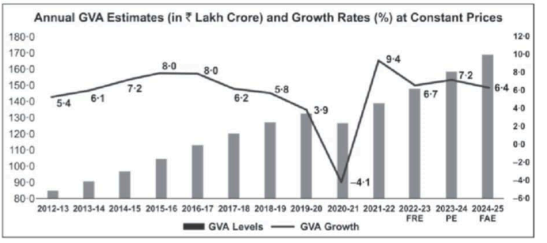
Key Highlights :

- Real GDP has been estimated to grow by 6·4% in FY 2024-25 as compared to the growth rate of 8·2% in Provisional Estimate (PE) of GDP for FY 2023-24.
- Nominal GDP has witnessed a growth rate of 9·7% in FY 2024-25 over the growth rate of 9·6% in FY 2023-24.
- Real GVA has grown by 6·4% in FY 2024-25 over the growth rate of 7·2% in FY 2023-24.
- Nominal GVA has shown a growth rate of 9·3% in FY 2024-25 as compared to the growth rate of 8·5% in FY 2023-24.
- Agriculture and allied sector is most likely to achieve higher growth rate in Real GVA during the FY 2024-25 as compared to FY 2023-24. Real GVA of Agriculture and allied sector has been estimated to grow by 3·8% during 2024-25 as compared to the growth of 1·4% witnessed during the last year, *i.e.*, 2023-24.
- Real GVA of 'Construction' sector and 'Financial, Real Estate & Professional Services' sector has been estimated to observe good growth rates of 8·6% and 7·3%, respectively during the FY 2024-25.
- Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) at Constant Prices, has witnessed a growth rate of 7·3% during FY 2024-25 over the growth rate of 4·0% in the previous Financial Year.
- Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GFCE) at Constant Prices, has rebounded to a growth rate of 4·1% as compared to the growth rate of 2·5% in the previous Financial Year.

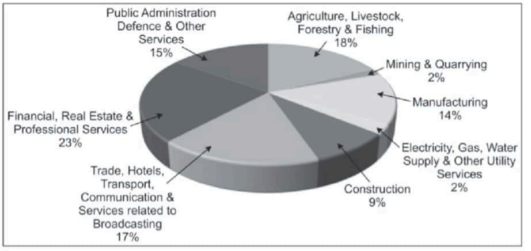
I. Annual GDP Estimates and Growth Rates

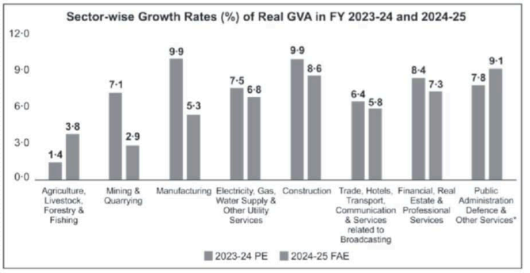
- Real GDP or GDP at Constant Prices is estimated to attain a level of ₹ 184·88 lakh crore in the financial year 2024-25, against the Provisional Estimate of GDP for the year 2023-24 of ₹ 173·82 lakh crore. The growth rate in Real GDP during 2024-25 is estimated at 6·4% as compared to 8·2% in 2023-24.
- Nominal GDP or GDP at Current Prices is estimated to attain a level of ₹ 324·11 lakh crore in the year 2024-25, against ₹ 295·36 lakh crore in 2023-24, showing a growth rate of 9·7%.
- Real GVA is estimated at ₹ 168·91 lakh crore in the year 2024-25, against the PE for the year 2023-24 of ₹ 158·74 lakh crore, registering a growth rate of 6·4% as compared to 7·2% growth rate in 2023-24.
- Nominal GVA is estimated to attain a level of ₹ 292·64 lakh crore during FY 2024-25, against ₹ 267·62 lakh crore in 2023-24, showing a growth rate of 9·3%.

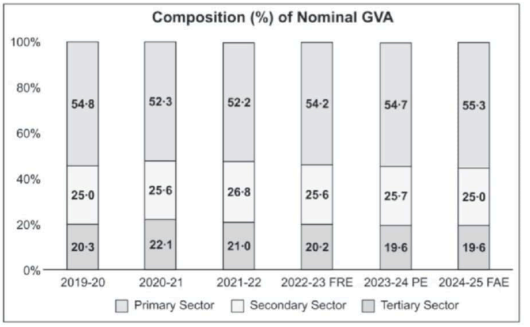


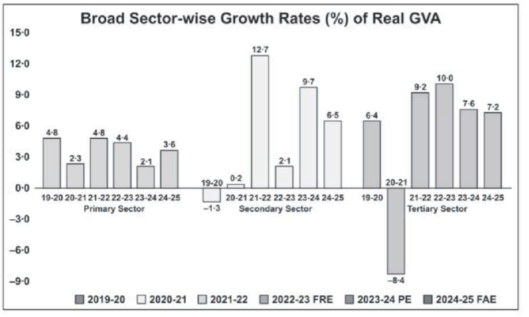


Sectoral Composition of Nominal GVA in FY 2024-25









Primary Sector : Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry & Fishing and Mining & Quarrying.

Secondary Sector : Manufacturing, Electricity, Gas, Water supply & Other Utility Services and Construction.

Tertiary Sector : Trade, Hotels, Transport, Communication and Services related to Broadcasting, Financial, Real Estate & Professional Services and Public Administration, Defence & Other Services.

II. Methodology and Major Data Sources

Advance Estimates of GDP are indicator based and compiled using the benchmark-indicator method i.e. the estimates available for the previous financial year (2023-24) are extrapolated using the relevant indicators reflecting the performance of sectors. Data sourced from various Ministries / Departments / Private Agencies serve as valuable input in the compilation of these estimates.

The sector-wise estimates have been compiled using indicators/data sources *viz*.. (i) Index of Industrial Production (IIP), (ii) Financial performance of Listed Companies based on available quarterly financial results of these companies for Q1 and Q2 of 2024-25, (iii) Estimates of Major Agricultural Crops and Horticultural crops for 2024-25 as provided by Ministry of Ag. & FW, (iv) Production Targets and Summer as well as Rainy season production estimates of Major Livestock Products for 2024-25; (v) Fish Production, (vi) Production of Coal, Crude Petroleum, Natural Gas, Cement and Consumption of Steel, (vii) Net Tonne Kilometres and Passenger Kilometres for Railways, (viii) Passenger and Cargo traffic handled by Civil Aviation, (ix) Cargo traffic handled at Major and Minor Sea Ports, (x) Sales of Commercial Vehicles, (xi) Bank Deposits and Credits, (xii) Premium related information of Life and Non-Life Insurance companies, (xiii) Data on outward Supplies of Goods and Services available from GSTN upto November 2024, (xiv) Accounts of Central and State Governments, (xv)

First Advanced Estimates for FY 2024-25

Item	Value in ₹ Lakh Crore		Annual percentage change over previous year	
	2023-24 (PE)	2024-25 (FAE)	2023-24	2024-25 (Adv. Estt.)
At Constant Prices (2011-12) :				
GVA at Basic Prices	158·74	168·91	7·2	6·4
Net Taxes on Products[ii]	15·08	15·97	19·1	5·9
Gross Domestic Product	173·82	184·88	8·2	6·4
Net Domestic Product	151·46	161·10	8·3	6·4
Gross National Income	171·26	181·98	8·2	6·3
Net National Income	148·91	158·20	8·3	6·2
Per Capita NNI (₹)	106744	112358	7·4	5·3
At Current Prices :				
GVA at Basic Prices	267·62	292·64	8·5	9·3
Net Taxes on Products[ii]	27·73	31·48	21·1	13·5
Gross Domestic Product	295·36	324·11	9·6	9·7
Net Domestic Product	261·28	286·85	9·7	9·8
Gross National Income	291·04	319·09	9·5	9·6
Net National Income	256·97	281·83	9·6	9·7
Per Capita NNI (₹)	184205	200162	8·7	8·7

Notes :

(i) GDP (Production/Income Approach) = GVA at Basic Prices + Net Taxes on Products.

(ii) Taxes on Products : Taxes on products are taxes payable per unit of good or service produced or exchanged such as VAT, GST, Excise Duties, Import/ Export Duties, vehicle registration taxes, taxes on lotteries, taxes on insurance premiums, etc.

(iii) GDP (Expenditure Approach) = Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) + Gross Fixed Capital Formation (Investment) (GFCF) + Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) + Change in Stocks (CIS) + Valuables + Export-Import.

Goods and Services Tax collections etc., available for first 6-9 months of the FY 2024-25.

Total tax revenue used for GDP compilation includes non-GST revenue as well as GST revenue. The Budget Estimates of Tax revenue for 2024-25 along with latest available information from Controller General of Accounts (CGA) and Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) have been used for estimating taxes on products at Current Prices. For compiling taxes on products at Constant Prices, volume extrapolation is done using volume growth of taxed goods and services. The total product subsidies at Current prices were compiled using the information on major subsidies *viz.*, Food, Urea, Petroleum and Nutrient based subsidy for Centre as available on CGA website and the expenditure incurred on subsidies by most States up to November 2024 as available on CAG website along with the Centre/ State-wise BE provision for 2024-25. Information available on Revenue expenditure, Interest payments, Subsidies etc. from Centre and States for 2024-25 were used for estimating Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GFCE).

Improved data coverage and revision in input data made by source agencies would have a bearing on subsequent revisions of these estimates. Estimates are, therefore, likely to undergo revisions for the aforesaid causes in due course, as per the release calendar. Users should take these into consideration while interpreting the figures. The Second Advance Estimates of Annual GDP for FY 2024-25 along with Quarterly GDP estimates for the quarter October-December of 2024-25 (Q3 2024-25) will be released on 28.02.2025.

PDarpan

Continued from Page 113

Project Yourself as a 'Man on Mission' and Excel in the Prelims

For cracking Prelims, you need to develop and showcase a combination of skills, traits, and qualities that highlight your dedication, discipline, and strategic thinking.

Discipline is the first trait that you need to adhere to a rigorous study-plan and showing consistency even in revision at regular interval.

As the preparation demands, you will have to be curious to learn newer things and keeping abreast with the latest.

You will have to exhibit adaptability as per the evolving needs and will have to tweak your strategy accordingly.

By maintaining focus on the goal, you keep moving gradually towards your dream destination.

Although strategically thinking will help you formulate line of action, your analytical skills will guide through the journey and help you decipher the UPSC examiners expectations.

Understanding the needs of this examination, you will have to show perseverance and resilience to overcome challenges and setbacks you face during your preparation and showing the ability to bounce back strongly.

While memory retention and recall are going to help you in real examination, your problem-solving skills and time management will ensure outstanding results.

Show a Positive Attitude to Unlock Success

As you are working diligently on a goal that is your life's mission right now, give it all you have. Your efforts and your mettle will clearly reflect in your end results.

By showing growth mindset and positive attitude, you will face the uncertainties boldly and significantly improve your chances of success in Preliminary Examination and will continue the winning streak. So, stay focused, keep preparing and keep pushing forward.

My best wishes are with you.

God Bless You !

PDarpan

Geopolitics Article

Deep-Sea Dilemmas : Need for International Cooperation to Thwart China's Dominance

—Achal Priyadarshy

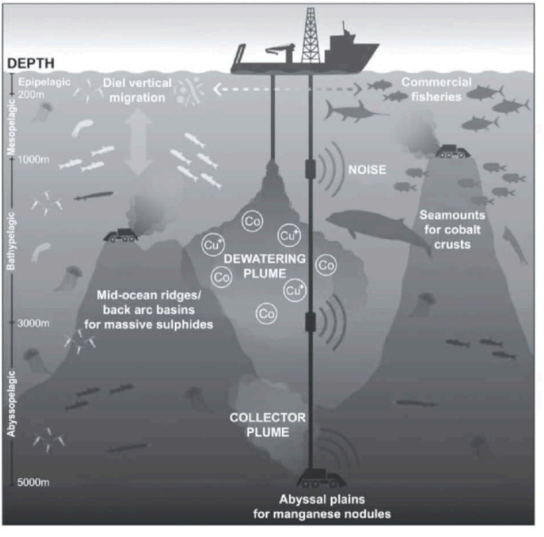
The vast expanses of the world's oceans stand as both an ecological treasure and a repository of untapped mineral wealth. The burgeoning practice of deep-sea mining—the extraction of rare minerals and earth elements from the oceanic depths—has emerged as a focal point of geopolitical intrigue, particularly in light of China's growing ambitions in this domain. In recent years, discourse has abounded regarding China's maritime dominance, with the nation possessing the largest navy, coast guard and maritime personnel globally. To this, one must append another critical element: China's unparalleled marine research and oceanographic fleet, which now boasts 64 active vessels, a remarkable increase from 19 in 2012. These vessels are equipped for diverse pursuits, including seismological and bathymetric research, climatology, and the study of deep ocean habitats. They facilitate the collection of seabed samples, the operation of advanced submersibles and the deployment of underwater monitoring systems, while some are tailored for ballistic missile detection.

China's 14th Five-Year Plan under-scores deep-sea exploration as a strategic priority, integrating economic and security objectives under the aegis of its highest echelons. A comprehensive understanding of the manifold implications of seabed mining, coupled with China's pivotal role and the necessity for international cooperation, is vital for discourse concerning international relations, environmental governance, and the stewardship of global commons.

The Strategic Importance of Deep-Sea Mining

The seabed is rich in valuable minerals such as polymetallic nodules, cobalt-rich crusts and sulphides, essential for high-tech industries, renewable energy technologies and military applications. These resources are vital for manufacturing batteries, semiconductors and other components that drive the global economy. China's *Kaituo 2*, a cutting-edge mining vehicle operating at depths of over 4,000 meters, showcases its technological prowess. Designed to overcome rugged seabed terrains with minimal human intervention, it solidifies China's ambition to dominate this burgeoning sector. However, the extraction process raises significant concerns, including environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity and disruption of marine ecosystems.

The International Seabed Authority (ISA), established in 1994 under the auspices of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), has so far granted 31 exploration contracts across four key regions : Nineteen of these contracts are for the exploration for polymetallic nodules in the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone (17) and Central Indian Ocean Basin (1) and Western Pacific Ocean (1). In addition, there are seven (7) contracts for exploration for polymetallic sulphides in the South West Indian Ridge, Central Indian Ridge and the Mid-Atlantic Ridge and five (5) contracts for exploration for cobalt-rich crusts in the Western Pacific Ocean. Of these, China has secured five contracts, the highest number held by any nation. In 2016, China enacted a National Law on the Exploration and Development of Resources in Seabed Areas, marking a significant step in its maritime ambitions. It has since regularly dispatched research vessels to its designated zones, utilizing advanced submersibles to collect seabed samples.



Dominating the research and exploration of deep-seabed mining, China aspires to shape the framework for its eventual commercial exploitation. Notably, the United States remains outside the ISA framework, not being a signatory to UNCLOS. In the Southwest Indian Ocean, exploration rights have also been granted to India, South Korea and Germany. Yet, through state-backed enterprises and unparalleled research capacity, China has emerged as a preeminent power in seabed mining, extending its maritime influence, particularly in the Indo-Pacific. This ascendancy portends economic, environmental and geopolitical challenges, warranting a concerted international response.

China's Seabed Mining Activities : Key Concerns

- **Economic Hegemony :** The rising global demand for critical minerals such as cobalt, nickel, copper and manganese—essential for electric vehicles, advanced weaponry, and renewable energy technologies—has intensified interest in oceanic resources. China's extensive involvement in seabed mining reinforces its position as a global leader in critical minerals. By dominating the supply chain, China could dictate terms to other nations, impacting industries dependent on rare earth elements. This monopolization poses a threat to global economic stability and technological sovereignty.
- **Environmental Risks :** Deep-sea ecosystems are among the least understood yet most vulnerable habitats on Earth. As nations like Japan, Canada, and the EU vie for oceanic riches; environmental groups, including Greenpeace, advocate for moratoriums on mining due to risks such as chemical pollution and habitat destruction.
- **Geopolitical Implications :** China's expansion in seabed mining aligns with its broader strategy to dominate global commons, including the Arctic and the South China Sea, intensifying tensions with QUAD nations (India, the US, Japan and Australia) and challenging equitable resource sharing. While, Chinese research vessels now operate globally, many deployments focus on the Indo-Pacific, particularly the Western Pacific, South China Sea and Indian Ocean Region (IOR). In the IOR, key areas include the southwestern Indian Ocean, Andaman Sea, Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea. Notably, research vessels like *Xiang Yang Hong 3* have undertaken prolonged missions, with some reportedly engaging in AIS spoofing or disabling systems, raising strategic concerns.

Legal and Institutional Frameworks Governing Seabed Mining

- **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) :** UNCLOS is the primary legal framework governing activities in the high seas and seabed. It designates the seabed beyond national jurisdictions as the 'common heritage of mankind', requiring equitable sharing of benefits. The International Seabed Authority (ISA), established under UNCLOS, regulates seabed mining activities and ensures environmental protection.
- **Challenges with ISA :** While the ISA has granted exploration licenses to several nations, its capacity to enforce environmental safeguards and address geopolitical disputes remains limited. Critics argue that the current regulatory framework is skewed towards resource exploitation rather than conservation.
- **Absence of Comprehensive Global Norms :** The lack of a unified global policy on seabed mining has allowed countries like China to exploit regulatory loopholes. The ambiguity in maritime zones and competing claims over exclusive economic zones (EEZs) further complicate governance.
- However, during the 29th session of the International Seabed Authority (ISA); no mining code was agreed; and there was the first formal debate ever by the ISA Assembly on the need to adopt an overall policy for the protection of the marine environment. Such policies could set the necessary conditions to be fulfilled before commercial deep-sea mining exploration can be considered.

The Role of International Cooperation

Addressing the challenges posed by China's seabed mining activities requires a coordinated and strategic approach through international cooperation. Key avenues include :

1. Strengthening Multilateral Frameworks

- **Reforming the ISA :** Enhancing the ISA's capacity to enforce stringent environmental and operational standards is crucial. Member states must push for greater transparency in licensing and decision-making processes.
- **Promoting Marine Scientific Research :** Collaborative research initiatives can improve understanding of deep-sea ecosystems, enabling informed decision-making and sustainable practices.

2. Leveraging Regional Partnerships

- **QUAD and Indo-Pacific Cooperation :** The QUAD nations can play a pivotal role in counterbalancing China's influence by pooling resources for seabed exploration, developing alternative supply chains for critical minerals and advocating for sustainable practices.
- **Strengthening ASEAN Engagement :** ASEAN nations, particularly those with overlapping maritime claims with China, can form a unified front to uphold UNCLOS principles and resist unilateral actions.

3. Developing Alternative Technologies

- Investing in green technologies and recycling initiatives can reduce dependence on seabed mining. Collaborative efforts in research and development (R&D) for sustainable extraction methods and substitutes for rare earth elements can diminish China's leverage.

4. Environmental Diplomacy

- **Global Agreements :** Advocating for legally binding global agreements on seabed mining that prioritize environmental conservation is essential.
- **Ocean Governance Forums :** Platforms like the UN Ocean Conference and the Our Ocean Conference can be utilized to build consensus on sustainable practices and foster cooperation.

India's Role and Strategic Interests : Enhancing International Cooperation

Several nations are advancing national programmes in deep-sea exploration and seabed mining, though progress varies.

India's deep-sea initiatives, including the Samudrayaan Deep Ocean Mission, the impending trials of the Matsya manned submersible, and the development of the Varha seabed mining vehicle, underscore the government's prioritization of oceanic exploration. Additionally, India's plans to auction seven seabed mineral blocks near the Great Nicobar Island signal its growing commitment. Nations such as the United States, Japan and Australia are also advancing cutting-edge programmes in this domain.

A coordinated framework, whether bilateral or under the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), is desirable for fostering ocean research, deep-sea exploration, and seabed mining. India's Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI) provides a foundation, with its pillars addressing ecology, resources, capacity building and scientific cooperation. Enhanced collaboration promises mutual understanding, sustainable development and maritime security.

Ethical and Environmental Considerations in Deep Sea Mining

- **Precautionary Principle :** Given the limited understanding of deep-sea ecosystems, a precautionary approach must be adopted to prevent irreversible damage.
- **Sustainable Development :** Balancing resource extraction with environmental conservation is essential for long-term sustainability. Emphasizing renewable energy transitions and reducing dependency on deep-sea mining can align with global climate goals.
- **Equity and Inclusion :** Seabed resources belong to humanity as a whole. Ensuring equitable access and benefit-sharing, particularly for developing nations, is critical.

Conclusion

The race for deep-sea resources underscores the need for a balanced approach that harmonizes economic ambitions with environmental stewardship. China's dominance in this sphere highlights the urgency for robust international cooperation, equitable governance, and sustainable practices. Nations must unite to uphold the principles of shared heritage, fostering research and innovation while safeguarding marine ecosystems. Through collaborative efforts and strengthened multilateral frameworks, the deep seas can be explored responsibly for the collective benefit of humanity.

Practice Question for Prelims :

Q. What role does the International Seabed Authority (ISA) play in seabed mining ?

(A) Enforces military control over oceanic resources

(B) Grants exploration contracts and ensures environmental safeguards

(C) Regulates shipping and navigation in international waters

(D) Mediates disputes over maritime zones

Ans. (B)

Practice Question for Mains

Q. Discuss the strategic importance of seabed mining in the context of China's dominance and its implications for international relations, environmental governance, and geopolitical stability. How can global cooperation address the challenges posed by seabed mining activities ? **(250 words)**

PJanjan

Continued from Page 118

- Invest in digital infrastructure to modernize cooperative operations and enhance member engagement through technology.

Inclusive and Sustainability

- Actively engage women, youth, and marginalized groups in cooperative initiatives to ensure equitable participation and benefits.
- Incorporate eco-friendly practices in cooperative operations to align with global environmental commitments and promote sustainability.

Leveraging International Recognition

- India's leadership in the ICA and upcoming International Year of Cooperatives presents an opportunity to position itself as a global leader in cooperative models, showcasing their success stories and innovations.

Conclusion

Cooperatives have immense potential to act as catalysts for inclusive and sustainable growth in India. By addressing their inherent challenges and leveraging emerging opportunities, they can contribute significantly to economic resilience, social equity and environmental stewardship. As the world prepares to celebrate the International Year of Cooperatives in 2025, India stands at the forefront of a renewed cooperative movement poised to transform its socio-economic fabric.

Practice Question for Mains

Q. "Cooperatives have immense potential to act as catalysts for inclusive and sustainable growth in India". Explain the Role of Cooperatives in inclusive and sustainable Growth. **(250 words)**

PJanjan

Sustainable Development Article

India's Green Architecture : Opening the Door to a Sustainable Future

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—Shashi Shekhar

Green Architecture in India has gained significant momentum in recent years as India faces rapid urbanisation and growing environmental challenges. In India, Green Architecture represents a transformative approach that prioritizes sustainability, energy efficiency and environmental responsibility.

By minimising environmental impact of building and increasing energy efficiency, India's green architecture is improving India's urban landscape and setting new standards for eco-friendly construction. Suzlon One Earth in Pune and Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in Hyderabad are good examples of green architecture in India.

Characteristics of Green Architecture

Green buildings have many features that make them environmentally friendly and resource efficient :

- **Energy Efficiency :** It is achieved through passive solar design, energy-efficient lighting and integrated renewable energy sources like solar panels and wind turbines and thereby reducing Green House Gases (GHGs).
- **Water Conservation :** Rainwater harvesting systems, greywater recycling and water-efficient fixtures and landscaping lead to water conservation.
- **Improving Indoor Air Quality :** Green buildings focus on maximizing natural daylight and ventilation, using low—VOC materials, and implementing intelligent sensors for lighting and air quality control.
- **Sustainable Materials :** While locally-sourced materials reduce transportation emission, Recycled and low-impact building materials increase sustainability.
- **Enhancing Biodiversity** : Green roofs, living walls and adoption of local flora and fauna improve building structure.

How Green Architecture is Leading to a Sustainable Future in India ?

By minimizing the environmental impact of building, green architecture not only helps mitigate climate change but also addresses challenges posed by rapid urbanisation.

- **Promoting Green Building in Construction Industry :** Green buildings utilize environmentally friendly materials and processes throughout their lifecycle—from design to demolition—to reducing resource consumption and are essential in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions in the construction and building sectors. As per industry estimates, India's green building market generated revenues of $ 29·2 billion in 2022.
- **Managing Rapid Urbanisation in India :** With India's expected urban population to reach 600 mn by 2036, India will require liveable, climate-resilient infrastructure. According to a Business Standard analysis, green buildings in India may cut maintenance expenses by 20% and emissions by 35%.
- **High Energy Savings** : Compared to conventional structure, green architecture can lower energy consumption by 20-30%. The C11-Godrej Green Business Centre met all its energy requirements through on-site renewable energy Solar PU systems generating 220 MWh per annum.
- **Reducing Solid Waste and e-Waste :** Green architecture promotes waste reduction by emphasising on recycling and using recycled materials in construction. Utilisation of waste in construction like construction and demolition waste through circular economy can reduce waste generation which is estimated at 436 million tonnes by 2050.
- **Mitigating Climate Change Impact :** Green architecture will play vital in reducing India's carbon footprint and achieving Panchamitra pledge. Green spaces integrated into building designs help absorb CO_2 and reduce urban heat island effects. According to International Energy Agency (IEA), buildings are currently responsible for 40% of global energy consumption and one-quarter of global human-induced CO_2 emissions.
- **Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) :** Green architecture can fulfil several India's SDGs such as SDG 7 (contributing to energy efficiency and clean energy adoption), SDG 11 (promoting sustainable cities and communities). India ranks third in 2023 on US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) by covering 7·2 million gross square meters of green building.

Challenges in Achieving Green Architecture

- **Accessibility and Affordability of Sustainable Materials :** While, there is a growing market for these materials, they are often more expensive and less accessible than conventional options, especially for budget-sensitive projects.
- **Complex Regulatory and Certification Process :** The process of obtaining certification like LEED, GRIHA, or IGBC for builders and developers is often challenging and the additional

requirements for green building compliance can complicate matters further.

- **High Cost of Green Certification :** High costs of green certification deter developers from pursuing it, despite evidence that green infrastructure offers substantial long-term financial benefits and cost savings.
- **Requirement of Skilled Workforce :** The lack of skilled experts and manpower in all groups, from policymakers to architects, engineers to contractors and workers, is one of the main reasons for the slow adoption of green building in India.
- **Lack of Awareness and Understanding :** Many consumers and developers lack awareness of the benefits and significance of sustainable building practices, often viewing them as a costly alternative.

Case Study : Infosys Mysore Campus, Karnataka

The Infosys Mysore Campus, covering over 300 acres, exemplifies sustainable design, integrating environmental responsibility with the operational requirements of a major IT company through the expertise of architects AMBI and The Walter Partnership.

Architecture Marvel

- **Rainwater Harvesting :** Through integrated water management strategies.
- **Energy Efficiency :** Through passive design strategies and active energy management systems.
- **Landscaped Courtyards :** By adopting biophilic design principles and promoting regenerative landscapes.

Measures to Promote Green Architecture

- **Environment Impact Assessment** for environmental clearance for projects for qualifying building and township projects.
- **Promoting Benchmarking, Standards and Guidelines** for green architecture through green rating systems including unitization of site, water, energy and material resources.
- **Adoption of Uniform Global Standards** to reduce disparities in verification and increase faster approvals.
- **Creating a Dedicated Team of professional** within the urban local bodies to facilitate green building promotion.

Initiatives to Promote India's Green Architecture

- **Energy Conservation Building Codes (ECBC 2017) for Commercial Buildings :** Developed by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), It has both prescriptive (require for the building envelope and energy systems such as lighting, HVAC, service water heating) and performance-based (require the application of whole building simulation approach to prove efficiency) compliance paths.
- **Eco-Niwas Samhita 2018 for Residential Buildings :** Developed by the BEE, it aims to promote energy efficient design and construction of residential projects including independent homes, multi-storey apartments, and township.
- **Indian Green Building Council (IGBC):** It is a public-private partnership between Confederation of India Industry, Government of Andhra Pradesh and Godrej Foundation, established with vision to enable a sustainable built environment for all and make India the global leaders in the sustainable built environment by 2025.
- **Green Building Rating Systems :** It comprises of predefined set of criteria related to the entire life cycle of building and facilities the effective use of site resources, water conservation, energy efficiency, waste management, optimum material utilisation and improve indoor environment quality.
- **LEED-Certification :** Developed by US Green Building Council, it is globally recognized rating system for buildings that are sustainable and energy efficient. There are four levels of certification – certified (40-49 points), silver (50-59 points), gold (60-79 points) and platinum (80+ points).
- **Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA)** : Developed by TERI (The Energy and Resources Institute) and adopted by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, the GRIHA has 100 point system which include both mandatory and optional points. The minimum point required for certification is 50.

  Buildings that receive 50–60, 61–70, 71–80, and 81–90 points will receive one star, two stars, three stars and four stars, respectively. The highest rating, five stars, will be awarded to a structure with 91–100 points.
- **Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework (CSCAF) :** The CSCAF 20 is based on five parameters – Energy and Green buildings (25%), urban planning and green cover (25%), water management (15%), waste management (15%), and mobility and air quality (20%) which provide roadmap for cities towards combating climate change while planning and implementing their actions including investments.
- **Tax Benefits :** Governments at different level are providing tax benefits to green architecture in many fields such as Floor Area Ratio (FAR), fixed capital investment of the project etc.

Conclusion

Green architecture is crucial for India's sustainable development, integrating government policies, technological advancements and changing public attitudes. As eco-friendly buildings increasingly shape urban environments, India has the potential to spearhead green architecture globally, demonstrating how economic growth can coexist with environmental sustainability.

Practice Questions for Prelims :

Q.1. Consider the following question in reference to promoting green architecture :

1. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) was developed by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC).
2. Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) provides rating system under GRIHA rating system.

Continued on Page 135

Science & Technology Article

From AI Chips to 6G Testing : How India's Tech Landscape Evolved in 2024 ?

—Ravi Singh

In July 2024, a Centre of Excellence on Classical and Quantum Communications for 6G was inaugurated at the IIT Madras Research Park in Chennai with the aim to promote research and development in 6G technologies in the country. The year 2024 marks an important chapter in India's tech journey. From forging global partnerships to advancing Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities, expanding 5G networks with eyeing 6G dominance, India has showcased its ambition to cement its place as a global tech hub. Here's a detailed look at highlights of India's tech achievement in 2024.

AI Chips

AI chips are integrated circuits (ICs) made of transistors and semiconductors, usually silicon. They're logic chips that process large amounts of data for AI workloads. Benefits of AI Chips are :

- They are optimized for AI operations, particularly deep learning and machine learning.
- They use parallel processing to handle complex mathematical computations and large amounts of data.
- They are more energy efficient and perform better than traditional Central Processing Units (CPUs).
- They can perform the same tasks as CPUs but with less power, which can save energy and money.
- AI chips are used in many devices, including smartphones, autonomous vehicles and robots.

These chips can play a major role in the initiatives like Smart Cities Mission and the 'Viksit Bharat' projects. As these technologies are evolving, it will be challenge to ensure accessibility and affordability.

Collaboration of Nvidia's AI Chip with India

The collaboration aims to develop an Artificial Intelligence (AI) chip by leveraging India's burgeoning semi-conductor design expertise and its expanding technology market. One of the aim is to develop a custom AI Chip to meet India's unique demand, such as :

- Security systems like the Kavach initiative for the Indian Railways.
- Applications in startups and government projects under the National AI Mission.

Benefits of Collaboration

- This partnership could add significant intellectual property to India's tech landscape.
- Encourage innovation among local AI startups.
- In the chip design market, companies like Nvidia dominate, especially in high-end graphics and AI chips. This collaboration will help India to become a global superpower in AI and semiconductors.

Airtel's AI-Powered Spam Detection System

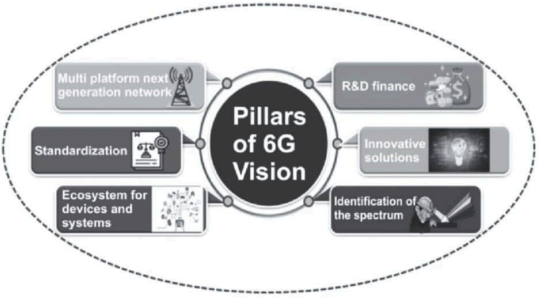
Bharti Airtel launched its AI-powered spam detection solution in September 2024 to tackle the growing threat of spam communications :

- The system employs a dual-layer protection mechanism that processes calls and SMS in real-time.
- It is able to identify around one million spammers per day.
- It uses 250 parameters to identify potential spam.
- It is also able to identify the malicious links by cross referencing against a centralized database of blacklisted URLs and enhancing the user's security against phishing attempts.
- It can process approximately 1·5 billion messages and 2·5 billion calls daily, identifying around one million spammers each day.
- Its effectiveness in combating the growing threat of spam communications can be gauged from the fact that it identified 8 billion spam calls and 0·8 billion spam SMS in just 2·5 months.

Status of Semiconductor Industry in India

According to Meity, the size of the Indian semiconductor market was about $ 38 billion in 2023 and is expected to reach $ 109 billion by 2030, as per the industry estimate.

- With the world's most populous economy, India is set to emerge as the second-largest market for 5G smartphones after China in leading to rapid growth in domestic consumption of semiconductors in the future.



- Semicon India programme has been approved for the development of semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem in the country.
- The US collaborated with India's Semiconductor Mission under the ITSI Fund to strengthen the global semiconductor supply chain.
- Larsen & Toubro has implemented plans to invest $ 300 million in a fabless chip company to design 15 different products by 2027.
- Tata Electronics has signed agreements with Tokyo Electron to enhance semiconductor infrastructure in Gujarat and Assam.
- In February, 2024, the Government of India approved $ 11 billion chip fabrication plant in Dholera, Gujarat, led by Tata Group in partnership with Taiwan's Powerchip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (PSMC). It is a significant step for creating an indigenous semiconductor industry in India which will generate over 20,000 direct and indirect skilled jobs.

India's Vision to Become Global Leader in 6G

Currently, the 6G technology is under development phase at international level and is expected to be available by 2030. Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has released India's 6G vision 'Bharat 6G Vision' document on March 23, 2023 which envisages India to be a frontline contributor in design, development and deployment of 6G technology by 2030. Bharat 6G Vision is based on principles of affordability, sustainability and ubiquity. Also, the Department of Telecom has facilitated the setting up of 'Bharat 6G Alliance' which is an alliance of domestic industry, academia, national research institutions and standards organisations to develop action plans according to the Bharat 6G Vision.

Phases of 6G Project

- **Phase-I (2023 to 2025) :** In Phase-I, support will be provided to explorative ideas, risky pathways, and proof-of-concept tests.
- **Phase-II (2025 to 2030) :** Ideas and concepts that show promise and potential for acceptance by the global peer community will be adequately supported to create implementational IPs and testbeds leading to the commercialisation of the 6G project.

Objectives :

- Facilitate and finance R&D, design, and development of 6G technologies by Indian startups/companies/research organisations/universities;
- Allow India to become a global leader in IP products and solutions for affordable 6G telecom solutions.
- Utilise 6G technology as a force multiplier for India by 2030.
- Enable an inclusive and significant improvement in the quality of life for citizens in India and around the world.
- It is expected to provide speeds of up to 1 terabit per second, significantly higher than the maximum speed of 5G.

India's Broadening Expansion of 5G in 2024

India is leading the charge in the adoption of 5G technology, marking a significant milestone in its digital transformation journey. With over 90 per cent 5G coverage and affordable services driving accessibility, the country is witnessing an unprecedented surge in subscriptions. According to the Ericsson Mobility Report, November 2024, 5G subscriptions was expected to reach almost 2·3 billion by the end of 2024, accounting for 23% of total mobile subscriptions. By 2030, this number is projected to rise to an impressive 97 crore, making up 74 per cent of all mobile connections in the region. India has made large-scale mid-band deployments and was expected to reach 95% population coverage by the end of 2024.

Key Technical Collaborations

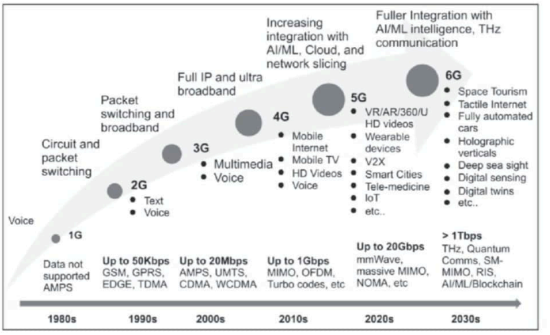
Leading mobile manufacturing company Apple began initial production of its iPhone 17 in India - a significant shift from its traditional reliance on China. The 'new production introduction' phase for the iPhone 17 was conducted in India, a first for Apple.

- Apple plans to shift 25 per cent of its iPhone manufacturing capacity to India in the coming years.
- Google joined the 'Make in India' wave by beginning local assembly of its Pixel 8 smartphones through Wowtek Technology in Tamil Nadu.
- Its manufacturing operations are expected to serve not just the Indian market but also facilitate exports to regions such as Europe and the US.

Challenges

Low R&D investment : Countries like the US and China are spending 2·8% and 2·2% of their GDP on research and development, while India is spending only 0·7% of GDP.

Shortage of skilled workers : With continued growth in cutting-edge sectors like AI, semiconductors and biotechnology, India may face a



shortage of around 30-32 million skilled workers by the end of 2025.

Dependence on critical imports : High dependence on foreign-made components like semiconductors limits self-reliance. India imports 95% of its semiconductors from countries like China, Taiwan, South Korea and Singapore.

Gap between policy and ecosystem : Weak linkages between academia, industry and government have slowed innovation and technology transfer.

Way forward

Need to Increase R&D investment : India has to increase the spending on R&D to at least 2% of GDP, focusing on cutting edge technologies.

Need to Enhance skill development programme : Skill development programmes in emerging areas such as AI, renewable energy and quantum computing should be prioritised under initiatives such as Skill India.

Reinforce public-private partnership : Promote partnerships between academia, research institutions and industries to accelerate innovation.

Kingpin on semiconductor fabrication : Investments under the Semiconductor Mission should be targeted towards advanced nodes (below 10 nm) to remain competitive in cutting-edge technologies such as AI, quantum computing and 5G.

Sector-distinct policies : Develop targeted policies for critical sectors such as space, defence, healthcare and agriculture to encourage indigenous technology adoption.

Conclusion

India's tech landscape in 2024 has focused on innovation, global partnerships, etc. to strengthen its self-reliance, which reflects India's commitment to become a global leader in the future. From leading AI chip collaborations with Nvidia to leading 6G development, expanding 5G networks at a rapid pace, while also attracting global giants like Apple and Google to invest in India, India has also demonstrated its readiness to lead the global technology race. Agreements signed with various international companies for semiconductor manufacturing will not only help India emerge as a global leader in the coming years but will also create millions of new jobs.

Practice Question for Mains

Q. The year 2024 has been a crucial year for India in terms of tech innovations and global partnerships. Do you think these technological innovations and global partnerships will help India to become self-reliant ?

PDanjan

Continued from Page 119

safe, predictable and trusted online environment. It aims to make intermediaries and online platforms accountable towards the consumers. It further aims to regulate the liabilities of intermediaries.

The integration of technology in governance has many challenges that need to be accounted for. Some of the challenges are identified here :

1. Limited access to internet and digital resources in remote and rural areas of our country hinders the effective integration of technology with governance.
2. With the benefits comes the threat of cyber attacks. There is a need for making the robust system to tackle the issue of cyber attack.
3. The implementation of technological shift is often hindered by resistance to changes on the part of bureaucrats.
4. The mechanism should be developed for effective use of data without unnecessarily violating the rights of the individuals.

The issues cannot outdo the benefits and efficiency that comes with merging technology and governance. Some of the steps that can be taken to work on ensuring effective integration of technology and governance :

1. The government should focus on research and innovations accustomed to the needs of India.
2. The government should focus on collaboration with private sectors to develop technology.
3. There is a need to develop a cyber security framework and protocol to ensure data protection.
4. There is a need to develop a robust framework to address the issues arising out of technological advancement.
5. The government should focus on digital literacy at administrative level and citizens' level through training and awareness.

The present era is one of technology which is gaining hold in every sector. The role of technology in governance will enhance the system by ensuring a transparent and accountable governance model. As India navigates through the digital era, the mantra of 'Innovate to Govern' will be a key factor in ensuring the effective, efficient and inclusive governance system.

Practice Question for Prelims :

Q. Which of the following legislation does not deal with regulation of technology and digital space ?

(A) Information Technology Act, 2000

(B) IT Rules, 2021

(C) Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023

(D) Right to Information Act, 2005

Ans. (D)

Practice Question for Mains

Q. Discuss the role of technology in promoting good governance in India **(250 words)**

PDanjan

Continued from Page 132

3. Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in Hyderabad is an example of green architecture. Which of the statements given above are correct ?

(A) Only 3

(B) Only 1 and 2

(C) Only 2 and 3

(D) All 1, 2 and 3

Ans. (A)

Q.2. Which of the following is a statutory body ?

(A) The Energy and Resources Institute

(B) Bureau of Energy Efficiency

(C) Indian Green Building Council

(D) None of the above

Ans. (B)

Practice Question for Mains

Q. 'India's green architecture movement is gaining momentum as a solution to environmental challenges and rapid urbanization.' Critically examine the progress made in sustainable building practices in India and evaluate the potential for green architecture to shape a more sustainable urban future. **(250 Words)**

PDanjan

Foreign Affairs Article

China's Great Game in Africa : Lessons for India

—Vijan Kumar Pandey

China's engagement with Africa has evolved into a multifaceted partnership encompassing economic, political, cultural, and security dimensions. This relationship, rooted in historical ties and mutual interests, has garnered significant global attention due to its implications for international relations, economic development and geopolitical dynamics.

Historical Context : The foundations of China-Africa relations were laid during the mid-20th century, marked by shared experiences of colonialism and a mutual desire for sovereignty and development. In the 1950s and 1960s, China supported African liberation movements, providing political backing and material assistance. This solidarity was exemplified by projects like the construction of the TAZARA Railway in the 1970s, symbolizing China's commitment to African development.

Economic Engagement : In recent decades, economic collaboration has become the cornerstone of China-Africa relations. China has emerged as Africa's largest trading partner, with bilateral trade reaching a record $ 282 billion in 2023. Approximately 20% of sub-Saharan Africa's exports are destined for China, while about 16% of the region's imports originate from China.

Chinese investments have been pivotal in developing Africa's infrastructure, including roads, railways, ports, and energy projects. Initiatives such as the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, constructed by China in 2012, underscore Beijing's commitment to infrastructure development.

Political and Diplomatic Relations : China's diplomatic strategy in Africa is characterized by high-level visits, bilateral agreements and participation in multilateral forums. A notable tradition is the annual visit of China's foreign minister to African countries, a practice maintained for over three decades, reflecting the importance Beijing places on its African partnerships.

The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), established in 2000, serves as a central platform for collective dialogue and cooperation. At the latest summit in Beijing, President Xi Jinping announced $ 51 billion in new funding for African nations, emphasizing China's commitment to deepening ties and supporting development across the continent.

Cultural and Educational Exchanges : China has actively promoted cultural diplomacy in Africa through educational programs, language institutes, and media initiatives. Confucius Institutes across the continent offer Chinese language and cultural education, fostering people-to-people connections. Additionally, China provides scholarships and training programs for African students and professionals, enhancing educational and technical capacities.

In 2022, China took a significant step to deepen its influence in Africa when the Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Leadership School in Tanzania started functioning. Built at an estimated cost of $ 40 million, this political training institution aims to shape the future leaders of Africa by imparting governance principles aligned with the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) ideology.

The inaugural cohort of 120 officials comprised representatives from six African countries with deep historical ties to China. These nations, namely South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Tanzania, are all governed by liberation parties that rose to power through pre-independence struggles. Notably, these countries, along with Botswana, form the Former Liberation Movements of Southern Africa, an informal alliance focused on addressing governance challenges and sustaining their political dominance.

China's establishment of this political school is a strategic move to strengthen its relationships with the ruling elites of these nations. By providing a platform for policymakers from these liberation parties to enhance their governance skills, China aims to bolster its influence in the region. This initiative underscores China's growing role in shaping Africa's political landscape and fostering closer ties with its leadership.

Security Cooperation : Security collaboration has become an increasingly significant aspect of China-Africa relations. China has participated in United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa and engaged in bilateral security assistance, including military training and equipment supply. This cooperation aims to address regional security challenges and promote stability, aligning with China's broader strategic interests.

Criticisms and Challenges : Despite the strengths of China-Africa relations, several critiques and challenges have emerged :

- **Debt Trap :** Concerns have been raised about the debt implications of Chinese loans for African countries. Critics argue that large-scale borrowing for infrastructure projects may lead to unsustainable debt levels, potentially compromising economic stability.
- **Labour and Environmental Standards :** Chinese projects in Africa have faced scrutiny over labour practices and environmental impacts. Issues such as the employment of Chinese labour over local workers and

environmental degradation have sparked debates about the long-term benefits of these projects for African nations.

- **Skewed Relationship :** Some analysts view China's engagement in Africa as driven by strategic interests, including access to natural resources and geopolitical influence. This perspective raises questions about the balance of benefits in the partnership.

China's Influence Game

China's growing role as a mediator is part of its larger strategy to establish an alternative world order. Recognizing the strategic importance of Africa in achieving this objective, Beijing has been intensifying its diplomatic and economic engagement with the continent. With 55 member states, Africa represents a powerful bloc in multilateral forums, and its support is vital for China's effort to reshape the global balance of power.

Today, China's influence in Africa spans economic, political and cultural dimensions, underpinned by significant investments in infrastructure, industry and technology. For instance, Beijing has financed large-scale projects such as railways, highways and energy plants across Africa, aiming to stimulate economic growth and strengthen ties with African nations. Notable examples include the construction of Kenya's Standard Gauge Railway and Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam. These initiatives, while beneficial in addressing Africa's infrastructure deficits, also serve China's broader strategic goals by deepening its foothold in the region and securing access to critical resources and markets.

Institutions such as the Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Leadership School in Tanzania, established with Chinese funding, reflect Beijing's intention to influence political systems and decision-making processes across the continent.

In summary, China's growing involvement in Africa is part of its strategic game of influence aimed at shifting the global balance in its favor. By acting as a mediator, investing in infrastructure and supporting governance initiatives, Beijing is positioning itself as a key player in shaping the future of international relations. Its engagement in Africa underscores the continent's importance in China's broader strategy to establish itself as a global leader in an increasingly multipolar world.

Implications for India

China's growing influence in Africa presents challenges for India, particularly in the realms of strategic competition, economic engagement, and diplomatic relations.

Strategic Implications : China's increased presence in Africa, through investments and political engagements, competes with India's long-standing ties to the continent. China's active role in mediating conflicts, such as the Saudi Arabia-Iran and Niger-Benin disputes, positions it as a rising global mediator, potentially diminishing India's influence. Additionally, China's effort to secure Africa's support in multilateral forums like the UN are critical, as Africa's 55 nations represent a significant voting bloc, which could challenge India's diplomatic efforts, including its bid for a permanent Security Council seat.

Economic Implications : China's investments far outweigh India's in Africa, particularly in infrastructure and resource extraction. With China-Africa trade reaching $ 282 billion, compared to India-Africa trade of $98 billion, India faces difficulty in competing for key sectors. Furthermore, China's loans to African nations have raised concerns over debt traps, potentially tying African economies more closely to Beijing, limiting India's access to African markets.

Diplomatic Implications : China's extensive diplomatic efforts, such as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), offer African nations alternative partnership models. This poses a challenge for India's own diplomatic initiatives, such as the India-Africa Forum Summit, as India vies for African support in global institutions. Moreover, China's growing influence in Africa could hinder India's leverage in multilateral negotiations.

Security Challenges : China's investments in African ports, such as those in Djibouti and Kenya, enhance its strategic presence in the Indian Ocean, creating a direct maritime security challenge for India. This 'String of Pearls' strategy by China threatens India's dominance in the region and necessitates stronger maritime partnerships with African countries.

Way Forward for India : India can differentiate itself by focusing on sustainable development, capacity building and technological transfer. Emphasizing responsible partnerships and avoiding debt dependence could help India counter China's growing footprint. Additionally, leveraging its historical and cultural ties with Africa, as well as collaborating with global partners like Japan and the US, can help India maintain a strategic presence in the region.

Conclusion

In conclusion, China's growing influence in Africa presents challenges for India, but also offers opportunities to build sustainable, strategic partnerships based on shared growth and historical ties. India can continue to play a significant role in Africa's development through targeted strategies. China's evolving diplomatic relationship with Africa, while offering development opportunities, also presents challenges, and will play a key role in shaping the future global geopolitical and economic landscape.

Practice Question for Mains

Q. Examine the role of China's diplomacy in Africa in reshaping the global geopolitical landscape. How can India leverage its historical ties and sustainable development model to counterbalance China's growing presence on the continent ?

(250 words)

PDJanpan

Important Concepts in News

Art & Culture

Indus Script

Reason for Discussion

On December 6, 2024, Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced a $ 1 million reward for experts or organisations for deciphering the script of the Indus Valley Civilisation for everyone to understand.

About the Script

- It is a pictographic script with human or animal motifs, including mythical 'unicorn'. Inscriptions are found on seal stones, terracotta tablets and occasionally on metals.
- It is an unknown writing system with very short inscriptions, comprising no more than five signs on an average. The longest inscription covers 26 signs.



- It is generally written right to left. Longer texts used Boustrophedon style-written from right to left and from left to right in alternate lines.
- 3500 specimens of the script from approximately 60 excavation sites have been discovered.

Difficulty in Deciphering the Script

Even after more than 100 years of discovery of the Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC) by Sir John Marshall, its script still remains a mystery after more than 100 documented attempts to decipher the writing system. Three main reasons are :

- **Absence of Multilingual Inscriptions :** Multilingual inscriptions enables comparison of unknown script with known script. Though, IVC had robust trade links with Mesopotamian Civilisation, but no multilingual inscriptions have been discovered so far.
- **Language not Known :** The IVC scripts falls in the category of 'unknown script of an unknown language.' Hence, allocating phonetic sounds to the script's symbol has been difficult for the linguistic experts.
- **Less Information about the IVC :** Greater the availability of material, higher the likelihood of script being deciphered. Although, some 3500 seals have been discovered at IVC, but scholars do not have enough material to analyse and decipher the script. Furthermore, many Harappan sites remain undiscovered and those which have been uncovered remain unexplored.

The Dravidian Connection

- The study 'Indus Signs And Graffiti Marks of Tamil Nadu—A Morphological Study' by K. Rajan, and R. Sivananthan of the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology, identified 'parallels' in more than 90% of the graffiti marks, and 60% of the base signs of the South India with the Indus script.
- The study also indicates that when the Indus Valley was going through Copper age; South India was in the Iron Age.
- Asko Heikki Siegfried Parpola, a Finnish Indologist, has claimed to have found the old Tamil names of all planets in the Indus script, which has Dravidian roots.
- The existence of Brahui, an extant Dravidian language spoken in Balochistan, lends further weight to the Dravidian hypothesis.

Disagreements on Several Aspects of Indus Script

- Archaeologist S.R. Rao postulated in 1982 that the script contained 62 signs. However, according to Parpola, it has 425 signs, and 676 signs according to Bryan K. Wells.
- Parpola has rejected the linkages between Indus script and Sanskrit, stating that the Aryans came in the Indus Valley in the 2nd Millennium BCE, which is after the Indus Valley Civilisation. According to him, the Indus script is logo-syllabic, and of similar nature with that of the Egyptian hieroglyphic writing, and hence, rejected the view that it is not a language-based writing system.

Way Forward

- A lot more archaeological work needs to be carried out to provide philologists, epigraphists and linguists greater opportunity to understand the writing system.

Question for Mains

Q. Discuss the main challenges in deciphering the Indus Script. Also throw light on its linkages with the Dravidian script ?

Health

Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV)

Reason for Discussion

As per the report of the Union Health and Family Welfare on January 6, 2025, ICMR had detected two cases of Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

What is Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) ?

- It is an enveloped single-stranded RNA virus belonging to the *Pneumoviridae* family, to which Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), measles and mumps, too, belongs.
- It causes both upper and lower respiratory tract infections, which surges in winter and early spring.
- Unlike SARS-CoV-2 which caused COVID-19 pandemic, HMPV is not a new virus. It was first identified in 2001 in the Netherlands. However, being an RNA virus, it is susceptible to mutation.

Spread, Symptoms and Diagnosis

- HMPV spreads through direct contact between people or when someone touches surfaces contaminated with the virus. Secretions from coughs and sneezes, shaking hands and hugging with infected people, etc., are some modes of spread of virus.
- It causes mild infection similar to common cold, which includes cough, nasal congestion, sore throat, fever and wheezing. Children, elderly people and immuno-compromised persons are more susceptible to the infection and developing complications.
- The estimated incubation period is three to six days, with illness cured within few days, with rest and supportive care at home. However, medical care is required for complications such as bronchitis or pneumonia, which may develop in immune-compromised persons.
- It is diagnosed through two tests : RTPCR-based Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (NAAT); and Enzyme-linked Immunosorbent Assays (ELISA).

Treatment and Preventive Measures

- Antibiotics does not work against HMPV. Also, there is no vaccine and no specific antiviral to treat HMPV. However, early detection can help manage symptoms and prevent complications, including routine testing for the virus.
- Precautionary measures must be taken such as hand hygiene, wearing mask and avoiding crowded places, especially during peak seasons.
- People with lung conditions such as asthama or Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) must take extra precautions.

Global Status of HMPV

- The current surge of HMPV in the northern hemisphere, including China, is due to low temperature. Viruses survive better in the cold and they pass more easily from one person to another as people stay indoors more often. The United States and the United Kingdom are witnessing surge in HMPV cases since October, 2024.
- Malaysia has also been witnessing surge in HMPV cases, with cases being reported in Hong Kong; and Japan is also closely monitoring the situation.

HMPV and India

- Between 2016-18, HMPV was found in 3·4% of patient samples during multi-centre study on respiratory infections.
- Researchers from JIPMER (Puducherry) found 9·6% of HMPV in samples during the HMPV outbreak in Puducherry between November 2022 and March 2023. It was more prevalent in children below the age of 1 year with the history of wheezing and seizures. The new lineages of the virus were also identified.
- After the 2006 bird flu outbreak and 2010 H1N1 outbreak, ICMR and Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme started testing samples of patients with respiratory illness for strains of influenza virus, RSV, HMPV and Adenovirus.
- Recent data from the network shows that Influenza A H3N2, Influenza B Victoria lineage and RSV are common cause of respiratory illness during the last week of December and first week of January.

Question for Prelims

Q. Choose the correct statement :

(A) HMPV is a DNA virus and is not susceptible to mutation

(B) Antibiotics are effective against infections caused due to HMPV

(C) HMPV was first identified in 2001 in China

(D) ELISA is one of the diagnostic tests for HMPV

Ans. (D)

Environment

Biodiversity Credits

Reason for Discussion

A recent study published in the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, has highlighted "deep uncertainties" within the biodiversity credit market and questioned whether its benefits truly outweigh the potential harms.

About Biodiversity Credits

- Biodiversity credits are a verifiable, quantifiable and tradeable financial instrument that rewards positive nature and biodiversity outcomes, such as, species, ecosystems and natural habitats, through the creation and sale of either land or ocean-based biodiversity units over a fixed period.
- It differs from the Biodiversity Offset, which focuses on mitigating the impact of new infrastructure development.
- According to the World Economic Forum, the current market value is estimated at $ 8 million, which is expected to grow to $ 2 billion by 2030 and $69 billion by 2050.

Key Developments in Biodiversity Credits Market

- In 2022, the World Economic Forum (WEF) launched the *Biodiversity Credits Initiative* for building the business case for development of the Biodiversity Credit markets to unlock new financing for measurable positive outcomes for nature and its stewards.
- The Biodiversity Credit Alliance (BCA) aims to close the biodiversity financing gaps through innovative financial tools like biodiversity credits to leverage

private investments. It was launched during the 15th COP of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in December 2022, in Montreal, Canada.

- The International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits (IAPB), established in June 2023, is an independent initiative established by France and the UK, to facilitate the creation and growth of biodiversity credit markets through enabling policy and regulatory mechanisms, which are credible, timely, and coherent on an international level.
- Several Biodiversity Credit schemes launched worldwide are Terrasos, GreenCollar, ValueNature, CreditNature, Wilderlands.

Financial targets under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework :

- **Target 19 :** Mobilize $ 200 billion per year for biodiversity from all sources, including $ 30 billion through international fnance.
- **Target 19(c) :** Leveraging private finance through impact funds and other instruments to invest in biodiversity.
- **Target 19(d) :** Stimulating innovative schemes such as payment for ecosystem services, green bonds, biodiversity offsets and credits, benefit-sharing mechanisms.

Challenges

A study published in the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* has highlighted several challenges :

- **Fungibility or Interchangeability :** Some methodologies attempt to standardise biodiversity gains across ecosystems, continents and biomes, overlooking the unique, place-specific importance of biodiversity.
- **Quantification :** Assigning numerical value to the ecosystems or classifying it as healthy or unhealthy ignores species interactions, cultural significance and the intrinsic value of biodiversity to Indigenous peoples and local communities, which are difficult to quantify.
- **Detection :** Metrics for detection are significantly uncertain for confirming that biodiversity has either been conserved or restored.
- **Demonstrating Additionality :** Showing that investments lead to positive biodiversity outcomes beyond business-as-usual is another challenge as additional investment does not always guarantee success.
- **Calculating Leakage :** Most of the methodologies lack clear guidance on how to calculate the leakage occurring when harmful activities such as deforestation are displaced to other areas.
- **Lack of Standard Measurement :** Nearly all methodologies, except one, sell biodiversity credits based on area, measured in hectares, issued for five years but can range from one month to the entire duration of a project. However, forest carbon credits use the standardised unit of one tonne of carbon dioxide (CO_2), or CO_2 equivalent.

Way Forward

- **Preference for Nature-based solutions :** Instead of market-based solutions with short-term impact, priority must be given to nature-based solutions such as expansion of protected areas, restoring ecosystems, community-based conservation, etc. Biodiversity loss must be prevented by limiting fossil fuel extraction, unsustainable agricultural practice, deforestation, etc. and promoting circular economy.
- **Metric for Measurement :** Context-specific metrics must be developed which takes into account species interaction, ecosystem vitality and cultural significance.
- **Regulation and Oversight :** Enforcement of regulation on the voluntary biodiversity credit market would require very substantial industry-generated will, as well as transparency and civil society scrutiny.

The Government of India notified the **Green Credit Rules** on 12th October, 2023 under the Environment Protection Act, 1986, as mechanism to encourage voluntary plantation activity across the country, resulting in award of Green Credits and to build an inventory of degraded land which can be utilised for Afforestation programmes.

Question for Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements :

I. The World Bank launched the Biodiversity Credit Initiative in 2021.
II. The Green Credit Rules have been notified under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1976.
III. Article 18 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework aims for mobilizing $100 billion annually.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I is correct
(B) Only I and II are correct
(C) All I, II and III are correct
(D) All I, II and III are incorrect

Ans. (D)

Science & Technology

GPS Spoofing

Reason for Discussion

On December 25, 2024, GPS interference was observed on the Embraer jet involved in the Azerbaijan Airlines crash, killing 38 people on board. GPS spoofing surged 500% in 2024, as per the report of OPS Group.

What is GPS Spoofing ?

Also known as GPS Simulation, it involves manipulating a GPS receiver by broadcasting false GPS signals, which results in the GPS device providing inaccurate location data. It is a form of cyberattack which undermines the reliability of GPS data and poses significant security challenges.

How it Works ?

It exploits the weak signal strength of GPS satellites which is send to GPS receivers on the Earth. The attacker sends counterfeit GPS signals which are stronger than the weaker signals of the GPS satellites, tricking the receiver to recognize them as authentic signals. The processing of these fake signals leads to inaccurate location information.

Threats from GPS Spoofing

- **Navigation :** Misleading GPS signals can potentially thwart a ship or aircraft from its course, potentially leading to accidents. According to the report published by OPSGROUP in September 2024, around 1,500 flights per day were affected by spoofing.
- **Industries :** Several industries such as logistics and supply chain, energy and telecommunications, including food delivery apps are affected by the inaccurate GPS signals.
- **Defence and Security :** GPS spoofing in conflict zones is employed for counteracting hostile drones, disrupting GPS-guided munitions, or misleading enemy navigation systems. Civil aviation is major victim of GPS spoofing in conflict zones. For example, the GPSjam portal lists India's borders with Pakistan and Myanmar as among the top five regions where more than 10% of aircraft reported low navigation accuracy.
- **Financial Fraud :** Manipulation of location-based services by sending inaccurate GPS signals for carrying out fraudulent financial transactions.

Current Status

- As per the September 2024 OPSGROUP report, the first series of GPS spoofing was identified in September 2023 in the area of northern Iraq, centred on Baghdad.
- In 2024, new spoofing locations were identified in the Black Sea region, western Russia and the Baltics, the North and South Korea border areas, western Ukraine and the India-Pakistan border. The Nicosia, Beirut, Tel Aviv and Cairo Flight Information Regions (FIRs) in the Eastern Mediterranean are also highly affected region.
- Global instances of GPS spoofing have risen from impacting 300 flights daily to 1500 flights impacted daily in August, 2024.
- In November 2024, South Korea military reported that North Korea had staged GPS interference complicating aircraft and ship operations, especially in the Yellow Sea.
- Israel reportedly employed GPS spoofing to shield against Iranian missile attacks.

Measures to Improve the Operational Safety of Civil Aviation

- 14th Air Navigation Conference of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) (Montreal; 26 August-6 September, 2024) recommended measures such as improved guidance for pilots, enhanced information sharing among stakeholders and establishment of a global contingency plan for mitigating GPS interference.
- It recommended that ICAO's member countries' military to notify aviation authorities, spectrum regulators and ANSPs (Aviation Navigation Service Providers) about their GNSS intentional interference activities whenever possible.
- A global and national policy framework outlining the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in preventing and responding to GPS spoofing attacks.
- Spoofing Detection and Alerting Service (SDAS), notifies crews of GPS spoofing along their active flight path, which can significantly improve the safety of civil aviation.

Practice Question for Mains

Q. What do you understand by the term 'GPS Spoofing' ? Discuss its implications. Also suggest remedial measures to minimize its impact.

Sonobuoy

Reason for Discussion

During a meeting between Shri Ajit Doval, the National Security Advisor of India and his US counterpart, Jake Sullivan on January 6, 2025, announced cooperation on the co-production of US sonobuoys for Undersea Domain Awareness (UDA) for the Indian Navy.

What are Sonobuoys ?

- They are critical anti-submarine warfare components, fitted with expendable electro-mechanical acoustic sensors to detect submarines and ships by relaying underwater sounds.
- The sensors descend below water to a predetermined depth for detecting acoustic signals, whereas, radio transmitter remain on the surface to relay communication to the host aircraft or ships. They are expendable and can be used only once.
- Group of sonobuoys deployed automatically in a pattern upon making impact with water enables tracking of ships and submarines by finding out their exact locations.

Types of Sonobuoys

- Passive Sonobuoys only receive acoustic signals from adversarial ships or submarines and relay it back to host aircraft or ships. For example, AN/SSQ-53G is a passive sonobuoy operating at a depth of 300 meters, and utilizes DIFAR (Directional Frequency Analysis and Recording) technology.
- Active Sonobuoys generate sound waves and receives the echo from adversarial ships or submarines to transmit it back to host aircraft or ships. For example, AN/SSQ-62F is an active sonobuoy, operating at a depth of more than 450 metres, and utilizes Directional Command Active Sonobuoy System (DICASS) technology.
- Special Purpose Buoys such as AN/SSQ-36 measures water temperature to improve sonar accuracy by refining sound propagation calculations and plays a supporting role in enhancing overall ASW detection.

Significance for the Indian Navy

- **Precision Attack :** It will enable the Indian Navy for carrying out precision attack through air-launched torpedoes.
- **Maritime Security :** They are useful in protecting carrier strike groups from submarine attacks.
- **Strategic Importance :** They are helpful in monitoring submarines in the strategic Indo-Pacific waters and addressing growing Chinese submarines threat in the region.

India-US Cooperation on Sonobuoys

- As per the announcement in January 2025, USA's Ultra Maritime (UM) and India's Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) through a first-of-its-kind partnership on co-production of US sonobuoys, will jointly supply and manufacture sonobuoys for the Indian Navy as per US Navy standards, with production split across the US and India, in accordance with 'Make in India' vision.
- They will jointly pursue new sonobuoy technologies to optimize their acoustic performance in the unique environment of the Indian Ocean.
- In August 23, 2024, US State Department approved the sale of sonobuoys for the MH-60 Romeo helicopters. Procuring AN/SSQ-53G, AN/SSQ-62F and AN/SSQ-36 was part of this deal. Moreover, India already operates the American sonobuoys from the P-8I maritime surveillance and anti-submarine warfare aircraft.

Question for Mains

Q. Explain the technological significance of advanced sonobuoys for Anti-submarine Warfare (AWS). How it contributes to the Indian Navy's vision of 'Net Security Provider' in the Indian Ocean Region ?

Agriculture

Farmers Producer Organisations (FPOs)

Reason for Discussion

The Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) in its recent analysis highlighted issues affecting India's Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). It also suggested reforms for FPOs.

What are FPOs ?

A Producer Organisation (PO) is a legal entity formed by primary producers such as farmers, milk producers, fishermen, weavers, etc. It can be in the form of company or cooperative societies providing for sharing of benefits/profits among its members. Ownership control is always with members and management is thorough the representatives of the members.

Farmers Producer Organisations (FPOs) consist of farmers as the members and it is promoted by the Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC.)

FPO Service Model : Providing End-to-End Services to Farmers

- **Financial Services :** It provides loans for crops, purchase of implements, etc.
- **Input Supply Services :** Quality inputs at low costs such as fertilizers, pesticides, seeds, sprayers, pumpsets, etc.
- **Procurement and Packaging Services :** FPOs procure agriculture produce from its members; and does storage, value addition and packaging.
- **Marketing Services :** Direct marketing after procurement of agricultural produce. It helps farmers to cope better with challenges such as distress sales, price fluctuations, transportation, quality maintenance etc.
- **Insurance Services :** The FPO provide various insurance like Crop Insurance, Electric Motors Insurance and Life Insurance.
- **Technical Services :** FPO promotes best practices of farming, maintain marketing information system, diversifying and raising levels of knowledge and skills in agricultural production and post-harvest processing that adds value to products.
- **Networking Services :** Making channels of information such as product specifications, market prices and other business services available to rural producers; facilitating linkages with financial institutions, building linkages of producers, processors, traders and consumers, facilitating linkages with government programmes.

Central Sector Scheme for FPOs

- The Government of India is implementing the Central Sector Scheme (CSS) for the "Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)" to form and promote 10,000 new FPOs.
- As on June 30, 2024, 8875 FPOs have been registered across the country.

Limitations Faced by FPOs

- About 80% FPOs have limited market access. They are unable to identify and reach buyers, manufacturers, processors and exporters.
- Though more than 8000 FPOs are registered with the Ministry of Agriculture, but there is lack of information on products they cater. Hence, limiting their access to foreign buyers.
- Limited e-commerce adoption hinders their market visibility.
- About 72% of FPOs find the domestic standard-setting process too complex and lack adequate knowledge of export standards and requirements.
- Varying standards of compliance and market access by different institutions such as APEDA, FSSAI, Spices Boards creates confusion for FPOs.

Way Forward

- Developing a product-specific database of FPOs for improving traceability of FPOs. Product-specific training must be provided for ensuring compliance with standards and regulations of markets.
- On-boarding FPOs on e-commerce platforms such as ONDC and e-NAM for improving market accessibility.
- Farmers must be informed about the global standards related to sanitary and phytosanitary measures crucial to avoid rejection of India's agricultural products in global market.
- Replicating successful model of Kandhamal Apex Spices Association for Marketing (KASAM) for promoting FPOs.

Question for Mains

Q. Discuss the challenges faced by Farmer Producers Organisations (FPOs). Also discuss how it can be made effective.



Compendium

Indian Polity and Constitution

- Which article in the Indian Constitution deals with 'Equal justice and free legal aid' ? **—Article 39A**
- When were the Fundamental Duties incorporated in the Indian Constitution ? **—1976**
- Which part of the Indian Constitution deals with the State governments under Article 152 to 237 ?

—Part VI

- Part XVIII of the Indian Constitution deals with the Emergency Provisions from Article **—352 to 360**
- The 91st Amendment Act, 2003 specified the total numbers of ministers including the PM in the Union Council of Ministers up to

—15% of the total strength of the Lok Sabha

- Who is considered as the channel of communication between the President and the Union Council of Ministers in India ? **—The Prime Minister of India**
- Articles 52 to 78 in Part V of the Constitution of India deal with **—The Union Executive**
- The President of India can give his assent to or withhold his assent to a bill approved by Parliament under

—Article 111

- How many members of Departmentally Standing Committees of Parliament are taken from Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha ?

—21 and 10 respectively

- When was the National Human Rights Commission established ? **—On 12 October, 1993**

Indian National Movement

- Author of the 'History of the Indian National Congress' is **—Pattabhi Sitaramaya**
- Who was the chief defence advocate during the INA trial at the Red Fort in 1945 ? **—Bhulabhai Desai**
- In which session was Surendranath Banerjee's National Conference merged with the Indian National Congress ? **—Calcutta Session, 1886**
- Mahatma Gandhi launched his historic salt movement with 'Dandi march' on March 12, 1930 with

—78 followers

- Which two provinces had totally non-Congress ministries after the 1937 elections ?

—Punjab and Bengal

- Who was the President of Central Legislative Assembly in 1925 ? **—Vitthal Bhai Patel**
- 'Abhinava Bharat Society' was a revolutionary group mainly active in **—Maharashtra**
- Which Indian leader was popularly known as 'Andhra Kesari' ? **—T. Prakasham**
- Which Indian leader described the plight of Indians under cruel British rule in India in his books 'The Economic History' and 'Famines in India' ?

—R.C. Dutt

- Who was the founding President of the Gadar Party at San Francisco ? **—Sohan Singh Bhakhna**

History and Culture of India

- To which period do the sites of Ellora and Elephanta belong ? **—Rashtrakuta**
- From which site of Prehistoric age has evidence of cremating dog with man found ? **—Burzahom**
- In which edict did Emperor Ashoka said having full faith in Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha ?

—In Bhabru edict

- Which King in ancient India retained the title of Senapati even after becoming the King ?

—Pushyamitra Sunga

- What was the name of the capital of Kosala mahajanapada in ancient India ? **—Shravasti**
- Which city was named Khizrabad by Alauddin Khilji after his son Khizr Khan ? **—Chittor**
- Which prominent member of emperor Akbar's court died in a royal expedition in 1586AD against Yusufzais ? **—Birbal**
- Daswant and Basawan were two great painters in the royal court of **—Emperor Akbar**
- Who was the Mughal ruler in Delhi at the time of Nadir Shah's attack on India ?

—Muhammad Shah

- Who was the British Governor-General when Sati system was declared illegal and punishable ?

—Lord William Bentinck

Economic Affairs of India

- India recently signed a global treaty about industrial designs. The name of treaty is

—Riyadh Design Law Treaty

- What was the theme of the first **Maritime Heritage Conclave (IMHC 2024) ?**

— "Towards Understanding India's Position in Global Maritime History"

✶ Which Indian organization has been honoured with the OPCW-The Hague Award 2024 ?
—The Indian Chemical Council (ICC)

✶ What was India's rank on the Network Readiness Index 2024 ? **—49th rank**

✶ Where is the headquarters of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) ?
—Hyderabad

✶ In India Liquid Funds are regulated by **—SEBI**

✶ GDP deflator is a type of **—Price Index**

✶ The 'Mudra Bank' is a subsidiary of **—SIDBI**

✶ In Indian economy, agriculture belongs to
—Primary sector

✶ Demand pull inflation is a situation of
—Excess demand

Geography (India and the World)

✶ 'Veld' temperate grasslands are located in
—South Africa

✶ Which Oceanic current extends southward in the name of Agulhas current ?
—South Equatorial Current of the Indian Ocean

✶ The Gulf Stream is a system of several currents moving in **—North-easterly direction**

✶ Landform map is also known as
—Morphographic map

✶ Which is the largest fresh water lake in India ?
—Wular lake

✶ The sub-tropical high pressure belt is the source for the **—Trade winds and Westerlies**

✶ The fall in temperature in troposphere is known as
—Lapse rate

✶ The Aravalli and the Nilgiri mountains are major examples of **—Residual mountains**

✶ India's coastal area from Gujarat to Goa is called
—Konkan coastal area

✶ River Beas flowing from Himachal Pradesh and Punjab, joins the River Satluj at **—Harike**

Science & Technology

✶ Regulation of sleep in human body is done by
—Melatonin

✶ An artificial satellite can be tracked very precisely from the earth by using **—Doppler effect**

✶ Genes control characters of living organisms through **—Protein Synthesis**

✶ Odontology is the study of **—Teeth and gums**

✶ Which virus is responsible for small pox ?
—Variola virus

✶ Beri-Beri is a disease caused due to the deficiency of
—Vitamin B1 (Thiamine)

✶ What is the chemical name of 'Pearl ash' ?
—Potassium Carbonate

✶ Which acid is mainly found in Vinegar ?
—Acetic Acid

✶ In case of chemical change, what is generally affected ? **—Electron**

✶ All objects experience a buoyancy when they are immersed in a fluid. Buoyancy is
—An upward force

Agriculture

✶ Which crop is also known as 'Finger millet' ?
—Ragi

✶ COJ-64 and CO7717 are early maturing varieties of
—Sugarcane

✶ The filler plant in a mango orchard is **—Papaya**

✶ Pyrus Malus is the scientific name of **—Apple**

✶ Which crop is a major example of C4 crop ?
—Maize

✶ CHS-1 is a variety of **—Jowar or Sorghum**

✶ Short duration crops are mainly suitable for
—Dry Farming

✶ 'Metaxenia' process in date palm is related to
—Pollination

✶ 'Shree Bhadra' is a variety of **—Sweet potato**

✶ National Research Centre for Onion and Garlic is located in **—Nasik (Maharashtra)**

Environment, Biodiversity, Climate Change etc.

✶ Which country became 104th full member of International Solar Alliance (ISA) ? **—Armenia**

✶ Who is the author of the book "The Burning Forest" ? **—Nandini Sundar**

✶ The ecological relationship between flowers and insects with regard to pollination is
—Mutualism

✶ Positive changes in the base level means
—Rise in the sea level

✶ Coral reefs are mainly distributed globally in
—Tropical water

✶ What is the ideal temperature for survival of coral reefs ? **—23°C to 29°C**

✶ The ecosystems which are characterized by 'low net community production' are called
—Mature Ecosystem

✶ Ozone layer lies in the **—Stratosphere**

✶ The process of change in species making up an ecological community over time is called as
—Ecological succession

✶ The Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary which was officially declared a tiger reserve recently, is located in
—Madhya Pradesh

Communication

✶ The interaction between a teacher and students creates a zone of proximal **—Development**

✶ 'Dependency model of mass communication' was presented by **—Ball Rokeach and Defleur**

✶ A message beneath a message is referred to as
—Sub-text

✶ A good and proper interaction between reader and message will result in **—Meaning**

✶ Every communicator has to experience
—Anticipatory excitement

✶ Communication audit is generally employed in the field of **—Public relations**

✶ The major strategy of participatory communication is **—Dialogue**

✶ For communicators, epistemology is concerned with the theories of **—Knowledge**

✶ Television transmission is an example of
—Simplex communication

✶ The communicated knowledge in a classroom is accepted as **—Cultural capital**

Sports and Games

✶ Which European football club clinched the FIFA Intercontinental Cup 2024 ? **—Real Madrid**

✶ Who emerged champion of the BWF World Tour Finals 2024 Men's Singles crown ?
—Shi Yuqi from China

✶ Who emerged champion of the BWF World Tour Finals 2024 Women's Singles title ?
—Wang Zhi Yi from China

✶ Who clinched FIDE World Chess Championship 2024 ? **—D. Gukesh from India**

✶ Which team clinched Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy 2024 ? **—Mumbai**

✶ Who emerged champion of the Formula One Driver World Championship 2024 ?
—Max Verstappen of Red Bull team

✶ What is the name of the playing field or campus of 'Ice hockey' ? **—Rink**

✶ Where was India's first Day-Night Test organized ?
—Eden Gardens, Kolkata

✶ Who won FIFA Men's Player of the Year 2024 honour ?
—Vinícius Junior

✶ Who won FIFA Women's Player of the Year 2024 honour ?
—Aitana Bonmati

Miscellany

✶ UNGA declared December 21 as
—World Meditation Day

✶ Who has been named Time Person of the Year 2024 ?
—Donald Trump

✶ Who has been crowned Miss India USA 2024 ?
—Caitlin Sandra Neil

✶ Which noted Indian educationist got Bhutan's royal honour ? **—Arun Kapur**

✶ Who has been honoured with the Jamsetji Tata Award by the Indian Society for Quality (ISQ) this year ? **— Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw**

✶ 49th Parallel is a boundary line between
—USA and Canada

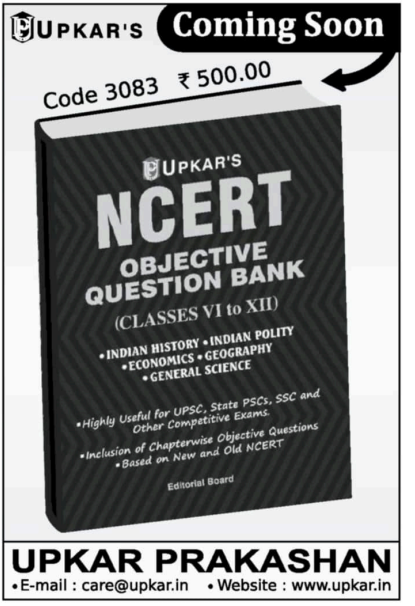
✶ What is the name for a webpage address ?
—Uniform Resource Locator (URL)

✶ Mahsu', 'Dangli' and 'Jhali' are popular folk dances of **—Himachal Pradesh**

✶ Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is observed on
—January 9

✶ Ustad Bundu Khan and Aruna Kalle are great exponents of **—Sarangi**

PDarpan



Prominent Historical Personalities of India



Aryabhatta

The Gupta age, generally known as the 'Golden Age of Ancient India' witnessed great all round development and outstanding progress in all spheres of life like society, economy, literature, art, science and mathematics. Aryabhatta was a luminary figure of this age. His contribution as a scientist and mathematician is even today highly regarded. It is widely believed that Aryabhatta was born in 476 AD in Patliputra, Magadha (now in modern day Bihar). After his early education, Aryabhatta went to Kusumapura for further advanced studies. A verse indicates he soon rose to become the head of the study centre at Kusumapura.

Aryabhatta established himself as a phenomenal mathematician by writing two great books—**Aryabhatiyam** and **Surya Sidhanta.** In these books he produced several great principles of mathematics and astronomy, solving many puzzles of science of that time. It is also widely believed that Aryabhatta established an observatory at the Sun temple in Taregana, Bihar. After giving an exceptional height to science and mathematics through his principles and formulae, he passed away in 550 AD.

- Aryabhatta's book **Aryabhatiyam** is also known as **'Arya-Shatas-Ashta'**. It means Aryabhatta's 108. Aryabhatiyam comprises 108 verses that why the name—Arya-Shastas-Ashta has been given to the book. The book has 13 introductory verses also. In this book Aryabhatta solved many problems of Algebra, Geometry and other branches of mathematics through his principles and mathematical solutions.
- Aryabhatta was the first Indian astronomer and one of the earliest scientists to discover that the earth rotates on its axis, rejecting the idea of the sun rotating round the earth.
- Aryabhatta's book **Surya Sidhanta** gave a detailed and scientific description of the causes of solar and lunar eclipses.
- He also described in detail the variations in planetary motions.
- Aryabhatta was also the first mathematician to calculate the value of 'pi', a mathematical figure which is accurate to the fourth decimal point.
- He also used the concept of zero in his writings.
- Aryabhatta in his book Aryabhatiyam gave detailed description of several astronomical and mathematical tools probably invented by him like Gnomon (shanku-yantra), a shadow tool (Chhaya-yantra) etc.
- Bhaskara I, another great mathematician is believed to be Aryabhatta's disciple. Bhaskara I wrote commentaries on the books by Aryabhatta.

Bharavi

Bharavi was a prominent figure of Sanskrit literature in ancient India. He is said to be contemporary to Kalidas. Nothing can be said with a certainty about his life history but it is widely claimed that he came from South India.

Bharavi is best remembered for his magnum opus 'Kiratarjuniya', a classical epic in Sanskrit. Kiratarjuniya is based on a story from the Mahabharata and comprises 18 cantos. In this epic, Bharavi describes the battle between Arjun, a great warrior and the mountain man in very vivid style and great language. In the end, the reality of the mountain man became clear as he was Lord Shiva who blessed Arjun with Pashupatastra, a great weapon. Kiratarjuniya is a phenomenal display of Bharavi's literary genius. Each canto of Kiratarjuniya begins with **Shree** and the concluding verse of each canto uses the word **Laxmi**. He is known for his compact and concise style. He expressed long points and dialogues in a few words. He used lofty and sublime language in accordance with the high thoughts and great story.

Prithviraj Chauhan

Prithviraj III was a valiant Rajput King and the son of Ajmer King Someshwar Chauhan. He belonged to the Chauhan dynasty in 12th century AD. Prithviraj III is best remembered for his courageous and great resistance against Muhammad Ghori's invasions of North India.



Prithviraj Chauhan

After the death of Someshwar Chauhan, Prithviraj became the ruler of Ajmer in 1178 AD. Being an able ruler and warrior, he soon developed a formidable army in Ajmer and strengthened his position as a ruler. His maternal grandfather, the ruler of Delhi declared Prithviraj the ruler of Delhi as he was very impressed with Prithviraj as a ruler and military commander. His influence and power grew in North India as he ruled over the empire under twin capitals of Ajmer and Delhi. Being an ambitious king, he attempted to expand his territorial boundaries. He brought many smaller states in Rajasthan under his authority in his initial campaigns. In 1182 he vanquished the Chandelas of Khajuraho and Mahoba. Chandela ruler Paramardi and his valiant commanders Alha and Udal gave fierce resistance to Prithviraj's forces but in the end suffered decisive defeat. In the same year, Prithviraj got phenomenal success against the Bhadanakas of Rewari and Bhiwani. In 1186 AD, Prithviraj launched a military campaign against Bhima II, the ruler of Gujarat but could not get decisive success. In the end, a peace treaty was

struck between the two rulers. In this way Prithviraj's expansion policy made many of his neighbouring states his foes and he failed to garner support from his neighbouring states against the invasions of Ghori.

In 1190 AD Shahabuddin Muhammad Ghori moved with his army towards Delhi through Punjab. Ghori captured Tabarhindah, present day Bhatinda which was located on the frontier of Prithviraj. After the success at Tabarhindah, Ghori returned to his state for massive military preparation for a fierce battle with Prithviraja. Prithviraj bravely faced the Ghori's forces in the battlefield of Tarain, about 80 miles away from Delhi in 1191 AD. Prithviraj III decimated Ghori's forces and inflicted a decisive defeat on Ghori in the First Battle of Tarain. Prithviraj III recaptured Tabarhindah and East Punjab after his phenomenal success in Tarain in 1191 AD.

Ghori returned to Tarain in 1192 with a massive army. Despite displaying great courage again, Prithviraj suffered a crushing defeat in the Second Battle of Tarain in 1192, paving the way for the Muslim rule in Delhi. Prithviraj III died in 1192 as he was sentenced to death on a charge of conspiracy against Sultan Muhammad Ghori.

- Prithviraj is also referred to as 'Rai Pithora' as he built a fort named 'Qila Rai Pithora' in Delhi.
- Chand Bardai was a famous court poet of King Prithviraj III. He presented his great deeds and life history in his epic 'Prithviraj Raso'.

Kunwar Singh

Kunwar Singh was the icon of Indian bravery and resistance to the cruel British company rule in India. He was one of the most prominent leaders of the 1857 Revolt against the British. He belonged to a family of the Ujjainiya clan of the Parmar Rajputs of Jagdispur, presently in Bhojpur district, Bihar. At the age of 80, he led the Indian forces in Bihar in 1857 Revolt and earned fame as 'Veer Kunwar Singh'. On 27th July, 1857, Veer Kunwar Singh and his troops laid siege to the district headquarters at Arrah. He held fort till 3rd August when British officer Major Vincent Eyre took Arrah back. Eyre's troops also ransacked Jagdispur in retaliation. During the revolt, he was assisted by both his brother, Babu Amar Singh and his commander-in-chief, Hare Krishna Singh. Some argue that the latter was the real reason behind Kunwar Singh's initial military success. In March 1858, Kunwar Singh occupied Azamgarh (now in UP). He later returned to his home and led a victorious battle near Jagdispur on 23rd July. The British led by Captain le Grand were defeated in this battle although Kunwar Singh was badly injured. The Indians routed the Company's troops killing about 130 men including Captain le Grand. Veer Kunwar Singh gave a good fight and harried British forces for nearly a year and remained invincible until the end. He was an expert in the art of guerilla warfare. His tactics left the British puzzled. In brief, he never accepted the British authority and tried to uproot their rule till his last breath. He died in July 1858.

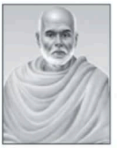


Kunwar Singh

To honour his contribution to India's freedom movement, the Republic of India issued a commemorative stamp on 23 April, 1966. The Government of Bihar established the Veer Kunwar Singh University, Arrah in 1992.

Narayana Guru

Narayana Guru was an eminent figure of social reform movement in South India. He is best known for his relentless fight against the evil of untouchability. He was born on August 22, 1856 in Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala in an Ezhava caste family. Ezhavas were the victims of the evil of untouchability in Kerala.

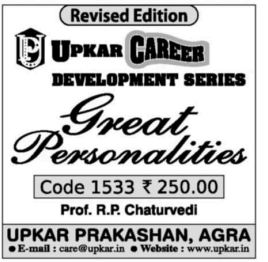


Narayana Guru

Madan Asan and Kutti Amma were the parents of Narayana Guru. Narayana Guru attained knowledge of Vedas and other Vedic scriptures. He learned Sanskrit from a famous Sanskrit scholar named Raman Pillai Asan. Being a man of intellectual mind and pious ideas, he renounced worldly life and dedicated his life for truth. He visited several places in South India. He was very disappointed seeing miserable life and deplorable conditions of lower caste people. He decided to uproot the evil of untouchability from Indian society.

He was the founder President of 'Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam', which was established in 1903, with efforts from Padmanabhan Palpu. He gave stress on two points to uplift the Ezhavas. First, total end of untouchability and second, building temples open to people of all castes. He also simplified rituals of marriage, funerals and other religious occasions to end the dominance of priests of upper castes. He succeeded in bringing awareness among people of lower castes for their basic rights. Narayana Guru rejected the 'chatur-varna' system (four caste system) terming it the root cause of evil of untouchability. After a long and relentless battle against the evil of untouchability, Narayana Guru passed away on September 20, 1928.

- In 1921, Narayana Guru gave his famous slogan, "One caste, one religion and one God for mankind" in the All Kerala Fraternity Conference held at Aluva.
- He also gave his support to the Vaikom Satyagraha (1924-25) to ensure entry for lower caste people in the Lord Shiva temples in Kerala.





Current Objective Questions

Trade And Industry

1. Consider the following statements about India's defence industry :
   I. India's defence production reached a record high of ₹ 1·27 lakh crore in FY 24 and is projected to reach ₹ 1·75 lakh crore in FY 25.
   II. 21% of defence production in India comes from the private sector.
   III. Defence exports reached at all time high at ₹ 21,083 crore in FY 24.
   IV. Around 65% of defence equipments is indigenously manufactured.
   How many of the above statements are correct ?
   (A) Only one (B) Only two
   (C) Only three (D) All four

2. The Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs hiked the Minimum Support Price for…… for 2025 market season.
   I. Milling Copra at ₹ 11582 per quintal.
   II. Ball Copra at ₹ 12100 per quintal.
   Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
   (A) Only I
   (B) Only II
   (C) Both I and II
   (D) Neither I nor II

3. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the production of Copra in India ?
   I. Kerala and Tamil Nadu are major producers of Milling Copra.
   II. Ball Copra is produced mainly in Karnataka.
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I
   (B) Only II
   (C) Both I and II
   (D) Neither I nor II

4. Which of the following statements is/are correct in relation to fiscal health of the states ?
   I. Aggregate Gross Fiscal Deficit, of the states as per cent of the GDP decreased to 2·9% in FY 2023-24 from 4·3% in FY 1998-99.
   II. Debt stock of the states was 28·5% of the GDP at end of March 2024.
   III. Both these measures are well below of the level suggested in Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Committee in 2017.
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I and II
   (B) Only II and III
   (C) Only I and III
   (D) All I, II and III

5. Which of the following industries is emerging as a foundational industry in India ?
   (A) Indian Railway
   (B) Iron and Steel
   (C) Telecommunication
   (D) Cotton Textiles

6. Total number of users (people) was highest in India among which of the following in the year 2023 ?
   (A) Access to internet
   (B) Smartphone users
   (C) Online transactions
   (D) Mobile payment user base

7. Consider the following statements in relation to renewable energy installed capacity in India as on November 30, 2024 :
   I. India has set a goal of reaching 500 GW of clean energy by the year 2030.
   II. Installed capacity of clean energy was 213·7 GW.
   III. Maximum installed capacity of clean energy was in wind energy.
   IV. Among the States Tamil Nadu emerged as the leader in wind power.
   How many statements given above are correct ?
   (A) Only one (B) Only two
   (C) Only three (D) All four

8. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the core industries ?
   I. Eight core Industries comprise 40·27% of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production.
   II. Petroleum Refinery Products has the maximum weight in Index of Eight core industries.
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I
   (B) Only II
   (C) Both I and II
   (D) Neither I nor II

9. The global share of the US Dollar in foreign exchange reserves is about …… now.
   (A) 70% (B) 63%
   (C) 58% (D) 49%

10. Consider the following statements in relation to 'Create in India', which was in the news :
    I. It is next big slogan to fuel $ 5 trillion vision.
    II. The idea has been coined by the Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting, Electronics and IT.
    Correct code is :
    (A) Only I
    (B) Only II
    (C) Both I and II
    (D) Neither I nor II

11. India's share of global trade in textiles and apparel stands at …… in FY 2023-24.
    (A) 5·6% (B) 4·8%
    (C) 3·9% (D) 2·6%

12. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the YES-TECH ?
    I. Yield Estimation System using Technology (YES-TECH) uses Remote Sensing Technology for Yield estimation with minimum 30% weightage to Technology based estimates.

II. Madhya Pradesh has adopted 100% technology based yield estimation for crop insurance scheme.

Correct code is :

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

13. Consider the following statements about the Export Inspection Council of India (EICI) :

I. The EICI was established on January 1, 1964.
II. The EICI is a statutory body.
III. The EICI advises the government on quality control pre-shipment inspection standards.
IV. Active participation in Codex Alimentarius, ISO, WTO etc., has enabled EICI of advance science-based standards, reducing trade barriers and fostering seamless international trade.

How many statements given above are correct ?

(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

14. Which of the following statements is/are correct in relation to Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) ?

I. Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) is responsible for formulating and implementing the Foreign Trade Policy.
II. The New Foreign Trade Policy 2023 was released on March 31, 2023.
III. DGFT amended the FTP, 2023 to bring legal backing in the FTP to make it necessary to do consultation with stakeholders.
IV. Government has reserved the right to take a final call in view of multiple and conflicting suggestions of the stakeholders.

Correct code is :

(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only II, III and IV
(C) Only I, III and IV
(D) All I, II, III and IV

15. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the World Food Price Index ?

I. The World Food Price Index is compiled and released by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation every month.
II. For 2024, as a whole, the WFP Index average 122·0, 2·1% lower than the 2023 value.

Correct code is :

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

16. Consider the following statements in relation to State Bank of India's research on poverty in India :

I. Poverty ratio in rural areas declined to 4·86% in FY 24 from 7·2% in FY 23.
II. Poverty ratio in urban areas fell to 4·09% in FY 24 from 4·6% in FY 23.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

17. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the level of poverty in India in FY 2024 ?

I. SBI Report on poverty estimated the poverty lines in FY 24 at ₹ 1632 for Rural Areas and ₹ 1944 for urban areas.
II. The poverty lines used for 2023-24 in the SBI report amount to just ₹ 55 per day in rural areas and ₹ 65 per day for urban areas.

Correct code is :

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

18. State Bank of India Report estimated the poverty lines for rural and urban areas for FY 2023-24. The poverty lines estimations are based on the poverty lines set up by :

(A) Y.K. Alagh Committee (1979)
(B) D.T. Lakdawala Committee (1993)
(C) Suresh Tendulkar Committee (2009)
(D) C. Rangarajan Committee (2012)

19. Which of the following statements is incorrect about the 'cashless treatment to road accident victims' scheme ?

(A) Police must be informed within 24 hours of the accident
(B) The scheme will immediately provide for the victim's cost of treatment for 7 days
(C) In case of death in hit and run case, the immediate family of the deceased person will receive ₹ 2 lakh
(D) Government will bear all the cost of treatment

20. Consider the List-I (Sectors of the economy) and List-II (Annual growth rate of GVA in 2024-25 (First Advance Estimates) :

List-I

(a) Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Fishing
(b) Mining and Quarrying
(c) Manufacturing
(d) Construction

List-II

1. 3·8% 2. 2·9%
3. 5·3% 4. 8·6%

Correct code is :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	3	4
(B)	2	1	4	3
(C)	2	1	3	4
(D)	4	3	2	1

21. As per First Advance Estimates of GVA at Basic Prices by Economic Activity at 2011-12 prices, which of the following sectors of the Indian economy registered highest growth rate in FY 2024-25 :

(A) Primary Sector
(B) Secondary Sector
(C) Tertiary Sector
(D) Mining and Quarrying sector

22. As per First Advance Estimates of National income for FY 2024-25. Real Gross Domestic Product is estimated to grow during FY 2024-25 by :

(A) 6·4% (B) 8·2%
(C) 7·3% (D) 8·6%

23. As per First Advance Estimates of National Income Nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP at Current Prices) is most likely to be grow by…… in FY 2024-25.
(A) 9·6% (B) 9·7%
(C) 10·3% (D) 11·4%

24. As per First Advance Estimates of National Income for FY 2024-25 per capita income at constant prices (2011-12) is likely to remain at :
(A) ₹ 112358 (B) ₹ 106744
(C) ₹ 99404 (D) ₹ 73899

25. As per First Advance Estimates of National Income for FY 2024-25 per capita income at current prices is most likely to be remain at :
(A) ₹ 233420 (B) ₹ 200162
(C) ₹ 184205 (D) ₹ 169496

26. Which of the following is the correct measure of Gross Domestic Product (Production/Income Approach) ?
(A) GVA at Basic Prices + Net Taxes on Products
(B) GVA at Basic Prices + Net Taxes on Production
(C) GVA at Basic Prices + Gross Tax on Products
(D) GVA at Basic Prices + Gross Taxes on Productions

27. Multilingual e-shram portal provides seamless access to various government schemes for unorganized worker in which language ?
(A) Only in English
(B) Only in Hindi, English
(C) Only in Hindi, English, Kannada and Marathi
(D) 22 languages enlisted in 8th schedule of Indian Constitution

28. Rural credit flow in India during the FY 2023-24 was :
(A) ₹ 25·49 lakh crore
(B) ₹ 24·37 lakh crore
(C) ₹ 23·85 lakh crore
(D) ₹ 23·18 lakh crore

29. India's external debt at end of September 2024 was :
(A) US $ 695·3 billion
(B) US $ 711·8 billion
(C) US $ 729·03 billion
(D) US $ 749·36 billion

30. Consider the following cities in relation to AVTAR's Top cities for women in India 2024 report :
I. Mumbai II. Chennai
III. Bengaluru IV. Pune
Which of the following sequence of the above cities is correct in terms of decreasing value of City Inclusion Score (CIS) ?
(A) III, II, I, IV (B) I, II, III, IV
(C) IV, III, II, I (D) III, I, II, IV

31. Consider the following pairs in relation to classification of the generations :
I. Generation X : Born 1946-1980
II. Generation Y : Born 1981-1996
III. Generation Z : Born 1997-2010
IV. Generation Alpha : Born 2010-2024
How many pairs given above are matched correctly ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

32. Consider the following facts about the Kisan Credit Card Scheme (KCC) :
I. KCC scheme was introduced in the year 1998.
II. It was extended to Fisheries and animal husbandry farmers in the year 2018-19.
III. 2% rebate in normal interest rate of 9% is provided with further rebate of 3% for timely repayment of loan.
IV. As on 30 June, 2023, ₹ 8·9 lakh crore was due to 7·4 crore KCC farmers.
How many statements given above are correct ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

33. India's Foreign Exchange Reserves declined to US $ 634·58 billion on the week ended January 3, 2025 from a peak of US $ 704·885 billion on week ended September 27, 2024. Which of the following factors are said to be responsible for this decline ?
I. Strengthening of the US dollar
II. Huge outflow of foreign funds from India
III. Surging crude oil prices overseas
IV. Negative sentiments in domestic equity markets
How many of the above are correct ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

34. India's banking system was in a deficit of ₹ 2·2 trillion on January 9, 2025. Which of the following measure can be adopted by the RBI to bridge the gap ?
I. Open Market Operation
II. Variable Repo Rate Auction
III. Foreign Exchange Swaps
IV. Cut in Cash Reserve Ratio
Correct code is :
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only I, II and III
(C) Only I and IV
(D) All I, II, III and IV

35. Consider the following statements in relation to recently released Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) :
I. Gini Coefficient, which is taken as a measure of consumption inequality, has declined from the level of 2011-12 to 2023-24.
II. The Gini Coefficient in rural areas declined to 0·237 in 2023-24 from 0·283 in 2011-12.
III. The Gini Coefficient in urban areas declined to 0·284 in 2023-24 from 0·363 in 2011-12.
Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) Only II and III
(D) All I, II and III

36. Consider the List-I (State) and List-II (Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure in 2023-24) in urban areas in relation to Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2023-24 by NSO :

List-I

(a) Telangana
(b) Haryana
(c) Tamil Nadu
(d) Karnataka

List-II

1. ₹ 8076 2. ₹ 8165
3. ₹ 8428 4. ₹ 8978

Correct code is :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	3	4	1	2
(B)	4	3	2	1
(C)	1	2	3	4
(D)	4	3	1	2

37. Future of Jobs Report 2025 has been published by :
(A) World Bank
(B) International Labour Organisation
(C) World Economic Forum
(D) UNCTAD

38. Consider the following facts about the Turmeric :
I. Turmeric is also known as 'Golden Spice'.
II. India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of turmeric in the world.
III. India is responsible for over 70% of global turmeric production.
IV. India has more than 85% share of world turmeric trade.
How many statements given above are correct ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

39. Which of the following statements is incorrect about the National Turmeric Board ?
(A) It was inaugurated on January 14, 2025
(B) Its headquarters is in Nizamabad (Telangana)
(C) It is a statutory body
(D) Palle Ganga Reddy is the first Chairperson of the NTB

40. Credit Information Companies in India are governed by :
(A) Reserve Bank of India
(B) Securities and Exchange Board of India
(C) Department of Economic Affairs
(D) TransUnion CIBIL

Answers with Hints

1. (D) 2. (C) 3. (C)
4. (A) Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Committee (2017) has suggested to keep Gross Fiscal Deficit within 3% of the GDP and Debt stock within 20% of the GDP.
5. (C) Telecom industry is emerging as a foundational industry in India, because every other industry is relying on it.
6. (A) 725 million people have access to internet, 655 million people use smartphone, 425 million people did online transactions and 300 million are mobile payment user base in India.
7. (B) As on November 30, 2024 total installed capacity in India was 456·757 GW. Out of which 213·70 GW was from clean energy sources—94·167 GW from solar energy, 47·959 GW from wind energy, 46·968 GW from Hydropower, 11·34 GW from B.M. Power, 8·180 GW from Nuclear Power, 5·084 GW from small hydropower, 0·612 GW from waste to energy. Among the States, Gujarat emerged as the leader in wind energy with an installed capacity of around 12·132 GW, as of July 2024.
8. (C) Petroleum Refinery Products has 28·04% weight in Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) which has 40·27% weight in IIP. It is followed by electricity generation (19·85%), Steel (17·92%), Coal (10·33%), Crude Oil (8·98%), Natural Gas (6·88%), Cement (5·37%), Fertilizers (2·63%).
9. (C)
10. (A) Year 2025 will be big on 'Create in India', going by PM Narendra Modi's end of the year Mann Ki Baat radio show. In his address on the 117th episode, Modi said that the creator economy is bringing new energy to achieve India's $ 5 trillion economy milestone.
11. (C) India was the 6th largest exporter of textiles and apparel in the world in the year 2023. The share of textiles and apparel, including handicrafts in India's total exports stood at 8·21% in 2023-24. India has a share of 3·9% of the global trade in textiles and apparels. Major textiles and apparel export destinations for India are USA and EU with around 47% share in total textiles and apparel exports.
12. (C) 13. (D) 14. (D) 15. (C)
16. (C) SBI Report's findings are based on the latest annual Household Consumption Expenditure Survey data for August 2023–July 2024.
17. (C) 18. (C)
19. (D) Government will bear upto ₹ 1·5 lakh on cost of treatment.
20. (A)
21. (C) Annual growth rate of Tertiary sector in 2024-25 (FAE) was highest (7·2%) followed by secondary sector (6·5%), Primary sector (3·6%) and Mining and quarrying (2·9%).
22. (A) Real GDP is likely to grow by 6·4% during the FY 2024-25 (FAE) as compared to 8·2% in FY 2023-24.
23. (B)
24. (A) Per capita income at constant prices in FY 2024-25 (FAE) has been estimated at ₹ 112358, which is more by 5·3% as compared to ₹ 106744 in FY 2023-24.
25. (B) Per capita income at current prices in FY 2024-25 has been estimated at ₹ 200162, which is most likely to increase by 8·7% over FY 2023-24.
26. (A)
27. (D) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's Bhashini Project has been leveraged to upgrade the e-shram portal with 22 languages.
28. (A) 29. (B) 30. (A)
31. (C) Babies born during the era 1946-1964 have been classified as 'Baby Boom Generation'. Generation X belongs to baby born 1965-1980.
32. (D) 33. (D) 34. (D) 35. (D) 36. (B)
37. (C) Future of Jobs Report 2025, published by the World Economic Forum, projected that about 170 million new jobs will be created by 2030, while about 92 million people will be displaced.
38. (C) India's share in World Turmeric Trade is over 62%.
39. (C) 40. (A)

PDargan

Multiple Choice Questions

Current Questionnaire

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1. Which of the following sports personalities has/have been awarded with Major Dhyanchand Khel Ratna Award 2024 ?
   I. Shooting Double Olympic-medallist Manu Bhaker
   II. Chess world champion D. Gukesh
   III. Men's hockey captain Harmanpreet Singh
   IV. Para-athlete Praveen Kumar
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I and II
   (B) Only II and IV
   (C) Only I, II and III
   (D) All I, II, III and IV

2. Which of the following sport personalities has/have been awarded with the Arjuna Award 2024 for their excellent performance in sports ?
   I. Jarmanpreet Singh (Hockey)
   II. Swapnil Suresh Kusale (Shooting)
   III. Aman (Wrestling)
   IV. Sajan Prakash (Swimming)
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I, II and III
   (B) Only II, III and IV
   (C) Only I, III and IV
   (D) All I, II, III and IV

3. Who among the following has/have been awarded with Lifetime Arjuna Award 2024 ?
   I. Sucha Singh (Athletics)
   II. Murlikant Rajaram Petkar (Para-Swimming)
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I
   (B) Only II
   (C) Both I and II
   (D) Neither I nor II

4. Who among the following has not been awarded with the Dronacharya Award 2024 in regular category ?
   (A) Sandeep Sangwan (Hockey)
   (B) Jaspal Rana (Shooting)
   (C) Deepali Deshpande (Shooting)
   (D) Subhash Rana (Para-Shooting)

5. Who among the following has/have been awarded with Lifetime Dronacharya Award 2024 ?
   I. S. Muralidharan (Badminton)
   II. Armando Agnelo Colaco (Football)
   Correct code is :
   (A) Only I
   (B) Only II
   (C) Both I and II
   (D) Neither I nor II

6. Which of the following university has won the Abul Kalam Azad Trophy (Overall) 2024 ?
   (A) Chandigarh University, Chandigarh
   (B) Lovely Professional University (PB), Phagwara
   (C) Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar
   (D) National Sports University, Imphal

7. Who among the following has not been awarded with the Arjun Award 2024 ?
   (A) Koneru Humpy
   (B) Vantika Agrawal
   (C) Saweety
   (D) Rakesh Kumar

8. India has lodged a 'solemn protest' with China over establishment of two new counties in Hotan prefecture because :
   (A) Parts of these regions fall in Ladakh
   (B) Parts of these regions fall in Arunachal Pradesh
   (C) Parts of these regions fall near the boundary of Bhutan and China
   (D) Parts of these regions fall near Indian State Sikkim

9. PM virtually laid the foundation stones for the following higher educational facilities in NCR Delhi :
   I. Veer Savarkar College at Roshanpura, Najafgarh.
   II. The East campus of Delhi University at Surajmal Vihar.
   III. The West campus at Dwarka Sector 22.
   Which of the above projects is/are correct ?
   (A) Only I
   (B) Only II and III
   (C) All I, II and III
   (D) None of the above

10. Which of the following statements is incorrect about the Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) ?
    (A) HMPV primarily affects children
    (B) HMPV is known to be present in about 0·7 per cent of flu cases globally
    (C) A large number of Human Metapneumovirus HMPV have been reported in China
    (D) An eight-month-old baby in New Delhi was suspected to have been infected with Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV)

11. Consider the following statements in relation to 'Pravasi Bharatiya Divas' :
    I. The 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention was organized in partnership with the State Government of Odisha from 8-10 January, 2025 in Bhubaneswar.
    II. The theme of this PBD Convention was "Diaspora's Contribution to a Viksit Bharat".
    III. The convention was addressed virtually by the Chief Guest, H.E. Christine Carla Kangaloo, President of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago.
    IV. Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas is celebrated once in every three years.

How many statements given above are correct ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

12. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the 'Bharatpol' ?
I. BHARATPOL portal has been developed by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).
II. BHARATPOL portal was launched on January 7, 2025.
III. The BHARATPOL portal will streamline the processing of all requests for international assistance through INTERPOL.
IV. BHARATPOL Portal will bring all the stakeholders (Law Enforcing Agencies) on a common platform.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only I, II and IV
(C) Only II and IV
(D) All I, II, III and IV

13. Bharatpol portal provides Indian law enforcement agencies with access to …Interpol databases.
(A) 19 (B) 15
(C) 12 (D) 9

14. Z-Morh tunnel, launched by the PM Modi, is in :
(A) Himachal Pradesh
(B) Jammu and Kashmir
(C) Ladakh
(D) Uttarakhand

15. Who among the following was the chief guest at the 76th Republic Day (2025) of India ?
(A) Sergio Mattarella OMRI OMCA, President of Italy
(B) Anura Kumara Dissanayake, President of Sri Lanka
(C) Prabowo Subianto, President of Indonesia
(D) Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of Brazil

16. Consider the following statements about the 'Polar Vortex', which was in the news recently :
I. The tropospheric polar vortex occurs at the lowest layer of the atmosphere which extends from the surface up to about 10 km to 15 km and where most weather phenomena occur.
II. The stratospheric polar vortex occurs at around 15 km to 50 km high. The stratospheric polar vortex disappears during the summer and is the strongest during the autumn.
III. The US, parts of Europe and Asia experience chilly winds when the polar vortex at the North Pole shifts from its usual position.
How many statements given above are correct ?
(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None of the above

17. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 16, 2025 dedicated three advanced naval combatants—INS Surat, INS Nilgiri , and INS Vaghsheer—to the nation at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai.
Which of the following pairs are matched correctly in this regard ?
I. INS Surat : P15B Guided Missile Destroyer
II. INS Nilgiri : Project 17A stealth frigates
III. INS Vaghsheer : P75 Scorpene submarine
Correct code is :
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) All three

18. Consider the following statements in relation to entry of private players in India into space research :
I. Pixxel and Digantara are Indian space start-ups.
II. Pixxel became the first private company in India to have its own constellation of satellites using the cutting-edge hyper-spectral frequency that allows observation of the earth in over 150 bands.
III. Digantara Aerospace announced the launch of the world's first commercial satellite Space Camera for Object Tracking (SCOT) for surveillance of objects as small as 5 cm orbiting the earth.
How many statements given above are correct ?
(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None of the above

19. Which of the following states has announced a $ 1 million prize for deciphering the script of the Indus Valley Civilisation ?
(A) Rajasthan
(B) Gujarat
(C) Tamil Nadu
(D) Haryana

20. Consider the following facts about the Indo-Afghan bi-lateral diplomatic relations :
I. India has officially recognise Taliban government of Afghanistan.
II. Indian Foreign Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar recently met Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi.
III. Government of India is providing food and other aid to Afghanistan on humanitarian ground.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only III
(C) Only I and III
(D) All I, II and III

21. Which of the following statements is correct about the 'Dragon Arc' which was in the news ?
(A) An arc shape four lane road constructed by the China along the Indo-China Border
(B) China's diplomatic move to single out India with a nexus of Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh
(C) China's diplomatic move to single out India with a nexus of Pakistan, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh
(D) Dragon Arc is a galaxy, nearly 6·5 billion light-years away from Earth

22. The Snickometer technology is used in which game ?
(A) Cricket
(B) Hockey
(C) Table Tennis
(D) Football

23. Which of the following statements is incorrect about the Norovirus infection, that was in the news recently ?

(A) Norovirus is a stomach infection

(B) Norovirus is a highly contagious virus popularly known as the 'winter vomiting bug'

(C) It can spread via contaminated food, water and surfaces. The major route is oral-fecal

(D) It was reported in China

24. Consider the following statements about the neutrinos :

I. Neutrinos are commonly known as ghost particles.

II. Neutrinos are microscopic particles that are extremely similar to electrons but have no electric charge.

III. They are one of the universe's fundamental particles and the second most abundant subatomic particle after photons.

How many of the above statements are correct ?

(A) Only one

(B) Only two

(C) All three

(D) None of the above

25. Which of the following statements is incorrect about the Jimmy Carter ?

(A) The longest-lived former US President Jimmy Carter, died on 29th December, 2024 at the age of 100 years

(B) Ownership of US-built Panama Canal was granted to Panama during his presidency

(C) Carter was awarded the 2002 Nobel Prize for Peace

(D) In 1962, he was elected to the New York Senate and in 1970 was elected Governor of the same state

26. A village, once known as the 'Daulatpur Nasirabad' was renamed as 'Carterpuri' is situated in which state ?

(A) Uttar Pradesh

(B) Haryana

(C) Rajasthan

(D) Madhya Pradesh

27. Koneru Humpy's name was in the news. Which of the following statements is incorrect about her ?

(A) Koneru Humpy won the 24 FIDE Women's World Rapid Championship

(B) It is her third World Rapid Championship, thereby making her the only Indian to achieve this incredible feat

(C) She hails from Vijayawada

(D) She defeated Indonesia's Irene Sikandar

28. Consider the following statements about SpaDeX Mission :

I. The SpaDeX mission consisted of two small spacecraft, about 220 kg each, launched by PSLV-C60 on December 30, 2024.

II. Spacecraft SDX01 is the chaser, while SDX02 is the target.

III. 10 hosted payloads from Non-Government Entities were on board the POEM-4 module of the PSLV-C60/SpaDeX Mission.

IV. India is now fourth country in the world after the US, Russia and China to master space docking.

How many statements given above are correct ?

(A) Only one (B) Only two

(C) Only three (D) All four

29. As per the analysis of the self sworn election affidavits of 31 Chief Ministers in India. Who among the following is the richest Chief Minister in the country ?

(A) N. Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh

(B) Pema Khandu, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh

(C) Siddharamaiah, Chief Minister of Karnataka

(D) Hemant Soren, Chief Minister of Jharkhand

30. According to an analysis by Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and National Election Watch (NEW), which of the following Chief Ministers has the highest number of criminal cases filed against him ?

(A) M.K. Stalin, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

(B) Hemant Soren, Chief Minister of Jharkhand

(C) Revanth Reddy, Chief Minister of Telangana

(D) N. Chandra Babu Naidu, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh

31. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the WINDS and ARG ?

I. WINDS is an acronym for Weather Information and Network Data Stations.

II. AWS is an acronym for Automated Weather Stations.

III. WINDS envisages setting up AWS at block level and Automatic Rain Ganges (ARGs) at Panchayat level.

Correct code is :

(A) Only I and II

(B) Only III

(C) All three

(D) None of the above

32. India's Rank in Henley Global Passport Index in January 2025 was :

(A) 80th (B) 85th

(C) 91st (D) 94th

33. 18th Edition of 'Military Exercise Surya Kiran' was held between the Armed Forces of :

(A) Nepal and Bangladesh

(B) China and Nepal

(C) India and Sri Lanka

(D) India and Nepal

34. As per the estimates of Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S), which of the following was the 'hottest' year ?

(A) 2024 (B) 2023

(C) 2022 (D) 2021

35. Who among the following represented India in the swearing-in ceremony of Donald Trump, President of US ?

(A) Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister of India

(B) Jagdeep Dhankar, Vice-President of India

(C) Dr. S. Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs of India

(D) Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India

36. Consider the following facts about Mahakumbha 2025 :
I. Kumbh 2024 has been given as new name Mahakumbh 2025 because it has been organised after 144 years.
II. 'Shahi Snan' has been given a new name–Amrit Snan.
III. Mahakumbh Tent city spread in 4000 hectare declared as the 76th district of the Uttar Pradesh.
IV. Mahakumbh 2025 was organised between 13 January–26 February, 2025 in Prayagraj.
How many statements given above are correct ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

37. India became …….country in the world to achieve space docking.
(A) Third (B) Fourth
(C) Fifth (D) Sixth

38. Who among the following has been appointed as the Chairman of National Human Rights Commission ?
(A) Justice V. Ramasubramanian
(B) Justice Madan Bhimarao Lokur
(C) Justice Dhananjaya Yeshwant Chandrachud
(D) Justice Ranjan Gogoi

39. Consider the following pairs :
I. Chairman, National Human Rights Commission : Justice V. Ramasubramanian
II. Chairman, UN Internal Justice Council : Justice Madan B. Lokur
III. President, Athletics Federation of India : Bahadur Singh Sagoo
IV. Governor, Reserve Bank of India : Sanjay Malhotra
How many pairs given above are matched correctly ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

40. Consider the following pairs in relation to recently appointed Governors of the states :
I. General V.K. Singh (Retd.) : Mizoram
II. Ajay Kumar Bhalla : Manipur
III. Arif Mohammed Khan : Bihar
IV. Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati : Odisha
How many pairs given above are matched correctly ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

Answers with Hints

1. (D) 22 year old Manu Bhaker became independent India's first athlete to win two medals in a single edition of the Olympics with her bronze-winning show in the 10m air pistol individual and 10m air pistol mixed team events in Paris Olympics (2024); Gukesh D. from Chennai, is the reigning World Chess Champion after securing a victory in the finals in December 2024. Gukesh is the youngest undisputed world champion; Harmanpreet led the Indian hockey team to its second consecutive bronze medal, first in Tokyo (2020) and again in Paris (2024) Olympics; Praveen Kumar is a para-athlete from Uttar Pradesh who competes in the T64 category of high jump. He won the gold at the 2024 Paris Paralympics and the silver at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics. He is also an Asian Para Games 2022 gold medalist.
2. (D) 3. (C) 4. (B) 5. (C) 6. (A)
7. (A) Koneru Humpy regained the women's World rapid chess championship after a gap of five years on December 29, 2024.
8. (A)
9. (C) PM Narendra Modi launched a slew of other infra projects for the national capital. Modi laid the foundation stone for Veer Savarkar College at Roshanpura, Najafgarh; two new campuses of the Delhi University—(i) The East campus at Surajmal Vihar and the West campus at Dwarka Sector 22.
10. (D) HMPV is a respiratory virus that primarily affects the respiratory tract. It belongs to the Paramyxoviridae family, similar to other common respiratory viruses like Respiratory Syncytial virus (RSV) and parainfluenza virus. HMPV is a leading cause of respiratory illnesses, particularly in children, older adults, and individuals with weakened immune systems. The virus is spreading rapidly in China. An eight month old baby in Bengaluru was suspected to have been infected with Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV).
11. (C) Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated once in every two years to strengthen the engagement of the overseas Indian community with the Government of India and reconnect them with their cultural roots.
12. (D) Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Amit Shah launched BHARATPOL portal developed by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in New Delhi on 7th January, 2025. BHARATPOL portal will significantly facilitate Indian LEAs enabling real-time information sharing for faster access to international police assistance.
13. (A) 14. (B) 15. (C)
16. (C) At least five people have died in the United States after a winter storm hit a large swathe of the country over the weekend. The extreme weather has been caused by the expansion of the polar vortex southwards.
17. (D) 18. (C)
19. (C) M.K. Stalin, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, has announced a $1 million prize for deciphering the script of the Indus Valley Civilisation, an enigma that has persisted for more than a century since Sir John Marshall announced the discovery of the Bronze Age culture that thrived in the Indus valley between 3300 BCE and 1300 BCE.
20. (B) Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's meeting with Taliban-ruled Afghanistan's acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi takes place in Dubai. There is no move yet to grant official recognition to the Taliban government.

21. (D) A group of physicists at Durham University in the United Kingdom have identified over 44 previously unknown stars that were hidden behind a cluster of galaxies. The newly discovered constellation of stars are located in a galaxy named Dragon Arc, nearly 6·5 billion light-years away from Earth. The Dragon Arc galaxy was unnoticed so far since it is located behind another cluster of galaxies called Abell 370.

22. (A) The snickometer is composed of a very sensitive microphone located in one of the stumps, connected to an oscilloscope that measures sound waves. When the ball hits the bat, the oscilliscope trace will pick up the sounds. At the same time, a high speed camera records the ball passing the bat.

23. (D) Norovirus is the leading cause of outbreaks from contaminated food in the United States. About 50% of all outbreaks of food-related illness are caused by norovirus. Most of these outbreaks occur in food service settings like restaurants. Infected food workers are frequently the source of outbreaks in food-service settings, often by touching ready-to-eat foods (such as raw fruits and vegetables) with their bare hands before serving them. However, any food served raw or handled after being cooked can get contaminated with norovirus.

24. (C) A neutrino is one of the so-called fundamental particles, which means it isn't made of any smaller pieces, at least that we know of Neutrinos are members of the same group as the most famous fundamental particle, the electron. But, while electrons have a negative charge, neutrinos have no charge at all. Neutrinos are also incredibly small and light. They have some mass, but not much. They are the lightest of all the subatomic particles that have mass. They're also extremely common—in fact, they're the most abundant massive particle in the universe. Neutrinos come from all kinds of different sources and are often the product of heavy particles turning into lighter ones, a process called 'decay'.

25. (D) In 1962, Jimmy Carter elected to the Georgia Senate and in 1970 was elected Governor.

26. (B) A village in Haryana once known as the 'Daulatpur Nasirabad' was renamed as 'Carterpuri' after the 39th US President Jimmy Carter visited India in 1978. Jimmy Carter along with Rosalynn Carter first travelled to the village, then 'Daulatpur Nasirabad', in 1978 Carter had a personal connection with Daulatpur Nasirabad as his mother Lillian had worked there as a health Volunteer with Peace Corps during the late 1960s.

27. (B) It is her second World Rapid Championship, thereby making her the only Indian to achieve this incredible feat. Humpy Koneru, Indian Chess Grandmaster claimed her second FIDE Women's World Rapid Chess Championship title in New York on December 29, 2024, defeating Indonesia's Irene Sukandar.

28. (D) ISRO launched the SpaDex mission on December 30, 2024 from Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. It is now expected to demonstrate in-space docking using two 220 kg satellites—Chaser and Target in a low Earth Circular Orbit.

29. (A) According to an analysis by Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and National Election Watch (NEW), N. Chandrababu Naidu, with assets worth ₹ 931 crore, is the richest Chief Minister in the country, followed by Pema Khandu (₹ 332 crore), Siddharamaih (₹ 51 crore), Hemant Soren (₹ 25 crore).

30. (C) Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has the highest number of criminal cases filed against him (89 cases), followed by M.K. Stalin (47 cases).

31. (C)

32. (B) India's ranking has dropped by five points to 85 in 2025 in Henley Global Passport Index 2025. India ranked 80th in 2024.

33. (D) The 18th edition of the Indo-Nepal Joint Military Exercise Surya Kiran conducted between 31 December, 2024 and 13 January, 2025 at Saljhandi in Nepal. Surya Kiran focused on counter-terrorism and operations in challenging terrains, the exercise featured rigorous training in jungle survival, urban warfare helibone operations and ambush tactics, fostering military cooperation and mutual preparedness.

34. (A) 2024 was the warmest year in global temperature records going back to 1850 the global average temperature of 15·10°C was 0·72°C above the 1991-2020 average, and 0·12°C above 2023, the previous warmest year on record. C3S–implemented on behalf of European Commission by the European Centre for Medium range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF).

35. (C) External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar represented India at the swearing-in-ceremony of President Donald Trump as the 47th US President on January 20, 2025.

36. (D) Actual duration of Mahakumbh was 45 days 14th January (Makar Sankranti) to 26th February (Mahashiva Ratri), but Mahakumbh Snan started from January 13, 2025, the auspicious day of Paush Poornima.

37. (B) India has become fourth country-after the US, Russia, and China-to have tested space docking capability. The technology is key to future lunar missions, building the Bharatiya Antariksh Station.

38. (A) On December 30, 2024, V. Ramasubramanian assumed the charge of Chairperson and Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi as Member of NHRC, India.

39. (D) 40. (D)

Solved Paper

UGC-NET/JRF EXAMINATION, 2024

(Held on 18-6-2024)

Political Science

1. Marxists hold that society is characterised by :
   1. Class conflict
   2. Constant harmony
   3. Irreconciliable conflict
   4. Division between the rich and poor
   5. Domination by the rich class

   Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
   (A) Only 1, 2, 3, 4
   (B) Only 1, 3, 4, 5
   (C) Only 1, 2, 3, 5
   (D) Only 1, 2, 4, 5

2. Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination was approved in :
   (A) 1964 (B) 1965
   (C) 1969 (D) 1967

3. Broadly, the term 'democracy' implies :
   1. a society based on priviledge and hierarchy.
   2. a system by the people based on equal opportunity and individual merit.
   3. a system based on principle of majority rule.
   4. a mean of filling public offices through a competitive struggle for the popular vote.
   5. a system of government that serves the interests of the people regardless of their participation in political life.

   Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
   (A) Only 1, 2, 3, 5
   (B) Only 1, 3, 4, 5
   (C) Only 2, 3, 4, 5
   (D) Only 1, 5, 3, 4

4. Kenichi Ohmae's idea of a borderless world is about :
   1. Marxism
   2. Socialism
   3. Globalisation
   4. Totalitarianism
   5. Inter connectedness of the world

   Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
   (A) Only 3 and 5
   (B) Only 1 and 2
   (C) Only 2 and 4
   (D) Only 3 and 4

5. Who described democracy as 'The Tyranny of the Majority' ?
   (A) Confucious
   (B) John Stuart Mill
   (C) Alexis de Tocqueville
   (D) Frantz Fanon

6. Which article of Indian Constitution provides power to the Governor of the state to promulgate Ordinances ?
   (A) Article 123 (B) Article 213
   (C) Article 217 (D) Article 223

7. Match List- I with List- II :

   List-I

   (Thinkers)

   (a) Kate Millett
   (b) Simon de Beauvoir
   (c) Germaine Greer
   (d) Judith Butler

   List-II

   (Books)

   1. The Female Eunch
   2. Gender Trouble
   3. Sexual Politics
   4. The Second Sex

   Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	3	4	1	2
(B)	2	4	3	1
(C)	4	3	1	2
(D)	1	4	3	2

8. Arrange the following Prime Minister of India in the chronological order.
   1. Atal Bihari Vajpayee
   2. Chandra Shekhar
   3. H.D. Deve Gowda
   4. Vishwanath Pratap Singh
   5. P.V. Narasimha Rao

   Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
   (A) 4, 2, 5, 1, 3 (B) 2, 4, 1, 5, 3
   (C) 1, 3, 2, 4, 5 (D) 3, 1, 5, 2, 4

9. Match List- I with List- II :

   List-I

   (Leaders)

   (a) Lal Bahadur Shastri
   (b) Indira Gandhi
   (c) Vinoba Bhave
   (d) Deendayal Upadhyaya

   List-II

   (Slogans/Ideas)

   1. Garibi Hatao
   2. Bhudaan
   3. Jai Jawan Jai Kisan
   4. Integral Humanism

   Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	2	3	4	1
(B)	3	1	2	4
(C)	1	4	3	2
(D)	4	2	1	3

10. Arrange the following cases in the chronological order :
    1. S. R. Bommai vs UOI
    2. Minerva Mills vs UOI
    3. Indra Sawhney's case
    4. Golaknath vs State of Punjab
    5. Keshvanand Bharati vs State of Kerala

    Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
    (A) 2, 4, 5, 3, 1 (B) 3, 2, 1, 5, 4
    (C) 4, 5, 2, 3, 1 (D) 1, 3, 5, 4, 2

11. Arrange the following Laws made by Parliament under Article 3 of the Indian Constitution in the chronological order :
    1. Andhra State Act.
    2. Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act.
    3. States Reorganisation Act.
    4. Bombay Reorganisation Act.

5. State of Arunachal Pradesh Act.

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) 3, 2, 5, 4, 1 (B) 2, 1, 3, 5, 4
(C) 1, 3, 4, 5, 2 (D) 4, 5, 1, 2, 3

12. Match List- I with List- II :

List-I

(Organisations)

(a) ASEAN
(b) European Union 2. 2002
(c) African Union3. 1967
(d) Euresian Economic Community

List-II

(Formation)

1. 2000 2.2002
3, 1967 4.1993

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	2	3	1	4
(B)	4	2	3	1
(C)	3	4	2	1
(D)	1	2	4	3

13. The book 'Political Parties : A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy' is written by :
(A) Alexander J. Groth
(B) Robert Michels
(C) J.S. Brown
(D) Bernard E. Brown

14. Which of the following is true about Expansionist Nationalism ?
1. Aggressive
2. Militarist
3. Peace loving
4. Expansionist
5. Tolerant

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) Only 2, 3, 4
(B) Only 3, 4, 5
(C) Only 1, 2, 4
(D) Only 1, 2, 3

15. Match List- I with List- II :

List-I

(Approaches)

(a) Human Relations approach to organisations
(b) Bounded Rationality
(c) Contribution - satisfaction equilibrium
(d) Self–actualization

List-II

(Proposer)

1. Chester Barnard
2. Abraham Maslow
3. Herbert Simon
4. George Elton Mayo

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	3	2	1	4
(B)	2	1	4	3
(C)	1	4	3	2
(D)	4	3	1	2

16. Arrange the following number of seats allotted, in descending order, to the Scheduled Tribes in States for Lok Sabha :
1. Madhya Pradesh
2. Rajasthan
3. Odisha
4. Maharashtra
5. Meghalaya

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) 2, 4, 3, 5, 1 (B) 1, 3, 4, 2, 5
(C) 4, 5, 3, 1, 2 (D) 3, 1, 2, 5, 4

17. Which league/society was formed in 1787 in Britain to oppose the slave trade ?
(A) Anti-Corn Law League
(B) The Black Panthers
(C) The Abolition Society
(D) The Irish Republican Society

18. Who wrote the book 'The Indian War of Independence of 1857' ?
(A) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
(B) Manmohan Singh
(C) Swami Vivekananda
(D) V.D. Savarkar

19. Globalisation promotes :
1. Market economy
2. Capital flow
3. Individual freedom
4. Equal distribution of wealth
5. Multiculturalism

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) Only 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
(B) Only 2, 3, 4, 5
(C) Only 1, 2, 5, 4
(D) Only 1, 2, 3, 5

20. Which year Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee died in Kashmir ?
(A) 1947 (B) 1953
(C) 1951 (D) 1948

21. Arrange the following Commissions/Councils as per their establishment in the chronological order :
1. Goods and Services Tax Council
2. National Commission for Women
3. National Commission for Minorities
4. National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
5. Formation of NITI Aayog

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) 3, 1, 2, 4, 5 (B) 2, 3, 4, 5, 1
(C) 1, 2, 5, 4, 3 (D) 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

22. Kautilyas elements of State consist of :
1. The King
2. Councillors, ministers and other higher officials
3. Territory and population
4. Fortified towns, treasury and allies
5. Foes

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) Only 1, 2, 3, 5
(B) Only 1, 2, 4, 5
(C) Only 1, 2, 3, 4
(D) Only 1, 3, 4, 5

23. Arrange the following formation of Inter-State Water Dispute Tribunals in the chronological order :
1. Godavari Water Dispute Tribunal
2. Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal
3. Ravi and Beas Water Dispute Tribunal
4. Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal
5. Mahadayi Water Dispute Tribunal

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) 1, 5, 3, 4, 2 (B) 4, 1, 3, 2, 5
(C) 3, 2, 5, 1, 4 (D) 1, 3, 4, 5, 2

24. Arrange the following Chief Justices of India in the chronological order :
1. H.J. Kania
2. P.N. Bhagwati
3. Ranganath Mishra
4. Madan Mohan Punchhi
5. S.H. Kapadia

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (B) 3, 1, 2, 5, 4
(C) 4, 3, 5, 2, 1 (D) 2, 4, 3, 1, 5

25. Arrange the following number of seats allotted to the States in Lok Sabha in descending order :

1. Maharashtra 2. West Bengal
3. Bihar 4. Karnataka
5. Odisha

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) 4, 1, 2, 5, 3 (B) 2, 4, 5, 3, 1
(C) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (D) 3, 5, 1, 2, 4

26. Minnowbrook-I conference was held in :

(A) 1956 (B) 1958
(C) 1968 (D) 1970

27. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I

(Former Chief Ministers)

(a) Karpoori Thakur
(b) Ram Naresh Yadav
(c) Ravi Shankar Shukla
(d) Prem Kumar Dhumal

List-II

(States)

1. Himachal Pradesh
2. Madhya Pradesh
3. Bihar
4. Uttar Pradesh

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	2	3	1	4
(B)	3	4	2	1
(C)	1	4	3	2
(D)	4	1	3	2

28. Which of the following books are related to 'political economy' ?

1. Marganthau, Politics among Nations
2. Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations
3. David Ricardo, Principles of Political Economy and Taxation
4. Karl Marx; Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts
5. J.S. Mill, Principles of Political Economy

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) Only 1, 2, 3, 4
(B) Only 2, 3, 4, 5
(C) Only 2, 4, 3, 1
(D) Only 1, 3, 4, 5

29. Which of the following are related to Liberalism ?

1. Ideology of industrialised West
2. Advocated virtues of Laissez-faire
3. Reflects the aspiration of rising industrial powers
4. Liberalism and Communism are closely linked
5. Locke was a key thinker of liberalism

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) Only 1, 3, 4, 5
(B) Only 2, 3, 4, 5
(C) Only 1, 2, 3, 5
(D) Only 4, 5, 1, 2

30. Arrange the following events in the chronological order :

1. All India Trade Union Congress set up
2. Surat split
3. Setting up of Sree Narayan Dharama Paripalana Yogam
4. Indian Trade Union Federation formed
5. Indian National Trade Union Congress formed

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) 4, 3, 2, 5, 1 (B) 2, 5, 1, 4, 3
(C) 3, 2, 1, 4, 5 (D) 5, 4, 2, 1, 3

31. Arrange the following Presidents of India in the chronological order :

1. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan
2. Dr. Zakir Hussain
3. Dr. N. Sanjeeva Reddy
4. R. Venkataraman
5. Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (B) 3, 5, 4, 1, 2
(C) 4, 3, 2, 1, 5 (D) 2, 1, 3, 5, 4

32. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I

(Political Leaders)

(a) Jyoti Basu
(b) Deen Dayal Upadhyaya
(c) Raja Dinesh Singh
(d) Bhagat Singh Koshyari

List-II

(Party)

1. Jan Sangh
2. Congress Party
3. CPI (M)
4. BJP

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	2	3	1
(B)	2	4	1	3
(C)	3	1	2	4
(D)	1	3	4	2

33. 'Uniform Civil Code' is the part of :

(A) Preamble of the Constitution
(B) Fundamental Duties
(C) Fundamental Rights
(D) Directive Principles of State Policy

34. In which book, Herbert Marcuse highlighted the totalitarian character of advanced industrial societies, based not on terror and open brutality but on their ability to exert control through the pervasive manipulation of needs, made possible by modern technology ?

(A) The Authoritarian Personal
(B) One - Dimensional Man
(C) Towards Rational Society
(D) Specters of Marx

35. Munich Agreement was signed in :

(A) 1938 (B) 1935
(C) 1936 (D) 1933

36. Who wrote the book 'The Practice of Management' ?

(A) Mary Parker Follett
(B) Peter Drucker
(C) Frederick Herzberg
(D) Paul E. White

37. Consider the following articles/subject related to Governor under Indian Constitution :

1. 155—Appointment of Governor
2. 159—Oath or affirmation by the Governor
3. 176—Special Address by the Governor
4. 123—Power of Governor to promulgate ordinance
5. 333—Appointment of District Judges by the Governor

Choose the most appropriate answer from the options given below :

(A) Only 1, 2, 3, 4
(B) Only 1, 2 and 3
(C) Only 1, 2, 3, 5
(D) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

38. Who wrote the famous book 'Man who Manage' on aspect of organizational life ?
(A) Lewis Cosers
(B) Rensis Likert
(C) Melville Dalton
(D) A.H. Maslow

39. Who wrote the book 'The Origins of Totalitarianism' ?
(A) Hannah Arendt
(B) Karl Marx
(C) John Rawls
(D) Thomas Hobbes

40. Arrange the following states into descending order as their number of members in the State Legislative Assembly (lower house) :
1. Uttar Pradesh
2. Tamil Nadu
3. Rajasthan
4. Madhya Pradesh
5. Assam
Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) 2, 1, 4, 5, 3 (B) 1, 2, 4, 3, 5
(C) 3, 4, 1, 5, 2 (D) 4, 3, 2, 1, 5

41. Consider the following Vice-Presidents of India in order to occupy office in the chronological order :
1. B.S. Shekhawat
2. K.R. Narayanan
3. M. Hidayatullah
4. B.D. Jatti
5. G.S. Pathak
Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) 4, 3, 2, 1, 5 (B) 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
(C) 2, 1, 4, 5, 3 (D) 1, 2, 5, 4, 3

42. Who wrote the book 'A plea for the Reconstruction of Indian Polity' ?
(A) Bhagat Singh
(B) Dadabhai Naoroji
(C) Jayaprakash Narayan
(D) Jawaharlal Nehru

43. Who among the following viewed nationalism as 'cultural artifacts of a particular kind, defining the nation as an imagined community' ?
(A) Ernest Gellner
(B) Johann Herder
(C) Benedict Anderson
(D) Giuseppe Mazzini

44. RTI is a means of strengthening democracy due to :
1. Openness
2. Maintaining secrecy
3. Transparency
4. Bureautic redtapism
5. Accountability
Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) Only 1, 2, 3
(B) Only 2, 4, 5
(C) Only 1, 3, 5
(D) Only 2, 3, 4

45. Arrange the following Chairman of the Finance Commission in reverse chronological order :
1. K. Santhanam
2. A.M. Khusro
3. Mahaveer Tyagi
4. N.K. Singh
5. Y.B. Chavan
Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) 4, 1, 2, 3, 5 (B) 3, 5, 4, 1, 2
(C) 4, 2, 5, 3, 1 (D) 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

46. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I

(Book)

(a) Administrative Theory
(b) Behaviour Approaches to Public Administration
(c) Emerging Synthesis in American Public Administration
(d) Administrative Theory and Public Administration

List-II

(Author)

1. Keith M. Henderson
2. Griffiths, Daniel E
3. Robert Presthus
4. R.J.S. Baker

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	1	3	2
(B)	1	4	2	3
(C)	3	2	4	1
(D)	2	3	1	4

47. The Indian Constitution ensures individual freedom by :
1. Limiting the power of Government.
2. Laying down relations between the state and individuals by demanding their powers and rights respective.
3. Defining civil rights and liberties.
4. Recognizing the fundamental rights of people.
5. No guaranteeing for the delivery of rights.
Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) Only 1, 2, 3, 5
(B) Only 2, 3, 4, 5
(C) Only 1, 2, 3, 4
(D) Only 1, 3, 4, 5

48. Match List- I with List- II :

List-I

(Political Events)

(a) Dismissal of Namboodaripad Government
(b) Operation Blue Star
(c) M.M. Punchhi Commission Report
(b) Sarkaria Commission

List-II

(Year)

1. 1987-88 2. 1984
3. 2010 4. 1959

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	3	2	4	1
(B)	2	4	1	3
(C)	1	3	4	2
(D)	4	2	3	1

49. India is emerging as a great power due to its :
1. Growing economic power
2. Diplomatic relations
3. Military capacities
4. Increasing conflicts with neighbours
5. Decreasing soft power
Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) Only 1, 2, 3
(B) Only 2, 3, 5
(C) Only 3, 4, 5
(D) Only 1, 4, 5

50. NREGA was implemented in :
(A) 2002 (B) 2006
(C) 2008 (D) 2009

51. Theory of Saptang Rajya (Postulating a seven-orgen institution of State) has been propounded by :
(A) Thomas Hobbes
(B) Kautilya
(C) John Locke
(D) Kalhan

52. Which Indian Prime Minister has ever visited Minar-e-Pakistan in Lahore ?
(A) Jawaharlal Nehru
(B) Lal Bahadur Shashtri
(C) Atal Bihari Vajpayee
(D) Manmohan Singh

53. Dag Hammarskjold appointed Secretary General of the United Nations in :
(A) 1961 (B) 1946
(C) 1951 (D) 1953

54. Hawthrone experiments pioneered a movement which came to be known as the :
(A) Public choice approach
(B) Weberian approach
(C) Parkinson's approach
(D) Human relations approach to management

55. India joined the World Trade Organization on :
(A) 1 January, 1995
(B) 11 January, 1996
(C) 1 January, 1997
(D) 11 January, 1993

56. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I
(Theories)
(a) Scientific Management
(b) Linking Pin Model
(c) Alienation of Bureaucracy
(d) New Public Administration

List-II
(Propounder)
1. Karl Marx
2. Frederick W. Taylor
3. Dwight Waldo
4. Rensis Likert

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	3	2	4	1
(B)	2	4	1	3
(C)	4	3	1	2
(D)	1	2	4	3

57. In which year Mahatma Gandhi undertook Dandi Yatra ?
(A) 1930 (B) 1928
(C) 1932 (D) 1933

58. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I
(Human Rights Conventions/ Declarations)
(a) Declaration on Torture
(b) Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
(c) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
(d) Convention on the Rights of the Child

List-II
(Year)
1. 1975 2. 1990
3. 1954 4. 1081

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	2	3	1
(B)	2	3	4	1
(C)	3	1	2	4
(D)	1	3	4	2

59. Arrange the following allocation of seats to States in Rajya Sabha (Council of States) from highest to lowest order :
1. Madhya Pradesh
2. Odisha
3. Maharashtra
4. Tamil Nadu
5. West Bengal

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) 1, 2, 4, 5, 3 (B) 3, 4, 5, 1, 2
(C) 2, 3, 1, 5, 4 (D) 4, 1, 2, 5, 3

60. In which year, Japan invaded Manchuria ?
(A) 1933 (B) 1930
(C) 1928 (D) 1931

61. By which Constitution Amendment Act, Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) was removed from the 9th schedule ?
(A) 38th Amendment, 1974
(B) 42nd Amendment, 1976
(C) 44th Amendment, 1978
(D) 52nd Amendment, 1986

62. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I
(Authors)
(a) John Rawls
(b) Hannah Arendt
(c) Plato
(d) John Locke

List-II
(Books)
1. Political Liberalism
2. A Letter Concerning Toleration
3. On Revolution
4. The Laws

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	2	1	3
(B)	1	3	4	2
(C)	3	1	2	4
(D)	2	4	3	1

63. In which general election, the prevailing dominant Congress Party lost half of the States to the opposition?
(A) 1962 (B) 1957
(C) 1967 (D) 1971

64. Who stated "History is the growth of reason to consciousness of itself and the constitutional legalistic state is the culmination of history" ?
(A) Fredrich Hegel
(B) Frantz Fanon
(C) John Locke
(D) Mary Wallstonecraft

65. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I
(Features of Indian Constitutions)
(a) Fundamental Rights
(b) Directive Principles of State Policy
(c) Emergency Power
(d) Fundamental Duties

List-II
(Borrowed from Constitutions)
1. German Constitution
2. USSR Constitution
3. American Constitution
4. Irish Constitution

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	3	4	2
(B)	4	2	3	1
(C)	2	1	4	3
(D)	3	4	1	2

66. Which Committee was appoited by Janata Party Government to review the working of the Panchayati Raj Institutions ?
(A) Andre Betelle Committee
(B) Ram Manohar Lohia Committee
(C) Jyoti Basu Committee
(D) Ashok Mehta Committee

67. The classical mercantilist strategy aimed to build States :
1. Wealth
2. Power
3. Prestige

4. Maximise export
5. Maximise import and minimise export

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) Only 1, 2, 3, 5
(B) Only 2, 3, 4, 5
(C) Only 1, 2, 3, 4
(D) Only 1, 2, 4, 5

68. Who wrote the book 'An Introduction to the Study of the Law of the Constitution' ?
(A) Albert V. Dicey
(B) Alexis de Tocqueville
(C) Fareed Zakaria
(D) Stephen P. Cohen

69. Who among the following has written the book, 'The Functions of the Executive' ?
(A) Chester Barnard
(B) Herbert Simon
(C) Chris Argyris
(D) A.H. Maslow

70. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I
(Book)

(a) The Framing of India's constitution : A study
(b) The Indian Constitution : Cornerstone of a Nation
(c) The Transfer of Power in India
(d) Kashmir : A study in India-Pakistan Relations

List-II
(Author)

1. V.P. Menon
2. Sisir K Gupta
3. B. Shiva Rao
4. Granville Austin

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	2	3	4	1
(B)	1	2	3	4
(C)	3	4	1	2
(D)	4	3	2	1

71. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I
(International Events)

(a) Gorbachev became Soviet leader
(b) Soviet invasion on Afghanistan
(c) Cuban Missile Crisis
(d) Soviet invasion on Hungary

List-II
(Year)

1. 1962
2. 1956
3. 1985
4. 1979

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	3	4	1	2
(B)	2	3	4	1
(C)	4	1	3	2
(D)	1	2	4	3

72. Arrange the following articles of Constitution of India as inserted by different Constitutional Amendments :
1. Right to education
2. National Judicial Appointments Commission
3. Right of workers to participate in management of industries
4. Entry of Ladakh in the First schedule
5. The cooperative societies

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) 2, 4, 3, 1, 5 (B) 3, 1, 5, 2, 4
(C) 1, 3, 4, 2, 5 (D) 4, 2, 5, 3, 1

73. 'Chaukhamba Model' of decentralization is propounded by :
(A) Rabindranath Tagore
(B) Ram Manohar Lohia
(C) Subhash Chandra Bose
(D) Sardar Patel

74. Finance Commission comes under which Article of the Indian Constitution ?
(A) Article 275
(B) Article 270
(C) Article 280
(D) Article 285

75. Arrange the following Committees related to Panchayati Raj Institutions in the chronological order :
1. Working Group on Panchayats and Co-operative
2. Study Team on Nyaya - Panchayats
3. Committee on Panchayati Raj Elections
4. Committee on Panchayati Raj Training Centres
5. Committee on Community Development and Panchayati Raj

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) 3, 5, 2, 1, 4 (B) 4, 3, 1, 2, 5
(C) 2, 4, 5, 1, 3 (D) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

76. Arrange the following Lok Sabha Speakers in the chronological order :
1. K.S. Hegde
2. Hukam Singh
3. Dr. Gurdial Singh Dhillion
4. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy
5. Rabi Ray

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) 4, 3, 2, 5, 1 (B) 1, 2, 4, 3, 5
(C) 2, 4, 3, 1, 5 (D) 2, 3, 4, 5, 1

77. Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia remarked 'Goongi Gudiya - (dumb doll)' about which politician ?
(A) Sarojini Naidu
(B) Sonia Gandhi
(C) Indira Gandhi
(D) Sucheta Kriplani

78. South Asian Association for regional cooperation came into being in :
(A) 1967 (B) 1985
(C) 1979 (D) 1981

79. Who wrote the book "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" ?
(A) John Rawls
(B) Mao Zedong
(C) Machivellei
(D) Mary Wollstonecraft

80. Immanuel Wallerstein's Capitalist World System consists of :
1. Poor Nations only
2. Core
3. Periphery
4. Semi Periphery
5. Islands of semi core

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(A) Only 2, 3, 4
(B) Only 1, 2, 5
(C) Only 2, 3, 5
(D) Only 1, 4, 5

81. Who wrote the book 'Engaging India : Diplomacy, Democracy and the Bomb' ?
(A) C. Raja Mohan
(B) Muchkund Dubey
(C) Jaswant Singh
(D) Strobe Talbott

82. Who stated "These has been for too much emphasis on rights and for too little on obligations. If obligations were undertaken,

rights would naturally flow from them" ?
(A) Ramasamy Periyar
(B) Kabir
(C) Jawaharlal Nehru
(D) Atal Bihari Vajpayee

83. Arrange the following Chief Election Commissions of India in the chronological order :
1. Sunil Arora
2. S.Y. Quraishi
3. T.N. Seshan
4. J.M. Lyngdoh
5. V.S. Sampath
Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) 2, 5, 1, 4, 3 (B) 1, 3, 5, 2, 4
(C) 3, 4, 2, 5, 1 (D) 4, 1, 3, 2, 5

84. Who among the following said that "Congressional Government is committee government. Congress in its committee rooms is 'Congress at work' ?"
(A) Mary Wollstonecraft
(B) Frantz Fanon
(C) Richard Cobden
(D) Woodrow Wilson

85. John Maynard Keynes criticised capitalist economies because :
1. It caused economic depression in 1930s
2. Increased unemployment
3. Market forces reduced wages
4. Reduced the demand for goods and services
5. It led to prosperity and happiness all over
Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) Only 1, 2, 3, 5
(B) Only 2, 3, 4, 5
(C) Only 1, 2, 3, 4
(D) Only 1, 2, 4, 5

86. Who stated "The world can be moulded only with the gun. Whoever wants to seize the political power of the state and to maintain it must have strong army" ?
(A) Plato
(B) Mao Zedong
(C) John Rawls
(D) John Locke

87. Arrange the following Committees and Commission on Urban Local Governments in the chronological order :
1. National Commission on Urbanisation
2. Committee on Budgetary Reforms in Municipal Administration
3. Committee on Service Conditions of Municipal Employees
4. Rural - Urban Relationship Committee
5. Taxation Enquiry Commission
Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (B) 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
(C) 2, 1, 5, 3, 4 (D) 3, 4, 1, 2, 5

88. Swami Vivekananda delivered his famous address to the Parliament of Religion in which city ?
(A) New York (B) Chicago
(C) Toronto (D) Bostan

89. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I

(Constitutional Amendment Act)

(a) 92nd Amendment Act, 2003
(b) 104th Amendment Act, 2019
(c) 76th Amendment Act, 1994
(b) 72nd Amendment Act, 1992

List-II

(Subject/Article inserted)

1. Amendment of Article 344
2. Inserting entry 257A in the IXth schedule
3. Addition of Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali in schedule VIII
4. Inserting clause 3(B) in Article 332

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	3	4	2
(B)	2	4	3	1
(C)	3	1	2	4
(D)	4	2	1	3

90. Arrange the following in the chronological order.
1. Konkani added in the Eighth Schedule
2. Madhya Pradesh Reorganization Act
3. Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act
4. Orissa (Alteration of Name) Act
5. Pondicherry (Alteration of Name) Act
Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) 2, 4, 3, 5, 1 (B) 4, 1, 2, 5, 3
(C) 1, 2, 5, 4, 3 (D) 3, 1, 2, 4, 5

Directions—(Q. 91–95) Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below :

The term 'Third world' drew attention to the parts of the world that, during the Cold War, did not fall into the capitalist so-called 'First World' or the communist so-called 'Second World'. The formerly colonized and newly independent countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America were 'third' in the sense that they were made economically and militarily dependent on the 'first' and 'second' world, and often suffered from wide spread poverty and famine as a result. The term also Implied that they were 'non-aligned', the third world often being the battleground on which the geopolitical struggle between the first and second world was conducted, Some anti-racism movements and Black Liberationists in 'First World' countries such as Stokely Carmichael, situated their movements as connected or conjoined with the third world, highlighting parallel forms of subjugation on non-white peoples at the national and global levels. The term 'Third World' has largely been abandoned since the 1970s due to its pejorative ideological implications, the receding significance of a shared colonial past and economic development in Asia in Particular.

91. The term 'Third World' was used for Africa, Asia and Latin American countries who were :
(A) Economically developed
(B) Military powerful
(C) Economically and military dependent
(D) Liberal Democratic and peace loving

92. Third World did not fall into :
(A) African world
(B) Asian countries
(C) Arabian Nations
(D) First world and second world

93. The term 'Third World' emerged during :
(A) First World War
(B) Second World War

(C) Cold War
(D) African-Asian conflict

94. The term 'Third World' also implied :
(A) Developed world
(B) Non-aligned
(C) Core Nations
(D) Liberal Democratic world

95. The term 'Third World' was largely abandoned since 1970s due to :
(A) Growing power of Russia
(B) Pejorative ideological implications
(C) Consideration of the White World
(D) Dominance of Western World

Directions—(Q. 96–100) Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below :

Moreover, the British world take action to ensure the fulfillment of all guarantees by China, as per the Adhesion Agreement of 1906. Alarmed by the aggressive forward policy unleashed by the Manchu Empire in the wake of the Young Husband expedition of 1903-04, which was followed up in a more robust manner by the regime of new republic during 1910–11. British India reacted vigorously, first by ejecting the policy of non-interference, and second by endeavouring to define the frontier with Tibet by reaching out to the less explored or unknown tribal territories on the southern slopes of Himalayas. The Chinese actions had been prompted by an apprehension that Britain might grab Central Tibet or assume the position of protector of Tibet, while the British reaction was spurred by a similar concern that China might take over Tibet or that an emboldened Russia might shake her claim for Tibet to be included in its sphere of influence. In an era of power-play politics, the vacuum created by a powerless and vulnerable Tibet heralded its own dynamics.

96. Britishers wanted autonomous Tibet to prevent :
(A) Indian intervention
(B) China and Russian intervention and claim in Tibet
(C) U.S. Claim
(D) British control

97. The forward Policy was unleashed by :
(A) Manchu empire
(B) British empire
(C) European empire
(D) Mao Zedong

98. Young Husband expedition took place in :
(A) 1800–15 (B) 2003–20
(C) 1903–4 (D) 1710–25

99. Britain and China suspected each other of wanting to grab :
(A) India (B) Tibet
(C) Mongolia (D) Burma

100. Britishers Policy aimed to define Indian frontiers with Tibet on :
(A) Central Asia borders
(B) The Southern slops of Himalayas
(C) Japanese Islands
(D) African continent

Answers with Hints

1. (B) Marxist society is not characterized by harmony but the conflict between two classes *i.e.* capitalist class and labour class.

2. (B) The convention was adopted by UN General Assembly on 21st December, 1965 and entered into force on 4th January, 1969.

3. (C) As the concept of democracy is based on equality, so it doesn't favour privileges.

4. (A) The idea of borderless world considers the world as a whole unit like a village.

5. (C) The 'Tyranny of the majority' occurs when the will of a majority population group exclusively prevails in a system of democratic government resulting in oppression of minority groups.

6. (B) Article 123 deals with the ordinance making power of the President.
Article 217 deals with the appointment and conditions of the office of a judge of a High Court.
Article 223 deals with the appointment of Acting Chief Justice.

7. (A) The 'Female Eunuch' by Germain Greer was published in October 1970 and it became an international bestseller and an important text in the feminist movement.
In 'Gender Trouble' the author Judith Butler criticizes one of the central assumptions of feminist theory that there exists an identity that requires representation in politics and language.
'Sexual Politics' by Kate Millett is a classic of feminism formative peace in shaping the intentions of the second wave feminist movement.
In 'The Second Sex', the author Simone de Beauvoir discusses a treatment of women in the present society as well as throughout all of history.

8. (A) Atal Bihari Vajpayee :
First term : 16 May, 1996 – 1 June, 1996
Second term : 19 March, 1998 – 22 May, 2004
2. Chandrashekhar :
10 November, 1990 – 21 June, 1991
3. Dev Gowda : 1 June, 1996 – 21 April, 1997
4. VP Singh : 2 December, 1989 – 10 November, 1990
5. Narsimha Rao : 21 June, 1991 – 16 May, 1996

9. (B) (a) 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan' was a slogan given by the second Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri to hail the soldiers and farmers in 1965 at a public gathering in Prayagraj.
(b) 'Garibi Hatao' slogan was given by Indira Gandhi during 1971 election campaign.
(c) 'Bhoodan' slogan was given by Vinoba Bhave. He was also known as 'Aacharya' or 'Vinayak Narahari Bhave.'
(d) 'Integral Humanism' slogan was given by Deendayal Upadhyaya, according to him, there is no meaning of Independence without National identity.

10. (C) 1. S.R. Bommai *vs* UOI (1994) is a Landmark decision of Supreme Court where the court discuss at length the provisions of Article 356.

2. Minerva Mills *vs* UOI (1980) : The Court ruled that the power of the Parliament to amend the Constitution is limited by the Constitution.

3. Indra Sawhney case (1992) : It is also known as 'Mandal Verdict' according to which 27% Central Government reservation for OBC is declared valid.

4. Golaknath vs State of Punjab (1967) : The Court ruled that Parliament could not curtail any of the fundamental rights in the Constitution.

5. Keshavanand Bharati *vs* State of Kerala (1970) : It is also known as fundamental rights case because in its decision Court asserted its right to strike down amendments to the Constitution that were in violation of the fundamental rights.

11. (C) 1. Andhra State Act (1953) : formation of the state of Andhra by increasing the area of the state of Mysore and diminishing the area of the state of Madras.

2. Jammu & Kashmir Reorganization Act (2019) : Divided Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories *i.e.* Jammu-Kashmir and Ladakh.

4. Bombay Re-organisation Act (1960) : Reorganisation of the state of Bombay.

5. State of Arunachal Pradesh Act (1987) : The Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh was reconstituted for state of Arunachal Pradesh.

12. (C) (a) ASEAN : It is a political and economic Union of 10 States in Southeast Asia formed on 8 August, 1967.

(b) European Union : It is a political and economic grouping of 27 countries.

(c) African Union : It is a continental Union of 55 member states of Africa. It was founded on May 2001.

(d) Eurasian Economic Community : It was a regional organisation between 2014.

13. (B) It is a book by the German born Italian sociologist Robert Michels. It was published in 1911 and introduced the concept of iron law of Oligarchy.

14. (C) Expansionist Nationalism favours war to expand territory, therefore it can't be peace loving and tolerant.

15. (D) (a) Human Relations Approach to Organisations focuses on worker's satisfaction, informal workplace organisations and a means of influencing employee productivity.

(b) Bounded Rationality is a human decision making process in which we seek a decision it will be good enough rather than the best possible decision.

(c) According to Bernard survival of an organisation depends on maintenance of Equilibrium between the Contributions and satisfaction of its participants.

(d) Self-Actualization is the highest level of psychological development when basic bodily and ego needs have been fulfilled.

16. (B) 1. Madhya Pradesh – 6

2. Rajasthan – 3

3. Odisha – 5

4. Maharashtra – 4

5. Meghalaya – 2

17. (C) The Abolition Society was founded in 1787 in Britain by Thomas Clarkson, Granville Sharp and William Dillwyn. It was set up for the abolition of the slave trade.

18. (D) What is the history of the 1857 revolt that was first published in 1909.

19. (D) Globalisation favours market economy, liberalisation and capital flow. It is based on the competition among various nations where equal distribution of wealth is not possible.

20. (B) Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee founded the Bharatiya Jan Sangh (predecessor to the Bharatiya Janata Party) in 1951.

21. (B) 1. Goods and Services Tax Council–2017

2. National Commission for Women–1992

3. National Commission for Minorities–1993

4. National Commission for Protection of Child Rights–2007

5. Formation of NITI Aayog–2015

22. (C) In Kautilya's Saptang Theory foes are not included.

23. (D) 1. Godavari Water Dispute Tribunal was constituted in April 1969 and headed by justice Bachawat

2. Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal was constituted in 1956 and headed by justice Khanwilkar.

3. Ravi and Beas Water Disput Tribunals was set up in 1986. It is an interstate water dispute among Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan

4. Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal was constituted on June 2, 1990. It is also an interstate water dispute
among Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Puducherry.

5. Mahadayi Water Dispute Tribunal is focused on the water allocation of Mahadayi between Goa and Karnataka.

24. (A) H.J. Kania (January 1950–November 1951)

P.N. Bhagwati (July 1985–December 1986)

Rangnath Mishra (September 1990–November 1991)

Madan Mohan Punchhi (January 1998–October 1998)

S.H. Kapadia (May 2010–September 2012)

25. (C) 1. Maharashtra–48

2. West Bengal–42

3. Bihar–40

4. Karnataka–28

5. Odisha–21

26. (C) Minnowbrook Í conference was held in 1968 at Syracuse University under the chairmanship of Dwight Waldo.

27. (B) (a) Karpoori Thakur served two terms as the former Chief Minister of Bihar :

I-December 1970–June 1971

II-June 1977–April 1979

(b) Ram Naresh Yadav served as the former Chief Minister of UP (June 1977 – Feb. 1979)

(c) Ram Shankar Shukla served as the former CM of Madhya Pradesh (1 November, 1956–31 December, 1956).

(d) Prem Kumar Dhumal served two terms as the former Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh :

I. March 1998–March 2003

II. January 2008–December 2012

28. (B) 1. Morgenthau has presented realist view on power politics.

2. In 'Wealth of Nations' Adam Smith writes about free market in an economic system.

3. David Ricardo has expressed the views that land rent grows as population increases.

4. Karl Marx presents philosophical analysis of political economy.

5. J.S. Mill discusses a scientific method in the analysis of political economy.

29. (C) Liberalism is a political philosophy based on liberty and equality. It believes that people are the best judges of their own interests. On the other hand, communism instead of individual rights favours collective rights. In it the government is more important than the individual.

30. (C) 1. All India Trade Union Congress was set up in 1920.

2. Surat split took place in 1907.

3. Shri Narayan Dharma Paripalan Yogam was set up in 1903.

4. Indian Trade Union Federation was formed in 1931.

5. Indian National Trade Union Congress was formed in 1947.

31. (A) 1. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan (1962 –67)

2. Dr. Zakir Hussain (1967–69)

3. Dr. Sanjeeva Reddy (1977–82)

4. R. Venkatraman (1987–92)

5. Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma (1992–97)

32. (C) Jan Sangh was founded in 1951 by three founding members—Shyama Prasad Mukharjee, Balraj Madhok and Deendayal Upadhyaya.

- Congress Party was founded on 28 December, 1885
- CPI (M) was founded in 1964 by Jyoti Basu, Nambudriped and Hare Krishna Konar.
- BJP is founded by Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Lal Krishna Advani.

33. (D) According to Article 44 of the Constitution the state shall endeavour to secure the citizen a Uniform Civil Code throughout the territory of India.

34. (B) Published in 1964, it strongly criticizes consumerism and modern industrial society. He draws attention to one dimensional thinking.

35. (A) On September 29-30, 1938, the Munich agreement was signed among Germany, Italy, Britain and France.

36. (B) Published in 1954, Peter Drucker (1909–2005) was considered the top management thinker of his time.

37. (B) Article 123 grants the President certain law making powers to promulgate ordinances during the recess of Parliament.

- Article 333 granted power to the Governor to nominate from Anglo Indian Community in Legislative Assembly of the states.
- Article 233 District Judges are appointed by Governor.

38. (C) He throws light how managers deal with the problems which they experience at various points.

39. (A) The 'Origin of Totalitarianism' is written by Hannah Atendt

40. (B) 1. Uttar Pradesh–403,

2. Tamil Nadu– 234,

3. Rajasthan– 200,

4. Madhya Pradesh– 230,

5. Assam– 126

41. (B) B.S. Shekhawat (August 2002 – July 2007)

- K.R. Narayanan (August 1992 – July 1997)
- M. Hidayatullah (August 1979 – August 1984)
- B.D. Jatti (August 1974 – August 1979)
- G.S. Pathak (August 1969 – August 1974)

42. (C) He was also known as 'Loknayak'. He is mainly remembered for his 'Total Revolution' against Indira Gandhi.

43. (C) It is a book by Benedict Anderson about the development of national feelings in different eras throughout the world. The book was first published in 1983 and reissued with additional chapters in 1991 and then with a revised version in 2006.

44. (C) Due to the openness, transparency and account-ability RTI is a medium of strengthening democracy.

45. (C) 1. 1956 2. 1998
3. 1968 4. 2017
5. 1982

46. (D) Administrative theory can be classified into 4 categories—classical organisation theory, the human relations approach, behavioural science approach and the post behavioural approach.

47. (C) Article 14 to 32 under part third of Indian Constitution human rights of citizens.

48. (D) (a) Due to mass protests and deaths from police firing in 1959, Indian government dismissed Namboodiripad on 31st July, 1959 in Kerala.

(b) It was an armed forced operation between 1st to the 10th June, 1984 to remove Sikh militants from Golden Temple.

(c) It was appointed on Central state relations in April 2007 under the chairmanship of Chief Justice of India Madan Mohan Punchhi.

(d) It was appointed by Central government in June 1983 to study Centre-State relations.

49. (A) Economic and military power of the chief basis of any country for emerging as a great power.

50. (B) Mahatma Gandhi's NREGA provides at least 100 days of guaranteed wages employment to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual labour.

51. (B) The seven organs of saptang theory are Swami (the king), Amaatya (ministers), Janpad (territory), Durga (fortified capital post), Kosh (treasury), Dand (justice) and Mitra (ally).

52. (C) On February 21, 1999.

53. (D) Dag Hammarskjold was a Swedish economist and diplomat who served as the second Secretary General of the United

Nations from April 1953 until his death in a plane crash in September 1961.

54. (D) Hawthorn effect is used to describe a change in the behaviour of an individual that results from their awareness of being observed.

55. (A) WTO deals with the Global rules of trade among the nations. Its current headquarter is at Geneva, Switzerland.

56. (B) Scientific management is also known as Taylorism after the name of its Pioneer F.W. Taylor.
Linking Pin Model presents the idea of an organisation as the number of overlapping work units.
Alienation of Bureaucracy occurs when the workers have to do meaningless repetitive jobs.
New Public Administration emphasizes on the concept of 4D *i.e.* decentralization, debureaucratisation, delegation and democratization.

57. (A) Dandi March is also known as Salt Satyagrah. It was an act of Civil Disobedience led by Mahatma Gandhi. The 24 days' Dandi March lasted from
12 March, 1930 to 6 April, 1930.

58. (D) In order to protect human rights at international level various conventions have been held time to time.

59. (B) 1. Madhya Pradesh– 11
2. Odisha–10
3. Maharashtra–19
4. Tamil Nadu–18
5. West Bengal–17

60. (D) In order to fulfill the requirement of fuel for its growing industries, Japan invaded the province of Manchuria in 1931.

61. (C) In 1977 MISA was removed from 9th schedule by the 44th Amendment Act of 1978.

62. (B) (a) 'On Revolution' was published in 1963. It presents comparison between French and American revolutions.
(b) 'Political Liberalism' was written in 1993. It is an update to his earlier work : 'A Theory of Justice' (1971)
(c) 'A Letter Concerning Toleration' was first published in 1689 in Latin language based on the problem between religion and government by proposing religious tolerance.
(d) 'The Laws' is a conversation on political philosophy among three elderly persons.
In anonymous Athenians, a Spartan named Megillahs and a Cretan named Clinias.

63. (C) After independence Congress remained in dominance in three general elections but in 1967 during 4th general election it lost its position of dominance.

64. (A) According to Hegal, the purpose of history is the progress of the consciousness of freedom.

65. (D) The philosophical part of the Constitution is borrowed from the America and Irish Constitution, while the political part has been taken from British Constitution.

66. (D) Ashok Mehta Committee submitted it's report in August 1978 and made 132 recommendations to strengthen Panchayati Raj system.

67. (C) Maximum import and minimum export is a negative trait of any economy.

68. (A) Dicey was an English jurist and professor of English law at Oxford University. In this book he elucidates the guiding principles of modern Constitution of England.

69. (A) The function of the executive has been enormously influential as it has provided the seeds for the formation and development of several important management theories.

70. (C) (a) 11th July, 2021. It is a set of six books.
(b) The author discusses the underlying social purposes of the Constitution.
(c) Menon was the last constitutional advisor to the Governor General of British India. He presents the actual account of transfer of powers from British to Indian government.
(d) This book is a detailed history of the Kashmir dispute presented according to the chronology of the story.

71. (A) (a) He served as the last leader of the Soviet Union from 1985 to the country's dissolution in 1991.
(b) The Soviet Afghan war a armed conflict fought in Soviet control of Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989.
(c) It is also known as October Crisis. It was a 13 days confrontation between US and Soviet Union in Cuba.
(d) Soviet invasion on Hungary was to repress Hungarian revolution of 1956.

72. (B) 1. 86th Amendment Act, 2002 inserted article 21-A in the Constitution of India providing free and compulsory education to the children age group of 6 to 14 years as a fundamental right.
2. 99th Constitutional Amendment 2014 would have replaced the collegium system for the appointment of judges as invoked by the Supreme Court via a judicial fiat by a new system.
3. This provision was added as Article 43A through the 42nd Amendment Act, 1976. It ensures workers participation in the management of Companies.
5. 25th March, 1904

73. (B) Instead of two pillar model of centre and state, he favoured four pillar model based on village, district, state and centre.

74. (C) According to Article 280 President shall constitute a finance commission within 2 years from the commencement of the Constitution and thereafter at the expiration of every 5th year.

75. (D) 1. 1961 (chairman S.D. Mishra),
2. 1962 (chairman G.R. Rajagopal),
3. 1965 (chairman K. Santhanam),
4. 1966 (G. Ramchandran),
5. 1976 (Smt. Daya Chaubey)
Since 1960 many study teams, committees and working groups have been appointed to examine the various aspects of functioning of Panchayati Raj system.

76. (C) 1. K.S. Hegde (1977–80)
2. Hukum Singh (1962–67)
3. Gurdayal Singh Dhillon (1969–71 and 1971–75)

4. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy (1967–69)

5. Ravi Ray (1989–91)

77. (C) During election Ram Manohar Lohiya was a strong opponent of Indira Gandhi, so he called her as the 'Gungi Gudiya.'

78. (B) In order to maintain South Asian Sovereignty, SAARC came into existence on December 8, 1985 when seven countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) signed the SAARC Charter in Dhaka.

79. (D) It is a feminist essay published in 1792.

80. (A) It is a model that classifies countries into three economic classes *i.e.* Core Periphery and Semi-Periphery.

81. (D) He is an American foreign policy analyst focused on Russia. The book was published in 2004 and mainly focuses on the events of 2004 general elections and nuclear tests of 1998.

82. (A)

83. (C)

1. Sunil Arora (December 2018 – April 2021)
2. S.Y. Qureshi (July 2010 – June 2012)
3. T.N. Sheshan (December 1990 – December 1996)
4. J.M. Lyngdoh (June 2001 – February 2004)
5. V.S. Sampath (June 2012 – January 2015)

84. (D) It was said by Woodrow Wilson 28th President of US in 1913-21.

85. (C) Prosperity and happiness is not a subject of criticism.

86. (B) According to the Marxist theory of the state, the army is the chief component of state power.

87. (B)

1. 1985–88 (headed by C.M. Correa)
2. 1974 (headed by Girijapati Mukherjee)
3. 1968 (headed by B.S. Murthy)
4. 1963–66 (headed by A.P. Jain)
5. 1953–54 (headed by John Mathai)

88. (B) This speech was delivered on September 11, 1893 in which he introduced Hinduism to America and called for religious tolerance and an end to religious fanaticism.

89. (C) (a) After this amendment total number of languages listed in the 8th schedule increased to 22.

(b) Extended the time limit for terminating SC and ST seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislatures from 70 to 80 years. It also removed the seats reserved for Anglo Indians in Lok Sabha and State Legislature.

(c) It allows the continuation of the 69% reservation in Tamil Nadu by adding the relevant Tamil Nadu Act of the 9th schedule of the Constitution.

(d) It provides reservation to scheduled tribes in Tripura State Legislative Assembly until the Re- adjustment of seats is made on the first census after the year 2000 under Article 170 of Constitution.

90. (C) 1. Passed in 1992,

2. Passed in 2000, it enabled the creation of Chhattisgarh state out of Madhya Pradesh.

3. Passed in 2014, commonly known as Telangana Act. It split the state of Andhra into Telangana and residuary Andhra state.

4. Passed in 2006, it renamed the Union Territory Pondicherry as Puducherry.

91. (C) The term 'Third World' arose during the Cold War for non aligned countries with both the blocs. In modern times this term is used for poor or developing countries.

92. (D) During Cold War, the countries under the leadership of US and USSR were known as first world and second world.

93. (C) The demographer, anthropologist and historian Alfred Sauvy, in an Article published in the French magazine, coined the term third world referring to countries that were playing a small role in international trade and business.

94. (B) The Nations positioned as neutral and independent during the Cold War were considered as third world countries. It includes many countries with colonial past America and Asia. the term is also used for non-aligned countries.

95. (B) The term was replaced by the developing countries as the majority of third world countries' economic growth rate reached significantly than those in most first world countries. This term was the symbol of an inferior position.

96. (B) China had always maintained that Tibet was a part of China and proclaimed to liberate the Tibetans from a theocratic feudal system. On the other hand, Russia's participation in Tibetan affairs was at the request of the Tibetan government.

97. (A) The term Forward policy has been used more generally to describe the promulgation of policies in specific areas for tactical reasons.

98. (C) The British expedition to Tibet known as the young husband expedition. It began in December 1903 and lasted until September 1904.

99. (B) Britain recognises Tibet as the part of the People's Republic of China and does not support Tibetan independence, but China's authoritative attitude is the cause of suspicion for Britain.

100. (B) In the reaction of China's young husband expedition, Britain gave up her policy of non-intervention.

P.Darjan



Solved Paper

UGC-NET/JRF EXAMINATION, 2024

(Held on 18-6-2024)

Sociology

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1. Which among the following are correct ?
   1. The Montreal Protocol signed in 1987 was related to phase out the manufacture and use of chemicals causing, depletion of the Earth's ozone layer.
   2. 'Agenda 21' was adopted at earth summit in 1992.
   3. In June, 1992, the United Nation conference on Environment and Development took place at Rio-de-Janeiro, Brazil.
   4. Rachel Carson's in her book 'Silent Spring' published in 1970 called attention to the threat of toxic chemicals to people and environment.

   Choose the most appropriate answer from the options given below—
   (A) Only 1, 2 and 3
   (B) Only 2, 3 and 4
   (C) Only 1, 3 and 4
   (D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

2. Match List-I with List-II—

   List-I
   (Concept)
   (a) Folkways
   (b) Conurbation
   (c) Sick role
   (d) Folk devils

   List-II
   (Author)
   1. Stanley Cohen
   2. Talcott Parsons
   3. Patrick Geddes
   4. William Graham Sumner

   Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	3	4
(B)	4	3	2	1
(C)	2	3	1	4
(D)	3	2	4	1

3. Match List-I with List-II—

   List-I
   (Book)
   (a) Political Man : The Social Basis of Politics
   (b) Modern Political Analysis
   (c) Open Society and its Enemies
   (d) Comparative Politics : A Developmental Approach

   List-II
   (Author)
   1. G. A. Almond & G.B. Powell
   2. Karl R. Popper
   3. Robert A. Dahl
   4. S.M. Lipset

   Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	3	4	1	2
(B)	2	3	4	1
(C)	4	3	2	1
(D)	1	2	3	4

4. Which of the following is not a primary data ?
   (A) Mailed Questionnaire
   (B) Direct Personal Interview
   (C) Material published by govt.
   (D) Case study material

5. Which among the following are true about Michel Foucault's geneology of power ?
   1. Foucault is concerned with how people govern themselves and others through production of knowledge.
   2. He supported the hietarchization of knowledge because the highest ranking forms of knowledge have the greatest power.
   3. He is interested in technologies that are derived from knowledge and how they are used by various institutions to exert power over people.
   4. Although Foucault saw link between knowledge and power, he did not see conspiracy by elite members of society.

   Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
   (A) Only 1, 2, 3 and 4
   (B) Only 1, 2 and 3
   (C) Only 1, 2 and 4
   (D) Only 1, 3 and 4

6. Radhakamal Mukherjee proposed that human civilization should be studied at three interrelated levels. Which among the following was not suggested by him ?
   (A) Biological evolution
   (B) Universalization
   (C) Spiritual dimension
   (D) Secular dimension

7. Who has portrayed 'civil society' as the terrain of individual egotism ?
   (A) Max Weber
   (B) A. Gramsci
   (C) Ralf Dahrendorf
   (D) Karl Marx

8. Which of the following is not part of 'Culture' ?
   (A) Communication
   (B) Religion
   (C) Family unit
   (D) Custom

9. A process of urban renewal in which older, decaying housing is refurbished by affluent people moving into the area is called—
   (A) Global city
   (B) Gerentology
   (C) New city
   (D) Gentrification

10. Which among the following is not the advantage of the factory system of production ?
    (A) Economic by allowing advantages of scale, while

reducing the cost of distribution of raw materials and finished product
(B) Technical, by making possible the deskilling of craft-labour and the use of machines
(C) Political, by empowering the owner to control the workers in political process
(D) Managerial, by increasing the scope for disciplined control of bargaining power of workers

11. Which of the following is a correct set of 'measure of dispersion' ?
(A) Range, Mean, Median, Mode
(B) Mean, Median, Mode
(C) Range, Mean Deviation, Standard Deviation
(D) Median, Mode, Semi-interquartile range

12. A term 'Gender order' is associated with the writings of—
(A) John Hortan
(B) R.W. Connell
(C) Lynne Segal
(D) Steven Seidman

13. Who has given 'World System Theory' of development ?
(A) Gunnar Myrdal
(B) I. Wallerstein
(C) Anthony Giddens
(D) David Held

14. A hypothesis which assumes that there is no relationship between the selected variables is called—
(A) Contrary hypothesis
(B) Suggestive hypothesis
(C) Contradictory hypothesis
(D) Null hypothesis

15. Environmental ethics deals with the following issues—
1. Environmental destruction is largely caused by the consumption of the rich.
2. The worst sufferers of environmental destruction are the poor.
3. Even where nature is being recreated as in afforestation, it is being transformed away from the needs of the poor.
4. There can not be proper economic and social development without a holistic understanding of society and nature.

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) Only 1, 2 and 3
(B) Only 2, 3 and 4
(C) Only 1, 2 and 4
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

16. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Concept)

(a) Time-Space Distanciation
(b) Reference Group
(c) Evolutionary Universals
(d) Deep structure

List-II

(Sociologist)

1. Robert K. Merton
2. Talcott Parsons
3. Anthony Giddens
4. C. Levi-Strauss

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	4	2	3
(B)	2	3	4	1
(C)	4	2	3	1
(D)	3	1	2	4

17. What is the correct chronological order of the sociologists who contributed to the theory of functionalism ?
1. Emile Durkheim
2. Herbert Spencer
3. A. R. Radcliffe Brown
4. Talcott Parsons
5. Robert K. Merton

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) 1, 2, 3, 5, 4 (B) 2, 3, 1, 5, 4
(C) 2, 1, 3, 4, 5 (D) 1, 3, 2, 4, 5

18. A term used by Louis Wirth to denote distinctive characteristics of urban social life, such as its impersonality is called—
(A) Urban ecology
(B) Urban renewal
(C) Urban recycling
(D) Urbanism

19. Which among the following is not correct about 'horizontal segregation' of gender based employment ?
(A) A concentration of women in jobs with little authority and room for advancement (at the bottom)
(B) Concentration of men and women in different categories of job
(C) Making unequal payment to male and female for the same type of job
(D) Making equal payment to male and female for the same type of job

20. Polygyny is found among—
1. Naga 2. Gond
3. Baiga 4. Toda

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :
(A) Only 1, 2 and 3
(B) Only 1 and 2
(C) Only 1 and 3
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

21. According to Giddens, which among the following is not the part of basic institutions of modernity ?
(A) Capitalism
(B) Industrialism
(C) Surveillance Capacities
(D) Democratization

22. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Study)

(a) Suicide
(b) The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
(c) The Andaman Islanders
(d) Getting A Job

List-II

(Method)

1. Historical Comparative Method
2. Network Analysis
3. Comparative Method
4. Functional Method

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	4	3
(B)	3	1	4	2
(C)	2	4	3	1
(D)	4	3	1	2

23. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Book)

(a) Patterns of Culture
(b) Man and His Works
(c) A Scientific Theory of Culture
(d) Primitive Culture

List-II

(Author)

1. B. Malinowski
2. E. B. Taylor
3. R. Benedict
4. M. J. Herskovits

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	3	4
(B)	4	3	2	1
(C)	2	3	4	1
(D)	3	4	1	2

24. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Book)

(a) Stone Age Economics
(b) The Gift
(c) The Philosophy of Money
(d) The Gift Relationship

List-II

(Author)

1. George Simmel
2. Marshall Sohlins
3. Mercel Mauss
4. Richard Titmuss

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	4	3
(B)	2	3	1	4
(C)	1	3	2	4
(D)	3	2	4	1

25. Who was Auguste Comte's mentor ?
(A) Montesquieu
(B) Morgan
(C) Saint Simon
(D) Tocqueville

26. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Book)

(a) The Passing of a Traditional Society
(b) Asian Drama
(c) The Achieving Society
(d) Communication and Political Development

List-II

(Author)

1. Gunnar Myrdal
2. Daniel Lerner
3. Lucian W. Pye
4. David C. McCleland

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	3	4
(B)	2	1	4	3
(C)	3	4	1	2
(D)	4	3	2	1

27. Which among the following act is not correctly mentioned ?
(A) The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
(B) The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981
(C) The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1980
(D) The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972

28. Identify the characteristics associated with Fordism—

1. Fordism has grown throughout the twentieth century in USA.
2. It reached its peak and began to decline in 1960's.
3. Ford generally credited with the development of the modern mass-production system.
4. Fordism of course refers to the ideas, principles and systems spawned by Henry Ford.

Choose the most appropriate answer from the options given below—

(A) Only 1, 2 and 4
(B) Only 1, 2 and 3
(C) Only 1, 3 and 4
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

29. The observation which occurs most frequently in a sample is the—
(A) Median
(B) Mean Deviation
(C) Standard Deviation
(D) Mode

30. According the Thomas S. Kuhn, which among the following is not correct about scientific revolution ?
(A) Everyday scientists engage in puzzle solving
(B) There is no objective truth, only a consensus about the truth
(C) Scientists working in an area subscribe multiple paradigms
(D) Crisis in paradigm leads to change in paradigm

31. The concept of 'Bureaucracy' developed over a period of time. Arrange the following sociologists in an ascending order who contributed to the notion of Bureaucracy ?

1. Max Weber
2. A. W. Gouldner
3. Robert K. Merton
4. Peter M. Blau
5. M. Crozier

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) 3, 4, 1, 5, 2 (B) 2, 4, 5, 1, 3
(C) 1, 2, 4, 3, 5 (D) 4, 2, 3, 5, 1

32. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Book)

(a) Introducing Women's Studies
(b) Feminism and Post-modernism
(c) The Transformation of Intimacy
(d) Sex, Gender and Society

List-II

(Author)

1. A. Giddens
2. Ann Oakley
3. L. J. Nicholson
4. V. Robinson and D. Richardson

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	3	1	2
(B)	1	2	3	4
(C)	4	1	2	3
(D)	2	1	3	4

33. Radcliffe Brown has brought about much clarity at thinking in the field of kinship studies by his scientific, treatment of the subject. Which among the following are correct about his contributions ?

1. He studies kinship systems with no preconceived notions regarding evolution as Morgan.
2. Not rejecting any conjuctural attempts at discovering origin.
3. He studied kinship systems functionally and from the synchronic point of view.
4. He did not study kinship systems.

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) Only 1, 2 and 3
(B) Only 1 and 4
(C) Only 1 and 2
(D) Only 1 and 3

34. Which is not correct about Max Weber's concept of 'ideal type' ?
(A) It is an anlaytical construct that serves the investigator as a measuring rod to as certain similarities as well as deviation in concrete cases
(B) It provides the basic method for comparative study
(C) An ideal type basically refers to moral ideals
(D) An ideal type is formed by the one sided accentuation of one or more points of view

35. What is chronological order of the following writings of B.R. Ambedkar ?
1. Annihilation of Caste
2. Who were Shudras ?
3. Caste in India : Their mechanism Genesis and Development
4. The Untouchables : Who were they and why they became untouchables ?

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) 2, 1, 3, 4 (B) 3, 1, 2, 4
(C) 1, 4, 3, 2 (D) 4, 1, 2, 3

36. Which is not the advantage of a genetically modified crop ?
(A) Genetically modified crop may enhanced nutritional qualities of foods
(B) It may improve their appearances
(C) Poor farmers may become locked in technologies that they can not afford to sustain
(D) G.M. crop may be more resistant to pest

37. Arrange the following sociologists in ascending order who have contributed significantly to 'role theory' ?
1. Talcott Parsons
2. Robert K. Merton
3. Ralph Linton
4. Erving Goffman

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) 1, 2, 4, 3 (B) 3, 1, 2, 4
(C) 2, 3, 1, 4 (D) 4, 1, 3, 2

38. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I
(Book)
(a) Some Aspects of Family in Mahua
(b) Caste and Kinship in Central India
(c) World Revolution and Family Pattern
(d) Family and Kinship : A Study of the Pandits of Rural Kashmir

List-II
(Author)
1. William J. Goode
2. T. N. Madan
3. I. P. Desai
4. Adrian C. Mayer

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	2	1	3	4
(B)	1	2	4	3
(C)	3	4	1	2
(D)	4	3	2	1

39. Which among the following is not true about environmentalism ?
(A) It refers to all forms of collective behaviour that aims at correcting destructive forms of relationship between human actions and its natural environment
(B) Environmentalism also nurtures the counter cultural environmentalism
(C) Ecofeminism is not the part of environmentalism
(D) The mobilization of local communities in defence of their space against intrusion of undesirable uses, is part of environmentalism

40. Who among the following have contributed to the concept of 'conflict' in sociology' ?
1. Lewis A. Coser
2. G. Simmel
3. B. Malinowski
4. Ralf Dahrendorf
5. Karl Marx

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) Only 1, 3, 4, 5
(B) Only 1, 2, 3, 5
(C) Only 1, 2, 4, 5
(D) Only 2, 3, 4, 5

41. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I
(Author)
(a) Margaret Mead
(b) Jurgen Habermas
(c) Edward Said
(d) Michel Foucault

List-II
(Book)
1. Towards a Rational Society
2. Twentieth Century Faith
3. The Archaeology of Knowledge
4. Orientalism

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	3	2	1
(B)	2	1	3	4
(C)	2	1	4	3
(D)	1	2	4	3

42. What is correct sequence of the research after the collection of data ?
1. Screening of filled tool
2. Coding
3. Tabulation
4. Report writing

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) 2, 1, 3, 4 (B) 1, 2, 4, 3
(C) 1, 2, 3, 4 (D) 4, 1, 2, 3

43. Arrange the following sociological works on Elite theory in chronological order of their year of publication—
1. The Power Elite —C. Wright Mills
2. The Mind and Society —Vilfredo Pareto
3. The Ruling Class —G. Mosca
4. Political Parties —Robert Michels

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) 2, 3, 4, 1 (B) 3, 4, 2, 1
(C) 4, 1, 3, 2 (D) 1, 2, 4, 3

44. Which of the following social movements can be classified in the category of 'New Social Movements' ?
1. Bhoodan Movement
2. Ecological Movement
3. Feminist Movement
4. Black Movement

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

(A) Only 1, 2, 3
(B) Only 1, 2, 4
(C) Only 2, 3, 4
(D) Only 1, 3, 4

45. Which among the following are the dimensions of 'Social exclusion' ?
1. Exclusion from adequate income or resources
2. Exclusion from labour market
3. Exclusion from services
4. Exclusion from social relation

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

(A) 1, 2, 3 and 4
(B) Only 1, 2 and 3
(C) Only 2, 3 and 4
(D) Only 1, 2 and 4

46. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Book)

(a) Foundations of Behavioural Research
(b) Research Methods in Social Relations
(c) Scientific Social Surveys and Research
(d) Methods in Social Research

List-II

(Author)

1. P. V. Young
2. Fred N. Kerlinger
3. William J. Goode and Paul K. Hatt
4. Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, Stuart W. Cook

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	3	2	4
(B)	2	4	1	3
(C)	3	2	1	4
(D)	4	3	2	1

47. The value of the middle item of series when it is arranged in ascending or descending order is called—

(A) Mode (B) Median
(C) Mean (D) Average

48. A term popularized by Erving Goffman to refer the facilities such as asylums, prisons and monasteries that impose on their residents a forcibly regulated system of existence in complete isolation from the outside world known as—

(A) Special Institutions
(B) Artificial Institutions
(C) Sick Institutions
(D) Total Institutions

49. Which among the following are correct about 'Milieux of innovation' ?
1. This concept was given by Manuel Castells, Peter Hall and Philippe Aydalot.
2. It is a specific set of relationship of production and management that aimed at generation new knowledge, new processes and new products.
3. Spatial proximity is a necessary material condition for the existence of such Milieux.
4. The high technological led industrial Milieux of innovation are called 'technopoles'.

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

(A) Only 1, 2 and 3
(B) Only 2, 3 and 4
(C) 1, 2, 3 and 4
(D) Only 1, 3 and 4

50. The learning of attitudes and behaviours necessary for recognized and sustainable competence within a context of employment is known as—

(A) Occupational structure
(B) Occupational socialization
(C) Occupational segregation
(D) Occupational prestige

51. Which is not true about Iravati Karve ?

(A) She wrote "Kinship Organization in India"
(B) She adopted indological approach to study Indian Society
(C) She was born in Puna (Maharashtra)
(D) Her book 'Yuganta' transformed our understanding of Mahabharata

52. Which among the following are true about Robert K. Merton's theory of structural functionalism ?
1. A structure may be dysfunctional for the systems as a whole and yet may continue to exist.
2. All standardized social and cultural beliefs and practices are functional for society as a whole as well as for individuals in society.
3. Actions have both intended and unintended consequences.
4. All structures are not indispensable to the working of social systems.

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

(A) Only 1, 2 and 3
(B) Only 2, 3 and 4
(C) Only 1, 3 and 4
(D) Only 1, 2 and 4

53. Panchayati Raj is an important unit of Development administration at the district level. Which of the following committee initially recommended Panchayati Raj system in India ?

(A) Kothari committee
(B) Ashok Mehta committee
(C) Balwantrai Mehta committee
(D) G. K. Moophar committee

54. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Book)

(a) Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer
(b) Kinship Organizations and Group Marriage in Australia
(c) African Systems of Kinship and Marriage
(d) The Dynamics of Kinship among the Tallensi

List-II

(Author)

1. N. W. Thomas
2. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde
3. E. E. Evans-Pritchard
4. M. Fortes

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	2	1	3
(B)	1	4	3	2
(C)	2	3	4	1
(D)	3	1	2	4

55. Basic steps in an Exploratory Research Design are—
1. The Survey of Literature
2. Preparing and interview schedule

3. The Experience Survey
4. The Analysis of 'Insight-stimulating' Examples

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

(A) Only 1, 2, 3
(B) Only 1, 3, 4
(C) Only 2, 3, 4
(D) 1, 2, 3, 4

56. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Concept)

(a) Global Commons
(b) Acid Rain
(c) Green House Effects
(d) Environmental Racism

List-II

(Explanation)

1. Precipitation that is made acidic by air pollution
2. Putting Environmental hazards in proximity of poor people
3. Resources shared by all members of international community
4. Rise in the Earth's average temperature due to increased concentration of carbon dioxide in environment

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	2	1	3	4
(B)	3	1	4	2
(C)	3	4	2	1
(D)	1	3	4	2

57. Which among the following are true about Charles Murray's 'dependency culture' of poverty ?
1. It refers to people who rely on government welfare provision rather than entering the labour market.
2. Murray contended that the growth of welfare state has created the subculture, which undermines personal ambition and people's capacity for self help.
3. Murray exempted those who are poor through 'no fault of their own' such as widow or disabled people.
4. Dependency culture' is one consequence of people's constrained situation not cause of it.

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

(A) Only 2, 3 and 4
(B) Only 1, 2 and 3
(C) 1, 2, 3 and 4
(D) Only 1, 3 and 4

58. What is the correct chronological sequence of the following books of Raymond Aron ?
1. The Imperial Republic : The United States and the World 1945-1973, Englewood Cliffs, N. J. Prentice Hall.
2. Main Currents in Sociological Thought, New York : Basic Books.
3. The Industrial Society : Three Essays on Ideology and Development, New York : Simon and Schuster.
4. The Opium of the Intellectuals, London, Secker and Warburg.
5. The Century of Total War, New York : Doubleday.

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

(A) 1, 2, 4, 3, 5
(B) 5, 4, 2, 3, 1
(C) 2, 3, 4, 5, 1
(D) 3, 2, 5, 4, 1

59. Who defines, "a network as a set of interconnected nodes-the distance between social positions are shorter where such positions constitute nodes within a network as opposed to those which lie outside the particular network" ?

(A) Frank Webstor
(B) Yoneji Masuda
(C) Nicholas Garnhar
(D) Manuel-Castells

60. The qualities of good research are—
1. Good research is systematic
2. Good research is logical
3. Good research is hypothetical
4. Good research is empirical
5. Good research is replicable

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

(A) Only 1, 2, 3, 4
(B) Only 1, 3, 4, 5
(C) Only 1, 2, 4, 5
(D) Only 2, 4, 3, 5

61. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Concept)

(a) Pattern Variables
(b) Glocalization
(c) Circulation of Elites
(d) Relative Deprivation

List-II

(Author)

1. R. Robertson
2. Robert K. Merton and S. A. Stouffer
3. Talcott Parsons
4. V. Pareto

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	4	2	3
(B)	2	3	1	4
(C)	3	1	4	2
(D)	4	2	3	1

62. What is the correct chronological sequence of the following books at Karl Marx ?
1. The Holy Family
2. Manifesto of the Communist Party
3. The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte
4. The Poverty of Philosophy
5. Capital

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

(A) 5, 1, 4, 3, 2 (B) 2, 3, 4, 1, 5
(C) 1, 4, 2, 3, 5 (D) 3, 4, 1, 5, 2

63. Who started his book with the rhetorical question "Who now reads Spencer" ?

(A) Emile Durkheim
(B) A. R. Radcliffe-Brown
(C) Randal Collins
(D) Talcott Parsons

64. What is the life cycle of a social movement ?
1. Emergence
2. Bureaucratization
3. Coalascence
4. Decline

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

(A) 1, 3, 2, 4 (B) 1, 2, 3, 4
(C) 2, 3, 1, 4 (D) 1, 4, 2, 3

65. Who has named 'Juggernaut' to describe an advance stage of modernity ?

(A) David Held
(B) Anthony Giddens
(C) R. Robertson
(D) Manuel Castells

66. How much percentage is reserved for women under 'Women Reservations Act, 2023' in legislative bodies ?
(A) 45% (B) 38%
(C) 33% (D) 50%

67. Which among the following is not related to embourgeoisement thesis ?
(A) It is a process by which bourgeois aspiration and bourgeois standard and style of life become institutionalized among the working class
(B) This process undermines working class consciousness
(C) This process is caused by transformation in the structure of employment the move from manufacturing to services
(D) Working class people retain their proletarian identities and distinctive social values, political ideals and style of life

68. 'Habitus' refers to the ensemble of dispositions by which actions and attitudes in everyday world become habitual and as a result the everyday world is taken for granted. Who has given the concept of 'habitus' ?
(A) Erving Goffman
(B) Pierre Bourdieu
(C) Peter L. Berger
(D) Thomas Kuhn

69. Manuel Castells labelled the third industrial revolution as 'informationalism'. Which among the following are the characteristics of this revolution ?
1. The driving role of science and technology for economic growth.
2. A shift from material production to information processing.
3. The emergence and expansion of new forms of networked industrial organization.
4. The rise of socio-economic globalization.

Choose the most appropriate answer from the options given below—
(A) Only 1, 2 and 3
(B) 1, 2, 3 and 4
(C) Only 2, 3 and 4
(D) Only 1 and 2

70. ……. family, consisted of a group which was founded upon the intermarriage, in a group of siblings, own and collateral, *i.e.*, of brothers and sisters and of cusions.
(A) The Consanguine
(B) The Punaluan
(C) The Syndyasmian
(D) The Patriarchal

71. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Book)

(a) Modernity and Self-identity
(b) Structure and Function in Primitive Society
(c) The Social System
(d) On the Shoulders of Giants

List-II

(Author)

1. Robert K. Merton
2. Talcott Persons
3. Anthony Giddens
4. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	3	4
(B)	4	3	1	2
(C)	3	4	2	1
(D)	2	1	3	4

72. Who among the following use concept of 'social structure' in their studies ?
1. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown
2. S. F. Nadel
3. B. Malinowski
4. Talcott Parsons

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) Only 2, 3, 4 (B) Only 1, 2, 3
(C) 1, 2, 3, 4 (D) Only 1, 2, 4

73. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Concept)

(a) Panopticon model of the prison
(b) Surveillance Society
(c) Virtual Reality
(d) Ethos of Science

List-II

(Author)

1. M. Feathrston and R. Burrows
2. Michel Foucault
3. David Lyon
4. Robert K. Merton

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	3	4
(B)	1	4	2	3
(C)	3	1	4	2
(D)	2	3	1	4

74. Standard Deviation is a measure of dispersion around—
(A) Mode
(B) Mean
(C) Both Mean and Mode
(D) Only Median and Mode

75. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(Scale Construction Approach)

(a) Item analysis approach
(b) Consensus scale approach
(c) Cumulative scale approach
(d) Factor analysis approach

List-II

(Name of the Scale)

1. Osgood's Semantic Differential Scale
2. Guttman's Scalogram
3. Likert scale
4. Thurstone Differential scale

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	3	4	1	2
(B)	2	3	4	1
(C)	1	2	3	4
(D)	3	4	2	1

76. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I

(a) Probability Sampling
(b) Non-Probability Sampling
(c) Central Tendency
(d) Correlation

List-II

1. Karl Pearson Coefficient
2. Median
3. Random Sample
4. Purposive Sample

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	4	3
(B)	3	4	2	1
(C)	2	4	3	1
(D)	3	1	2	4

77. According the Alfred Schutz, how do actors create a common subjective world ?
1. They carry in their minds rules, social recipes, concep-

tions of appropriate conduct that allows them to act in their social world.
2. The sum of these rules, recipes, conceptions and information as the individual's stock of knowledge' at hand.
3. Such 'stock knowledge' gives people a frame of reference or orientation with which they interprete events as they pragmatically act on the world around them.
4. People's reality is not based on their 'stock of knowledge'.

Choose the most appropraite answer from the options given below—
(A) Only 1, 2 and 3
(B) Only 2, 3 and 4
(C) Only 1, 2 and 4
(D) Only 1, 3 and 4

78. "A Definition is a phrase signifying a thing's essence". Who has given this statement ?
(A) August Comte
(B) Herbert Spencer
(C) Aristotle
(D) Plato

79. Who has proclaimed an 'epistemological break' between the earlier (pre-1845) and mature writings of Karl Marx ?
(A) Talcott Parsons
(B) Louis Althusser
(C) C. Wright Mills
(D) Ralph Dahrendorf

80. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I
(Book)
(a) Religion and the Rise of Capitalism
(b) Ancient Judaism
(c) The Social Organization of Australian Tribes
(d) Primitive Religion

List-II
(Author)
1. Max Weber
2. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown
3. R. H. Lowie
4. R. H. Tawney

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	1	2	3
(B)	3	1	4	2
(C)	2	4	1	3
(D)	1	2	3	4

81. Who is considered as the pragmatic social reformer ?
(A) Nehru, J. L.
(B) Gandhi, M. K.
(C) Tilak, B. G.
(D) Shree Guru Narayan

82. Which among the following studies analyse the concept of 'social stratification' at empirical level ?
1. Andre Beteille—Caste, Class and Power
2. S. C. Dude—Indian Village
3. F. G. Bailey—Caste and the Economic Frontiers
4. Mckim Marriott—Caste Ranking and Community Structure in Five Regions of India and Pakistan

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) Only 1, 2, 3 (B) Only 1, 3 4
(C) 1, 2, 3, 4 (D) Only 2, 3, 4

83. Arrange the following types of societies in ascending order of the development—
1. Pastoral
2. Agrarian
3. Hunting and Gathering
4. Industrial
5. Post-Industrial

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) 2, 3, 1, 5, 4 (B) 2, 1, 3, 4, 5
(C) 1, 2, 3, 5, 4 (D) 3, 1, 2, 4, 5

84. The social structure of the Garos can be understood only in the context with—
(A) Nok (B) Kur
(C) Jaid (D) Ka

85. Match List-I with List-II—

List-I
(Concept)
(a) Conspicuous Consumption
(b) Popular Culture
(c) Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy
(d) White-Collar Crime

List-II
(Author)
1. Joseph Schumpeter
2. E. H. Sutherland
3. Thorstein Veblen
4. Ian Chambers

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	3	4	1	2
(B)	4	2	1	3
(C)	3	4	2	1
(D)	4	3	1	2

86. What are the antecedents of the weakening of Nation-State in contemporary society ?
1. Transnational flow of the people.
2. Increasing significance of Multinational Companies (MNCs).
3. Over emphasis on nationalism
4. Development and adoption of new communication technologies at the global level.

Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
(A) Only 1, 2, 3
(B) Only 1, 2, 4
(C) Only 1, 3, 4
(D) 1, 2, 3, 4

87. Economic action cannot be reduced to rational, individual calculations of profit of interest maximization but must be seen as embeded within social networks involving social divisions, power relations, organizations, culture and politics". This statement is given by—
(A) Max Weber
(B) Neil J. Smelser
(C) Mark Granovetter
(D) Talcott Parsons

88. Phenomenology is radical alternative of—
(A) Evolutionarism
(B) Functionalism
(C) Positivism
(D) Diffusionism

89. Which among the following are true Durkheim's views on the 'Division of Labour' ?
1. The 'division of labour' produces specialization of occupational function and therefore fosters the development of specific talent, capacities and attitudes.
2. The individual personality should be developed according to the specific qualities which the person has, and hence not everyone should receive a uniform education.

3. The expansion of individualism is associated with the division of labour.
4. Durkheim's principles of 'division of labour' can be compared with evolutionary model of growth.
5. 'Division of Labour' is result of industrialism alone.

Choose the most appropriate answer from the options given below—

(A) Only 1, 2, 3 and 5
(B) Only 1, 2, 3 and 4
(C) Only 2, 3, 4 and 5
(D) Only 1, 3, 4 and 5

90. According to Talcott Parsons, which among the following is the basic unit of social system ?

(A) Plurality of individual actors
(B) The Status-Role complex
(C) Actors, interacting with each other
(D) Culturality shared structure and shared symbols

Directions—(Q. 91–95) Read the given passage and answer the following questions—

Modernization of role structures involves changes not only in norms and behaviour but also in the psychic-dynamic properties, bringing about major changes in motivational and value orientation patterns of individuals. Motivationally, modernized role structures represent a higher level of psychic mobility and achievement orientation; the latter stimulates the aspiration levels generally in a modern society. Thus, modernization also implies a revolution in aspiration levels. Aspiration may broadly be defined as the strength of an individual's motivation to achieve progressively higher (or conversely, lower) goals based on the experiences of success and failure, his own and of others who constitute his reference models. Aspiration level may be 'higher' or 'lower' in a temporal sense (between two points of time) for the same individual, or it may be 'higher' or 'lower' in comparison to that of some other individuals. In the former case, aspirations operates as a psychological category, but in the latter situation it has both psychological as well as socio-cultural foundation.

91. Modernization of role structure involves—
1. Changes in motivational patterns of individuals.
2. Changes in social norms.
3. Changes in value-orientation patterns.
4. Pattern of Housing.

Choose the most appropriate answer from the options given below—

(A) Only 1 and 2
(B) Only 1, 2 and 3
(C) Only 2, 3, 4
(D) Only 1, 3, 4

92. The achievement orientation generally stimulate—

(A) alienation in modern society
(B) level of aspiration in modern society
(C) discourage the individuals
(D) deviance in modern society

93. If aspiration level of a given individual is higher between two points of time, it operates as—

(A) A Psychological category
(B) A Socio-cultural category
(C) A Biological category
(D) A Political category

94. Modernized role-structures represents—

(A) Higher level of psychic mobility only
(B) High level of achievement orientation only
(C) Lower level of achievement orientation only
(D) Both higher level of psychic mobility and achievement orientation

95. If level of aspiration is higher in comparison to that of some other individuals, it operates as—

(A) Political category
(B) Psychological category as well as Socio-cultural category
(C) Biological category
(D) Organizational category

Directions—(Q. 96–100) Read the given passage and answer the following questions—

Epstein analyses the impact of a Government-sponsored modern irrigation project on the economic and social structure of two, differently located, villages in Mysore State. She is particularly interested in the tracing the effects of technological innovation and economic change on the institutional structures of the two villages. She finds that, although the development of modern commercialized agriculture had brought about a shift in the social and economic life of the communities, the pattern of development varied according to whether the village lay in the central zone of irrigation or on the fringe. In the case of Wangala village, which reaped the full benefits of irrigation and therefore expanded its existing agricultural economy, development was unilinear "in the sense that new opportunities were in line with the former mode of economic organization" and this resulted relatively little change in social structure. On the other hand, Dalena village, which was on the fringes of the irrigation area and therefore could not participate directly in the cash-crop economy, exhibited a pattern of economic diversification as its inhabitants responded to increased employment opportunities in the nearby town, became contractors for the public works department, and engaged in various small-scale commercial activities. Some of them even bought up irrigated land or worked as agricultural labourers in neighbouring villages. As their greater involvement in a wider range of economic relations and of the impact of multifarious urban influences. Dalena social structure underwent cosiderably transformation……While Smelser tends towards a unilinear view of development and writes of the change from multifunctional roles to more specialized structures, Epstein shows how 'economic development may occur without change in traditional economic roles and relations.

96. What was the impact of modern irrigation project on Wangala Village ?

(A) The families migrated to other villages
(B) They adopted new occupations in the town
(C) The agriculture was commecialized
(D) The production of crops decreased

97. What was the impact of urban contacts on Dalena village society ?
    1. Social structure underwent considerable transformation.
    2. The villagers responded to new employment opportunities like Small scale commercial activities.
    3. New opportunities were in accordance to former mode of economic organization.
    4. Some villagers purchased irrigated land or worked as agricultural labours in the nearby villages.

    Choose the correct answer from the options given below—
    (A) Only 1, 2, 4
    (B) 1, 2, 3, 4
    (C) Only 2, 3, 4
    (D) Only 1, 3, 4

98. In what way Epstein study is different from Smelsar's assumptions on development ?
    (A) Economic development is always result of structural differentiation in the society
    (B) Change in mode of production is cause of social change
    (C) Economic development may occur without change in traditional economic roles and relations
    (D) Social change is result of cash-drop economy

99. What was the research interest of Epstein in this study ?
    (A) To study mode of production of the villages
    (B) To analyse it impact of technology and economic change in social structure of the villages
    (C) To anlayse the consumption pattern of the villages
    (D) To understand the family relations in the villages

100. What was the impact of modern irrigation project on Dalena village ?
    (A) The pattern of development was unilinear
    (B) There was no change in occupational structure of the village
    (C) The villagers were engaged in growing cash crops
    (D) Exhibited a pattern of economic diversification

Answers with Hints

1. (C)
   - The Montreal Protocol signed in 1987 was related to phase out the manufacture and use of chemicals causing depletion of the Earth's ozone layer.
   - 'Agenda 21' was adopted at the Rio Earth summit in 1992.
   - In June, 1992 the United Nation Conference on Environment and Development took place at Rio-de-Janeiro, Brazil.
2. (B)
   - Folkways—W.G. Sumner
   - Conurbation —Patrick Geddes
   - Sick Role—Talcott Parson
   - Folk Devils—Stanley Cohen
3. (C)
   - Political Man : The Social Basis of Politics—SM Lipset
   - Modern Political Analysis —Robert A. Dahl
   - Open Society and its Enemies —Karl Popper
   - Comparative Politics : A Development Approach —G.A. Almond & G.B. Powell
4. (C) Secondary data in research methodology pertains to information previously gathered for purposes other than the current research project. This data is sourced from materials such as books, articles, databases, and reports, originally collected for distinct aims.
5. (D)
   - Foucault is concerned with how people govern themselves and other through production and knowledge.
   - He is interested in technologies which are derived from knowledge and how they are used by various institutions to exert power over people.
   - He saw link between knowledge and power, he did not see conspiracy by elite members of society.
6. (D) Radhakamal Mukherjee proposed the human civilization should be studied at three interrelated levels *i.e.* Biological evolution, spiritual dimension and universalization.
7. (D) Karl Marx potrayed civil society as the terrain of individual egotism.
8. (C)
9. (D) A process of urban renewal in which, older decaying house is refurnished by affluent people moving into the area is called Gentrification.
   The term gentrification was first coined in 1964 by Ruth Glass.
10. (C) Advantages of factory system :
    1. Economic, by allowing advantage the scale, by reducing the cost of distribution of raw materials and finished products.
    2. Political, by empowering the owner, to control in political process
    3. Managerial, by increasing the scope for disciplined control of bargaining powers of workers.
11. (C) Two data sets can have the same mean but they can be entirely different. Thus to describe data, one needs to know the extent of variability. This is given by the measures of dispersion. Range, interquartile range, and standard deviation are the three commonly used measures of dispersion.
12. (B) Gender roles are associated with the writings of R.W. Connel. Gender roles in society means how we're expected to act, speak, dress, groom, and conduct ourselves based upon our assigned sex.
13. (B) World System Theory was given by Immanual Wallerstein. The world systems theory suggests that while the world economy is ever changing, there are three basic hierarchies of countries : core, periphery, and semi-periphery. Core countries dominate and exploit peripheral countries. Peripheral countries are dependent on the core countries for capital.
14. (D) A null hypothesis is a hypothesis that says there is no statistical significance between the two variables.

15. (D) Environmental ethics is a branch of applied philosophy that studies the conceptual foundations of environmental values as well as more concrete issues surrounding societal attitudes, actions, and policies to protect and sustain biodiversity and ecological systems.
16. (D) Time Space Distanciation —Anthony Giddens
Reference Group—R.K. Merton
Evolutionary Universals —Talcott Parsons
Deep Structure —Claude Levi Strauss
17. (C) Chronological order of sociologists who contribute to the theory of functional :
Herbert Spencer – Emile Durkheim – A.R. Radcliffe Brown – Talcott Parsons – R.K. Merton
18. (D) The concept of urbanism is given by Louis Wirth. Urbanism is the study of how inhabitants of urban areas, such as towns and cities, interact with the built environment. It is a direct component of disciplines such as urban planning, a profession focusing on the design and management of urban areas, and urban sociology, an academic field which studies urban life.
19. (D) Vertical segregation measures inequality and horizontal segregation measures occupational gender differences but without an inequality component.
20. (D) Polygyny, the practice of one man being married to multiple wives at the same time, is a common family structure in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa. Polygyny is found among the Naga tribes, the Gond, the Baiga and the Toda. It is also found among the Lushai, Juang and the Kondh.
21. (D) According to Giddens Capitalism, Industrialism and Surveillance capacities are the part of basic institutions of Modernity.
22. (B)
- Suicide—The Comparative Method
- The Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism—Historical comparative method
- The Andaman Islanders—Functional Method
- Getting a job—Network Analysis

23. (D) Patterns of Culture —R. Benedict
Man and his Works —M.J. Herskovitz
The Scientific Theory of Culture —B. Malinowski
Primitive Culture —E.B. Taylor
24. (B) Stone Age Economics —Marshall Shahlins
The Gift —Marcel Mauss
The Philosophy of Money —George Simmel
The Gift Relationship —Richard Titmuss
25. (C) Saint Simon was the mentor of August Comte. Saint-Simon conceptualized a science of social organization, which he called 'social physiology' : human society was seen as an organic entity whose development was governed by natural laws which the social physiologist must attempt to uncover.
26. (B) The Passing of Traditional Society—Daniel Lerner
Asian Drama—Gunnar Myrdal
The Achieving Society—David C. McClelend
Communication and Political Development—Lucian W. Pye
27. (C) The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution Act) came into force in 1974.
28. (D) Fordism is an industrial engineering and manufacturing system that serves as the basis of modern social and labour-economic systems that support industrialized, standardized mass production and mass consumption. The concept is named after Henry Ford.
29. (D) The observation which occurs most frequently in the sample is called the mode.
30. (B) Kuhn argued for an episodic model in which periods of conceptual continuity where there is cumulative progress, which Kuhn referred to as periods of 'normal science', were interrupted by periods of revolutionary science. The discovery of 'anomalies' during revolutions in science leads to new paradigms.
31. (C) The concept of Bureaucracy developed over a period of time. An ascending order chronology who contributed to the notion of Bureaucracy.
Max Weber–A.W. Gouldner–Peter M. Blau–Robert K. Merton – M. Crozier.
32. (A) Introducing Women's Studies—V. Robinson and D. Richardson
Feminism and Post Modernism—L.J. Nicholson
The Transformation of Intimacy—A. Giddens
Sex, Gender and Society—Ann Oakly
33. (D) He studied kinship system with no preconceived notion regarding evolution as D. Morgan. He studied kinship system functionally and synchronous point of time.
34 . (C) According to Weber, the Ideal Type is a model, and it means a mental image or an origin, as it is not any material object. In the Ideal Type, the term typically refers to any class, type, or group. So, in general terms Ideal Type is a class of any person that shows the specific character of that individual.
35. (B) Chronological writings of B.R. Ambedkar Writings
- Caste in India : Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development (1916)
- Annihilation of Caste (1936)
- Who were the Shudras (1946)
- The Untouchables : Who were they and why they became untouchables (1948)

36. (C) Some benefits of genetic engineering in agriculture are increased crop yields, reduced costs for food or drug production, reduced need for pesticides, enhanced nutrient composition and food quality, resistance to pests and disease, greater food security and medical benefits to the world's growing population.
37. (B) Sociologist who have contributed significantly to Role theory are Ralph Linton, Talcott Parsons, R.K. Merton, Erving Goffman.
38. (C)

- Some Aspects of Family in Mahua—I.P. Desai
- Caste & Kinship in Central India—Andrian. C. Mayer
- World Revolution and Family Pattern—William J. Goode
- Family and Kinships; A Study of Pandits or Rural Kashmir—T.N. Madan

39. (C) Ecofeminism is a part of Environment. Ecofeminism uses the basic feminist tenets of equality between genders, a revaluing of non-patriarchal or non-linear structures, and a view of the world that respects organic processes, holistic connections, and the merits of intuition and collaboration.
40. (C) Contributions of following sociologist in conflict theory—Lewis Coser, G. Simmel, Ralf Dahrendorf and Karl Marx
41. (C)
    - Margaret Mead—Twentieth Century faith
    - Jurgen Habermas—Towards a Rational Society
    - Edward Said—Orientalism
    - Michael Foucault—The Archaeology of Knowledge
42. (C) Sequence of research after collection of data :
    1. Screening
    2. Coding
    3. Tabulation
    4. Report Writing
43. (B) Sociological work of Elite theory in chronological order and their year of publication.
    1. The Ruling Class—G. Mosca (1896)
    2. Political Parties—Robert Michels (1911)
    3. The Mind and Society—Vilfredo Pareto (1916)
    4. The Power Elite—C.W. Mills (1956)
44. (C) New social movements represent the 'new politics' which is about quality of life, individual self-realization, and human rights; whereas the old politics focused on economic, political, and military security. The New Social Movements (NSMs) are not directing their collective action to state power. Ecological, Black and Feminist movement are some example of it.
45. (A) Dimensions of Social Exclusion :
    1. Exclusion from labour market
    2. Exclusion from services
    3. Exclusion from social relations
    4. Exclusion from adequate income and resources
46. (B)
    - Foundations of Behavioural Research—Fred N. Linger
    - Research Methods in Social Research—Marie Jahoda, Mortan Deutch, Stuart W. Cook
    - Scientific Social Surveys and Research—P.V Young
    - Methods in Social Research—William J. Goode and P.K. Hatt
47. (B) The value of middle item in series when it is arranged in ascending and descending order called median.
48. (D) Total Institution was the term popularized by Erving Goffman to refer the facilities such as asylums, prisons and monastery that imposed on their residents a forcibly regulated system of existence in complete isolation from the outside world.
49. (C) An innovative milieu, as an innovation system, describes the relationships (scientific, technological, industrial, commercial, financial, political) between private and public institutions (enterprises, research and engineering labs, administrations, etc.).
50. (B) The learning of attitudes and behaviours necessary to recognized and sustainable competence within a context of employment. These include skills acquired through training, informal work norms, and peer-group values and relationships is called occupational socialization.
51. (C) Irawati Karve (15 December, 1905–11 August, 1970) was a pioneering Indian sociologist, anthropologist, educationist and writer from Maharashtra, India. She was born in Burma (Myanmar)
52. (C) Merton argues, people must be willing to admit that there exist various structural and functional alternatives within society. In terms of structural functionalism, Merton felt that the focus should be on social functions rather than on individual motives.
53. (C) The Balwant Rao Mehta Committee was formed in 1957. It introduced the three-tier Panchayati Raj system, which consisted of the Gram Panchayat at the village level, the Panchayat Samiti at the block level and the Zila Parishad at the district level.
54. (D)
    - Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer—Evand Pritchard
    - Kinship Organizations and Group Marriages in Australia—N.W. Thomas
    - African system of Kinship and Marriage—A.R. Radcliffe Brown and D. Forte
    - The Dynamics of Kinship among Tallensi—M. Fortes
55. (D) Basic steps in an exploratory research design are :
    1. The Survey of research
    2. Preparing an interview schedule
    3. The experience survey
    4. The analysis of insight stimulating examples.
56. (B)
    - **Global Commons**—Resources shared by all members of international community.
    - **Acid Rain**—Precipitation that is made acidic by rain pollution.
    - **Green House Effect**—Rise of global average temperature due to increased concentration of carbon dioxide in environment.
    - **Environmental Racism**—Putting environmental hazards in proximity for poor people.
57. (C) Dependency culture is a term associated with New Right theorists such as Charles Murray who argue that the welfare state undermines individual responsibility and effectively traps claimants within the benefits

system with little or no incentive to escape.

58. (B) Raymon Armon books chronology :
- The century of Total War (1954)
- The Opium of Intellectuals (1955)
- Main Currents in Sociological Thoughts (1965)
- The Industrial Society (1967)
- The Imperial Republic (1974)

59. (D) Manual Castell defined network as a set of interconnected nodes—the distance between social positions are shorter where such positions constitute nodes within a network as opposed to those which lie outside the particular network.

60. (C) Good research is Systematic, Empirical, Replicable and logical.

61. (C)
- Pattern Variables—Talcott Parsons
- Glocalisation—R. Robertson
- Circulation of Elites—Vilfredo pareto
- Relative Deprivation—R.K. Merton and S.A. Stouffer

62. (C) Chronology of Karl Marx Books
1. Holy Family (1845)
2. The Poverty of Philosophy (1847)
3. Manifesto of Communist Party (1848)
4. The 18th Blumaire of Louis Bonaparte (1852)
5. Capital (1867)

63. (D) Talcott Parsons stated in his book with rhetorical question 'Who now reads Spencer'

64. (A) Life cycle of social movement—
Emergence – Coalascence – Bureaucratization–Decline

65. (B) Anthony Giddens has named Juggernaut to describe an advance stage of modernity.

66. (C) Women Reservation Act proposed 33% women reservation to continue for 15 years. Additionally, it mandates that a quota for individuals belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes be established within the reserved seats designated for women in Parliament and Legislative assembly.

67. (D) Embourgeoisement a process by which a working-class person adopts middle-class values via increased wealth and/or a change in occupation. As the name implies, embourgeoisement represents the spread of bourgeoisie values within society. It can be thought of as the opposite of class consciousness.

68. (B) In Bourdieu's words, habitus refers to "a subjective but not individual system of internalised structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group or class.

69. (B) Manual Castell labelled the third industrial revolution as 'Informationlism' with the characteristics of :
1. The driving role of science and tech. for economic growth.
2. The shift from material production to information processing.
3. The emergence and expansion of new forms of networked industrial organization.
4. The rise of socio economic globalisation.

70. (A) Consanguine Family was founded upon the intermarriage of brothers and sisters, own and collateral in a group.

71. (C)
- Modernity and Self Identity—Anthony Giddens
- Structure and Function in primitive society —A.R. Radcliffe Brown
- The Social System —Talcott Parsons
- On the Shoulders of Giants —R.K. Merton

72. (D) A.R. Radcliffe Brown, S.F. Nadel, Talcott Parsons used concept of social structure in their studies.

73. (D)
- Panoptican Model of Prison—Michael Foucault
- Surveillance Society—David Lyon
- Virtual Reality—M. Featherstone & R. Burrows
- Ethos of Science—R.K. Merton

74. (B) Standard deviation is a method of dispersion around mean.

75. (D) 76. (B)

77. (A) For Alfred Schutz, subjective meaning seems more important to understand human action than the fact that social actors internalize normative values.

78. (C) The "Definition is a phrase signifying the thing's essence" is given by Aristotle.

79. (B) Louis Althusser proclaimed an epistemological break between the earlier and mature writings of Karl Marx.

80. (A)
- Religion and Rise of Capitalism—R.H. Tawney
- Ancient Judaism— Max Weber
- The Social Organization of Australian Tribes—A.R. Radcliffe Brown
- Primitive Religion—L.H. Lowie

81. (D) Shri Guru Narayan is considered as a pragmatic social reformer.

82. (B) Andre Beteille, F.G. Bailey and McKim Mariott studies analyse the concept of Social stratification at empirical level.

83. (D) Societies in ascending order of their development—
Hunting & Gathering–Pastoral–Agrarian–Industrial-Post Industrial

84. (A) The social structure of Garo can be understood in the context of Nok.



85. (A)
86. (B) Over emphasis of Nationalism never weakens the Nation state in cotemporary society.
87. (C) Economic action cannot be reduced to rational, individual calculation of profit or interest maximization but must be seen as embedded within social networks involving social divisions, power relation, organizations, culture and politics. This statement is given by Mark Granovetter.
88. (C) Phenomenology is a radical Alternative of Positivism Social phenomenology is an approach within the field of sociology that aims to reveal what role human awareness plays in the production of social action, social situations and social worlds.
89. (B) Durkheim considers the development of the division of labour to be associated with the increasing contact among people. There is a greater density of contact, so that people are led to specialize. The division of labour emerges in different ways in different societies, leading to somewhat different forms of solidarity.
90. (B) According to Talcott Parsons status role complex is the basic unit of social system.
91. (B) Modernization of role structure involves change in motivational patterns of individuals, change in social norms and change in value orientation patterns.
92. (B) The achievement orientation generally stimulate level of aspiration in modern society.
93. (A) If aspiration level of a given individual is higher between two points of time, it operates as a psychological category.
94. (D) Modernized role-structures represents both higher level of psychic mobility and achievement orientation.
95. (B) If level of aspiration is higher in comparison to that of some other individuals, it operates Psychological category as well as Socio-cultural category.
96. (C)
97. (A)
    (a) Social structure underwent considerable transformation.
    (b) The villagers responded to new employment opportunities like small scale commercial activities.
    (c) Some villagers purchased irrigated land or worked as agricultural labours in the nearby villages.
98. (C) 99. (B) 100. (D)

PDarpan

Test Your Knowledge

Answers with Hints

1. (B) 2. (C) 3. (C) 4. (C)
5. (B) Lokpal is not empowered to inquire into any allegation against the Prime Minister in relation to his functions concerning national security, foreign affairs and public order. The Lokpal is not able to probe complaints against the President of India, Vice-President of India, Speaker and Dy Speaker Lok Sabha, Vice-Chairman of Rajya Sabha, sitting judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts, Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Attorney General, Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners, Chairman and Member of National Commission for SC/STs and Chairman and Members of the Union Public Service Commission.
6. (B) PMGSY is a centrally sponsored scheme, with a funding pattern of 60 : 40 between the Centre and States and 90 : 10 in 8NE and 3 Himalayan States.
7. (A) 8. (C)
9. (C) Indian Army defeated Pakistani Army in Kargil War during the Prime Ministership of (Late) Atal Bihari Bajpayee.
10. (A)
11. (C) Murias (Tribe) live in Bastar Region of Chhattisgarh.
12. (C) India Struggles was written by Subhash Chandra Bose.
13. (A) Sand, Sandstone, Conglomerate and Grit (all are Arenaceous) are formed mechanically, while calcareous (Coral limestone, Crinoidal limestone and shelly limestone) are formed organically, Sinter (Silicate) is formed chemically and Rock-salt (Chloride) is formed by Desiccation-Evaporites.
14. (B) Australia, geographically regarded as a continental landmass, is World's largest Island with an area of 7600000 sq. km next come Greenland (2130800 sq km), New Guinea (785753 sq km) and Borneo (748168 sq km).
15. (C) Budapest is situated on the bank of Danube.
16. (D) Rain drops containing fine particles of reddish dust transported by the wind from deserts and washed down from the atmosphere during precipitation, is called blood Rain. It is most common in South Italy, Sicily, Malta and Canary Islands. Blood Rain is also called 'Mud-Rain'.
17. (D)
18. (C) Malana, closely situated to Jari Village of Kullu (Himachal Pradesh), famous for its beauty is also known as the 'Little Greece' in H.P.
19. (A)
20. (C) Tacheometry is a system of rapid surveying by which the horizontal and vertical positions of points on the earth's surface relative to one another are determined using a tacheometer.
21. (B) 22. (C) 23. (B) 24. (A) 25. (D)
26. (C) According to Article 142(1) of the Constitution of India, the Supreme Court in the exercise of its jurisdiction may pass such decree or make such order as necessary for doing 'Complete Justice' in any cause or matter pending before it, and any decree so passed or order so made shall be enforceable throughout the territory of India in such manner as may be prescribed by or under any law made by Parliament and until provision in that behalf is so made in such manner as the President may by order prescribe.
27. (D)
28. (C) Draught animals include those animals that work with and for humans for subsistence and livelihood. The most commonly thought of draught animals are horses, donkeys, mules, camels and elamas.
29. (D)
30. (A) Squamous is an epithelial tissue.
31. (D) 32. (C) 33. (D) 34. (A) 35. (C)
36. (C) 37. (D) 38. (C) 39. (C) 40. (C)

PDarpan

Solved Paper

Bihar B.Ed. Common Entrance Test, 2024

(Held on 24-6-2024)

SECTION-I

General English Comprehension

Directions—(Q. 1–5) Read the passage and answer the four choices given after each question that follows—

Until he was ten Alex attended the nearby Allen School. He was then transferred to Moor School which he attended with his Sisters. Alex learned a good deal about nature during that three mile downhill hike to school and the three mile uphill return trip. He was a quick student and at twelve, the age limit prescribed for Moor School, he was sent to Markil Academy. Two years later he joined his sisters Zen and Jesia at the home of his elder brother Tom, who was to become a successful occultist in Paris. However, the economic success of the family was yet to be and Alex was forced to leave school for economic reasons. When he was fifteen he obtained a job in shipping company. Good fortune, however, was on his side and on the side of humanity. In 1901, he received a share in a legacy which made it possible for him to return to school. He decided to study medicine.

1. …… and at twelve, the age limit prescribed for, Moor School …… this in the context means that children were—
   (A) not admitted to the school before they were twelve
   (B) admitted to the school at the age of twelve
   (C) allowed to remain in the school only up to line age of twelve
   (D) admitted to the school any time after the age of twelve
2. The word 'Legacy' in the context means—
   (A) Lottery
   (B) Goodwill money
   (C) Inheritance
   (D) Legal payment
3. Alex trekked …… miles everyday to attend Moor School.
   (A) three (B) six
   (C) twelve (D) unknown
4. He was a quick student—this means that Alex—
   (A) reached school before his sisters
   (B) reached the school-leaving age
   (C) was a lively student too soon
   (D) was a fast learner
5. Alex become rich ……
   (A) by working in a shipping company
   (B) when his brother became a successful occultist
   (C) because he studied medicine
   (D) by receiving share in legacy
6. Shyam …… the movie before he read the review.
   (A) watches
   (B) have watched
   (C) had watched
   (D) was watching
7. Did he just …… me a liar.
   (A) call
   (B) called
   (C) calling
   (D) None of the above
8. It gives him immense pleasure …… her to the programme.
   (A) to invite
   (B) for invitation
   (C) in inviting
   (D) to invited
9. Choose the correct word which means 'Small Branch'—
   (A) Bit (B) Stick
   (C) Twig (D) Log
10. The synonym of Friendly is—
    (A) Amazing (B) Energetic
    (C) Amiable (D) Hostile
11. Tomato is highly …… commodity and weather vulnerability.
    (A) expensive (B) perishable
    (C) dear (D) exorbitant
12. Those people have …… money.
    (A) much (B) a lot
    (C) a lot of (D) lots of
13. Make haste lest you …… late.
    (A) should get
    (B) should not get
    (C) may not get
    (D) shall get
14. No loss accrued …… me from this Grocery Shop.
    (A) to (B) with
    (C) on (D) beside
15. The house was …… river and railway station.
    (A) from (B) at
    (C) between (D) with

SECTION-II

सामान्य हिन्दी

निर्देश–(प्रश्न 16 से 20 तक) निम्न-लिखित अवतरण को ध्यानपूर्वक पढ़ें एवं सही विकल्पों का चयन करके उत्तर दीजिए–

साहित्य मानव समाज का अभिन्न अंग है. समाज का दर्पण साहित्य कहलाता है. साहित्य का जन्म समाज के बिना असम्भव है और अच्छे समाज का जन्म बिना साहित्य के असम्भव है. समाज और साहित्य का अटूट सम्बन्ध है. साहित्य समाज को नवजीवन प्रदान करता है. साहित्य किसी भी समाज, देश और राष्ट्र की नींव है. साहित्य कभी नष्ट नहीं होता. साहित्य समाज को संस्कारित करने के साथ-साथ जीवन मूल्यों की भी शिक्षा देता है. समाज को व्यापक रूप में प्रभावित करता है, साथ ही लोगों को प्रेरित करने का कार्य भी करता है. समाज के नवनिर्माण में साहित्य की केन्द्रीय भूमिका होती है.

16. साहित्य और समाज का सम्बन्ध है–
    (A) कोई सम्बन्ध नहीं
    (B) खराब
    (C) कमजोर
    (D) अटूट

17. समाज के नवनिर्माण में साहित्य की भूमिका–
(A) नगण्य है
(B) केन्द्रीय है
(C) गौण है
(D) उपर्युक्त में से कोई नहीं

18. साहित्य समाज का क्या कहलाता है ?
(A) दर्पण (B) सम्बन्ध
(C) जीवन (D) प्रेरणा

19. साहित्य समाज को संस्कारित करने के साथ-साथ किसकी शिक्षा देती है ?
(A) व्यक्तित्व की
(B) जीवन मूल्यों की
(C) छवि की
(D) उपर्युक्त में से कोई नहीं

20. प्रस्तुत अवतरण दर्शाता है–
(A) समाज एवं साहित्य का सम्बन्ध
(B) समाज एवं साहित्य की अवहेलना
(C) साहित्यकार की सृजनशक्ति
(D) सामाजिक व्यवहार

21. 'कमल' का पर्यायवाची शब्द है–
(A) रश्मि (B) सरोज
(C) भानु (D) भास्कर

22. इनमें से देशज शब्द नहीं है–
(A) डॉक्टर (B) दातुन
(C) लोटा (D) कटोरा

23. 'ज्येष्ठ' का विलोम शब्द है–
(A) उत्कृष्ट
(B) कनिष्ठ
(C) अग्रज
(D) उपर्युक्त में से कोई नहीं

24. 'गजानन' में कौनसा समास है ?
(A) अव्ययीभाव (B) बहुव्रीहि
(C) तत्पुरुष (D) कर्मधारय

25. छंद कितने प्रकार के होते हैं ?
(A) 3 (B) 2
(C) 5 (D) 4

26. 'नमक-मिर्च लगाना' मुहावरे का अर्थ है–
(A) बड़ा काम करना
(B) बहुत पैसे कमाना
(C) खाने में नमक और मिर्च डालना
(D) बढ़ा-चढ़ा कर कहना

27. भारत की राजभाषा है–
(A) उर्दू
(B) अंग्रेजी
(C) हिन्दी
(D) उपर्युक्त में से कोई नहीं

28. 'गोदान' के लेखक हैं–
(A) माखनलाल चतुर्वेदी
(B) भगवतीचरण वर्मा
(C) महादेवी
(D) प्रेमचन्द

29. उसे धीरे-धीरे लिखने की आदत है. रेखांकित शब्द क्या है ?
(A) सर्वनाम (B) संज्ञा
(C) क्रिया (D) क्रिया-विशेषण

30. देव + इंद्र की सन्धि से बनने वाला शब्द है–
(A) देवींद्र (B) देवइंद्र
(C) देवेंद्र (D) देविंद्र

SECTION-III
Logical and Analytical Reasoning

Directions— (Q. No. 31–32) Choose the group of letters which is different from others of the following :

31. (A) DF (B) KM
(C) PN (D) TV

32. (A) CDE (B) LNO
(C) RST (D) HIJ

33. Find out the missing item from the following :

15	6	4
6	8	7
2	6	?

(A) 8 (B) 9
(C) 10 (D) 11

34. If you write down all the numbers from 1 to 100, then how many times do you write 4 ?
(A) 19 (B) 18
(C) 20 (D) 21

35. If 25th February, 2008 was a Monday, then what was the day of 15th March, 2008 ?
(A) Tuesday (B) Saturday
(C) Sunday (D) Monday

36. Read the given pattern carefully and tell which number will come in place of question-mark (?) :

7	8	2
2	3	3
4	1	7
5	6	?

(A) 1 (B) 2
(C) 4 (D) 6

37. If 841 = 3, 633 = 5 and 425 = 7, then 217 = ?
(A) 6 (B) 7
(C) 8 (D) 9

38. Select the related number from the given alternatives :
12 : 30 : : 20 : ?
(A) 48 (B) 32
(C) 35 (D) 42

39. A sum of ₹ 53 is divided among A, B and C in such a way that A gets ₹ 7 more than what B gets and B gets ₹ 8 more than what C gets. The ratio of their share is :
(A) 27 : 20 : 12
(B) 27 : 17 : 09
(C) 25 : 18 : 10
(D) None of the above

40. Select the option figure that will complete the series of question figure :



(A) 
(B) 
(C) 
(D) 

41. 'A + B' means 'A is the sister of B', 'A – B' means 'A is the father of B'. 'A × B' means 'A is the brother of B'. If Q + R – P × N – S, then how is R related to S ?
(A) Father
(B) Brother
(C) Uncle
(D) Grandfather

42. The formula to calculate mean (Long Method) from classified data is :
(A) $M = \frac{\sum f N}{N}$ (B) $M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$
(C) $M = \frac{\sum f x}{\sum x}$ (D) $M = \frac{\sum f x}{N}$

43. Which of the following is a positional average ?
(A) Mean (B) Median
(C) Mode (D) Range

44. 'Flow' is related to 'River' in the same way as 'Stagnant' is related to :
(A) Stream (B) Canal
(C) Rain (D) Pond

45. Ogive gives no help in the extinction of :
(A) Median
(B) Percentile
(C) Mode
(D) Percentile Rank

46. If COVER = 18522153, STIND = 111492019, PLATE = ?
(A) 52011216 (B) 68541264
(C) 16121195 (D) 56841525

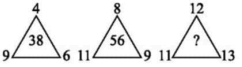
47. If $a : b = 2 : 3$, $b : c = 4 : 5$, then find $a : b : c$:
(A) 8 : 12 : 15 (B) 15 : 12 : 8
(C) 2 : 5 : 15 (D) 24 : 12 : 8

48. A man said to a woman 'The only son of your brother, is the brother of my wife,'. How is that woman related to the wife of that man ?
(A) Aunt
(B) Sister
(C) Mother
(D) Grandmother

49. In a code language 'SURGE' is written as 'GITWU'. How will 'LIGHT' be written in that language ?
(A) NKIJV (B) UJIMN
(C) VKIJM (D) VJIKN

50. If 'A' stands for '+', 'B' stands for '–', 'C' stands for '×' and 'D' stands for '÷', then what will be the value of the given expression ?
35A 25B 12C 25D 5
(A) 5 (B) 0
(C) 10 (D) 2

51. Select the option that best suits the place of question mark (?) in the figure :



(A) 72 (B) 78
(C) 108 (D) 90

52. If 16 ÷ 4 = 74, 21 ÷ 7 = 33, 81 ÷ 9 = 99, then 55 ÷ ?
(A) 110 (B) 1001
(C) 11 (D) 1011

53. In a code language, if 'PLAYER' is coded as '119', then how will 'OPTIONS' be coded in the same language ?
(A) 150 (B) 121
(C) 131 (D) 141

54. Select the number that can come in place of the question mark (?) in the following series :
1, 1, 2, 3, 7, 22, ?
(A) 157 (B) 155
(C) 154 (D) 156

55. Find out the wrong number in the given series :
51, 27, 61, 122, 213, 340, 509
(A) 27 (B) 61
(C) 122 (D) 509

SECTION-IV

General Awareness

56. Main use of salt in diet is to :
(A) ease the process of cooking
(B) increase the taste
(C) produce small amount of hydrochloric acid required for digestion
(D) increase solubility of food particles in water

57. Which fungus is known as 'Green Mold' ?
(A) Aspergillus
(B) Saccharomyces
(C) Mucus
(D) Penicillium

58. MDT is used for which disease ?
(A) Tuberculosis
(B) Leprosy
(C) Diphtheria
(D) Polio

59. Which pollutant may lead to 'Black Foot Disease' ?
(A) Cd (B) Hg
(C) As (D) Cu

60. What is the unit of Astronomical Distance ?
(A) Weber (B) Angstrom
(C) Light Year (D) Lux

61. Electronegativity is the measure of :
(A) Non-metallic character
(B) Metallic character
(C) Basic character
(D) None of the above

62. The lens used in a simple microscope is :
(A) Concave
(B) Convex
(C) Cylindrical
(D) None of the above

63. The elimination of toxic nitrogenous waste and excess water in man is by :
(A) Excretion
(B) Circulation
(C) Reproduction
(D) Pollution

64. Universally accepted colour for mountains is :
(A) Grey
(B) Snow White
(C) Dark Green
(D) Brown

65. Bolometer is used to measure :
(A) Frequency
(B) Temperature
(C) Velocity
(D) Wavelength

66. A jet engine works on the principle of conservation of :
(A) Mass Velocity
(B) Angular Momentum
(C) Energy Mass
(D) Linear Momentum

67. If a lift is going up with acceleration, the apparent weight of a body is :
(A) More or less than true weight
(B) Equal to the true weight
(C) Less than the true weight
(D) More than the true weight

68. The liquid metal is :
(A) Bismuth (B) Magnesium
(C) Mercury (D) Sodium

69. Which of the following is not a primary colour ?
(A) Red (B) Blue
(C) Green (D) Yellow

70. Which blood cells are called 'Soldiers' of the body ?
(A) WBC
(B) Platelets
(C) RBC
(D) All of the above

71. If the radius of blood vessels of a person decreases, then his/her blood pressure will :
(A) Decrease
(B) Increase
(C) Remain Same
(D) Become zero

72. What is the scope of Decision-making ?
(A) Organization
(B) Management
(C) Inspection
(D) Administration

73. Do children of intelligent parents always shine in study ?
(A) No
(B) Yes

(C) Dependent on God
(D) Psychology

74. Which of the following pairs of rivers was first added ?
(A) Damodar-Hooghly
(B) Son-Mahanadi
(C) Narmada-Tapti
(D) Godavari-Krishna

75. Whose knowledge helps us immensely in understanding ourselves ?
(A) Colors
(B) Education
(C) Socialization
(D) All of the above

76. Which planet is surrounded by methane rings ?
(A) Neptune (B) Venus
(C) Mercury (D) Uranus

77. Granite, Gabbro and Basalt are which type of rocks ?
(A) Igneous
(B) Sedimentary
(C) Metamorphic
(D) Complex

78. Which Ocean has one-third of land surface in the world ?
(A) Indian Ocean
(B) Arctic Ocean
(C) Pacific Ocean
(D) Atlantic Ocean

79. Which Article deals with 'Education for All' ?
(A) Article 41 (B) Article 45
(C) Article 43 (D) Article 44

80. Which is considered as the most ancient part of the world by historians ?
(A) Gangetic Valley
(B) Southern part of Vindhya Mountain
(C) North Western Indian Valley
(D) North Eastern part of India

81. The official language of Pallavas was :
(A) Tamil (B) Pali
(C) Sanskrit (D) Kharosthi

82. The lines that adjoin different places with the same pressure are known as :
(A) Isobar
(B) Isotherm
(C) Contour
(D) Hythergraph

83. In India, the National Human Rights Commission was established in which year ?
(A) 1991 (B) 1992
(C) 1993 (D) 1994

84. White Revolution is associated with :
(A) White Edible Oil
(B) Fruit Production
(C) White Poultry and Egg
(D) Milk Production

85. The Local Government in India was initially established by :
(A) Lord Ripon
(B) Lord Curzon
(C) Lord Canning
(D) Lord Dalhousie

86. 'Khajuraho' temple was built by :
(A) Chauhans (B) Chandelas
(C) Rajputs (D) Pratiharas

87. The macro-nutrient provided by inorganic fertilization are :
(A) Carbon, Iron, Boron
(B) Carbon, Nitrogen, Phosphorous
(C) Nitrogen, Phosphorous, Potassium
(D) Magnesium, Zinc, Iron

88. Who was appointed as Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund in October, 2019 ?
(A) Rodrigo Rato
(B) Kristalina Georgieva
(C) Christine Lagarde
(D) Dominique Strauss-Kahn

89. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi got Global Goalkeeper Award for which of the following movement ?
(A) Saubhagya Yojana
(B) Nutrition Mission
(C) Swachh Bharat
(D) Mission Indradhanush

90. Which of the following fort is known as 'The Golden Fort' ?
(A) Jaisalmer Fort
(B) Red Fort
(C) Mehrangarh Fort
(D) Aurangabad Fort

91. The Biodiversity Act was formed in India in which year ?
(A) 2000 (B) 2001
(C) 2002 (D) 2004

92. When TEL (Tetra Ethyl Lead) is added to petrol, then :
(A) it increases the B.P. of petrol
(B) it increases the anti-knocking rating
(C) it decreases the B.P. of petrol
(D) it decreases the anti-knocking rating

93. Which Carbon Compound is used as fire extinguisher ?
(A) CS_2 (B) $CHCl_3$
(C) CH_3Cl (D) CCl_4

94. Supersonic Aircrafts discharge the following substance into the stratosphere :
(A) SO_2 (B) CO_2
(C) NO_2 (D) CO

95. When water is added to anhydrous white copper sulphate, the color will change to :
(A) Yellow (B) Green
(C) Blue (D) Red

SECTION-V

Teaching-Learning Environment in Schools

96. Classroom problem-solving ability is developed by using which as feedback device ?
(A) T-Group
(B) Micro Teaching
(C) Interaction Analysis
(D) Simulation Technique

97. The supporting system of teaching is :
(A) Laboratory
(B) Library
(C) (A) and (B)
(D) None of the above

98. Mastery learning strategy of teaching is designed by :
(A) J.S. Bruner (B) Osborne
(C) B.S. Skinner (D) B.S. Bloom

99. The norms for teachers are to be developed by :
(A) U.G.C. (B) N.C.E.R.T.
(C) N.C.T.E. (D) S.C.E.R.T.

100. In the absence of …… human personality does not develop.
(A) Knowledge
(B) Culture
(C) Work
(D) None of the above

101. Newspaper is a/an …… agency.
(A) Formal
(B) Informal
(C) Personal
(D) None of the above

102. …… consider school as a miniature form of society.
(A) Idealist
(B) Naturalist
(C) Pragmatist
(D) Humanitarian

103. Who said that 'Philosophy and Education are Two Sides of the same Coin' ?
(A) Dewey (B) Ross
(C) Adams (D) Socrates

104. The direct control of management is on :
(A) State Bodies
(B) Central Bodies
(C) Both (A) and (B)
(D) None of the above

105. Technique of teaching is :
(A) Illustration
(B) Exposition
(C) Explanation
(D) All of the above

106. Procedure of management of teaching-learning is :
(A) Organizing
(B) Planning
(C) Controlling
(D) All of the above

107. The main approach of Educational Management is :
(A) Social Justice
(B) Social Demand
(C) Manpower Development
(D) All of the above

108. Teacher's main task is to :
(A) Understand his students
(B) Mastery of his subject
(C) Acquire teaching skills
(D) All of the above

109. Children's error :
(A) should be immediately corrected by asking them to do repeated practice
(B) are a part of learning and give an insight into their thinking
(C) are insignificant in the teaching-learning process
(D) reflect how careless children are

110. The method of teaching is to :
(A) Impart information
(B) Asked students to read books
(C) Suggest good reference material
(D) Initiate a discussion and participate in it

111. An object in which no light rays can pass through is called :
(A) Translucent
(B) Transparent
(C) Convex
(D) Opaque

112. Environmental Studies curriculum may lead to holistic learning of children if it is :
(A) Integrated
(B) Inclusive
(C) Thematic
(D) All of the above

113. For an efficient and durable learning, learner should have :
(A) Ability to learn only
(B) Requsite level of motivation only
(C) Opportunities to learn only
(D) Desire level of ability and motivation

114. Classroom communication must be :
(A) Teacher-centric
(B) Student-centric
(C) General-centric
(D) Textbook-centric

115. As a teacher, select the best option to ensure your effective presence in the classroom :
(A) Uses of peer command
(B) Making aggressive statement
(C) Adoption of well established posture
(D) Being authoritarian

116. Which of the following is the longest source of water pollution in major rivers of India ?
(A) Untreated sewage
(B) Agriculture run-off
(C) Unregulated small scale industries
(D) Religious practices

117. Which of the following is not a prescribed level of teaching ?
(A) Memory
(B) Understanding
(C) Reflective
(D) Differentiation

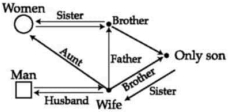
118. The coastal State / Union Territory of bay of Bengal is :
(A) Odisha (B) Karnataka
(C) Kerala (D) Telangana

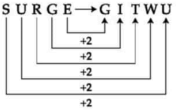
119. Learning is a process of development, where the individual has to make :
(A) Efforts on his own
(B) Contribution of parents
(C) Contribution of teachers
(D) None of the above

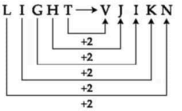
120. What is the meaning of 'E' in UNESCO ?
(A) Economic
(B) Environment
(C) Eastern
(D) Educational

Answers with Hints

1. (C) The sentence states that 'twelve' was the age limit for Moor School. This implies that students were allowed to attend school until they turned twelve, but not after.
2. (C) The passage states that Alex received a share in a legacy that allowed him to return to school. The word 'legacy' in this context refers to money or property passed down from a deceased person.
3. (B) Alex trekked three mile downhill and three mile uphill to attend Moor School.
4. (D) A quick learner is an individual who learns quickly, they typically have excellent communication and listening abilities.
5. (D) The passage states that Alex received a share in a legacy that allowed him to return to school.
6. (C) In the given sentence, the speaker is trying to reveal that Shyam has completed the action of watching a movie before reading the review. So, the correct form of the verb is 'had watched' should fill the blank.
7. (B) Since the sentence is asking about a past action, the verb should be in the past tense. Option (B) 'called' is the only one in the past tense, which fits the sentence structure.

8. (A) 'to invite' is a correct form as it fits the structure that complements the verb 'gives' and the noun 'pleasure.'
9. (C) A twig is a small, thin branch of a tree or bush, usually without its leaves.
10. (C) 'Amiable' is the synonym for the word 'friendly'. Both refer to 'having or displaying a friendly and pleasant manner.'
11. (B) Perishable (especially of food) likely to decay or go bad quickly.
12. (C) When we talk about quantities of money, we often use the phrase 'a lot of' to convey a large amount. It's a common and informal way to express a large amount.
13. (A) 'Make haste lest you should get late' is a phrase that means 'hurry up, move or act quickly'. So, the blank fills with 'should get'.
14. (A) The preposition that best fits the context of not incurring a loss from a grocery shop is 'to.' The phrase 'to me' indicates that the loss, if any, would have affected the speaker.
15. (C) The preposition 'between' is used to express the relationship of two or more entities positioned on either side of a central point or line. In the context of the sentence, "The house was between the river and the railway station."
16. (D) 17. (B) 18. (A) 19. (B)
20. (A) 21. (B) 22. (A) 23. (B)
24. (B) 25. (A) 26. (D) 27. (C)
28. (D) 29. (D) 30. (C)
31. (C) D F K M P N T V (+2, +2, −2, −2)
32. (B) C D E (+1, +1); L N O (+1, +2); R S T (+1, +1); H I J (+1, +1)
33. (B)
34. (C) 4, 14, 24, 34, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 54, 64, 74, 84, 94
Required number of digis 4 = 20
35. (B) Total number of days from 25 February, 2008 to 15 March, 2008 = 20 days
Total odd days = 06
= Saturday
36. (D) $7 + 2 + 4 + 5 = 18$
$8 + 3 + 1 + 6 = 18$
$2 + 3 + 7 + ? = 18$
$? = 18 - 12$
$? = 6$
37. (D) $841 \Rightarrow \frac{8}{4} = 2 \Rightarrow 2 + 1 = 3$
$633 \Rightarrow \frac{6}{3} = 2 \Rightarrow 2 + 3 = 5$
$425 \Rightarrow \frac{4}{2} = 2 \Rightarrow 2 + 5 = 7$
$? = 217$
$\Rightarrow \frac{2}{1} = 2 \Rightarrow 2 + 7$
$= 9$
38. (D) As,
$12 : 30$
$\downarrow \quad \downarrow$
$3^2 + 3 \quad 5^2 + 5$
Same as,
$20 : \boxed{? = 42}$
$\downarrow \quad \downarrow$
$4^2 + 4 \quad 6^2 + 6$
39. (C) $A + B + C = 53$ ...(1)
Let the amount received by C
$= ₹ x$
Amount received by B
$= x + 8$
Amount received by A
$= x + 8 + 7$
$= x + 15$
From equation (1)—
$x + 15 + x + 8 + x = 53$
$3x + 23 = 53$
$3x = 53 - 23$
$x = \frac{30}{3}$
$x = 10$
$\therefore$ A : B : C
$= (x + 15) : (x + 8) : x$
$= (10 + 15) : (10 + 8) : 10$
$= 25 : 18 : 10$
40. (C) All the elements of figure sereis are moving one step in every next step in clockwise direction.
41. (D) Q ←Sister R ←Father P ←Brother N ←Father S
Grandfather
42. (D) $M = \frac{\Sigma fx}{N}$
43. (B) In median, the middle most value of the series is taken as the representative value. Therefore, median is a positional average.
44. (D) As, 'Flow' is related to 'River' in the same way 'Stagnant' is related with 'Pond'.
45. (C) Ogive gives no help in the extinction of mode.
46. (A) As, C O V E R
18 5 22 15 3
and S T I N D
4 14 9 20 19
Same as, P L A T E
5 20 1 12 16
47. (A) $a : b = 2 : 3$
$b : c = 4 : 5$
$\therefore \quad a : b : c = 2 \times 4 : 3 \times 4 : 3 \times 5$
$= 8 : 12 : 15$
48. (A)


49. (A) As,


Same as,


50. (B) 35 A 25 B 12 C 25 D 5
$= 35 + 25 - 12 \times 25 \div 5$
$= 35 + 25 - 12 \times 5$
$= 60 - 60$
$= 0$
51. (A) As, $(9 + 6 + 4) \times 2 = 19 \times 2$
$= 38$
and $(11 + 9 + 8) \times 2 = 28 \times 2$
$= 56$
Same as, $? = (11 + 13 + 12) \times 2$
$= 36 \times 2 = 72$
52. (*) Question is incomplete.
53. (A) P L A Y E R
$\Rightarrow (16 + 12 + 01 + 25 + 05 + 18) + 42$
$\Rightarrow 77 + 42$
$\Rightarrow 119$

Same as,

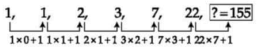
O P T I O N S

$\Rightarrow$ (15 + 16 + 20 + 9 + 15 + 14 + 19) + 42

$\Rightarrow$ 108 + 42

$\Rightarrow$ 150

54. (B)



$? = 22 \times 7 + 1$

$= 154 + 1$

$= 155$

55. (*) 51 27 61 122 213 340 509

In the given question, 51 should be '5'. If so then we get a correct series. Question is incorrect. Correct series of this question is—

5, 27, 61, 122, 213, 340, 509

$2^3 - 3 = 8 - 3 = 5$

$3^3 - 3 = 27 - 3 = 24$

$4^3 - 3 = 64 - 3 = 61$

$5^3 - 3 = 125 - 3 = 122$

$6^3 - 3 = 216 - 3 = 213$

$7^3 - 3 = 343 - 3 = 340$

Since wrong number is 27.

Hence, correct number $= 3^3 - 3$

$= 27 - 3$

$= 24$

So, Answer of this quesiton should be (A).

56. (C) Salt plays a crucial role in the process of digestion and absorption within the human body. It aids in the breakdown of food and the creation of hydrochloric acid, a vital digestive secretion that lines the stomach walls.

57. (D) The fungus known as green mold is Penicillium. It often appears as a greenish, fuzzy growth on food and other organic materials.

58. (B) Multidrug Therapy (MDT) is used for the treatment of leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease. Leprosy is an infectious condition caused by the bacteria Mycobacterium leprae. It can affect the skin, eyes, mucous membranes, and nerves, leading to disfiguring sores and nerve damage.

59. (C) Blackfoot disease, also known as 'BFD' or 'Endemic Peripheral Vascular Disease,' primarily affects individuals living in specific regions of Taiwan. It is caused by the long-term ingestion of arsenic-contaminated water from artesian wells.

60. (C) Light year (ly) is a unit of length used to express astronomical distances, which equals approximately 9.46 trillion kilometers.

61. (A) Electronegativity is the measure of non-metallic character. As the electronegativity increases, the non-metallic character increases.

62. (B) Microscopes use a combination of convex lenses, also known as objective lens and eyepiece lens, to magnify images.

63. (A) Excretion is the process of removing waste materials, toxins, and surplus materials from an organism's body, including carbon dioxide, urea, and extra salts.

64. (D)

65. (B) A bolometer measures temperature changes in an absorptive element due to absorbed radiation. The greater the absorbed power, the higher the temperature.

66. (D) A jet engine operates based on the concept of conserving linear momentum. By combusting fuel together with air, the engine generates energy that propels an aircraft, vehicle, or other mechanical device forward.

67. (D) When a lift is going up with acceleration, the apparent weight of a body is more than its true weight. This means that the body feels heavier than its actual weight. The reason for this is that when the lift accelerates upward, there is additional force acting on the body in the upward direction. This force, known as the pseudo force, is caused by the acceleration of the lift and adds to the force of gravity.

68. (C) Mercury is the only metal that is a liquid at normal temperatures and pressure. This unique property of mercury is due to its unique electronic configuration. Mercury has a symbol Hg and it belongs to the d-block in the periodic table.

69. (D) The option that is not a primary color is yellow if you are considering the additive color model (RGB), where the primary colors are red, green, and blue. However, in the subtractive color model (RYB), the primary colors are red, yellow, and blue. So, the answer depends on the context, but in the common additive model, yellow is the correct choice.

70. (A) White blood cells, also known as leukocytes, are called the 'soldiers of the body'. These remarkable cells play a crucial role in protecting our body against infectious diseases and foreign bodies.

71. (B) If the radius of a person's blood vessel decreases, their blood pressure increases. This relationship is due to increased resistance when vessels narrow, requiring higher pressure for blood flows.

72. (D) Decision-making can be a part of administration, as it involves making choices about policies, procedures, and resource allocation.

73. (A) The answer to whether children of intelligent parents always shine in their studies is 'no'. While having intelligent parents can potentially provide certain advantages, it does not guarantee automatic success or exceptional performance in academics. Intelligence is a multifaceted trait influenced by various factors, including genetics, environment, motivation, and individual effort.

74. (D)

75. (B) The option that best fits is education. While socialization also plays a significant role in helping us understand ourselves through interactions with others, education provides structured knowledge and critical thinking skills that enhance self-awareness and personal development.

76. (A) The planet surrounded by methane rings is Neptune. Neptune has faint rings that contain methane ice, contributing to its distinct blue color.

Uranus also has rings, but they are not specifically characterized by methane.

77. (A) Igneous rocks are formed out of magma and lava. (when it cools and solidifies) from the interior of the earth, hence are known as primary rocks. Examples of igneous rocks are Granite, gabbro, pegmatite, basalt, volcanic breccia and tuff.
78. (C) The Pacific Ocean is the ocean that occupies about one-third of the Earth's surface, according to the CIA World Fact book. This makes it not only the largest ocean but also a significant portion of the Earth's overall geography.
79. (B) Article 45 : Provision for free and compulsory education for children. The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.
80. (B) The southern part of the Vindhya Mountain is considered the most ancient part of the world by historians. This region is often recognized for its historical significance and archaeological findings that suggest early human habitation and cultural development.
81. (C) The official languages of the Pallava dynasty were Sanskrit and Prakrit. The official scripts were Pallava and later Grantha.
82. (A) An isobar is an imaginary line that connects places of equal barometric pressure. They can be used to find areas of low or high pressure over a large area. Isobars make it easier to read and understand weather maps.
83. (C) The National Human Rights Commission of India (abbreviated as NHRC) is a statutory body constituted on 12 October, 1993 under the Protection of Human Rights Ordinance of 28 September, 1993.
84. (D) The white revolution (also known as Operation Flood) was a movement initiated in India during the 1970s. It was aimed at transforming the nation from being a milk-deficient country to the world's largest milk producer.
85. (A) Lord Ripon often regarded as the Father of Local Self-Government in India, Lord Ripon served as the Viceroy and Governor-General of India from 1880 to 1884. During his tenure, he introduced local self-government in 1882. This move allowed Indians to participate in decision-making processes at the local level, empowering them and laying the foundation for democratic governance.
86. (B) The Khajuraho temples were built by the Rajput rulers of Chandela Dynasty who ruled over central India from the 10th to the 13th Century CE. The temples were built over a period of 100 years and it is believed that each Chandela ruler commissioned at least one temple in the complex during his lifetime.
87. (C) Fertilizers play a crucial role in providing essential nutrients to plants, which are vital for their growth and development. The nutritional components typically found in fertilizers are the three primary macronutrients : Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), and Potassium (K).
88. (B) Kristalina Georgieva has been serving as Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund since October 1, 2019. On April 12, 2024, the IMF's Executive Board selected Ms. Georgieva to serve for a second five-year term starting on October 1, 2024.
89. (C) Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi received the 'Global Goalkeeper' Award by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, for Swachchh Bharat Abhiyan, on 24 September, 2019.
90. (A) Jaisalmer Fort, also known as Sonar Quila or the Golden Fort, is a magnificent fortress located in the city of Jaisalmer in the Indian state of Rajasthan.
91. (C) The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 was passed by the Parliament of India to protect biodiversity and facilitate the sustainable management of biological resources with local communities.
92. (B) When tetraethyl lead (TEL) is added to petrol, it increases the anti-knocking rating. TEL helps petrol burn more slowly and smoothly, preventing knocking and resulting in higher octane ratings.
93. (D) Carbon tetrachloride (CCL4) is commonly used as a fire extinguisher. It is a non-flammable liquid that can combat small fires effectively.
94. (C) NO_2 (Nitrogen Dioxide) : This is one of the key emissions from supersonic aircraft. NO_2 contributes to stratospheric ozone depletion and affects radiative balance.
95. (C) When white copper sulphate is mixed with water, it turns blue, indicating the presence of water crystallization within the copper sulphate crystals. These hydrated copper sulphate crystals lose their water of crystallization when heated, transforming into anhydrous copper sulphate.
96. (C) **Interaction Analysis :** This is a method of systematically observing and evaluating teacher-student interactions in the classroom. It provides precise feedback on teaching and learning processes, which can help strengthen problem-solving methods.
97. (C) The supporting systems for teaching can include both laboratories and libraries. These resources enhance classroom instruction and provide valuable learning experiences for students.
98. (D) Mastery learning is an instructional strategy and educational philosophy, first formally proposed by Benjamin Bloom in 1968. Mastery learning maintains that students must achieve a level of mastery (*e.g.*, 90% on a knowledge test) in prerequisite knowledge before moving forward to learn subsequent information.
99. (C) The main objective of the NCTE is to achieve planned and coordinated development of the teacher education system throughout the country, the regulation and proper maintenance of Norms and Standards

in the teacher education system and for matters connected therewith.

100. (A)

101. (B) Newspapers serve as informal agencies, delivering news and opinions in a conversational tone. They engage readers with stories that resonate on a personal level.

102. (C) Pragmatism, particularly as articulated by philosophers like John Dewey, views education as a vital social process. One of the key tenets of pragmatism in education is the idea that schools function as miniature societies. This concept emphasizes that schools are not just places for academic learning but also environments where students learn to navigate social interactions and develop essential life skills.

103. (B) Both philosophy and education are integrally and interdependently related to each other. According to Ross, 'Philosophy and education are like the two sides of the same coin; the one is implied by the other; the former is the contemplative side of life, while the later is the active side'.

104. (A)

105. (D) Teaching techniques can be categorized into three main approaches :
- **Illustration :** This involves using examples, diagrams, or demonstrations to make concepts clearer.
- **Exposition :** Expository teaching directly presents information, concepts, ideas, and principles to students through explanation and demonstration.
- **Explanation :** Providing detailed clarification and understanding of a topic or concept.

So, the correct answer is 'all of the above.' These techniques complement each other and can enhance the learning experience.

106. (D) Education management refers to the process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling the activities of an educational institution. Effective education management is essential for ensuring that students receive a high-quality education that meets their needs and prepares them for success in the future.

107. (D) Educational management should consider all three approaches :
- **Social Justice :** This approach focuses on ensuring equal access to education, addressing disparities, and promoting fairness.
- **Social Demand :** Here, educational management responds to societal needs and demands. Schools and institutions adapt their programs and offerings based on what the community requires.
- **Manpower Development :** This approach emphasizes preparing students for the workforce. Educational institutions align their curriculum with the skills and competencies needed in the job market.

108. (D) A teacher's main jobs are to know their students, be good at their subject, and have good teaching skills. Knowing students helps them teach better, while being good at the subject means they can explain things clearly. Good teaching skills, like talking well and managing the classroom, are important for keeping students interested and creating a positive learning space.

109. (B) Children's errors are a natural and essential part of the learning process. They provide valuable insights into how children understand the world around them and help them develop problem-solving skills.

110. (D) **Engage in initiating and participating in discussions :** This approach highlights the significance of interactive learning, which is essential for effective pedagogy. Involving students in discussion not only enhances their comprehension of concepts but also fosters critical thinking and promotes collaboration among classmates.

111. (D) **Opaque :** preventing light from travelling through and therefore not transparent or translucent.

112. (D) Studying Environmental Studies can facilitate comprehensive learning through the following curricular approaches :
- **Integrated Curriculum :** This method emphasizes purposeful learning by connecting various themes and breaking down traditional subject boundaries.
- **Inclusive Curriculum :** This approach ensures that content is accessible to a diverse range of learners, addressing their specific educational needs.
- **Thematic Curriculum :** Here, content is organized around familiar themes, using relatable language as the medium of instruction to enhance engagement and connection.

113. (D) Every learner is unique, and a holistic approach that considers both ability and motivation is essential for effective and durable learning.
- Learners' abilities play a crucial role in their learning outcomes. Having a desired level of ability allows learners to grasp concepts, solve problems, and retain information effectively.
- Motivation drives learners to engage actively in the learning process. It affects their persistence, effort, and overall success.

114. (B) In a student-centered classroom, the focus shifts to the students. Key aspects include active listening, community building, collaboration, and student advocacy. The goal is to create an inclusive environment where students feel valued and engaged.

115. (C) The most effective approach for establishing presence in the classroom is to adopt a well-established posture. This involves several key elements :
- Confidence
- Body Language
- Approachability
- Engaging Content
- Reflective Practice

Continued on Page 242

Solved Model Paper

FORTHCOMING UPSC CIVIL SERVICES (Pre.) EXAM.

General Studies

1. Consider the following statements :
   I. The surface albedo reaches its maximum during summer.
   II. The surface albedo is highest for oceans.
   III. The surface albedo is lowest for fresh snows.
   Choose the correct option from the code given below :
   (A) Only I and II are correct
   (B) All I, II and III are correct
   (C) Only II and III are correct
   (D) All I, II and III are incorrect

2. Consider the following characteristics of a climatic region :
   I. Continental climate with extremes of temperature.
   II. Located in the Westerly Wind Belt.
   III. Landscape is dominated by grasslands.
   Which of the following climatic region has above characteristics ?
   (A) Taiga Type Climate
   (B) British Type Climate
   (C) Steppe Type Climate
   (D) Mediterranean Type Climate

3. Given below are two statements, in which one is labeled as Assertion (A) and the other as Reason (R) :
   Assertion (A) : Isotherms bend much more between seasons in the Northern Hemisphere than in the Southern Hemisphere.
   Reason (R) : Large landmasses in the Northern Hemisphere cause isotherms to bend toward the equator in winter and poles in summer as they change their temperature much more than the water.
   Select the correct answer from the code given below :
   Codes :
   (A) Both (A) and (R) are true and (R) is the correct explanation of (A)
   (B) (A) is true, but (R) is false
   (C) Both (A) and (R) are true, but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A)
   (D) (A) is false, but (R) is true

4. The Iron Catastrophe refers to :
   (A) Accidental discovery of Iron by human race
   (B) Large scale erosion of iron from the earth's surface
   (C) Sinking of iron and nickel which led to formation of the Earth's Core
   (D) Large scale dispersion of iron from the Earth's core to its surface

5. The seismically active regions of the world are :
   I. The Pacific Ring of Fire
   II. Alpine-Himalayan Belt
   III. Mid-Atlantic Ridges
   IV. East African Rift System
   Choose the correct option from the code given below :
   (A) Only I and II are correct
   (B) Only II and III are correct
   (C) Only I, II and III are correct
   (D) All I, II, III and IV are correct

6. Consider the following :
   I. Mountains
   II. Oceans
   III. Continents
   IV. Plateaus
   V. Valleys
   Which of the above are Second Order Landforms ?
   (A) Only II and III
   (B) Only I and IV
   (C) Only II, IV and V
   (D) Only I, II and III

7. Consider the following statements :
   I. The Wadati-Benioff Zone is associated with the convergent plate boundary.
   II. Powerful earthquakes are common along the Wadati-Benioff zone.
   III. Deep-focus earthquakes occur along the divergent plate boundary.
   Choose the correct option from the codes given below :
   (A) Only I and II are correct
   (B) Only II and III are correct
   (C) Only III is correct
   (D) All I, II and III are correct

8. Consider the following statements :
   I. Doldrums are characterized by strong horizontal surface winds.
   II. It is characterized by low pressure and high temperature.
   III. The position of the belt varies with the apparent movement of the Sun.
   Choose the correct option from the codes given below :
   (A) Only I and II are correct
   (B) Only II and III are correct
   (C) Only III is correct
   (D) All I, II and III are correct

9. Consider the following statements regarding tropical cyclones :
   I. The eye of a tropical cyclone is characterized by strong winds, heavy rainfall and deep convective clouds.
   II. Cyclones continue to gain strength after making landfall because of the increased friction with land surfaces.
   III. Tropical cyclones are more frequently developed over oceans between 5°N and 5°S latitude.
   Choose the correct option from the code given below :
   (A) Only I is incorrect
   (B) Only I and II are incorrect
   (C) Only III is incorrect
   (D) All I, II and III are incorrect

10. The location below the Earth's surface where the earthquake originates is called as :
(A) Fault (B) Hypocenter
(C) Epicenter (D) Ridge

11. Consider the following statements :
I. Convection Current originating in Mantle was responsible for drifting of continents.
II. Existence of Super Continent named 'Pangea' and Super Ocean named 'Panthalassa'
III. Drifting of continent started in Mesozoic era.
Which of the above postulates is related with the Continental Drift Theory ?
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II
(C) Only II and III
(D) All I, II and III

12. Consider the following statements :
I. Droughts in Peru and Ecuador.
II. Heavy Floods in Australia.
III. Increased temperature in the Indian Ocean.
Which of the above are impact of La-Nina ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) All I, II and III
(D) Only II and III

13. Consider the following statements :
I. It rises in Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra.
II. Bhima, Tungabhadra and Ghatprabha are some of the major tributaries.
III. Nagarjuna Sagar Dam is one of the major HEP built across it.
Which of the following rivers have been described above ?
(A) Godavri (B) Krishna
(C) Cauvery (D) Narmada

14. Consider the following statements :
I. As per 2011 Census, Jharkhand has the highest tribal population in India.
II. Among the States, Nagaland has maximum percentage of tribal population.
Choose the correct option from the code given below :
(A) Only I is correct
(B) Only II is correct
(C) Both I and II are correct
(D) Neither I nor II is correct

15. The most commonly found gas in the solar nebula is :
(A) Hydrogen and Helium
(B) Helium and Argon
(C) Hydrogen and Water Vapour
(D) Hydrogen and Argon

16. Which of the following were the major outcomes of the COP29, recently held in Baku, Azerbaijan ?
I. Establishment of Cali Fund.
II. Full Operationalisation of Loss and Damage Fund.
III. Tripling climate finance to developing countries by 2035.
Choose the correct option :
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only III
(D) All I, II and III

17. SAMARTH aims for use of agri-residue in :
(A) Domestic cooking
(B) Waste Plants
(C) Fertilizer Production
(D) Thermal Power Plants

18. Which of the following is true about the Nature Conservation Index ?
I. The first-ever Nature Conservation Index was launched by the United Nations Environment Programme.
II. The index is based on four criteria related with environment conservation.
III. India was ranked in bottom five countries.
Choose the correct option :
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only II
(D) All I, II and III

19. Which of the following gases/compounds are responsible for photochemical smogs ?
I. Nitrogen Dioxide
II. Ozone
III. Carbon Monoxide
IV. VOC such as Aldehydes
V. Peroxyacetylnitrate (PAN)
VI. Carbon Dioxide
Choose the correct option :
(A) Only I, II, III, IV
(B) Only I, II, IV and V
(C) Only III, IV, V and VI
(D) Only I, III, IV, V and VI

20. Consider the following statements :
I. There are nine species of vultures found in India.
II. The Asian King Vulture has been listed as critically endangered in the IUCN Red List.
III. Loss of Habitats and use of diclofenac in domestic animals are major threats to vulture population in India.
Which of the above statements are true ?
(A) Only II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only III
(D) All I, II and III

21. Consider the following statements :
I. Ecotone is a transition area between two biomes.
II. Ecological Niche refers to the unique functional role and position of a species in its habitat or ecosystem.
III. Ecocline is a zone of gradual but continuous change from one ecosystem to another when there is no sharp boundary between the two in terms of species composition.
Which of the above statements are correct ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) Only II and III
(D) All I, II and III

22. Which of the following is associated with Kodo poisoning which has resulted into deaths of elephants in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve ?
(A) Aflatoxins
(B) Zearalenone
(C) Cyclopiazonic Acid
(D) Patulin

23. Consider the following statements :
I. The Pyramid of Biomass is always upright.
II. The Pyramid of Energy can be inverted.
Choose the correct option from the code given below :
(A) Only I is correct
(B) Only II is correct
(C) Both I and II are correct
(D) Both I and II are incorrect

24. In relation to Ramsar Convention, consider the following statements :
I. The Montreux Record was adopted at the 4th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties in Montreux (Switzerland) in 1990.
II. The Montreux Record identifies Ramsar sites that are in need of priority conservation attention at national or international level.
III. Keoladeo National Park and Loktak Lake were listed in the Montreux Record in 1990 and 1993, respectively.
Which of the above statements are true ?
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) All I, II and III

25. Consider the following statements :
I. Neelakurinji is the flagship species of the montane grasslands of southwest India.
II. It blossoms once in every 12 years.
III. It has been listed as 'critically endangered' by IUCN.
Which of the above statements are true ?
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) All I, II and III

26. In reference to the 'Landslide Atlas of India', choose the correct statements :
I. More than 60% of landslides are reported from the Northwestern Himalayas.
II. The National Remote Sensing Centre has ranked Rudraprayag as the top vulnerable districts.
III. Number of districts with maximum landslide exposure is in Uttarakhand.
Which of the above statements are true ?
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) All I, II and III

27. Consider the following statements :
I. It is a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992.
II. The protocol aims for fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the genetic resources.
Which of the following protocol has been described above ?
(A) Cartagena Protocol
(B) Montreal Protocol
(C) Nagoya Protocol
(D) Kunming-Montreal Protocol

28. Consider the following statements :
I. The title of the 'Living Planet Report 2024' was 'A System in Peril.'
II. The report was released by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN.)
III. The Living Planet Index 2024 registered a decline of 73% between 1970 and 2020.
Which of the above statements is/are true ?
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) All I, II and III

29. Consider the following :
I. Botanical Gardens
II. Cryopreservation
III. Biosphere Reserves
IV. DNA Banks
Which of the above are not an example of *in-situ* conservation ?
(A) Only I and III
(B) Only I, II and III
(C) Only I, II and IV
(D) All I, II, III and IV

30. Consider the following :
I. Atleast, 1500 vascular plants must be endemic.
II. It must have 30% or less of its original natural vegetation.
Which of the above are criteria for biodiversity hotspots ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

31. Consider the following statements :
I. As compared to LiDAR, RADAR utilizes radio waves for generating high resolution images and maps.
II. The use of longer wavelengths allows LiDAR to detect smaller objects.
Which of the above statements are true ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

32. Consider the following statements in relation to the CAR T-Cell Therapy :
I. In this therapy, T cells are genetically altered in a lab to bind with cancer cells and kill them.
II. CAR T-cell therapy made for one type of cancer won't work against another type of cancer.
III. There are no side effects of this therapy.
Which of the above statements are true ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) Only II and III
(D) All I, II and III

33. iPS Stem Cells are :
(A) Unipotent Stem Cell for treatment of neurological disorders
(B) Stem cells engineered to fight leukemia
(C) These are the stem cells derived from the embryonic stage
(D) These are the stem cells created through the introduction of embryonic genes

34. Consider the following statements :
I. Nipah Virus cannot be transmitted directly from human-to-human
II. There is currently no vaccine or drugs available for animals or humans
III. Nipah virus was first recognized in 1999 during an outbreak among pig farmers in, Malaysia
Which of the above statements are true ?
(A) Only II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only III
(D) All I, II and III

35. Consider the following statements :
I. Microbial Bio-remediation can be carried out by using bacteria only.
II. In Myco-remediation, fungi's digestive enzymes break down contaminants such as pesticides, hydrocarbons, and heavy metals.
III. In Phyto-remediation, plants are used to bind, extract, and clean up pollutants.
Which of the above statements are true ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) Only II and III
(D) All I, II and III

36. Which of the following is not a characteristics of oligopoly ?
(A) Existence of few large firms
(B) A change in price of products by one firm does not influences other firms
(C) Strong barriers are there to entry of new firms in the industry
(D) Demand curve is uncertain

37. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the GDP Deflator ?
I. GDP deflator = (Nominal GDP/Real GDP) $\times$100.
II. GDP deflator is the best indicator of inflation in an economy.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

38. Consider the following :
I. Subsidies to railways
II. Input subsidies to farmers
III. Subsidies to village and small scale industries
How many of the above are termed as production subsidies ?
(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None of the above

39. Consider the following statements :
I. Bretton Woods Agreement (BWA) established the US dollar as the cornerstone of the global financial system.
II. BWA system pegged the dollar to gold and other currencies to the dollar, ensuring stability and making the US dollar Central to International Trade.
III. European Union is promoting the process of de-dollarisation to explore alternatives.
Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) All I, II and III

40. Multidimensional Poverty Index, developed by NITI Aayog, covers which of the following ?
I. Deprivation of education, health, assets at services that reflect the standard of living of the household.
II. Per capita income
III. Health and Education expenditure as a proportion of GDP.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) Only I and III
(D) All I, II and III

41. Consider the following Acts :
I. Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
II. Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999.
III. Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, 2023.
IV. Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002.
How many of the Acts are administered by the Reserve Bank of India ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

42. Consider the following :
I. Government of India
II. Respective State Government
III. Reserve Bank of India
IV. NABARD
V. Sponsoring Commercial Bank
Which of the above are the shareholders of the Regional Rural Bank ?
(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only I, II and V
(C) Only III, IV and V
(D) All I, II, III, IV and V

43. The economic cost of wheat and rice to the Food Corporation of India is Minimum Support Price and Bonus (if any) paid to farmers plus :
(A) Procurement incidentals and distribution cost
(B) Interest cost only
(C) Transportation cost only
(D) Procurement incidentals and charges for godowns

44. Which of the following statements is/are correct ?
I. Gujarat had the maximum share in Merchandise exports in FY 2023-24.
II. Tamil Nadu was the only state among the top five to grow its share in the last three fiscal.
III. Total exports (goods + services) for FY 2023-24 stood almost flat from the previous fiscal.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only I and III
(C) Only II and III
(D) All I, II and III

45. Which of the following statements is/are correct ?
I. PM Jan Dhan Yojana is one of the key initiatives under the National Mission for Financial Inclusion.
II. PM Jan Dhan Yojana is one of the largest and most successful initiatives of financial inclusion in the world.
III. PM Jan Dhan Yojana is one of the components of JAM-Trinity.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only II and III
(C) All I, II and II
(D) None of the above

46. Parliament passed the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill 2024. Which of the following Acts has/have been revised through this Bill ?
I. RBI Act 1934
II. Banking Regulation Act, 1949
III. SBI Act, 1955
IV. Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertaking) Act, 1970
Correct code is :
(A) Only II
(B) Only I and II
(C) Only I, II and IV
(D) All I, II, III and IV

47. Which of the following is a feature of newly approved Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) ?
I. Assured Pension
II. Assured Family Pension
III. Assured Minimum Pension
IV. Inflation Indexation
IV. Payment of Gratuity
Correct code is :
(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only I, II, III and IV
(C) Only I, II and IV
(D) All, I, II, III, IV and V

48. Boards of Navratna Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) have been delegated autonomy in the areas of enhanced power in :
I. Capital Expenditure
II. Investment in joint ventures/subsidiaries
III. Mergers and acquisitions
IV. Human Resources Management
Correct code is :
(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only I, III and IV
(C) Only I and II
(D) All I, II, III and IV

49. Which of the following is the correct sequence of the States in terms of increasing annual growth rate of Gross State Domestic Product at constant prices in the FY 2023-24 ?
(A) Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, West Bengal
(B) Tamil Nadu, Telangana, West Bengal, Rajasthan
(C) Rajasthan, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Telangana
(D) West Bengal, Rajasthan, Telangana, Tamil Nadu

50. Central Government revises the Variable Dearness Allowance the minimum to revise wages from time-to-time. The revision is based on the changes in :
(A) Consumer Price Index (Industrial Workers)
(B) Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers
(C) Wholesale Price Index
(D) Consumer Price Index (Combined)

51. Consider the following facts about the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA) :
I. DAJGUA envisions saturation of critical gaps in social infrastructure, health, education, livelihood.
II. DAJGUA has been planned based on the learning and success of PM-JANMAN.
Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

52. Consider the following statements in relation to poverty in India, as per the estimates of the World Bank :
I. About 129 million Indians are living in extreme poverty in 2024 on less than $ 2·15 a day down from 431 million in 1990.
II. With a higher poverty standard of $ 6·85 a day more Indians are living below the poverty line in 2024 than in 1990.
III. Poverty threshold for middle income countries is $ 6·85 a day.
How many statements given above are correct ?
(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None of the above

53. Consider the following statements in relation to 'sprinkler irrigation' system :
I. It is suited best for sandy soil with high infiltration rates.
II. It influences greater conducive micro-climate.
III. It is suitable for irrigating crops where the plant population per unit area is very high.
Which of the above statements are correct ?
(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None of the above

54. Convertibility of Indian Rupee implies :
(A) Being able to convert rupee notes into gold
(B) Allowing the value of rupee to be determined by market forces
(C) Freely permitting to conversion of rupee to other currencies and vice versa
(D) Developing an international market for currencies in India

55. Terms 'Amber Box', 'Blue Box' and 'Green Box' are related to :
(A) Environmental Concerns
(B) WTO rules
(C) Financial Assistance to Underdeveloped States
(D) India-UK negotiations on Free Trade Agreement

56. Consider the following statements about the Sanyasi Rebellion (1763-1800) :
I. A notable feature of this rebellion was that there was equal participation of Hindus and Muslims.

II. In the year 1872, Rabindranath Tagore published a historical novel named Anandamath, which was based on the background of the Sanyasi Rebellion.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

57. Consider the following statements regarding the factors for the rise of Bhakti movement :

I. The Turkish conquest of India weakened Brahminical power by eliminating temple wealth and state patronage. The decline in Brahmin influence paved the way for non-conformist movements such as the Nathpanthi and Bhakti movements.

II. Due to social and cultural contact between Hindu and Muslim people, a feeling of harmony, sympathy and cooperation developed between them. This reason also helped in the development of the Bhakti movement.

III. Due to the exploitative caste system of the then Indian society, the condition of the lower castes was extremely pathetic. The message of social harmony given by the Bhakti saints influenced the people.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

(A) All I, II and III
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and II
(D) None of the above

58. Consider the following statements regarding the merger of Hyderabad into independent India :

I. In June 1947, Nizam Mehboob Ali Khan issued a decree declaring Hyderabad's intention to remain independent after the transfer of power to India by the British.

II. India rejected it saying that Hyderabad's location is strategically important for India's national security.

III. On September 13, 1948, the Indian Army launched the military operation 'Operation Polo' in Hyderabad. On September 17, 1948, the Nizam formally surrendered, dismissing Prime Minister Mir Laik Ali and his cabinet.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and II
(D) None of the above

59. Match List-I with List-II :

List-I

(a) Dr. Surajbhan
(b) S.R. Rao
(c) R.S. Bisht
(d) M.S. Vats

List-II

1. Dhaulavira
2. Rangpur
3. Lothal
4. Rakhigarhi

Codes :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	3	1	2
(B)	2	3	1	4
(C)	3	1	4	2
(D)	4	3	2	1

60. There are two statements in this question. One is called 'Statement A' and the other is called 'Reason R'. Examine these statements carefully and select the answer to this question with the help of the code given below :

Statement (A) : The inner color of megalithic pottery of South India is black and the outer colour is red.

Reason (R) : The pottery of these colours is painted separately.

Codes :

(A) Both statement (A) and reason (R) are true and (R) is the correct explanation of (A)
(B) Both statement (A) and reason (R) are correct and (R) and (A) are not the correct explanation
(C) Statement (A) is correct, but reason (R) is wrong
(D) Statement (A) is wrong, but reason (R) is correct

61. Consider the following statements regarding the French in India :

I. The first French factory in India was established in Surat by Francois Caron in the year 1667, after which the factory was established in Masulipatam by Markara in the year 1669.

II. On 1 November, 1955, the French territories in India were officially incorporated into the Indian Union and Puducherry became a Union Territory.

III. Puducherry officially became an integral part of India only after the French Parliament in Paris ratified the treaty with India in 1963.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

(A) All I, II and III
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) None of the above

62. Read the following statements carefully :

I. Brahmo Samaj supported monotheism.

II. Arya Samaj contributed for the development of education.

III. Swami Vivekanand founded Ramkrishna Mission.

Answer on the basis of following codes :

Codes :

(A) All I, II and III are true
(B) Only I and II are true
(C) Only I and III are true
(D) Only II and III are true

63. Consider the following statements about Krishnadevaraya :

I. Vijayanagara Empire was ruled by Krishnadevaraya from 1519 to 1539 AD.

II. Kannada poet Thimmanna completed the Kannada Mahabharata at the request of Krishnadevaraya, which was originally started by Kumara Vyasa.

III. He also established a suburban town named Nagalapuram, named after his mother, near Vijayanagara.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
(A) All I, II and III
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and II
(D) None of the above

64. With reference to the Ryotwari system during the British period, consider the following statements :
I. The Ryotwari system was implemented by Alexander Reid in Madras Presidency. In this system, individual farmers called ryots did not have full rights on sale, transfer and lease of their land.
II. This system was prevalent in most parts of South India, first introduced in Tamil Nadu and later extended to Maharashtra, Berar, East Punjab, Coorg and Assam.
Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

65. Match List-I with List-II :
List-I
(a) Vinay Pitak
(b) Sutta Pitak
(c) Abhidhamma Pitak
(d) Jatak
List-II
1. Rules of Sangh life
2. Bodhisatva's life story
3. Sermons of Buddha
4. Buddhist Philosophy
Codes :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	4	3	2
(B)	1	3	4	2
(C)	3	2	4	1
(D)	4	1	2	3

66. Consider the following archaeological sites :
I. Damdama
II. Kurnool Caves
III. Tekkalkot
IV. Pond
Select their correct ancient chronology from the codes given below :
(A) 2, 4, 3, 1 (B) 3, 1, 2, 4
(C) 2, 1, 3, 4 (D) 3, 4, 2, 1

67. With reference to the steps taken to abolish the practice of Sati, consider the following statements :
I. In the year 1582, Emperor Akbar ordered officials throughout his empire that if they saw that a woman was being forced to commit Sati, then she should be stopped from committing Sati.
II. Marathas had banned the practice of Sati in their region.
III. British Governor-General William Macaulay declared the practice of Sati illegal and punishable by criminal courts under the Bengal Sati Regulation, 1829.
Which of the above statements are correct ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) Only II and III
(D) All I, II and III

68. Consider the following statements regarding Tebhaga Movement :
I. It was a peasant resistance that began in Bengal in 1946-47 under the leadership of the Bangiya Pradeshiya Kisan Sabha (BPKS).
II. It demanded increasing the share of jotedars (landowners) in harvesting the crop from half to two-thirds.
III. About 40% of tenant farmers received Tebhaga rights (two-thirds shares) voluntarily given by landholders, unjust and illegal extortions were abolished or reduced.
Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) None of the above

69. The Rigveda contains a hymn in the form of a dialogue between the sage Vishwamitra and two rivers, who were worshiped as goddesses. Which are these rivers ?
(A) Alaknanda and Bhagirathi
(B) Ravi and Chenab
(C) Ganga and Yamuna
(D) Beas and Satluj

70. In which year were 30 Rigveda manuscripts dating from 1800 to 1500 BC included in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register ?
(A) 2008 (B) 2005
(C) 2009 (D) 2007

71. Which of the following statements is false with regard to the Dutch interest and activities in India ?
I. They treated the local inhabitants cruelly and exploited them.
II. They did not get involved in local politics.
III. They became the carrier of trade between India and the Islands of the Far East.
IV. Many attempts were made by them to monopolise the channels of trade between India and the West.
Codes :
(A) I, II, III (B) II, III, IV
(C) I, III, IV (D) I, II, IV

72. With reference to Kumbh Mela, consider the following statements :
I. Kumbh Mela is celebrated 3 times in 12 years.
II. Ardh Kumbh Mela is organized every sixth year in Ujjain and Prayagraj.
III. Maha Kumbh Mela is celebrated in Prayag after 180 years (after 15 'Purna Kumbh Melas').
Which of the above statements are correct ?
(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) None of the above

73. The President of the Second Buddhist Council was :
(A) Mahakasyap
(B) Vasumitra
(C) Moggaliputta Tissa
(D) Sabakami

74. Which of the following statements about the revolutionaries are true ?
I. Attempt on the life of Lt. Governor of East Bengal, Mr. Fuller by B.K. Ghosh and Bhupen Datta.

II. Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki assassinated Mr. Kingsford, the judge of Muzaffarpur.
III. Attempt on the life of Lord Hardinge by Ras Behari Bose and Sachin Sanyal.
IV. Mr. Saunders was assassinated by Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru as a revenge for the police assault on Lala Lajpat Rai.

Choose the answers from the code given below :

Codes :

(A) Only I, II and III
(B) All are true
(C) Only I, II and IV
(D) Only IV is correct

75. Which ruler of the Magadha state first used the secret weapons called 'Rath Musal' (a chariot to which a mace-like weapon was attached) and 'Mahashilakantaka' (a stone-throwing war machine) against the Vajji Sangha ?
(A) Ajatashatru
(B) Chandragupta Maurya
(C) Kalashok
(D) Udayin

76. Consider the following statements regarding the legislative powers of the President :
I. He can send messages to the Houses of Parliament regarding any bill pending in Parliament.
II. He decides on questions relating to the disqualification of Members of Parliament in consultation with the Prime Minister.
III. In the case of Puducherry, the President can make laws by making rules, but only when the Assembly is suspended or dissolved.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None of these

77. Which of the following are the federal features of the Constitution ?
I. Independent Judiciary
II. All-India Services
III. Bi-Cameral Legislature
IV. Single Citizenship

Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) Only II, III and IV

78. Consider the following statements :
I. The territorial jurisdiction of all the High Courts of India are limited to a single state.
II. District Courts, when they deal with cases related to criminal matters, are named Sessions Courts.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

79. Consider the following :
I. Business Advisory Committee
II. Rules Committee
III. Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions
IV. Committee regarding the absence of members from the meetings of the House.

The Speaker of the Lok Sabha is the Chairman of which of the above committees ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

80. "It shall be the endeavour of every state and every local authority within the state to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups." This is a :
I. Part of the Fundamental Rights under Part III of the Constitution.
II. Provision made under an Act of Parliament.
III. Justifiable in courts if not implemented by the Government of India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) Only I
(B) Only II and III
(C) Only I and III
(D) None of the above

81. Which of the following has been initiated by NITI Aayog ?
I. Mission Karma Yogi
II. National Data and Analytics Platform
III. Atal Innovation Mission
IV. Zero-Pollution Mobility Campaign

Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) Only I and III
(B) Only II, III and IV
(C) Only I and II
(D) I, II, III and IV

82. With reference to the curative petition, consider the following statements :
I. The concept of 'curative petitions' in Indian law takes inspiration from American judicial decisions.
II. Curative petitions are generally adjudicated by judges in private chambers.
III. The Supreme Court is not bound to consider every curative petition presented by the convicts.
IV. Filing a review petition in the Supreme Court is permitted only if the curative petition has been rejected.

How many of the above statements are correct ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

83. Which of the following is correct regarding the electoral college of the Vice President ?
I. It includes both elected and nominated members of Parliament.
II. It does not include members of state legislative assemblies.

Choose the correct option from the codes given below :
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

84. Who is the common Chairman of the five regional councils ?
(A) Union Home Minister
(B) Prime Minister
(C) President
(D) Governor

85. Consider the following statements regarding the Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Act, 1959, and the concept of 'office of profit' :
I. The Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Act, 1959, provides exemption from disqualification for various offices on the basis of 'office of profit'.
II. The above-mentioned Act has never been amended.
III. The Constitution of India provides a clear definition of the term 'office of profit'.
How many of these statements are correct ?
(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None of the above

86. The parliamentary system of government is one in which :
(A) All political parties in Parliament have representation in the government
(B) The government is answerable to Parliament and can be removed by Parliament
(C) The government is elected by the people and can be removed by them
(D) The government is elected by the Parliament but cannot be removed before its completion

87. Consider the following statements :
I. The Constitution of India defines its 'Basic Structure' in terms of federalism, secularism, fundamental rights, and democracy.
II. The Constitution of India provides for 'judicial review' to protect the liberties of citizens and preserve the ideals on which the Constitution is based.
Which of the statements given above is correct ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

88. Consider the following statements regarding the presidential versus parliamentary system of government :
I. Unlike the presidential system, in the parliamentary system, the tenure of the chief executive is directly linked to the legislature.
II. In the presidential system, the Chief Executive is elected by the members of the legislature among themselves.
Which of the statements given above is correct ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

89. Who among the following declared that the Indian Constitution is "too large and therefore too rigid, too bound up with its history, and too difficult to be molded into anything useful through judicious interpretations" ?
(A) C. Rajagopalachari
(B) Morris Johnson
(C) Granville Austin
(D) Ivor Jennings

90. In the context of India, which of the following characteristics is appropriate for bureaucracy ?
(A) An agency to expand the scope of parliamentary democracy
(B) An agency to strengthen the structure of federalism
(C) An agency to facilitate political stability and economic development
(D) An agency for the implepmentation of public policy

91. Consider the following statements regarding World AIDS Day :
I. World AIDS Day has been observed annually since December 1, 1988.
II. The theme for 2024 was "Take the right path : My health, my right !"
Which of the statements given above are incorrect ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

92. Consider the following statements regarding the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) :
I. December 3 has been observed annually as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) by the United Nations since 1992.
II. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, was enacted in India to align with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
Which of the statements given above are correct ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

93. Consider the following statements regarding Ratapani Tiger Reserve :
I. Ratapani Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh has been notified as the 59th Tiger Reserve of the country.
II. A tiger reserve in India is established under the Project Tiger initiative of 1973 to ensure the conservation of tigers and their habitats.
Which of the statements given above are correct ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

94. Consider the following statements about Nafithromycin :
I. It is India's first indigenously developed antibiotic designed to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR).
II. Nafithromycin is marketed as 'Miqnaf' and is 10 times more potent than Azithromycin.
Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

95. Consider the following statements :
I. Belgium has become the first country in the world to recognize sex workers' rights, offering them the same benefits as other workers.

II. Sex work was decriminalized in Belgium in 2022, and this legislation provides protections like maternity leave and pensions.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

96. Consider the following statements :

I. Captain Avhilash Rawat received the 2024 International Maritime Organisation's (IMO) Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea for his extraordinary courage during a rescue mission in the Indian Ocean.

II. This award is given annually to individuals who demonstrate exceptional courage at sea.

Which of the statements given above are incorrect ?

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

97. Consider the following statements :

I. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has decided to uncover the Mauryan pillars at Kumhrar, an archaeological site in Patna.

II. The excavation of the 80-pillar assembly hall at Kumhrar was first undertaken in 1912-15 by Indian archaeologist K.P. Jayaswal.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

98. Consider the following statements :

I. Indian-origin Scottish artist Jasleen Kaur won the 2024 Turner Prize for her exhibition 'Alter Altar', which reflects on themes of plurality and politics.

II. The Turner Prize was first awarded in 1851 and is named after JMW Turner, a famous English sculptor.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

99. Consider the following statements :

I. The Tripura government won seven National Panchayat Awards, including the Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar for the Amarpur RD block.

II. Tripura's Gomati district received ₹ 1·75 crore as prize money for its awards.

Which of the statements given above are incorrect ?

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

100. Consider the following statements :

I. Lake-effect snow occurs when warm, moist air rising from a body of water mixes with cold dry air overhead.

II. The Hornbill Festival, held annually in Nagaland, is organized by the Central government to promote regional tourism.

Which of the statements given above are correct ?

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

Answers with Hints

1. (D) The amount of insolation which is reflected back by the surface is known as albedo, which reaches its maximum during winter. It is highest for fresh snow and lowest for oceans.
2. (C) The Steppe type of climate is defined by absence of maritime influence (continentality), high annual range of temperature and practically treeless.
3. (A) The isotherms are more linear in the Southern hemisphere, which has less land mass as compared to the Northern Hemisphere. Large landmasses in the Northern hemisphere cause isotherms to bend toward the equator in winter and poles in summer as they change their temperature much more than the water.
4. (C) Iron Catastrophe refers to a brief geological period in which iron and nickel moved towards the center of the Earth, forming the core, under very high temperature.
5. (D)
6. (B) First Order Landforms are Oceans and Continents. Second Order Landforms are Mountains, Plateaus and Plains. Valleys are third order landforms.
7. (A) The Wadati-Benioff Zone is a site of powerful and deep focus earthquake which is associated with the convergent plate boundaries.
8. (B) The Equatorial Low-Pressure Belt or 'Doldrums' is formed at around 5° North and South. It is thermally induced pressure belts formed because of high temperature prevailing at equator. Winds are feeble.
9. (D) The eye of a tropical cyclone is region of almost no precipitation, clear sky, light winds and fair weather. The cyclones dissipate after reaching the land as supply of moisture is stopped. They develop well beyond 5°N and 5°S latitude where Coriolis Force is strong enough to create cyclonic storm.
10. (B) Hypocenter or Focus is a point where an earthquake originates below the Earth's Surface. The point on the Earth's surface directly above the focus or hypocenter of an earthquake is epicenter.
11. (C) According to the Continental Drift Theory proposed by Alfred Wegner, the pole-fleeing force and tidal force were responsible for drifting of continents.
12. (C) 13. (B)
14. (D) As per 2011 Census, Madhya Pradesh has the highest tribal population. Among the States,

Mizoram has the maximum percentage of tribal population.

15. (A)
16. (B) The Cali Fund was launched at the COP16 to the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), held in Colombia.
17. (D) SAMARTH (Sustainable Agrarian Mission on use of Agri-Residue in Thermal Power Plants) also known as National Mission on use of Biomass in TPPs, aims to address the issue of air pollution due to farm stubble burning and to reduce carbon footprints of thermal power generation.
18. (B) The first-ever Global Nature Conservation Index was launched by the Goldman Sonnenfeldt School of Sustainability and Climate Change (Ben-Gurion University) in collaboration with BioDB.com. India was ranked 176th and placed in bottom five countries.
19. (B) Photochemical smog is produced from combustion products produced at the Earth's surface and UV light found in the troposphere. The major undesirable components of photochemical smog are nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), ozone (O_3), PAN (peroxyacetylnitrate), and chemical compounds that contain the—CHO group (aldehydes).
20. (D) In India, among the nine species of vulture, four are critically endangered : Red-Headed Vulture (Asian King Vulture), Long-billed Vulture, Slender-billed Vulture and Oriental White-backed Vulture.
21. (D) 22. (C)
23. (D) In aquatic ecosystem, the pyramid of biomass can be inverted. When the energy flows from one trophic level to another, some energy is always lost as heat in each step. Hence, the pyramid of energy is always upright.
24. (D)
25. (A) The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has declared 'Neelakurinji', a flowering shrub which blossoms once in a 12 year as 'Vulnerable' in the Red List under the Criteria A2c.
26. (A) According to 'Landslide Atlas of India' by the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) of Indian Space Research Organisation; numbers of districts with the maximum landslide exposure are in Arunachal Pradesh (16), Kerala (14), Uttarakhand and Jammu and Kashmir (13 each), Himachal Pradesh, Assam and Maharashtra (11 each), Mizoram (8) and Nagaland (7).
27. (C) The Nagoya Protocol was adopted on October 29, 2010, in Nagoya, Japan. It entered into force on October 12, 2014. It aims for fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources. It is a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992.
28. (C) The Living Planet Report 2024, titled 'A System in Peril', was a biennial assessment, released by the World Wildlife Fund.
29. (C) Biosphere Reserves, National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuary, etc. are examples of *in-situ* conservation.
30. (C) The concept of 'Biodiversity Hotspots' was first proposed by Norman Myers in 1988. Around the world, 36 areas qualify as hotspots, which represent 2·5% of Earth's land surface, and more than half of the world's plant species as endemics.
31. (D) LiDAR utilizes light waves of shorter wavelengths to generate high-resolution images and maps, and to detect smaller objects. RADAR employs radio waves that can penetrate various environmental conditions, such as rain and fog.
32. (B) The side effects of Chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy are: cytokine release syndrome (CRS), negative effects on the nervous system, etc.
33. (D) Induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells are derived from skin or blood cells that have been reprogrammed back into an embryonic-like pluripotent state that enables the development of an unlimited source of any type of human cell needed for therapeutic purposes.
34. (B) Human-to-human transmission of Nipah virus has also been reported among family and care givers of infected patients.
35. (C) Bio-remediation can be carried out using bacteria, algae, fungi, etc.
36. (B) A change in price of products by one firm influences other firms.
37. (C) One has to note that the nominal GDP is nothing but GDP at current prices and the real GDP is GDP at constant prices.
38. (C) Production subsidies include, subsidies to railways, input subsidies to farmers, subsidies to village and micro and small scale industries, while food subsidy, petroleum and fertiliser subsidies are product subsidies.
39. (A) In recent years, the global financial landscape has been evolving, with the US dollar's dominant role increasingly under scrutiny Central to this shift in the process of de-dollarisation—a move by the BRICS group to explore alternatives.
40. (A) Originally the MPI was developed by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiatives (OPHI) and the UNDP. At the core of the MPI is the Alkire-Foster methodology.
41. (C) FRBM Act 2003 is administered by the Ministry of Finance.
42. (B) Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976 mandates that of the capital issued by a RRB, 50% shall be held by the Central Government, 15% by the concerned State Government and 35% by the sponsor bank.
43. (A) 44. (D)
45. (C) GoI initiated the National Mission for Financial Inclusion (NMFI), namely, the PMJDY in August 2014. PMJDY is one of the components of JAM-Trinity the other two being the Aadhar and Mobile number.
46. (D)
47. (D) Central government approved Unified Pension Scheme on August 24, 2014. Under which an employee will get 50% of the amount of average basic pay received during the last 12 months with a minimum qualifying service of 25 years.

Central government employees can select between UPS and the NPS.

48. (D) Central government introduced Navratna scheme in 1997 to identify the CPSEs that had comparative advantages and to support them in their drive to become global giants. Under this scheme the boards of Navratna CPSEs have also been delegated autonomy in the areas of enhanced powers in all 4 areas mentioned in the question.
49. (A) Annual growth rate of Gross State Domestic Product at constant prices in the FY 2023-24 was highest in Telangana (9·2%), Tamil Nadu (8·2%), Rajasthan (8·0%) and West Bengal (7·7%).
50. (A) The Central Government revises the Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA) twice a year, effective from April 1 and October 1, based on the six-month average increase in the CPI (IW).
51. (C) DAJGUA was launched on October 2, 2024 in Hazaribagh by the PM Narendra Modi. Total outlay of DAJGUA—Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan is ₹ 79,156 crore (Centre Share : ₹ 56,333 crore and State Share : ₹ 22,823 crore. DAJGUA envisions in social infrastructure through 25 interventions implemented by 17-live ministries of Central government by convergence and outreach and ensures holistic and sustainable development of tribal areas and communities.
52. (C) The observations are based on World Bank's 'Poverty, Prosperity and Planet. Pathways out of the Polycrisis Report released on October 15, 2024.
53. (C)
54. (C) With the introduction of foreign exchange reforms in 1992, rupee has been made convertible on current account in phased manner, but it is still not convertible on Capital Account.
55. (B) In World Trade Organisation terminology, subsidies in general are identified by Amber Box, Blue Box and Green Box. The Agreement on Agriculture has no red box.
56. (A) Due to the increasing hardships of farmers, increasing demand for revenue and the Bengal famine of 1770, a large number of dispossessed small landowners, dismissed soldiers and rural poor people joined the group of sanyasis and fakirs. The targets of their attacks were the grain stores of the nobles and later the government officials. They established an independent government in Bogra and Mymensingh. A notable feature of these rebellions was the equal participation of Hindus and Muslims in them. Some of the important leaders of these movements were Manju Shah, Musa Shah, Bhavani Pathak and Devi Chaudharani. In the year 1872, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay published a historical novel named Anandamath, which was based on the background of the Sanyasi rebellion.
57. (A) After the establishment of Turkish rule victory in India, the Hindu people, frustrated by the barbaric rule of the Muslim rulers and troubled by their atrocities, felt more secure in the shelter of God and took the help of the path of devotion. Due to social and cultural contact between Hindu and Muslim people, a feeling of harmony, sympathy and cooperation developed between them. This reason also helped in the development of the Bhakti movement. Like Sufis, Bhakti saints believed in monotheism and opposed discrimination and casteism. Shankaracharya's path of knowledge and monism was no longer comprehensible to the common people. Due to the exploitative caste system of the then Indian society, the condition of the lower castes was extremely pathetic. The message of social harmony given by the Bhakti saints influenced the people.
58. (B) In June 1947, Nizam Osman Ali Khan issued a decree declaring Hyderabad's intention to remain independent after the transfer of power to India by the British. India rejected this, saying that Hyderabad's location was detrimental to India's national security is strategically important. On September 13, 1948, the Indian Army launched military operation 'Operation Polo' in Hyderabad, citing internal law and order concerns. It was called a 'police action' because it was an internal matter of India.
    On September 17, 1948, the Nizam formally surrendered, dismissing Prime Minister Mir Laik Ali and his cabinet.
59. (A)
60. (C) The term Black and Red pottery is the result of fining process that produces red colour on exterior surface and black colour on interior surface.
61. (C) On 1 November, 1954, the French territories in India were officially incorporated into the Indian Union and Puducherry became a Union Territory. With this, 280 years of French rule came to an end. Puducherry officially became an integral part of India only after the French Parliament in Paris ratified the treaty with India in 1963.
62. (A)
63. (B) The Vijayanagara Empire was ruled by Krishnadevaraya from 1509 to 1529 AD. The Kannada poet Thimmanna, at the request of Krishnadevaraya, completed the Kannada Mahabharata, which was originally started by Kumara Vyasa
64. (B) The Ryotwari system was implemented by Alexander Reid in Madras Presidency. Under this system, revenue was collected directly from the farmers and they were made owners of property. In this system, individual farmers called raiyats had full rights on the sale, transfer and lease of their land. As long as farmers continue to pay taxes, they will not be evicted from their lands. This system was prevalent in most parts of South India, first introduced in Tamil Nadu and later extended to Maharashtra, Berar, East Punjab, Coorg and Assam. The benefit of this was that middlemen, who often exploited the villagers, were eliminated.
65. (B)

66. (C) Damdama belongs to the Middle Stone Age. Small stone tools, scrapers, moonstones, equilateral triangles etc. have been found from here. The caves of Kurnool belong to the Upper Stone Age. Tekkalkot is located in Karnataka, South India. This is a Neolithic site.

67. (B) Steps taken from time to time to stop the practice of Sati :
- In the year 1582, Emperor Akbar ordered officials throughout his empire that if they saw that a woman was being forced to perform a sacrifice, then she should be stopped from performing the sacrifice. To stop this practice, he issued a pension to the widow, also offered gifts and rehabilitation.
- Sikh Guru Amar Das condemned this practice in the 15th-16th century.
- Marathas had banned the practice of Sati in their region.
- The Dutch, Portuguese and French also banned the practice of Sati in their colonies in India.
- British Governor-General William Bentinck declared the practice of Sati illegal and punishable by criminal courts under the Bengal Sati Regulation, 1829.

68. (C) The Tebhaga movement was a peasant resistance that began in Bengal in 1946-47 under the leadership of the Bangiya Pradeshiya Kisan Sabha (BPKS). It demanded a reduction in the share of jotedars (landlords) in crop harvesting from half to one-third. Kakdwip in the South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal emerged as one of the centers of the movement. About 40% of the sharecroppers received tebhaga rights (two-thirds shares) voluntarily given by the landholders, demanding the repeal or abolition of unjust and illegal extortions be reduced.

69. (D) The Rigveda contains a verse in the form of a dialogue between the sage Vishwamitra and the two rivers Beas and Sutlej were worshiped as goddesses.

70. (D) 30 Rigveda manuscripts from the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune, have been nominated for UNESCO's 2007 'Memory of the World' register.

71. (A) 72. (D)

73. (D) The second Buddhist council was held in Vaishali in 383 BC. The second Buddhist council was held under the patronage of king Kalasoka and was presided over by Sabakami.

74. (B) 75. (A)

76. (B) Statement II is incorrect because it decides on questions related to the disqualification of Members of Parliament in consultation with the Election Commission.

77. (C) All India Services, single citizenship, strong centre, emergency provisions, etc. are unitary features of the Constitution.

78. (B) Statement I is incorrect because the territorial jurisdiction of all the High Courts of India is not limited to a single state. The jurisdiction of Union Territories except Delhi & J&K comes under the High Court of other states.

79. (B) The Speaker of the Lok Sabha is the Chairman of the Business Advisory Committee, Rules Committee and General Purposes Committee. Hence, option (B) is correct.

80. (D) It is part of the Directive Principles. All the above statements I, II and III are wrong because the Directive Principles are non-justifiable.

81. (B)

82. (B) The origin of curative petitions in India can be attributed to the landmark 2002 Supreme Court case Rupa Ashok Hurra *Vs.* Ashok Hurra and others. This innovation serves to prevent abuse of legal processes and correct serious miscarriages of justice. Hence, statement I is not correct.
Curative petition is a legal remedy after review petition has been rejected or dismissed.

83. (C) The electoral college for the election of the Vice President consists of : (I) both elected and nominated members of Parliament; and (II) does not include members of the State Legislative Assemblies.

84. (A) The Home Minister of the Central Government of India is the common chairman of the five regional councils. The Chief Minister serves as Vice-Chairman of the Council by rotation, holding office for a term of one year at a time.

85. (A)

86. (B) Under Article 75(3) of the Indian Constitution, it has been provisioned that the Council of Ministers will be collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha. Therefore, under the parliamentary system of government, the government is answerable to the Parliament and it can be removed by the Parliament.

87. (B) Statement I is not correct because the Supreme Court has defined basic infrastructure in the landmark 1973 case of Keshavananda Bharati *Vs.* State of Kerala.

Statement II is correct because Article 13(2) of the Constitution states that the Union or a State shall not make any law that takes away or abridges any fundamental right, and any law made in contravention of the above mandate will be void to the extent of the violation.

88. (A) Statement I is correct because, in the parliamentary system of government, the leader of the party having a majority in the Lok Sabha is appointed by the President as the Prime Minister, *i.e.*, the real executive. He holds this post only as long as he enjoys a majority in the Lok Sabha.

Statement II is not correct because, in the presidential system, the head of the executive is elected directly by the public.

89. (D)

90. (D) The bureaucracy in India is responsible for implementing public policies and providing public services. It acts as a link between the government and the citizens and ensures that policies are implemented effectively and efficiently.

91. (D) World AIDS Day has been observed annually since December 1, 1988. It aims to provide a global platform to create awareness about HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) /AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). The theme for this year is 'Take the right path : My health, my right !'

92. (C) December 3 is annually observed as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) by the United Nations since 1992. The theme for this year is "Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future." In India, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 was enacted to give effect to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

93. (B) Ratapani Tiger Reserve of Madhya Pradesh has been notified as the 57th Tiger Reserve of the country. It has a core area of 763·8 sq. km, buffer area of 507·6 sq. km and total area of 1271·4 sq. km. Now, there are Eight tiger reserves in Madhya Pradesh. A tiger reserve in India is a designated area established under the Project Tiger initiative of 1973 to ensure the conservation of tigers and their habitats. These reserves are part of the government's efforts to protect the tiger population, maintain biodiversity and restore ecological balance.

94. (D) The government has announced the soft launch of Nafithromycin, India's first indigenously developed antibiotic designed to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Nafithromycin is designed for the treatment of Community-Acquired Bacterial Pneumonia (CABP), a serious illness caused by drug-resistant bacteria that affects vulnerable populations.

It has been developed with support from the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), which is a unit of the Department of Biotechnology.

Nafithromycin is marketed as 'Miqnaf' by the pharmaceutical company Wolkardt. It is 10 times more potent than Azithromycin, a safer, faster, and more tolerable solution for patients.

95. (C) Belgium has become first of its kind in the world to recognise sex workers' rights, offering them the same benefits as other workers, including maternity leave, pensions, health insurance, and sick leave. This landmark legislation, introduced after sex work was decriminalised in 2022, ensures sex workers have the same protections as other professions.

96. (D) Captain Avhilash Rawat has received the 2024 International Maritime Organisation's (IMO) Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea for the 'extraordinary courage' shown in a Red Sea rescue mission earlier this year.

97. (A) The ASI has decided to uncover the Mauryan pillars at the archaeological site of Kumhrar, a little over 5 km from the Patna railway station.

The ASI had excavated the 80-pillar assembly hall in two phases. The first excavation, in 1912-15, was done by American archeologist David Brainard Spooner, who found one pillar, a number of stone fragments and 80 pits, which, he concluded, were spots where the other pillars stood. The second excavation, in 1961-55, was by the K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute in Patna, found four more pillars.

98. (A) Turner Prize for art Indian-origin Scottish artist Jasleen Kaur has won the prestigious Turner Prize 2024 for her exhibition, 'Alter Altar', that reflects on plurality, personal and political themes.

The prize is named after English painter JMW Turner (1775-1851), known for his paintings of sceneries, the ocean and dramatic depictions of light. Many of his works show red and yellow hues of sunsets in great detail.

The Turner Prize was first awarded in 1984, founded by a group called the Patrons of New Art. It sought to "encourage wider interest in contemporary art and assist Tate in acquiring new works."

99. (B) The Tripura government has bagged seven National Panchayat Awards.

The Amarpur RD block in Tripura's Gomati district has been ranked the best district panchayat and the best block panchayat under the Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar.

Gomati district will get ₹ 5 crore and Amarpur RD block another ₹ 1·75 crore as prize money for winning the award.

100. (A) **Lake-effect snow :** It happens when warm, moist air rising from a body of water mixes with cold dry air overhead. Recently, parts of Michigan were battered by lake-effect snow. **Hornbill Festival :** The Hornbill Festival was held in Nagaland from December 1 to December 10, 2024. The festival is organised by the Nagaland government.

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PRATIYOGITA DARPAN

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Essay Contest

Darkness Cannot Drive Out Darkness

Magazines @ 60/m WhatsApp To 8969469464

—Prabhash Pathak

The phrase "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that" originates from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s profound thoughts on love, hatred and human morality. It encapsulates a timeless truth about the power of love, understanding and hope in the face of adversity. It challenges the idea that conflict or oppression can be resolved with more conflict or oppression, instead advocating for compassion, empathy and constructive dialogue. Dr. King Jr. argues that responding to negativity with more negativity is inactive just as darkness cannot eliminate darkness. Its relevance transcends time and context, offering a pathway toward a more harmonious and equitable world. By embodying its principles, individuals and communities can overcome negativity and foster a culture of resilience, empathy and hope. It encapsulates King's philosophy of combating racial injustice and social inequality through love, understanding and peaceful protest rather than aggression or retaliation.



Prabhash Pathak

The metaphorical use of 'darkness' to represent hatred, ignorance and negativity is as old as human civilization. Darkness symbolizes ignorance, hatred, violence or despair. Trying to confront these with similar negativity only perpetuates the cycle, deepening wounds rather than healing them. For instance, responding to hatred with hatred fuels division, while acts of kindness and understanding pave the way for reconciliation and peace. From literature to philosophy, darkness often symbolizes moral and intellectual voids. For instance, in William Shakespeare's Macbeth, darkness is a recurring theme that represents treachery, guilt and moral corruption. Similarly, religious texts like the Bible equate darkness with sin and estrangement from divine guidance, while light is portrayed as the path to righteousness. Philosophically, darkness also represents the human condition when stripped of wisdom and compassion. Friedrich Nietzsche explored this in his concept of nihilism, where the absence of meaning and values creates a metaphorical darkness.

Light, in contrast, symbolizes love, understanding and knowledge. It is the force that dispels ignorance, heals wounds and fosters unity. History provides ample examples of the triumph of light over darkness. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s leadership during the Civil Rights Movement exemplifies how love and non-violence can dismantle systemic hatred and oppression. King's philosophy of non-violent resistance, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's teachings, proved that moral courage and empathy are more powerful than violence. Gandhi's principle of Ahimsa (non-violence) similarly illustrates the transformative power of light. During India's struggle for independence, Gandhi emphasized that hatred toward oppressors would only perpetuate a cycle of violence. Instead, he urged Indians to use non-violent resistance to expose the immorality of British colonial rule. The result was not just political freedom but also a moral victory that reshaped global views on justice and resistance. Light, therefore, is not just an abstract ideal but a practical force. It is embodied in acts of kindness, the pursuit of knowledge and the willingness to see humanity in others.

Spiritual teachings across cultures reinforce the idea that light is the antidote to darkness. The Bible teaches, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Jesus Christ's emphasis on love, forgiveness and turning the other cheek embodies the principle of responding to darkness with light. The Buddhist concept of metta (loving-kindness) encourages individuals to cultivate compassion, even toward enemies. This practice not only alleviates personal suffering but also transforms relationship and communities. The Quran emphasizes mercy and forgiveness as central virtues. For instance, it states, "Repel evil with that which is better," highlighting the power of goodness to disarm hostility. These teachings underscore the universal nature of the principle that light must confront darkness, not through retaliation but through moral and spiritual strength. While, the philosophy of light overcoming darkness is compelling, its application is not without challenges. In situations of genocide, terrorism or systemic oppression, the balance between justice and forgiveness becomes tenuous.

Responding to darkness with light requires immense emotional and moral fortitude. It demands the ability to transcend personal pain and ego, which is difficult but not impossible. There is also the danger of misinterpreting 'light' as passivity.

Hatred, as a response to hatred, perpetuates a cycle of negativity. Psychological studies support this, showing how anger and aggression create feedback loops that escalate conflict. For instance, the concept of 'emotional contagion' demonstrates how negative emotions spread within groups, fuelling collective hostility. Conversely, acts of kindness and forgiveness have a powerful ripple effect. Research in positive psychology shows that altruism not only benefits the recipient but also enhances the well-being of the giver and inspires others to do the same. For example, studies on restorative justice practices reveal that victims and offenders who engage in dialogue often experience greater healing and closure than those who pursue punitive approaches. This aligns with the idea that understanding and compassion can break the cycle of harm.

History is replete with instances where darkness was met with light, leading to profound societal changes. The systemic racism and segregation in mid-20th century America represented a profound darkness.

African Americans were denied basic rights and subjected to violence and marginalized in every aspect of society. Yet, instead of responding with hatred, leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks chose the path of non-violence. The Montgomery Bus Boycott, peaceful marches and stirring speeches brought about legislative changes, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, proving that love and perseverance can drive out the darkness of injustice. In South Africa, decades of apartheid created one of the most oppressive systems of racial segregation in history. Nelson Mandela, who spent 27 years in prison, emerged as a symbol of forgiveness and reconciliation. Rather than seeking revenge, Mandela advocated for unity and understanding. His leadership in creating the Truth and Reconciliation Commission exemplified how light, embodied in the willingness to forgive, can heal even the deepest wounds. The Holocaust stands as one of history's darkest chapters. However, the post-war period saw remarkable efforts to rebuild and reconcile. The establishment of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights were direct responses to the horrors of war, driven by the collective desire to ensure that such darkness would never prevail again.

The concept of overcoming darkness with light remains profoundly relevant in today's world. Movements like Black Lives Matter and #MeToo have shed light on systemic issues of racism and gender inequality. While anger and frustration fuel these movements, their power lies in their ability to mobilize people through awareness, solidarity and a vision for a better future. The impending threat of climate change represents a metaphorical darkness. Activists like Greta Thunberg exemplify how light, in the form of knowledge, advocacy and collective action can inspire hope and solutions. While denial and apathy worsen the crisis, awareness and innovation offer a way forward. In an era of increasing political division, responding to hate speech or misinformation with similar negativity only deepens the divide. Constructive dialogue, empathy and a commitment to truth are essential in bridging gaps and fostering unity.

While the adage 'darkness cannot drive out darkness' underscores the power of positivity and light in overcoming negativity, the reverse can also hold true in nuanced contexts. However, darkness is not purely negative. It can be transformative. It forces introspection and often precedes enlightenment, much like the night heralds the dawn. The challenge lies in not letting darkness dominate, but using its lessons to find light. From a philosophical standpoint, 'darkness' can symbolize ignorance, suffering, or adversity. Sometimes, combating one form of darkness necessitates another form of darkness. For instance, confronting ignorance may require deconstructing long-held but flawed beliefs, which can be a painful or disorienting process. This deconstruction itself can feel like an act of 'darkness', as it destabilizes existing framework. In psychology, the concept aligns with the process of 'shadow' in Jungian theory. Carl Jung posited that individuals must confront their unconscious or 'shadow' aspects, including their darker traits, desires and fears, to achieve personal growth and self-integration. Avoiding or suppressing these darker elements allows them to fester, whereas facing and integrating them transforms their destructive potential into constructive power.

In socio-political contexts, systems of oppression or corruption are sometimes dismantled by adopting countermeasures that appear equally forceful or disruptive. For instance, during revolutions or uprisings, systemic injustices are often resisted through methods that challenge established norms or systems. While these methods can be contentious, they are often necessary to unseat entrenched injustices. Historical examples include the Civil Rights Movement or anti-colonial struggles, where bold and disruptive actions led to greater justice and equality. Similarly, in medicine, chemotherapy employs controlled cellular destruction to eliminate cancerous growths. These examples reflect how 'darkness' can be employed strategically to mitigate or eliminate a greater threat.

Conclusion : The phrase "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that" serves as a guiding principle for navigating the complexities of human conflict and suffering. At its core, it suggests that negativity cannot eliminate negativity; only positive, constructive forces can counteract destructive ones. In essence, only by bringing lights as hope, kindness and wisdom, can overcome the shadows in our lives and the world.

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ESSAY COMPETITION

Topic : **Need for Another Green Revolution which is More Sustainable and Inclusive**

Last Date : March 25, 2025

Cash Prizes : **1st :** ₹ 1,500/- ; **2nd :** ₹ 1,200/- ; **3rd :** ₹ 1,000/-

DEBATE COMPETITION

Topic : **Multilateral Organisations have Turned into Pocket Organisations of Developed Countries**

Last Date : March 25, 2025

Cash Prizes : ₹ 1,500/- (Each in favour/against)

Rules and Regulations :

- Duly signed hand written entries on Essay/Debate in maximum limit of 1500 words with relevant details must be sent by e-mails or by ordinary post.
- Only one entry on Essay/Debate will be accepted from one participant.
- Entries must be submitted with declaration mentioning **"This is my original work and is unpublished elsewhere"** and should have complete name, address, mobile no., passport size photograph alongwith bank account details/IFSC code.
- Prize money will be awarded through cheques alongwith certificates from Pratiyogita Darpan. The awarded entries will be published in the forthcoming issue of Pratiyogita Darpan.

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Debate Contest

Caste Census will Help to Reduce Socio-Economic Inequalities

In Favour

—**Mahesh Kumar**

India, a nation proud of her diversity, has long struggled with the scourge of caste-based socio-economic inequalities, which has perpetuated inequality and discrimination, hindering the progress of marginalised communities. A caste census, which involves collecting data on the population's caste composition, has been proposed as a potential solution to address these so-called socio-economic in inequalities.



Mahesh Kumar

The first comprehensive caste census was conducted in 1881 under the leadership of Lord Risley, categorizing the Indian population into castes and communities for administrative purposes. This practice continued in subsequent censuses, with the last caste census taking place in 1931. The data from this census was publicly disclosed by the British Government and later became the basis for implementing reservation policies for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) based on the Mandal Commission Report.

After India gained independence, the practice of conducting caste censuses was discontinued in 1951. However, in recent years, there have been demands for conducting a caste census, particularly from the OBCs. In 2011, the Government conducted the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC), which collected data on the socio-economic status of rural and urban households, including their caste. The SECC data have been used for various government schemes such as MGNREGA and for the National Food Security Act. Currently some states in India, including Andhra Pradesh and Bihar are conducting their own caste surveys. The data from these surveys could potentially be used to inform policy decisions, such as increasing the OBC quota and redrawing reservation ceilings.

Identifying Disparities

A caste census would provide invaluable data on the socio-economic status of various caste groups, helping to identify disparities in education, employment, healthcare and income sources. By quantifying these disparities, policy-makers can design targeted interventions to address the specific needs of the marginalized communities. For instance, data from a caste census could reveal that a particular caste group has a limited access to education, promoting the government to establish schools and scholarship programmes in the areas where that community is concentrated.

A caste census would, enable more efficient allocation of resources, ensuring that development programmes and welfare schemes reach the most disadvantaged groups. By knowing the caste composition of a region, policy-makers can tailor their initiatives to address the unique challenges faced by different communities.

Accurate Data for Policy Formulation

A caste census will provide precise data on the population distribution across castes, and socio-economic strata. This information is essential for devising targeted welfare schemes improving the effectiveness of affirmative policies like reservations in education, employment and polity.

Empowering Marginalised Communities

A caste census will empower marginalised communities by quantifying their population, needs and challenges, enabling them to demand for fair representation and resources. A caste census would definitely empower the marginalised communities by providing them with appropriate and systematic data to advocate for their rights. This in turn, would help to create a moral level playing field, where marginalised communities have equal opportunities to participate in India's economic and social uplift.

Addressing Historical Injustices

Even today, historical inequalities and injustices perpetuated against marginalised communities manifest as disparities in income, literacy rates, healthcare access and representation in decision-making roles. A caste census can act as a corrective measure by providing empirical evidence of these injustices enabling targeted interventions to bridge the socio-economic gaps. By addressing historical injustices, a caste census not only ensures equitable access to opportunities but also fosters social harmony and economic growth.

A Tool to Strengthen Democracy

India, the world's largest democracy, thrives on the principles of justice, equality and representation. However, caste-based disparities have long posed challenges to achieving true inclusivity and equality. Conducting a caste-census is a significant step towards strengthening democracy by providing the data necessary to empower marginalised communities, ensure equitable resource distribution and enhance political representation. A caste census is not just a statistical exercise but a means to acknowledge the socio-economic realities of diverse communities and address systemic inequalities. By creating a more inclusive and representative society, it has the potential to reinforce the democratic ideals enshrined in the Indian Constitution. A caste census strengthens democracy by promoting representation of the margina-

lised communities, ensuring social cohesion and overall national unity.

Caste Census : A Tool for Research and Analysis

A caste census provides valuable data for researchers, academics and analysts to study social dynamics, inequality, and development issues. By collecting data on caste, researchers can track the progress of marginalised groups, such as Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) and identify areas where they need more social or economic support to reduce socio-economic inequalities. A caste census can provide insights into social mobility and how it varies across different castes and communities. By analysing caste census data, researchers can identify patterns of caste-based discrimination and develop strategies to address them to reduce socio-economic inequalities. Integrating caste census data with other data sources can provide a more comprehensive understanding of social and economic inequality. Caste census data can be disaggregated to insights into specific caste groups, sub-castes and regional variations. Longitudinal data from successive caste censuses can facilitate trend analysis enabling researchers to track changes in caste demographics and socio-economic indicators over time. Advanced statistical techniques, such as predictive modelling can be applied to caste census data to forecast future trends and outcomes so that socio-economic inequalities can be reduced in the forthcoming time.

Conclusion

Caste census holds immense potential to reduce socio-economic inequalities by providing the foundation for informed and inclusive policy making. It is a step towards acknowledging and addressing the historical and systemic barriers that have marginalised certain communities for generations. By combining this data with strong political will and effective implementation, a caste census will reduce socio-economic inequalities. While, there may be challenges in implementing caste census, the benefits far outweigh the castes. It is time for India to take this crucial step towards creating a more equitable society free from socio-economic inequalities.

Against

—Nitin Kumar Singh

"The outcaste is a bye product of the caste system. There will be outcaste as long as there are castes. Nothing can emancipate the outcaste except the destruction of the caste system."

—B.R. Ambedkar

The belief that a caste census will effectively reduce socio-economic inequalities in India is contested. It is argued that such a exercise of caste census could inadvertently reinforce caste identities, exacerbating existing social divisions. By explicitly categorizing individuals by caste, it risks perpetuating discriminatory practices and hindering social cohesion. Moreover, focusing solely on caste as a determinant of socio-economic status overlooks the complex interplay of other crucial factors like class, gender, regional disparities and access to resources. This narrow focus could divert attention and resources from addressing these equally important dimensions of inequality.



Nitin Kumar Singh

In caste census, practical challenges also pose significant hurdles. Defining and categorizing the numerous castes and sub-castes is a complex and potentially contentious undertaking, raising concerns about data accuracy and the potential for misuse or manipulation. Furthermore, even with accurate data, there is no guarantee of effective policy implementation or a genuine shift in societal attitudes. The process of caste census could also be politically charged, with various groups demanding for inclusion or exclusion from certain categories.

Let's delve into the key arguments against the idea that a caste census will help to reduce socio-economic inequalities and burst the myth.

Reinforcement of Caste Identities

The concern that a caste census reinforces caste identities stems from the fact that such an exercise gives official state recognition and legitimacy to the caste system. By explicitly listing and categorizing individuals based on their caste, the state inadvertently perpetuates the idea that caste system is a relevant and important marker of identity. For example, the consolidation of diverse intermediate castes under the 'Other Backward Classes' (OBCs) category after the Mandal Commission's recommendations demonstrates how categorization, even without a full caste census can create a stronger sense of shared identity and political interests. This official categorization can solidify existing caste hierarchies and hirder social mobility, making it harder for individuals to transcend caste-based identities. Furthermore, the very act of conducting a caste census brings caste to the forefront of public discourse, increasing its significance in social interactions and potentially fueling political mobilization along caste lines. In short, while intended to address inequalities, a caste census can inadvertently make caste a more prominent feature of Indian society, reinforcing the very divisions it aims to mitigate.

Oversimplification of Inequality

By focusing primarily on caste as the key determinant of socio-economic disparities, it risks neglecting the crucial interplay of other factors such as class, gender, religion, location and disability leading to an incomplete understanding of 'intersectional inequalities'. Furthermore, treating each caste as a homogenous group marks significant variation in socio-economic status within those groups, overlooking the nuances of individual experiences and potentially leading to poorly targeted policies. Critically, a caste census focuses on identifying and counting people based on their caste identity but it does not directly addresses the underlying structural factors that perpetuate inequality, such as unequal access to land, resources,

quality education, healthcare and discriminatory market practices. By providing only a snapshot of inequality, a census fails to capture the dynamics of social mobility and changes in socio-economic status over time, hindering a complete understanding of progress or regression in addressing disparities.

Potential Challenges and Potential for Misuse

The potential pitfalls of a caste census extend beyond theoretical concerns to encompass significant practical challenges and the risk of misuse. Accurately defining and enumerating the vast and often fluid landscape of castes and sub-castes presents a formidable logistical hurdle, raising concerns about data accuracy and consistency. The reliance on self reporting introduces the potential for bias, with individuals potentially misrepresenting their caste identity for various reasons. Furthermore, the sensitive nature of caste data raises serious concerns about privacy and security, with the risks of leaks or misuse by government agencies or private sectors. It could also lead to increased demands for reservations, potentially triggering inter-caste tensions. Beyond these issues, the scale and complexity of conducting such a census in India would require immense resources and logistical planning potentially diverting funds from other more effective interventions.

Limited Impact on Policy Change and Implementation

It is based on the understanding that data alone is insufficient to drive meaningful social transformation. While a census may provide a detailed picture of caste-based disparities, it doesn't guarantee that this information will be translated into effective policies or that those policies will be implemented effectively. India's history offers several examples where data on social inequality has not necessarily led to substantial improvements on the ground. For instance despite numerous reports and studies highlighting the continued discrimination and marginalization faced by Dalits these communities continue to face significant challenges in accessing education, employment and basic social services. This suggest that even with clear data on disparities, factors such as political will bureaucratic inertia, social resistance and lack of accountability mechanism can hinder effective implementation.

Focus on Symptoms Not Causes

Caste census focuses on symptoms rather than causes highlights a critical limitation in its potential to address socio-economic inequalities. A caste census primarily provides a snapshot of the outcomes of historical and ongoing discrimination—the unequal distribution of wealth, education and opportunities across different caste groups. However, it doesn't directly address the root causes of these inequalities. For example, a census might reveal that Dalits have significantly lower rates of land ownership than upper castes. This is a symptom of historical land dispossession and discriminatory land policies, not the cause itself. Focusing solely on symptom without addressing the cause is equal to treating a fever with ice packs without addressing the underlying infection. Similarly, lower literacy rates among certain castes might be documented by a census, but the underlying causes-unequal access to quality education, social exclusion and historical disadvantages are not directly addressed. In the same way, a caste census might provide data on disparities, but it does not automatically dismantle these structural barriers historical injustices and discriminatory practices that perpetuated those disparities.

In conclusion, instead of relying on a caste census, approaches should focus on addressing the root causes of socio-economic inequality through universal and structural inventions. Universal Social Welfare programmes, like a robust public education system accessible to all regardless of background, directly address disparities in opportunity by providing a level playing field. For example, the mid day meal scheme while not specifically targeting any caste, has improved school attendance and nutritional outcomes, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Addressing structural issues, such as implementing effective land reforms to distribute land ownership more equitably, rectifies historical injustices that perpetuate inequality. Similarly, ensuring access to affordable credit and capital for marginalized communities empowers them to engage in economic activities and improve their livelihoods, regardless of their caste. Investing in vocational training and skill development programmes, like those focused on digital literacy or technical skills, equips individuals with the tools to participate in the modern economy, breaking cycles of poverty that often disproportionately affect certain groups. Finally, strengthening anti-discrimination measures and promoting inclusive economic growth through job creation and support for small businesses creates a more equitable economic landscape for all. These approaches, unlike caste census which merely documents existing disparities, actively work to dismantle the systemic barriers that perpetuate socio-economic in equalities.

P.Darpan

Continued from Page 116

16. Flagship Programmes

- **Start-up India** : The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has allocated ₹ 547·35 crore for startup funds, supporting 303 startups in the oil and gas sector, with ₹ 286·36 crore already disbursed. This initiative aims to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the energy sector.
- **Skill Development** : Skill Development Institutes (SDIs) for hydrocarbon sector have been established in six cities (Bhubaneswar, Vizag, Kochi, Ahmedabad, Guwahati, and Raebareli) by various PSUs, including IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, ONGC, OIL and GAIL. Over 41,547 trainees have been trained as of November 2024. The focus on high-priority trades has resulted in the development of 55 National Occupational Standards (NOS)/Qualification Packs (QP) by various PSUs, including IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, ONGC, OIL and GAIL. Over 41,547 trainees have been trained as of November 2024. The focus on high-priority trades has resulted in the development of 55 National Occupational Standards (NOS)/Qualification Packs (QP) by various PSUs, including IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, ONGC, OIL and GAIL. Over 41,547 trainees have been trained as of November 2024. The focus on high-priority trades has resulted in the development of 55 National Occupational Standards (NOS)/Qualification Packs (QP) by various PSUs, including IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, ONGC, OIL and GAIL. Over 41,547 trainees have been trained as of November 2024. The focus on high-priority trades has resulted in the development of 55 National Occupational Standards (NOS)/Qualification Packs (QP) by various PSUs, including IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, ONGC, OIL and GAIL. Over 41,547 trainees have been trained as of November 2024. The focus on high-priority trades has resulted in the development of 55 National Occupational Standards (NOS)/Qualification Packs (QP) by various PSUs, including IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, ONGC, OIL and GAIL. Over 41,547 trainees have been trained as of November 2024. The focus on high-priority trades has resulted in the development of 55 National Occupational Standards (NOS)/Qualification Packs (QP) by various PSUs, including IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, ONGC, OIL and GAIL. Over 41,547 trainees have been trained as of November 2024. The focus on high-priority trades has resulted in the development of 55 National Occupational Standards (NOS)/Qualification Packs (QP) by various PSUs, including IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, ONGC, OIL and GAIL. Over 41,547 trainees have been trained as of November 2024. The focus on high-priority trades has resulted in the development of 55 National Occupational Standards (NOS)/Qualification Packs (QP) by various PSUs, including IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, ONGC, OIL and GAIL. Over 41,547 trainees have been trained as of November 2024. The focus on high-priority trades has resulted in the development of 55 National Occupational Standards (NOS)/Qualification Packs (QP) by various PSUs, including IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, ONGC, OIL and GAIL. Over 41,547 trainees have been trained as of November 2024. The focus on high-priority trades has resulted in the development of 55 National Occupational Standards (NOS)/Qualification Packs (QP) by various PSUs, including IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, ONGC, OIL and GAIL. Over 41,547 trainees have been trained as of November 2024. The focus on high-priority trades has resulted in the development of 55 National Occupational Standards (NOS)/Qualification Packs (QP) by **the** National Skill Qualification Committee (NSQC).

P.Darpan

Concentric Quiz

Special on Science & Technology

1. Consider the following statements :
   I. Living With A Star Mission is a cross disciplinary programme of NASA.
   II. It targets specific aspects of the Earth-Moon System.
   III. Parker Solar Probe, launched in 2019, is a part of this mission.
   Choose the correct option from the code given below :
   (A) Only I is correct
   (B) Only I and II are correct
   (C) Only I and III are correct
   (D) All I, II and III are correct

2. Consider the following statements :
   I. Quantum Key Distribution utilizes the unique properties of quantum mechanical systems to generate and distribute cryptographic keying material.
   II. Quantum Cryptography enables secure sharing of encryption keys as compared to standard cryptography.
   III. Quantum Entanglement between two particles exists, irrespective of distance between them in space.
   Choose the correct option from the code given below :
   (A) Only I and II are correct
   (B) Only II and III are correct
   (C) Only III is correct
   (D) All I, II and III are correct

3. Consider the following Assertion (A) and Reason (R) :
   Assertion (A) : Manipulating a GPS receiver by broadcasting false GPS signals is known as GPS spoofing or GPS simulation.
   Reason (R) : GPS spoofing exploits the weak signal strength of GPS satellites.
   Choose the correct option :
   (A) Both (A) and (R) are correct. (R) is the correct explanation of (A)
   (B) Both (A) and (R) are correct. However, (R) is not the correct explanation of (A)
   (C) (A) is true, (R) is false
   (D) (A) is false, (R) is true

4. Choose the correct chronology of India's three stage nuclear programme.
   I. Fast Breeder Reactors based on Plutonium.
   II. Pressurized Heavy Water reactors based on natural Uranium.
   III. Advanced Nuclear Power Systems for utilization of Thorium.
   Choose the correct option :
   (A) I-II-III (B) II-I-III
   (C) II-III-I (D) III-I-II

5. Consider the following statements :
   I. Aerogels are prepared by drying of the wet gels in which the liquid inside the pores of the network of the wet gel is replaced by air.
   II. They are prepared by sol-gel process.
   III. They can be derived only from the inorganic precursors.
   IV. They can be used to extract gold from the electronic waste.
   Choose the correct option :
   (A) Only I and II are correct
   (B) Only I, II and III are correct
   (C) Only I, II and IV are correct
   (D) All I, II, III and IV are correct

6. Consider the following statements :
   I. The Doppler Effect is based on the concept of the relative velocity.
   II. The Speed Gun uses the Doppler effect to infer the speed of an object.
   III. The Doppler Effect is named after an English physicist Charles Doppler.
   Choose the correct option :
   (A) Only I is correct
   (B) Only I and II are correct
   (C) Only II is correct
   (D) All I, II and III are correct

7. Consider the following statements :
   I. Dark Comets display non-gravitational acceleration but without tails.
   II. The larger dark comets belong to the inner solar system.
   III. The smaller dark comets belong to the outer solar system.
   Choose the correct option :
   (A) Only I is correct
   (B) Only II and III are correct
   (C) All I, II and III are correct
   (D) All I, II and III are incorrect

8. Consider the following statements :
   I. Varmam Therapy is based on pressure manipulation over the varmam points.
   II. Human body has 84 major varmam points.
   III. Varmam points are considered vital areas where life energy (prana) is concentrated.
   IV. In December 2024, the National Institute of Siddha (NIS) has set a Guinness World Record for providing Varmam therapy to 567 individuals simultaneously.
   Choose the correct option :
   (A) Only I, III and IV are correct
   (B) Only I, II and IV are correct
   (C) Only II, III and IV are correct
   (D) All I, II, III and IV are correct

9. Consider the following :
   I. The Human-Rated Launch Vehicle Mark-III is an advanced version of LVM3.
   II. It includes Crew Escape System (CES) for escape provisions during emergency.

III. It will be used in Gaganyaan Mission.

IV. It has three-stage to carry up to 10 tonnes to the Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I, II and III are correct
(B) Only I and III are correct
(C) Only I, III and IV are correct
(D) All I, II, III and IV are correct

10. Consider the following statements :

I. Organophosphate (OP) and carbamate based-insecticides inhibit acetylcholinesterase (AChE).

II. Inhibition of Acetylcholinesterase (AChE) enzyme due to insecticide exposure causes neurological dysfunction, breathing disorder, paralysis and death in severe cases.

III. KISAN KAVACH, developed by iBRIC, uses Oxime-fabric for developing bodysuit to reduce the exposure of farmers to insecticides.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) Only III is correct
(C) All I, II and III are correct
(D) All I, II and III are incorrect

11. Hydroxymethanesulphonate is :

(A) Aerosol (B) Hydrosol
(C) Lipid (D) Emulsion

12. Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis affects :

(A) Liver
(B) Lungs
(C) Small Intestine
(D) Kidney

13. Consider the following statements related to 3D image of Foetal Brain :

I. AIIMS has recently released the 3D Image of Foetal Brain for early diagnosis and treatment of developmental disorders.

II. It has been named *Dhara*.

III. The project was supported by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India and private entities.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) All I, II and III are correct
(C) All I, II and III are incorrect
(D) Only III is correct

14. Consider the following statements :

I. India aims to establish the Bharatiya Antariksha Station by 2040.

II. India aims to land an Indian astronaut on the Moon by 2035.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I is correct
(B) Only II is correct
(C) Both I and II are correct
(D) Both I and II are incorrect

15. Consider the following statements :

I. Low Pressure tubes to minimize friction.

II. Linear Electric Motors to propel the pod smoothly.

III. Magnetic Levitation Technology to eliminate friction.

Which of the above technologies are utilized in Hyperloop ?

(A) Only I and II
(B) Only I and III
(C) Only III
(D) All I, II and III

16. Consider the following statements :

I. African Swine Fever Virus (ASFV) belongs to the genus *Asfivirus*, family *Asfarviridae*.

II. It was first reported in Kenya in 1921.

III. India recorded the first outbreak of the African swine fever in Kerala in 2020.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) Only I is correct
(C) Only II and III are correct
(D) All I, II and III are correct

17. Willow Chip is a new state of the art quantum computing chip developed by :

(A) IBM
(B) Google
(C) Meta
(D) OpenAI

18. Consider the following statements :

I. Carbon-14 Diamond Battery captures fast-moving electrons emitted from Carbon-14 from within the diamond structure.

II. It can be used in extreme environment, both in space and on the Earth.

III. World's first Carbon-14 Diamond Battery have been created by the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS).

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I is correct
(B) Only I and II are correct
(C) Only I and III are correct
(D) All I, II and III are correct

19. Consider the following statements :

I. Subaru Telescope is 8·2 metre optical-infrared telescope.

II. It is located on the dormant volcano Mauna Kea on the island of Hawaii.

III. It is operated by Goddard Institute for Space Studies.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I and II are correct
(B) Only II and III are correct
(C) All I, II and III are correct
(D) Only I is correct

20. Consider the following statements :

I. Nafithromycin is India's first indigenous macrolide antibiotic.

II. It has been developed by the Bharat Biotech, with support from the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) under the Biotech Industry Program.

III. It offers a five-day treatment regime and is 100 times more effective than Azithromycin.

Choose the correct option :

(A) Only I is correct
(B) Only I and II are correct
(C) All I, II and III are correct
(D) Only II is correct

PDarpan

Concentric Quiz

ENTRY FORM

Special on Science & Technology

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I have read and understood the rules of Concentric Quiz of Pratiyogita Darpan and agree to abide by them.

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Q. No.	A	B	C	D	Q. No.	A	B	C	D	Q. No.	A	B	C	D	Q. No.	A	B	C	D
1.	☐	☐	☐	☐	6.	☐	☐	☐	☐	11.	☐	☐	☐	☐	16.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	☐	☐	☐	☐	7.	☐	☐	☐	☐	12.	☐	☐	☐	☐	17.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	☐	☐	☐	☐	8.	☐	☐	☐	☐	13.	☐	☐	☐	☐	18.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	☐	☐	☐	☐	9.	☐	☐	☐	☐	14.	☐	☐	☐	☐	19.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	☐	☐	☐	☐	10.	☐	☐	☐	☐	15.	☐	☐	☐	☐	20.	☐	☐	☐	☐

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- All students or those appearing in competitive examinations can take part in this contest.
- Candidates taking part in quiz contest will necessarily have to send their entries by the fixed date. Entries are to be sent by ordinary post. Please mark your envelope **'Quiz–Pratiyogita Darpan'** on the top left hand side.
- Answers given only on the Entry Form of the magazine will be admissible.
- In the form there are four squares against each question number. Contestants should put a Tick (✓) in the square for the answer they think is correct. Giving more than one answer to a question will disqualify it.
- Contestants should essentially write the number of questions they have solved.
- Marks will be deducted for wrong answers.
- The candidate sending the maximum number of correct answers will be given ₹ 1000 as first prize. Next two candidates after that will get ₹ 800 and ₹ 600 as second and third prize respectively. If there are more than one candidate eligible for a prize, the amount will be equally distributed among them.
- Write your name in English in Capital Letters. The name must be the one which appears in your bank account. Also, write the bank account number, IFSC code of the bank and your mobile phone number.
- The decision of the editor will be final and binding in all cases, and will not be a matter for consideration of any court and no correspondence will be entertained in this concern.
- Names of prize winners of Concentric Quiz alongwith the answers will be published in the next issue of Pratiyogita Darpan.
- Pratiyogita Darpan reserves the right to terminate or extend the period of quiz, or to accept or reject any or all the entries at their absolute discretion without assigning any reason.
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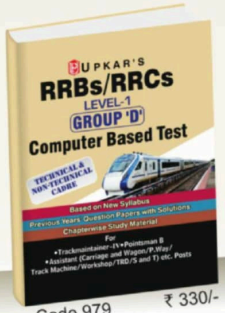

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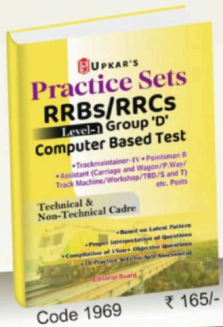

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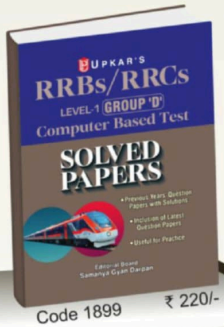

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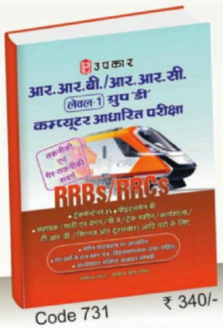

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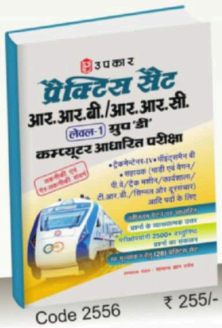

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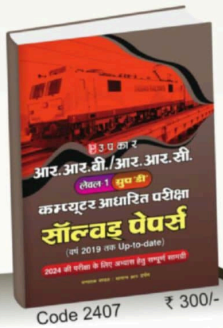

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RESULTS

Essay Competition

Topic : **Darkness Cannot Drive Out Darkness**

Winners

First Prize Winner



Prabhash Pathak
Nilkanth Nagar
Bhagalpur
Bihar–812 001

Second Prize Winner



Shivam M. Yadav
Ward No. 1, Thakurpura,
Shivpuri
Madhya Pradesh

Third Prize Winner



Renu Arora
The English Villa
Gurunanak Pura, Narnaul
Haryana–123 001

Debate Competition

Topic : **Caste Census will Help to Reduce Socio-Economic Inequalities**

Winners

In Favour



Mahesh Kumar
S/o Chiman Lal
The English Villa
Gurunanak Pura, Narnaul
Haryana–123 001

Against the Topic



Nitin Kumar Singh
R-180, HIG Duplex
Sector-12
Pratap Vihar, Ghaziabad
Uttar Pradesh–201 009

Quiz Contest

(Special on Awards and Prizes)

First Prize Winner

Nikita Abala Bhaurle
Lonar Ali, Junnar
Maharashtra–410 502

Second Prize Winner

Abhinava Kumar
Q. No. P-1080/12, Basant Bagh
Near Raina TCP, Bathinda Cantt
Punjab–151 004

Third Prize Winner

S. Karpaga Soubha Varshine
Krishna Nagar
Puducherry–605 008

Answers

1. (D)	2. (D)	3. (A)	4. (B)	5. (B)
6. (C)	7. (D)	8. (C)	9. (C)	10. (C)
11. (A)	12. (D)	13. (A)	14. (D)	15. (D)
16. (C)	17. (C)	18. (C)	19. (C)	20. (C)

Mental Exercise — TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Match the List-I (Committee) and List-II (Year) and choose the correct code given below :

List-I

(Committee for Estimation of Poverty in India)

(a) C. Rangarajan Committee
(b) Y.K. Alagh Committee
(c) D.T. Lakdawala Committee
(d) Suresh Tendulkar Committee

List-II

(Year of Set-up)

1. 1979 2. 1993
3. 2005 4. 2012

Correct code is :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	3	4
(B)	4	1	2	3
(C)	1	4	2	3
(D)	4	1	3	2

2. Which of the following statements is/are correct in relation to Sex Ratio ?

I. Sex Ratio measures the number of females per 1000 males in a given population.
II. According to National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21) the overall sex ratio at birth in India was 929.

Correct code is :
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

3. Consider the following statements in relation to Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) :

I. ALH programme is an indigenously designed and developed 5·5 tonne multirole helicopter by RWRDC, HAL Bengaluru.
II. One of the variations of ALH has been named as ALH MK-IV Rudra.
III. ALH Mark-III crashed at the Coast Guard Air Enclave in Porbandar, Gujarat.

How many statements given above are correct ?
(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None of the above

4. Consider the following statements in relation to Thiruvalluvar :

I. Thruvalluvar, was the great Tamil philosopher, poet and thinker.
II. Thiruvalluvar day is celebrated on January 15, every year.
III. He is best known as the author of Tirukkural a collection of couplets on ethics, politics and economics and love.

How many of the above statements are correct ?
(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None of the above

5. Lokpal is not authorized to accept complaints against the :

I. President of India
II. Vice-President of India
III. Prime Minister of India
IV. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court
V. Comptroller and Auditor General of India

Correct code is :
(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only I, II, IV and V
(C) Only I, III, IV and V
(D) Only I, II

6. Which of the following statements is incorrect about the Prime Minister Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) ?

(A) PMGSY was launched on 25th December, 2000
(B) PMGSY is a Central Sector Scheme
(C) PMGSY provide all weather road connectivity to unconnected habitations
(D) PMGSY IV aims to provide all weather connectivity to unconnected habitations of population size 500 + in plains and 250 + in NE and Hill States/UTs

7. Match the List-I (Authors) and List-II (Books) and choose the correct code given below :

List-I

(a) Bankim Chandra Chatterjee
(b) Michael Madhusudan Das
(c) Rabindra Nath Tagore
(d) Sarojini Naidu

List-II

1. Anand Math
2. Captive Lady
3. Gora
4. The Broken Wing

Correct code is :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	1	2	3	4
(B)	2	3	4	1
(C)	1	4	2	3
(D)	4	1	3	2

8. Which of the following pairs is matched correctly ?
(A) Lord Cornwallis —Regulating Act, 1773
(B) Lord Wellesley —Permanent Settlement, 1793
(C) Lord Ellenborough —Annexation of Sindh, 1843
(D) Lord Dalhousie —First Anglo-Afghan War, 1838-42

9. Which of the following pairs is not matched correctly ?
(A) Operation Smiling Buddha —Indira Gandhi
(B) Operation Shakti —Atal Bihari Bajpayee
(C) Kargil Vijay —P.V. Narsimha Rao
(D) Galwan Valley Conflict —Narendra Modi

10. Match the List-I and List-II and choose the correct code given below :

List-I

(a) Morley-Minto Reforms
(b) Montagu Chelmsford Reforms

(c) Government of India Act of 1935
(d) Cripps Proposal

List-II

1. Dyarchy in the Provinces
2. Provincial Autonomy
3. Introduction of Separate Electorate for Muslims
4. Provision for establishment of a Constituent Assembly

Correct code is :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	3	1	2	4
(B)	3	2	1	4
(C)	3	4	2	1
(D)	3	4	1	2

11. Consider the following pairs in relation to various tribes :
I. Odisha—Khonds
II. Uttar Pradesh—Murias
III. Meghalaya—Garos
IV. Madhya Pradesh—Baiga
Which of the pairs are matched correctly ?
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only III and IV
(C) Only I, III and IV
(D) Only IV

12. Consider the following pairs :
I. India Wins Freedom —Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
II. Wither India —Jawahar Lal Nehru
III. India Struggles —Gopal Krishna Gokhale
IV. India Divided —Rajendra Prasad
How many pairs given above are matched correctly ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

13. Which of the following are formed mechanically ?
(A) Arenaceous
(B) Calcareous
(C) Sinter
(D) Rock-salt

14. Which of the following is world's largest Islands ?
(A) Greenland
(B) Australia
(C) New Guinea
(D) Borneo

15. Consider the following pairs in relation to cities and river on which bank they are situated ?
I. Alexanderia—Nile
II. Amesterdam—Amsel
III. Antwerp—Scheldt
IV. Budapest—Thames
How many pairs given above are matched correctly ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

16. Blood Rain is most common in :
I. South Italy
II. Sicily
III. Malta
IV. Canary Islands
Correct code is :
(A) Only I, II, III
(B) Only II, III, IV
(C) Only IV
(D) All I, II, III, IV

17. Consider the following pairs in relation to varieties of Mica—a non-metalic mineral :
I. Biotite —Iron-Magnesium mica
II. Hepidolite —Lithium-bearing mica
III. Muscovite—Potash mica
IV. Phlogopite —Magnesium mica
How many pairs given above are matched correctly ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

18. Which of the following valley is known as a 'Little Greece' in Himachal Pradesh ?
(A) Chumbi Valley
(B) Kangra Valley
(C) Malana Valley
(D) Spiti Valley

19. Sudarshal Bridge connects :
(A) Beyt Dwarika island in the Gulf of Kutch and Okha
(B) Mumbai and its satellite city Navi Mumbai
(C) Dibrugarh and Dhemaji
(D) Dhola and Sadiya

20. Which of the following pairs is not matched correctly ?
(A) Anemometer—Wind Speed
(B) Ammeter—Electric Current
(C) Tacheometer —Pressure Difference
(D) Pyrometer—Temperature

21. Vice-President of India is elected by an electoral college consisting of :
(A) Elected members of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha
(B) All the members of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha
(C) Elected members of Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and State Assemblies
(D) All the members of Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies and Legislative Councils

22. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the pensionary benefits available to former Member of Parliament ?
I. Former Member of Parliament receive a pension of ₹ 25,000 per month after serving one term in Parliament.
II. For every extra year of service, MPs get an increment of ₹ 2000 per month.
Correct code is :
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

23. Which of the following is not a fundamental duty of every citizen as has/have been introduced in the Constitution of India ?
(A) To uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India
(B) To vote in parliamentary election
(C) To safeguard public property and to abjure violence
(D) To develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform

24. A writ issued by a higher court to lower court to transfer the matter to it or to some other superior authority for its proper consideration is called :
(A) Certiorari
(B) Mandamus
(C) Quo Warranto
(D) Prohibition

25. Consider the following statements in relation to Attorney-General of India :
I. Attorney General of India is appointed by the President of India.
II. He holds office during the pleasure of the President.

III. A person, who is qualified to be appointed a judge of the Supreme Court, can be appointed as the Attorney General of India.
IV. Attorney General of India has the right to speak in, and otherwise to take part in the proceedings of either House of Parliament, any joint sitting of the house.

How many statements given above are correct ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

26. Term 'Complete Justice' has been in the core of which Article of Indian Constitution :
(A) Article 136
(B) Article 139
(C) Article 142(1)
(D) Article 143

27. Consider the following insect pests :
I. Khapra
II. Rice moth
III. Pulse beetle
IV. Grain and flour moth
Which of the above damage foodgrains during storage ?
(A) Only I and II
(B) Only III and IV
(C) Only I, II and III
(D) All I, II, III and IV

28. Which of the following is not most commonly thought a draught animal ?
(A) Camel (B) Elephant
(C) Sheep (D) Horse

29. Consider the following in relation to diffusion :
I. It is a slow process
II. It takes place in both directions
III. It does not use energy
IV. It allows all transmissible molecules to pass through membrane
Which of above are correct about the process of diffusion ?
(A) Only I, II, III
(B) Only II, III, IV
(C) Only I, III, IV
(D) All I, II, III, IV

30. Which of the following is not a muscular tissue ?
(A) Squamous (B) Striated
(C) Smooth (D) Cardiac

31. Consider the following statements in relation to Lichens :
I. Lichens grows as the slow-growing coloured patches on rocks, bark of tree-trunks and even on the ground.
II. Lichens are very soft.
III. In lichens, blue-green algae or cyanobacteria and fungi live in symbiosis.
IV. The algae component of the lichen is known as phycobiont and the fungal component a mycobiont.
How many of the above statements are correct ?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) All four

32. Isotopes of an element have :
(A) The same physical properties
(B) Different chemical properties
(C) Different number of neutrons
(D) Different atomic numbers

33. Which of the following is a correct electronic configuration of sodium ?
(A) 2, 8 (B) 8, 2, 1
(C) 2, 1, 8 (D) 2, 8, 1

34. Match the List-I (Separation of material) and List-II (Separation technique) and choose the correct code given below :

List-I

(a) Separation of sodium chloride from its solution in water
(b) Small pieces of metal in the engine oil of a car
(c) Butter from curd
(d) Wheat grains from husk

List-II

1. Winnowing
2. Centrifugation
3. Filteration
4. Evaporation

Correct code is :

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
(A)	4	3	2	1
(B)	3	4	1	2
(C)	1	2	3	4
(D)	2	1	4	3

35. Consider the following substances :
I. Ice
II. Iron
III. Calcium Oxide
IV. Mercury
Which of the above materials fall in the category of 'pure substance' ?
(A) Only I and IV
(B) Only I, II and IV
(C) All I, II, III and IV
(D) Only IV

36. The reflection of sound waves is utilized in the working of :
I. Megaphones
II. Stethoscope
Correct code is :
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II

37. Sound is a form of energy which makes us hear. Sound can be produced by vibrating :
I. Strings
II. Air
III. Membranes
IV. Plates
Correct code is
(A) Only I, II, III
(B) Only II, III, IV
(C) Only I, III, IV
(D) All I, II, III, IV

38. When of the following vibrates when a musical note is produced by the cymbals in an Orchestra ?
(A) Stretched strings
(B) Stretched membranes
(C) Metal plates
(D) Air columns

39. When an object falls freely towards the earth, then its total energy :
(A) Increases
(B) Decreases
(C) Remains constant
(D) First increases and then decreases

40. Which of the following does not possess the ability to do work not because of motion ?
(A) A sparrow flying in the sky
(B) A sparrow moving slowly on the ground
(C) A sparrow in the nest on a tree
(D) A squirrel going up a tree

[For Answer see Page 182]

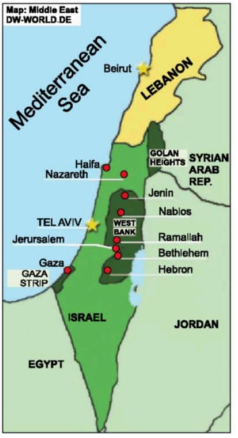


International Scenario

Round The Half Year

Israel-Hamas Conflict : A Timeline of Major Events Since October 7, 2023

- **October 7, 2023 :** Hamas carried out surprise attack in Israel named 'Operation Al-Aqsa Flood' by crossing over from Gaza. According to Israel, the attack claimed about 1200 lives and about 250 hostages were taken by Gaza. Israel launched 'Operation Iron Sword' in response to the barrages of rockets launched by Hamas from Gaza at Israel.



- **October 8, 2023 :** Hezbollah began launching rockets, announcing its support for the people of Gaza and that it would stop when a ceasefire was announced. For 11 months, Hezbollah and its allies fired rockets, targeting Israeli military sites.
- **October 17, 2023 :** Huge blast took place at Gaza's al-Ahli Arab Hospital, killing nearly 500 people.
- **November 19, 2023 :** The first Houthi's attack against Israel in the Red Sea took place. They hijacked a cargo ship named Galaxy Leader, partly owned by an Israeli businessman.
- **November 24 to December 1, 2023 :** Temporary ceasefire and pause in fighting between two sides. It was mediated by Qatar and renewed twice. Exchange of hostages took place from both the sides during the seven-days ceasefire.
- **January 12, 2024 :** United States and British warplanes began bombing Yemen in response to the Houthis' attacks on Red Sea traffic.
- **May 6, 2024 :** Israel invaded Rafah, a city in the southern Gaza, which was an important refuge for Palestinians fleeing Israeli bombardment, and point of border crossing with Egypt and entry for aid. Israel's strike continued despite ICJ's order to immediately halt it.
- **July 13, 2024 :** Israel strikes in al-Mawasi Humanitarian zone killed at least 90 Palestinians and wounded hundreds. The attack was one of many massacres Israel committed in Gaza.
- **September 13, 2024 :** Thousands of pagers exploded in Lebanon. A day later, thousands of walkie-talkie radios also exploded. These attacks were blamed on Israel.
- **September 23, 2024 :** Israel carried out attack on Lebanon in the South and the Beka Valley in the East. Beirut's southern suburb of Dahiyeh also came under Israeli attack.
- **October 1, 2024 :** Israel launched its 6th invasion of Lebanon, since 1978. It started the ground invasion of the southern Lebanon to dismantle Hezbollah's infrastructure. Iran fired a salvo of ballistic missiles at Israel in retaliation for Israel's campaign against Hezbollah in Lebanon.
- **October 2, 2024 :** Israeli Government declared the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, *persona non-grata* and barring him from entering Israeli territory.
- **November 9, 2024 :** Qatar suspended its work as mediator between Israel and Hamas for release of hostages and ceasefire.
- **November 23, 2024 :** The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrant against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant and Hamas commander Mohammed Deif Ibrahim al-Masri, for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Gaza conflict.
- **November 27, 2024 :** A ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon came into effect which ended the 13 month conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. The 13-point agreement, brokered by the United States and France, provided for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory within sixty days.
- **January 2, 2025 :** Israeli Prime Minister approved the Israeli delegation's visit to Qatar to discuss a ceasefire arrangement, led by US. The agreement, in current form, will provide for the implementation of a ceasefire and the gradual release of hostages over three phases. The major point of contention is withdrawal of Israeli forces from Philadelphi corridor, connecting Gaza with Egypt.

List of Hamas and Hezbollah Leaders Killed by Israel Since October 7, 2023

- Mahmud Shah, Chief of Gaza police force and his deputy, Hussam Shahwan were killed in Israeli strike on January 2, 2025 in al-Mawasi.

- Abd al-Hadi Sabah, a Nukhba Platoon commander within Hamas' Western Khan Yunis Battalion, killed in a drone strike on December 31, 2024. He was a key figure behind the attack on Kibbutz Nir Oz during the October 7, 2023, massacre.
- Yahya Sinwar, Hamas leader in Gaza and head of its political bureau, was killed by Israeli forces in the southern Gaza strip on October 16, 2024. He had succeeded Ismail Haniyeh who was assassinated by Israel in Tehran on July 31, 2024.
- Nabil Kouk, deputy head of Hezbollah's central council was killed in airstrike on September 28, 2024.
- On September 27, 2024, Hezbollah's Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah was assassinated in an attack on Dahiyeh in Beirut, Lebanon. Ali Karki, Hezbollah's commander in southern Lebanon, was also killed in the same strike.
- Mohammed Srur, head of Hezbollah's drone unit, was killed during airstrike in Beirut on September 26, 2024.
- Ibrahim Qubaisi, who led Hezbollah's missile unit, was killed in an Israeli airstrike on the Dahiyeh suburb of Beirut, on September 24, 2024.
- Israeli strike in Dahiyeh, Beirut on September 20, 2024, killed Ibrahim Aqil (Hezbollah operations commander), Ahmed Mahmud Wahabi (who earlier led Radwan Special Forces).
- Faud Shukr, Hezbollah's leading military figure since its inception, was killed in Dahiyeh on July 30, 2024.
- Israel claimed that it killed Mohammed Deif, the military commander of Hamas in Gaza, in a July 13, 2024 air strike on al-Mawasi, west of Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip.
- Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated by Israel in Tehran on July 31, 2024, who was Hamas leader since 2017.
- Hamas deputy chief Saleh al-Arouri was killed on January 2, 2024 during an Israeli drone strike in Dahiyeh, Lebanon. He was the founder of 'Qassam Brigades' the military wing of Hamas.

Donald J. Trump Elected 47th President of USA

In the 60th quadrennial Presidential Election of USA, Donald John Trump has been elected as the 47th President of the United States of America, which was held on November 5, 2024.

His victory in all 7 swing or battleground states with 93 Electoral votes—Pennsylvania (19), Georgia (16), North Carolina (16), Michigan (15), Arizona (11), Wisconsin (10) and Nevada (6) catapulted him on the path to victory.

Why 2024 US Presidential Election was Historic ?

- Donald Trump will be the only second US President, after Grover Cleveland, to serve two non-consecutive terms. Grover Cleveland was the first US President to serve two non-consecutive terms 22nd and 24th from 1885 to 1889 and again from 1893 to 1897.
- In 2016, he defeated Hillary Clinton, and in 2024 he defeated Kamala Harris to become 45th and 47th President of USA, respectively.
- At the age of 78 years, Trump is the oldest person to be elected as the USA President. His running mate James David Vance will be the third youngest Vice-President of USA.
- All 50 states witnessed 'Red Shift' (increase in voting percentage of Republican Party) in 2024.

Important Appointments Announced in Trump 2·0

Secretary of the State	Marco Rubio
Attorney General	Pam Bondi
Director, National Intelligence	Tulsi Gabbard
Defence Secretary	Pete Hagseth
Homeland Security Secretary	Kristi Noem
CIA Director	John Ratcliffe
Health and Human Services Secretary	Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
Chief of Staff of White House	Susie Wiles
National Security Advisor	Mike Waltz
Veterans Affair Secretary	Doug Collins
Border Czar	Tom Homan
Department of Government Efficiency	Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy
Special Envoy to the Middle East	Steven Witkoff
Ambassador to Israel	Mike Huckabee
Ambassador to the United Nations	Elise Marie Stefanik
White House Counsel	William McGinley

The Republican Party has officially won a full 'trifecta' of power in Washington DC by winning the 2024 US Presidential election and achieving majority in both the Houses of the US Congress, established by the Article 1 of the US Constitution, and consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Samosa Caucus

Samosa Caucus is a term which denotes the informal grouping the Indian-origin Americans in the US Congress. It was coined by Raja Krishnamoorthi, from Illinois. It is in vogue since 2018. It includes members from both the House of Representatives and the Senate who have roots in India or South Asia and who often work together on issues relevant to the Indian-American community, as well as broader issues of interest to South Asian constituents in the United States.

Currently, there are 6 US Representatives of Indian descent serving in the Samosa Caucus, all of whom belong to the Democratic Party : Shri Thanedar (Michigan's 13th District), Dr. Ami Bera (California's 6th District), Ro Khanna (California's 17th District), Pramila Jayapal (Washington's 7th District), Raja Krishnamoorthi (Illinois's 8th District); and Suhas Subramanyam became the 6th member after becoming the first Indian American to be elected from Virginia and the entire East Coast.

Canada Ended the Student Direct Stream (SDS) for International Students

The Canadian Government, on November 8, 2024, announced the closure of the Student Direct Stream (SDS), which was launched in 2018 to expedite the study permit application process for international students from 14 countries, including India, for admission into post-secondary Designated Learning Institutions (DLI).

Reasons for Closure of SDS

- A statement issued by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada on November 8, 2024, closure of SDS is aimed to provide fair and equal access to all foreign students to the application process for study permits.
- Strengthening program integrity and addressing student vulnerability.
- To better manage the inflow of foreign students, alleviate pressure on housing in cities such as Toronto and Vancouver, and to implement more equitable approach to student visa processing.
- To better manage the resources such as healthcare, transportation and education which has been under strain due to influx of foreign students.

2024 G20 Rio de Janeiro Summit

The 19th G20 Summit, also known as the 2024 G20 Rio de Janeiro summit, was hosted by Brazil at the Museum of Modern Art in the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro on November 18th and 19th, 2024.



Meetings held by Indian PM with Countries' Heads on sidelines of 2024 G20 Rio Summit

Key Highlights of the G20 RIO Summit :

- **Theme :** The theme of the G20 Rio Summit 2024 was 'Building a Just World and A Sustainable Planet.'
- **3 Priority :** Fight against hunger, poverty and inequality; the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental); and the reform of global governance.
- **G20 Social :** It was the first such summit in the history of G20. Its goal is to increase the participation civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders in G20 activities and decision-making processes.
- **Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty :** It aims to eliminate hunger and poverty by 2030. India is one of the founding members.
- **Global Initiative for Information Integrity on Climate Change :** A joint initiative launched by Brazil, UNESCO and the United Nations to strengthen research and communication actions to tackle disinformation.
- **Rio de Janeiro Declaration :** It emphasized the fight against hunger and poverty, the taxation of billionaires, measures for the energy transition, the global governance reform, and the acceleration of climate action, and supporting COP30 (UNFCCC) in 2025, to be held in Belém, Brazil.
- **Declaration on Digital Public Infrastructure, AI and Data for Governance :** It aimed to seek establishment of fair and equitable principles for data governance to address data protection and management, privacy and security while offering market participants the protection of intellectual property rights and their confidential information.

National People's Power Swept the Sri Lankan Parliamentary Election

The National People's Power (NPP), led by Sri Lanka's President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, registered landslide victory by winning 159 seats and secured a 2/3rd majority in the 225 member Parliament. The party also secured the 61·6% votes in in Sri Lanka's parliamentary elections held on November 14, 2024. The party was able to secure majority of seats in Tamil-majority regions.

21 women have been elected Members of Parliament (MPs), in which 2 women MPs are Malaiyaga Tamils, a marginalised and under-represented community.

India and Guyana Signed 10 MoUs During PM Modi's 2-Day State Visit

During his State visit to Guyana from 20-21 November, 2024; Prime Minister Narendra Modi was warmly welcomed by the Guyana's President Mohamed Irfaan Ali. It was the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Guyana in 56 years.

Key Highlights of Visit

- The visit saw signing of 10 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two countries, spanning areas like culture, agriculture, pharmaceuticals and the deployment of UPI in Guyana.
- India extended credit facilities to Guyana for mutually agreed fields, including agriculture and information technology.
- Prime Minister Modi was conferred the country's highest award—'The Order of Excellence' by Guyanese President Irfaan Ali.

PM Narendra Modi Attends 2nd India-CARICOM Summit

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the Prime Minister of Grenada, H.E. Mr. Dickon Mitchell, the current CARICOM Chair, chaired the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit in Georgetown, Guyana, on 20 November, 2024. The first India-CARICOM Summit was held in 2019 in New York.

Key Highlights of the Summit :

- PM Modi presented a 7-pillar framework of assistance to CARICOM countries : C : Capacity Building; A : Agriculture; R : Renewable Energy and Climate Change; I : Innovation, Technology and Trade; C : Cricket and Culture; O : Ocean Economy and Maritime Security; M: Medicine and Healthcare.
- He urged CARICOM members to join International Solar Alliance, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, Mission LiFE and Global Biofuel Alliance.
- He offered DPI, Digi locker and UPI models to improve public service delivery.

- He proposed organizing 'Days of Indian Culture' in member countries next year to strengthen people-to-people ties.
- India expressed its readiness to work with CARICOM countries on maritime domain mapping and hydrography in the Caribbean Sea.
- Replicating Jan Aushadhi Kendras model for affordable medicines and Yoga experts for promoting e-health.

During the sidelines of the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit, PM Narendra Modi held meeting with Barbados PM Mottley, and expressed gratitude on receiving 'Honourary Order of Freedom of Barbados'. Their talks covered areas such as agriculture, healthcare, education, science and technology and climate change.

16th BRICS Summit 2024

The leaders of the BRICS met in Kazan, Russia from 22 to 24 October, 2024 for the 16th BRICS Summit held under the theme : "Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security'."



PM Narendra Modi during the 16th BRICS Summit at Kazan Expo Center, in Russia on October 23, 2024.

What is Kazan Declaration ?

The 16th BRICS Summit adopted the 'Kazan Declaration' in which countries committed themselves on strengthening cooperation under the three pillars : political and security; economic and financial; cultural and people-to-people cooperation.

It called for full implementation of UNSC resolutions for peaceful resolution of Gaza conflict. It called for honouring of UNFCCC and Paris Climate Agreement and its principles of CBDR-RC.

Reforming the current international financial architecture, timely implementation of G20 Common Framework for Debt Treatment, to mobilize private capital to finance infrastructure projects and supported the further expansion of New Development Bank membership. It called for strengthening cross border payments in local currencies in line with the BRICS Cross-Border Payments Initiative.

Strengthening people-to-people contacts through BRICS Alliances, including the Alliance of Museums, the Alliance of Museums and Art Galleries, the Alliance of Libraries and the Alliance of Theatres for Children and Young People.

Key Highlights of PM Modi's Speech at the 16th BRICS Summit :

- People-centric approach to tackle global challenges.
- Early adoption of a UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
- BRICS Startup Forum initiated by India to be launched in 2024.
- He noted new values and impacts created by the regional presence of the New Development Bank including in GIFT city, India.
- He invited BRICS countries to join India-led alliances such as International Solar Alliance, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, Mission LIFE and Green Credit initiative announced during COP28.
- He underlined the need to prioritise small and medium scale industries.

Prime Minister Unveils 10-Points Plan at the 21st India-ASEAN Summit 2024

During the 21st edition of the India-ASEAN summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated India's support for unity, centrality and outlook of ASEAN for the 'Indo-Pacific', and called 21st century as the Asian Century.

The leaders agreed to create a new ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2026-2030) and 10-Points Plan was announced by PM Modi :

- Celebrating the year 2025 as the ASEAN-India Year of Tourism.
- Celebrating 10 years of the Act East Policy through people centric activities.
- To organise ASEAN-India Women Scientists Conclave under ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund.
- To double the number of scholarships at Nalanda University; and new scholarships for ASEAN students at the Agricultural Universities in India.
- Review of ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement by 2025.
- India has announced to commit US $ 5 million for strengthening disaster resilience.
- Building health resilience through initiating new Health Ministers' track.
- Strengthening digital and cyber resilience by initiating a regular mechanism of ASEAN-India Cyber Policy Dialogue.
- Workshop on Green Hydrogen.
- PM Narendra Modi invited ASEAN Leaders to join 'Plant a Tree for Mother' campaign towards building climate resilience.

The 19th East Asia Summit (EAS) was held on 11 October, 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. It was chaired by H.E. Mr. Sonexay Siphandone, Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

The Summit was attended by ASEAN Member States, Australia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea (ROK), the Russian Federation and the United States of America (USA), as well as the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste as Observer.

44th and 45th ASEAN Summit

The members of the Association of the South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) gathered in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), on 9 October, 2024, for the 44th and 45th ASEAN Summits under the Chairmanship of the Lao PDR. The Summits were chaired

by H.E. Mr. Sonexay Siphandone, Prime Minister of the Lao PDR.

The member countries reaffirmed support for Lao PDR's ASEAN Chairmanship under the theme **ASEAN : Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience**, which focuses on enhancing connectivity through integrating economies, forging an inclusive and sustainable future, and transforming for the digital era, and strengthening resilience by supporting the development of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans, strengthening ASEAN Centrality, promoting environmental cooperation, addressing issues related to women and children, and bolstering health systems.

The ASEAN countries continued to support and stressed the need for Timor-Leste to implement the objective and criteria-based Roadmap for Timor-Leste's full membership in ASEAN. Malaysia will be the new Chair of ASEAN in 2025.

UN Summit of the Future 2024

The United Nations' Summit of the Future was held on 22-23 September, 2024, which adopted a **Pact for the Future** that includes a Global Digital Compact and a Declaration on Future Generations.

What is Pact of the Future ?

- It is the first multilateral recommitment to nuclear disarmament, with a clear commitment to eliminate nuclear weapons.
- It is a commitment to improve measuring progress, going beyond GDP to capture human and planetary wellbeing and sustainability.
- The pact pledges to give developing countries a greater say in how decisions are taken at international financial institutions, mobilize more financing from multilateral development banks to help developing countries and review sovereign debt.
- The Pact includes first ever **Declaration on Future Generations** with a set of commitment for providing more meaningful opportunities for young people to participate in the decisions that shape their lives, especially at the global level.
- The **Global Digital Compact,** annexed to the Pact, is the first comprehensive global framework for digital cooperation and AI governance.

His Excellency Philemon Yang, former Prime Minister of Cameroon, was elected to serve as President of the 79th Session of the General Assembly. The election took place at United Nations Headquarters, in New York, on 6 June, 2024. He served as the Prime Minister of Cameroon from 2009 to 2019.

23rd Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG)

The 23rd Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) was held on October 16, 2024 in Islamabad under the chairmanship of Pakistan. India was represented by the External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar.

About SCO

The Shanghai Five (1996) got transformed into the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2001, with an aim to enhance regional cooperation by curbing separatism, terrorism and extremism among the Central Asian Republics.

The members of SCO are : Russia, China, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan, Iran and Belarus. Afghanistan and Mongolia have Observor Status in SCO.

The Heads of State Council (HSC) is the highest decision-making body in the SCO. It meets once every year to take decisions and give instructions on all important issues regarding SCO activity.

The Organisation has two permanent bodies—the Secretariat in Beijing (China) and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent. The official working languages of SCO are : Russian and Chinese.

India Elected to GlobE Network Steering Committee

India has been elected to the steering committee of the GlobE Network, a global anti-corruption platform, during its Plenary Session held in Beijing, China on September 26, 2024.

About GlobE Network

The Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GloBE Network), an initiative of G20, was officially launched on 3 June, 2021 during a special event at the UN General Assembly Special Session against Corruption (UNGASS).

It aims for sharing best practices, criminal intelligence, develop strategies and support in the common cause of combating corruption.

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is Central Authority for GloBE Network and CBI and ED are member authorities of this Network from India.

India Rejects the USCIRF Report 2024

Calling the USCIRF as biased organization with political agenda, Shri Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, rejected the findings of the report. He also said that the report continues to misrepresent facts and giving false narrative about India.

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) in its 2024 annual report, recommended to the US state department designate India as a 'Country of Particular Concern' for engaging in "systematic, ongoing and egregious violations of religious freedom."

About USCIRF

The USCIRF is a US federal government agency created under the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA), 1998. It monitors the universal right to freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) in countries other than the US. The reports of USCIRF are not binding on the US State Department.

German Cabinet Adopted 'Focus on India' Paper

Germany aims to elevate relations with India through a key document, 'Focus on India' which seeks to enhance cooperation in areas like defence, trade, and clean energy, with a focus on future growth and innovation. It was adopted by the German Cabinet on October 16, 2024.

'Focus on India' is a key document in which all the ministries and departments of the government of Germany have come together and agreed on how to 'elevate' the bilateral relations to the 'next level'. It is the first ever paper that the German government has dedicated to the country, which aims for enhancing mutual cooperation in all areas of bilateral relations.

The Intergovernmental Consultation (IGC) is a whole of government framework under which ministers from both sides hold discussions in their respective areas of responsibility and report on the outcome of their deliberations to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor.

UNGA Resolution Passed to End Israel's Occupation in Palestine

The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for ending Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories within 12 months on September 17, 2024.

The resolution also demands withdrawal of Israeli forces, immediately halt all new settlement building and evacuate all settlers from the Palestinian territories. The resolution also demands Israel allow all Palestinians displaced during the occupation to return to their places of origin and make reparations for the damage caused by its occupation. It urges member countries to take steps to prevent trade or investments that maintain Israel's presence and implement sanctions, "including about settler violence."

The resolution says that Israel must return land and other 'immovable property' as well as all assets seized since the occupation began in 1967 and all cultural property and assets taken from Palestinians and Palestinian institutions.

The UNGA resolution was based on an advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in July, 2024, that declared the occupation illegal and said all states are obliged not to 'render aid or assistance in maintaining' it.

India Seeks Review of the Indus Waters Treaty

On August 30, 2024, India served formal notice to Pakistan seeking review of the Indus Waters Treaty, 1960, due to 'fundamental and unforeseen' changes in circumstances and impact of cross-border terrorism.

Under the Indus Waters Treaty, 1960, India has complete rights over three eastern rivers—Ravi, Beas and Satluj. Pakistan is entitled to receive the entire flow from the three western rivers : Indus, Jhelum and Chenab.

Reasons for Review : India is seeking review of the Indus Waters Treaty, 1960, due to population pressure, environmental concerns, and to accelerate the development of hydro-electric power projects to meet its carbon emission targets. Impact of persistent cross-border terrorism has also been cited as one of the reason for India's demand of review.

In 2016, India had requested for appointment of Neutral Experts, whereas, Pakistan proposed a Court of Arbitration (CoA). However, on October 17, 2022, the World Bank appointed Sean Murphy as the chairman of the Court of Arbitration and Michel Lino as neutral expert to resolve the differences between the two countries over the Kishenganga Hydroelectric Project and Ratle Hydro Electric Project (over Chenab River) in Jammu & Kashmir. India's consistent and principled position has been that the constitution of the Court of Arbitration is in contravention of the provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty which does not allow parallel dispute resolution mechanisms.

Anura Kumara Dissanayake Elected as the President of Sri Lanka

Left leader *Anura Kumara Dissanayake* was elected as the 10th President of Sri Lanka, following a historic second round of election, since it was introduced in 1978. He is the leader of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) party and its broader front, the National People's Power (NPP). He defeated his closest rival Sajith Premadasa of Samagi Jana Balawegaya during the second round of counting. He took oath to the office before Chief Justice *Jayantha Jayasuriya* on September 23, 2024.

This was the first election to elect the President since the devastating Sri Lankan economic crisis of 2022, which led to country declaring pre-emptive loan default of $ 51 billion in April, 2022. The economic hardship and shortages of essential commodities resulted into 2022 '*Aragalya*' movement—the word meaning 'struggle' in Sinhalese—which led to fall of Gotabaya Rajpaksa presidency in 2022. During this period, Dissanayake's Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) played important role in mobilising people across the country.

Forum on China-Africa Cooperation : Focus on Connectivity

The 9th Ministerial Conference on Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was held in Beijing, which ended on September 6, 2024. It was attended by the leaders of 53 African nations, except Eswatini (former name is Swaziland) and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres. The theme of the summit was "Joining Hands to Advance Modernization and Build a High-Level China-Africa Community with a Shared Future."

Key Outcomes of Summit

Beijing Declaration : The Beijing Declaration and the FOCAC-Beijing Action Plan (2025-27), adopted during the summit, aims for deepening the partnership of world's second largest economy with resource-rich Africa. It integrates Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with African Union's Agenda 2063 and the UN's 2030 Agenda.

China's pledges and deals with African countries : China is Africa's largest trading partner, and has invested in Africa to tap Africa's natural and mineral resources such as copper, gold, lithium and rare earth minerals. African countries have secured deals for greater cooperation in infrastructure, agriculture, mining, trade and energy.

- China has committed to support 30 infrastructure projects in Africa through financial support of $ 50·7 billion over next three years.
- Increasing cooperation in the field of agriculture, infrastructure, trade and investment.
- China has promised to help in creating at least one million jobs in Africa.

2024 QUAD Leaders' Summit

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi participated in the 6th QUAD Leaders' Summit in Wilmington, Delaware on 21 September, 2024, hosted by the President of the United States of America and attended by Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. It resulted in the adoption of the Quad Wilmington Declaration.

Important Outcomes of the Summit are

- 'QUAD Cancer Moonshot', a partnership to save lives in the Indo-Pacific region by combating cervical cancer.
- Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific (MAITRI) to enable Indo-Pacific partners to maximize tools provided through IPMDA and other QUAD initiatives.
- 'QUAD-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission' to be launched in 2025 to improve interoperability and advance maritime safety.
- 'QUAD Ports of the Future Partnership' which will harness the QUAD's collective expertise to support sustainable and resilient port infrastructure development across the Indo-Pacific.
- 'QUAD Principles for Development and Deployment of Digital Public Infrastructure' in the region and beyond.
- 'Semiconductor Supply Chains Contingency Network Memorandum of Cooperation' to enhance resilience of QUAD's semiconductor supply chains.
- Collective QUAD effort to boost energy efficiency, including deployment and manufacturing of high-efficiency affordable cooling systems in the Indo-Pacific region.
- India's establishment of a space-based web portal for Mauritius, to support the concept of open science for space-based monitoring of extreme weather events and climate impact.
- A new sub-category under the QUAD STEM Fellowship, announced by India, for students of the Indo-Pacific region to pursue a 4 year bachelor's level engineering programme at a Government of India funded technical institute.

According to the Union Ministry of External Affairs, United States will host the 2025 QUAD Foreign Ministers Meeting, and India will host the 2025 QUAD Leaders Summit.

India-Poland Strategic Partnership : Moving Beyond 'Big Four' European Nations

In last 45 years, Shri Narendra Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister to make an official visit to Poland. The landmark visit by the Prime Minister witnessed the upgradation of bilateral ties to the level of 'Strategic Partnership.'

The visit assumes significance as it shows that India has moved beyond the 'Big Four' countries of Europe : Germany, Italy, France and the United Kingdom.

Key Highlights of the Visit :

- Discussion was held on range of bilateral issues such as trade, investment, commerce, science & technology, defence and security, people-to-people ties.
- Both sides stressed the need for reforms in UNSC.
- They also called for firm implementation of relevant resolutions of UNSC, UN Global Counter-Terrorism strategy and early adoption of comprehensive convention on International Terrorism.
- Both sides reinforced their commitment for free, open and rule-based Indo-Pacific Region.
- India encouraged Poland's membership for CDRI and the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- Both sides agreed to expand cooperation and exchanges between the two countries' legislature.
- The Joint Statement and Action Plan (2024-28) for the implementation of India-Poland strategic partnership focussed on deepening trade and investment, security and cybersecurity cooperation, climate and energy, mining and science & technology, health, transport & connectivity and cultural cooperation.
- Jamsaheb Memorial Youth Exchange Programme was announced by India under which 20 Polish Youth will visit India.

Shri Narendra Modi is the First Indian PM to Visit Ukraine Since 1992

Shri Narendra Modi became the first ever Prime Minister from India to visit Ukraine on August 23, 2024, since the inception of diplomatic ties between two countries in 1992.

Four key agreements were signed during the landmark visit, which are :

- Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and Food Industry;
- MoU on Cooperation in the field of Medical Products Regulation;
- MoU on Indian Humanitarian Grant Assistance for Implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects; and
- Programme for Cultural Cooperation for 2024-2028.

The four modules of Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri (BHISHM) cubes were presented to Ukraine. It will help in early evacuation and treatment of injured soldiers during the war.

India Became the 18th Country to Sign Security of Supply Arrangement with USA

The Union Ministry of Defence entered into a non-binding Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA) with the Department of Defence, USA. This makes India as the 18th SOSA partner of USA.

The Security of Supply Agreement will enable both the sides to provide reciprocal priority support for goods and services for securing national defence. It will also help in resolving supply chain disruptions in defence manufacturing sector.

Both the countries have also signed a Memorandum of Agreement regarding Assignment of Liaison Officers. This will enable India to deploy the first Colonel-rank Liaison Officer to the Headquarters Special Operations Command in Florida, US.

The Defence Minister of India also announced to deploy Indian Navy personnel in the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) Combined Task Force 150 headquarters in 2025.

President Droupadi Murmu's 3-Nation Visit : Impetus to Act East Policy

President Droupadi Murmu embarked on a 3-nation diplomatic tour to Fiji, New Zealand and Timor-Leste from 5-10 August, 2024.

President's Visit to Fiji

While addressing the Indian diaspora community, She said that the determination and resilience of the 'Girmitiya' indentured laborers who came to Fiji 145 years ago is a source of great inspiration to the world.

She witnessed the progress of 'Solarisation of Heads of State Residences' project, an Indian initiative which was inaugurated in February 2023.

She and Fiji's Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka-presided over a ceremony for allocation of project sites for :

- High Commission of India Chancery, Suva
- Indian Cultural Centre Complex, Suva
- 100-bed Super Speciality Hospital, Suva

She was conferred the 'Companion of the Order of Fiji', the highest civilian award of Fiji by the President of Fiji, Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere.

President's Visit to New Zealand

She addressed the New Zealand International Education Conference, where India was the 'Country of Honour' for 2024.

The President encouraged more educational exchanges and collaboration, particularly in the fields of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, vocational and skills-based training, climate and environment studies, cultural exchange programs, research and innovation.

She also paid floral tributes to the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the Wellington Railway Station.

MoUs Signed during the Visit

- Cultural Exchanges
- Collaboration between Prasar Bharati and 'Timor-Leste Radio & Television' (RTTL)
- Exemption from visa requirement for holders of diplomatic, official and service passports.

President Murmu's Visit to Timor-Leste

- She participated as special guest in the popular programme 'Horta Show', hosted by President José Ramos-Horta on Timor-Leste Radio & Television (RTTL).
- President José Ramos-Horta of Timor-Leste conferred the **Grand-Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste**, the country's highest civilian award, upon President Droupadi Murmu.

India-Malaysia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

India and Malaysia upgraded the ties to the 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' during the visit of Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim to India on 20 August, 2024.

Key Highlights of the Visit :

- Several MoUs were signed between two countries. These included MoUs on workers' mobility, digital technology, culture, tourism, sports and education.
- In order to strengthen the supply chain between India and ASEAN countries; India and Malaysia will expedite the review process of ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) and aim for its conclusion by 2025.
- Malaysia has decided to join the International Big Cat Alliance as its founding member.
- Establishment of two university chair by India in Malaysian Universities : Tiruvalluvar Chair of Indian Studies at the Universiti Malaya (UM); and Ayurveda at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia.
- Malaysia support to India's bid for UNSC permanent membership. India's support to Malaysia to join BRICS.

22nd India-Russia Annual Summit

On 8th July, 2024, the Prime Minister Modi visited Russia for the 22nd India-Russia Annual Summit.

Key Highlights :

- India and Russia aim to boost bilateral trade to over $ 100 billion by 2030.
- The two sides agreed on nine key areas of co-operation : Trade and currency settlement; New transport routes like the North-South Corridor; Increased trade in agriculture, food and fertilizers; Energy sector collaboration, including nuclear energy; Infrastructure development; Digital economy projects; Medicine supply and humanitarian efforts.
- **Reorienting Defence Partnership :** Focus on joint R&D, co-development and production of advanced defence technology; Expand joint military activities and exchanges; Promote joint manufacturing in India for maintenance of Russian defence equipment under Make in India.
- **Humanitarian Cooperation :** Expand cooperation in education, science, technology, culture, tourism, sports and healthcare.
- **Infrastructure and Space Development :** Enhance collaboration in infrastructure, transport, automobile production, shipbuilding and space sectors.
- **Cooperation in Russian Far East and Arctic :** Intensify trade and investment in the Far East and Arctic regions of Russia.

Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle : During the visit, PM Modi was conferred with the order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, the highest civilian honour in Russia.

- The PM received the award for exceptional services in promoting bilateral ties between the two countries.
- The Order was established in 1698 by Tsar Peter the Great, in honour of Saint Andrew, the first apostle of Jesus and patron saint of Russia. It is only awarded for the most outstanding civilian or military merit.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Historic Visit to Austria

On 10th July, 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi concluded his two-day visit to Austria.

Significance

- First visit by an Indian PM to Austria in 41 years after former PM Indira Gandhi visited Austria in June 1983.
- The visit marked the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Austria.

Key Highlights :

- Emphasis on joint projects in green and digital technologies, infrastructure, renewable energy, water management, life sciences, smart cities, mobility and transportation.
- Unanimous condemnation of terrorism and a call for decisive action against terrorists, including through UN sanctions.
- Emphasis on the Start-up Bridge initiative and the exchange of start-ups between India and Austria.
- Collaboration in renewable energy, water management and clean technologies.
- Commitment to comprehensive reforms of the United Nations, including its Security Council.
- India's support for Austria's UNSC candidature for the term 2027-28 and Austria's support for India's candidature for 2028-29.

Israeli Settlement Threatens Palestinian UNESCO Village

Young Israeli settlers are establishing an illegal outpost near Palestinian landowner Olayan Olayan's olive groves in Battir, a UNESCO-protected heritage site in the West Bank.

Battir's Heritage Significance : The 2,000 year old dry stone walls supporting the landscape earned the village its cultural inscription in 2014.

- It is an ancient agricultural village in the West Bank, is renowned for its UNESCO designation due to its historical irrigation system.
- The site features a traditional water distribution system characterized by aqueducts, terraces, and lush agricultural production of olives and eggplants.
- Battir's water distribution system is a testament to an ancient and equitable method of managing resources, crucial for the village's traditional farming practices.

The 50th G7 Summit

The Italy hosted the 50th G7 Summit in Apulia from June 13 to 15, 2024. The summit addressed several pressing global challenges, including the ongoing conflict in Gaza, the war in Ukraine, climate disasters, migration, food security and the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence. India was invited as an Outreach Country.



Key Decisions and Agreements

- **Security Agreements :** US President Joe Biden and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed a 10 year security agreement to bolster Ukraine's defence against Russia. This move signifies a significant commitment to support Ukraine's defence efforts.
- **Financial Support for Ukraine :** The G7 leaders agreed to a $ 50 billion loan package for Ukraine, utilizing interest from Russia's frozen central bank assets as collateral. This financial support aims to strengthen Ukraine's position and resilience against Russian aggression.
- **Sanctions :** The UK announced new sanctions targeting entities involved in supplying military goods to Russia, including those based in China, Israel, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. These sanctions are designed to weaken Russia's war capabilities in Ukraine.

Significance of the G7 for India : India's participation in the G7 as an Outreach Country holds great importance.

- It provides a forum for strengthening relations with the world's leading economies and can help India transform into a global mediator, a manager of the region, and a mobilizer against the looming threat from China.
- India's engagement in discussions about regional and global economic restructuring through the diversification of supply chains and greater technological cooperation among trusted friends and partners is critical for its long-term economic prospects.

China's Nuclear Force Now Three Times Larger than India's : SIPRI Data

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), China's nuclear arsenal has grown from 410 warheads in January 2023 to 500 warheads by January 2024, significantly more than India's 172 and Pakistan's 170.

Global Nuclear Stockpiles : Notable arsenals include Russia (4,380), US (3,708), France (290), UK (225), Israel (90) and North Korea (50).

- Around 3,904 deployed warheads are with missiles and aircraft, while the remainder is in storage.
- Russia and the US hold 90% of the world's nuclear weapons, with Russia at 4,380 and the US at 3,708 warheads.
- China aims to exceed 1,000 warheads by 2030, possibly matching US and Russian ICBM counts.

Advancements and Achievements in India's Nuclear Program

- **Mission Divyastra :** India showcased its ability to deploy multiple nuclear warheads with a single missile through the successful test flight of Agni-V under 'Mission Divyastra'.
- **Nuclear Doctrine :** Grounded in 'no first use' and massive retaliation, India formalized its nuclear doctrine post the 1998 nuclear tests.

- **Nuclear Triad Operationalization :** India achieved full operational capability of its nuclear triad in November 2019, marked by the successful deterrence patrol of INS Arihant equipped with ballistic missiles carrying nuclear warheads.

India Hosted the Antarctic Parliament

The 46th edition of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting, also known as the Antarctic Parliament, took place in Kochi, Kerala, from May 20 to May 30, 2024.

- The meeting focused on the implications of the rise of tourism in Antarctica, especially in the context of the continent's fragile ecosystem and the need for sustainable management of resources.
- India underscored the need to regulate tourism activities in Antarctica and initiated the process of creating a framework for responsible and sustainable tourism in the continent.

About Antarctic Treaty : The Antarctic Treaty was signed in Washington on 1 December, 1959 by the twelve countries whose scientists had been active in and around Antarctica during the International Geophysical Year (IGY) of 1957-58. It entered into force in 1961.

Russia-North Korea Security Pact

On 19th June, 2024, the **Russian President Vladimir Putin** signed a 'comprehensive strategic' partnership deal with North Korea's leader Kim Jong-un in Pyongyang as the two countries sought to deepen their security ties in a bid to challenge the West-dominated world order.

Key Provisions of the Deal

- The pact includes a pledge of immediate military and other assistance 'using all available means' if either party is involved in a war, aligning with Article 51 of the UN charter, which deals with self-defence.
- The treaty also emphasizes the building of a 'just and multipolar new world order' and joint actions to strengthen defence capabilities. Additionally, it addresses the chronic shortage of food in the DPRK.

Child Nutrition Report 2024

UNICEF's 'Child Nutrition Report 2024' reveals 181 million children under 5 in severe food poverty globally.

Key Findings Include

- Globally, one in four children are living in severe child food poverty in early childhood, amounting to 181 million children under 5 years of age.
- Severe child food poverty is experienced by children belonging to poor and non-poor households, indicating that household income is not the only driver of severe child food poverty.
- The global food and nutrition crisis and localized conflicts and climatic shocks are intensifying severe child food poverty, especially in fragile countries.
- Severe child food poverty is driving child undernutrition; the prevalence of severe child food poverty is three times higher in countries with a high prevalence of child stunting.

About India : India is among the top 25 nations severely affected by child food poverty. In Asia, India ranks third after Afghanistan and Bhutan.

Around the World in a Nutshell

Summits/Meetings/Conferences

- **19th East Asia Summit :** Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi attended the 19th East Asia Summit on 11 October, 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. He stressed on ASEAN's central role in the Indo-Pacific regional architecture. He invited the EAS countries for a Heads of Higher Education Conclave to be held at Nalanda University.
- **First BIMSTEC Business Summit :** The Union Ministry of External Affairs in association with Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) hosted the 1st BIMSTEC Business Summit in New Delhi on 6-8 August, 2024. It aimed to foster greater regional collaboration through robust trade and investment relations among the member countries.
- **SCO Summit 2024 :** The 24th Meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State (SCO Summit) was held on 4 July, 2024 in Astana, under the presidency of Kazakhstan. The Indian delegation was led by Dr. S. Jaishankar. India's priorities in SCO are shaped by vision of a 'SECURE' SCO. SECURE stands for Security, Economic cooperation, Connectivity, Unity, Respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and Environmental protection.
- **APEC Summit 2024 :** APEC Economic Leaders met November 15-16, 2024 in Lima, under theme of 'Empower. Include. Grow'. *Machu Picchu Declaration* was adopted by its member countries.
- **2nd India-Australia Annual Summit 2024 :** Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi and the Prime Minister of Australia, Anthony Albanese, held the second India-Australia Annual Summit on the sidelines of the Group of 20 (G20) Summit in Rio de Janeiro on 19 November, 2024. Both the leaders welcomed the launch of the Renewable Energy Partnership.
- **19th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit :** It was hosted in Kampala, Uganda, from 19-20 January, 2024. Indian delegation was led by External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar. The theme of the Summit was 'Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence.'
- **3rd Voices of Global South Summit :** India hosted the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit on 17 August, 2024, in virtual format, under the theme, "An Empowered Global South for a Sustainable Future." The Inaugural Leaders' Session was also hosted during the Summit. 173 dignitaries from 123 countries participated in the summit.
- **Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) :** On August 30, 2024, India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Mauritius signed a Charter and a MoU, for the establishment of the CSC secretariat. Earlier, on July 10, 2024, Mauritius virtually hosted the 8th Deputy National Security Adviser level meeting of CSC, in which Bangladesh was welcomed as the 5th member, and Seychelles participated as an Observer State.

- **India-Japan 2+2 Dialogue :** The 3rd India-Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting was held in New Delhi on 20 August, 2024. Both the sides highlighted common strategic vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific. They welcomed the possibilities for enhancing the bilateral security and defence cooperation for strengthening India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership.
- **2nd BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat 2024 :** It was held in New Delhi from July 11 to 12, 2024. The 1st edition was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 17 July, 2023. The Retreat provides a platform to deepen cooperation in security, connectivity, trade and investment, people to people contacts etc., in the Bay of Bengal region and littoral.
- **Summit on Peace in Ukraine :** It was hosted by Switzerland at Burgenstock on 15-16 June, 2024. The joint communique focused on 3 priorities : nuclear safety, global food security and humanitarian issues. India did not associate itself with any communique/ document.
- **India-USA 2+2 Inter-sessional meeting :** It was held on September 16, 2024, in New Delhi. The meeting laid the groundwork for strengthening India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership.

Important Organisations in News

- **UN Internal Justice Council :** It is a means for UN staff to try to resolve dispute informally and if informal means do not work, to resolve disputes formally through the management evaluation process, UN Dispute Tribunal and UN Appeals Tribunal. Madan B. Lokur, retired judge of the Supreme Court, has been appointed as the chairperson of the United Nations Internal Justice Council (IJC) for a four year term.
- **UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs :** It was established by Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1946, to assist the ECOSOC in supervising the application of the international drug control treaties. In 1991, it was made the governing body of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC.) It is headquartered in Vienna, Austria. India has been elected to chair the 68th session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND).
- **United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) :** Originally, UNIFIL was created by the UN Security Council in March 1978 to confirm Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, restore international peace and security and assist the Lebanese Government in restoring its effective authority in the area. The expanded mandate is monitoring the cessation of hostilities; accompany and support the Lebanese armed forces in south of Lebanon; and providing humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons.
- **Court of Arbitration for Sport :** In 1983, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) officially ratified the statutes of the CAS, which came into force on 30 June, 1984. In 1993 the CAS became entirely independent, by creating a new administration and financing body, the International Council of Arbitration for Sport (ICAS) and adopting a new judgement structure.
- **UNRWA :** The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) was established in 1949 to carry out direct relief and works programmes for Palestine refugees. It began operations on 1 May, 1950. In October 2024, Israel passed laws to ban UNRWA from operating in Israel.
- **International Criminal Court (ICC) :** Established in 2002 in the Hague (Netherlands) by the Rome Statue, it provides for prosecuting individuals for the international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression. In August 2024, Ukraine's Parliament voted to join the International Criminal Court, which entered into force for Ukraine on January 1, 2025.

Bilateral Visits : Outgoing Visits

- **Prime Minister Visit to Bhutan (March 22-23, 2024) :** The visit witnessed exchange of MoUs/Agreements on energy, trade, digital connectivity, space, agriculture, youth connect. PM Narendra Modi was conferred the Order of the Druk Gyalpo, Bhutan's highest civilian decoration.
- **Visit of Prime Minister to Brunei Darussalam and Singapore (September 3-5, 2024) :** During his visit to Brunei, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the new Chancery premises of the High Commission of India in Brunei. He also visited the Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque in Bandar Seri Begawan. Exchange of MoU on Cooperation in the operation of Telemetry, Tracking and Telecommand Station for Satellite and Launch Vehicles. During his visit to Singapore, both sides exchanged MoUs for cooperation in Semiconductors, Digital Technologies, Skill Development and Healthcare. He also visited AEM, a leading Singaporean company in semiconductor and electronics sector.
- **State Visit of President of India to Algeria, Mauritania and Malawi (October 13-19, 2024) :** It was the first visit by an Indian Head of State to Algeria, Mauritania and Malawi. The three-nation visit is reflective of India's 'deep desire' to strengthen its partnership with countries in Africa. In Malawi, bilateral agreements in the fields of arts and culture, sports and pharmaceutical cooperation, were signed. In Mauritania, she signed several MoUs, including on diplomat training and visa exemption. She was awarded an Honourary Doctorate during her visit to Algeria.

Bilateral Visits : Incoming Visits

- **State Visit of President of Sri Lanka :** Newly elected President of Sri Lanka, Anura Kumara Dissanayake, visited India from December 15 to 17, 2024. He met with the President and Prime Minister of India, participated in a business event in New Delhi and visited Bodh Gaya. Both sides reiterated their commitment for early conclusion of ETCA for promoting bilateral trade; and to initiate ferry service between Rameshwaram and Talaimannar.

- **State Visit of King of Bhutan :** The King and Queen of Bhutan, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and Jetsun Pema Wangchuk, respectively, visited India from December 5-6, 2024; and accompanied by the Bhutan's Minister for Energy and Natural Resources, Gem Tshering. Prime Minister reassured India's continued support for the Gelephu Mindfulness City project of Bhutan.
- **Official Visit of President of Spain :** Pedro Sanchez, the incumbent President of Spain, visited India from October 27-29, 2024. The visit of the President of Spain took place after 18 years. He and Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Final Assembly Line Plant of C295 aircraft at Vadodara, set up by Tata Advanced Systems in collaboration with Airbus Spain under 'Make in India.' He also visited Mumbai where he interacted with prominent business leaders, cultural figures and representatives of the Indian film industry. 2026 has been made as the Year of India and Spain in Culture, Tourism and Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- **Official Visit of German Chancellor :** Olaf Scholz, the Chancellor of Germany, paid official visit to India from October 24-26, 2024, for the 7th Intergovernmental Consultations. He also addressed the 18th Asia Pacific Conference of German Business (APK 2024), held in New Delhi. He also visited Goa, where the German naval frigate 'Baden-Wuerttemberg' and combat support ship 'Frankfurt am Main' made a scheduled port call as part of Germany's Indo-Pacific deployment. He also visited BITS Pilani in Goa.
- **State Visit of President of Maldives :** President of Maldives, Mohamed Muizzu, visited India from October 6-10, 2024. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldivian Mohamed Muizzu jointly virtually inaugurated the runway at the Hanimadhoo International Airport and also witnessed via weblink a live transaction using a RuPay payment service card in the Maldives.
- **Official Visit of Prime Minister of Jamaica :** Prime Minister of Jamaica, Dr. Andrew Holness paid an official visit to India from 30 September-3 October, 2024. It was the first ever bilateral visit of a Prime Minister of Jamaica to India. Several MoUs on Digital Public Infrastructure, payment linkages, Cultural Exchange Programmes and Sports were signed.
- **Official Visit of Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi :** Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, officially visited India on 9-10 September, 2024. MoUs on nuclear cooperation, Food Park and crude oil storage were signed. He visited Raj Ghat to pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi and Mumbai to participate in a Business Forum.
- **State Visit of Prime Minister of Vietnam :** Pham Minh Chinh, the Prime Minister of Vietnam, officially visited India from 30 July to 1 August, 2024. Important outcomes of the visit were : Two Dollar Credit Line Agreements; MoUs on cooperation in medicinal plants, legal field, agriculture, capacity building in customs, radio and television, development of National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal. Vietnam to join the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

Elections/Appointments

- Keir Starmer of the Labour Party became the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom on July 5, 2024.
- Francois Bayrou, leader of the Democratic Movement, replaced Michel Barnier to become the Prime Minister of France on December 13, 2024.
- Kemi Badenoch made history by becoming the first black person to be elected as the leader of the Conservative Party of the United Kingdom. She is serving as the Leader of Opposition and Leader of Conservative Party since November 2, 2024.
- Harini Amarasuriya was appointed as the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka on September 24, 2024. She was later reappointed on the same post by the Sri Lankan President, Anura Kumara Dissanayake, after the parliamentary elections handed sweeping victory to Dissanayake's party—National People's Power in November 2024. She is the third woman PM of Sri Lanka after Sirimavo Bandaranaike (1960-65, 1970-77 & 1994-2000) and Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga (1994).
- Paetongtarn Shinawatra was sworn-in as the youngest Prime Minister of Thailand on September 6, 2024. The 38 year old is the third member of the Shinawatra political dynasty to lead the country in the past 23 years, following her father and her aunt, Yingluck Shinawatra.
- Claudia Shenbaum is the first female and 66th President of Mexico since October 1, 2024. She belongs to political party—Morena. She previously served as Head of Government of Mexico City from 2018 to 2023.
- Masoud Pezeshkian is an Iranian politician and physician who has been serving as the ninth President of Iran since 28 July, 2024.
- Vladimir Putin began his fifth term as the President of Russia from May 7, 2024, setting out on another 6 years term till 2030. He was Acting President of Russia for a brief period from December 31, 1999 to May 7, 2000. He remained President from 2000 to 2008 and 2012 to present day. He served as the Prime of Russia from 1999 to 2000 and 2008 to 2012. In July 2020, Putin had ordered amendments in the Russian Constitution, allowing him to remain in power until 2036.
- Denmark, Greece, Pakistan, Panama and Somalia began their two year term as non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council with effect from January 1, 2025, until December 31, 2026. The five countries replaced Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique and Switzerland, whose terms ended on December 31, 2024.



BADMINTON

BWF Japan Open 2024

Unseeded French shuttler Alex Lanier completed his dream run in the BWF Japan Open 2024 with a title victory as he defeated world medallist Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei in straight games, in the Men's Singles final of the Japan Open 2024 on August 24, 2024 in Yokohama. It was Lanier's first BWF Super 750 title victory.

Home favourite and former world champion Akane Yamaguchi cruised to a victory over Busanan Ongbamrungphan from Thailand in the Women's Singles final, regaining the crown for the fourth time.

In the Japan Open 2024 Men's Doubles final, Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin of Malaysia beat Kang Minhyuk and Seo Seung-jae of South Korea to win the title.

Chinese duo Liu Shengshu and Tan Ning beat top-seeded South Koreans Baek Ha-na and Lee So-hee in the final to win the Women's Doubles title of Japan Open 2024.

The Mixed Doubles title went to Jiang Zhenbang and Wei Yaxin of China, who beat Hong Kong's Tang Chun Man and Tse Ying Suet in the final.

BWF Singapore Open 2024; China Dominated with 4 Titles

The BWF Singapore Open 2024 Women's Singles title went to South Korea when An Se-Young defeated China's Chen Yufei in the final on June 2, 2024.

Shi Yuqi from China clinched the BWF Singapore Open 2024 Men's Singles title beating compatriot Li Shi Feng in the final. China captured the Singapore Open 2024 Mixed Doubles title when Chinese duo Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong beat Chinese Taipei's pair Yang Po-hsuan and Hu Ling-fang in the final, while Chen Qing Chen and Jia Yifan from China won the women's doubles title by defeating Japan's Nami Matsuyama and Chiharu Shida in the final.

Young Chinese duo He Ji Ting and Ren Xiang Yu clinched the BWF Singapore Open 2024 Men's Doubles title beating Indonesia's Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Rian Ardianto.

BWF Indonesia Open 2024; China Took 4 Major Titles

Chinese shuttler Shi Yuqi defeated Denmark's Anders Antonsen in the final to win the Indonesia Open 2024 Men's Singles title. He is the first Chinese male shuttler to win Indonesia Open Singles since 1989.

China's Chen Yufei defeated An Se-Young in the final to win the Indonesia Open 2024 Women's Singles title.

Chinese duo Liang Wei keng and Wang Chang emerged victorious against Malaysia's Man Wei Chong and Kai Wun Tee to win the Indonesia Open 2024 Men's Doubles title.

In the Mixed Doubles event, Jiang Zhen Bang and Wei Ya Xin outplayed fellow Chinese pair Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong.

South Korean pair of Baek Ha Na and Lee So Hee clinched the Indonesia Open 2024 Women's Doubles title beating Chinese pair of Chen Qing Chen and Jia Yi Fan.

BWF Australian Open 2024

Lee Zii Jia from Malaysia emerged champion of the BWF Australian Open 2024 Men's Singles title beating Japan's Kodai Naraoka in the final on June 16, 2024 in Sydney.

Aya Ohori of Japan clinched the Australian Open 2024 Badminton Women's Singles title.

In the Men's Doubles final, China's He Ji Ting and Ren Xiang Yu swept past Indonesian pair Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan.

Indonesian duo Febriana Dwipuji Kusuma and Amallia Cahaya Pratiwi won the Australian Open 2024 Women's Doubles title beating Malaysia's Lai Pei Jing and Lim Chiew Sien in the final. Chinese top seeds Jiang Zhen Bang and Wei Ya Xin overcame countrymen Guo Xin Wa and Chen Fang Hui in the mixed doubles decider by two-games-to-one.

CRICKET

Irani Cup 2024

Ranji champion Mumbai emerged champion of the coveted Irani Cup 2024 on October 5, 2024 in Lucknow, beating Rest of India (ROI) in the final. It was the 15th time Mumbai won the prestigious domestic cricket trophy and first since 1997-98 season. Mumbai team led by skipper Ajinkya Rahane completed the Ranji Trophy-Irani Cup double to assert their dominance as one of the powerhouses of Indian domestic cricket.

India Inflicted 2-0 Test Series Sweep Against Touring Bangladesh

Host India inflicted 2-0 Series sweep against touring Bangladesh in 2 Tests bilateral series by winning the second Test by 7 wickets at Green Park Stadium in Kanpur on October 1, 2024.

Earlier, India took 1-0 unbeatable lead in the 2 Test Series by winning the first Test at MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on September 22, 2024 by 280 runs. Ravichandran Ashwin completed a memorable all-round outing with a six-wicket haul as India defeated Bangladesh by 280 runs on the fourth day of the opening Test to take a 1-0 lead in the two-match series.

Ravichandran Ashwin was adjudged the Player of the Series.

India Inflicted 3-0 T20I Series Sweep Against Touring Bangladesh

India inflicted a 3-0 series sweep against Bangladesh by winning the third and final T20I by 133 runs on October 12, 2024 at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad.

India scored 297 runs in the third T20I before Bangladesh. Chasing a mammoth target of 298 runs, Bangladesh could score 164 runs only and lost the match by 133 runs.

- Suryakumar Yadav was the captain of the India team in the series.
- Hardik Pandya was adjudged the Player of the Series.

ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 : New Zealand Emerged Champion

The ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 was successfully organized from October 3 to October 20, 2024 in the United Arab Emirates. Total 10 teams in two groups of five teams in each group took part in the mega women's cricket event. Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were in Group-A while West Indies, South Africa, Bangladesh, Scotland and England were in the Group-B. After league stage, four teams–New Zealand, Australia, West Indies and South Africa secured their places in the semi-final of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024.

South Africa defeated Australia by 8 wickets on October 17, 2024 in the first semi-final while New Zealand deeated West Indies by 8 runs on October 18 in the second semi-final.

New Zealand emerged champion of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 as it prevailed over South Africa by 32 runs in the final on October 20, 2024 at Dubai International Stadium, United Arab Emirates. **It was New Zealand's maiden ICC Women's T20 World Cup title triumph.**

- Sophie Devine was the captain of the champion side New Zealand while Laura Wolvaardt was the South African skipper.
- Amelia Kerr was adjudged the Player of the final match for her splendid all round show. She was also declared Player of the Tournament.

India Inflicted 3-0 Series Sweep in T20I Over Sri Lanka

Touring Indian team defeated host Sri Lanka in super over to win the three T20Is Series 3-0 on July 30, 2024 at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium in Pallekele. Indian team scored only 137 runs in the third T20I of the series. In reply Sri Lanka could score 137 and the super over was taken to decide the winner. Here India emerged winner to end series with 3-0 whitewash.

Suryakumar Yadav was the skipper of the Indian team. He was also adjudged the Player of the series.

Sri Lanka Won ODI Series 2-0 against India

Host Sri Lanka defeated Indian team by 110 runs in the third and final ODI of the series on August 7, 2024 at R. Premdasa Stadium in Colombo and won the 3 ODI Series by 2-0. Sri Lanka clinched their first bilateral one-day international series win over India in 27 years. India hadn't lost a bilateral ODI series to Sri Lanka since 1997.

The first ODI of the Series ended in a dramatic tie. Sri Lanka won the second ODI by 32 runs and took 1-0 unbeatable lead.

Charith Asalanka was the Sri Lankan skipper in the series while Rohit Sharma led the Indian side as skipper.

Sri Lanka Won its Maiden Women's Asia Cup T20 Title 2024

Host Sri Lanka clinched its maiden Women's Asia Cup T20 Title 2024, beating India by 8 wickets in the final on July 28, 2024 in Dambulla. With this title triumph, Sri Lanka became the third team after India and Bangladesh to win this title.

The Indian women's cricket team won the Asia Cup seven times in eight editions previously. Bangladesh won the title once in 2018.

- Harmanpreet Kaur was the captain of the Indian team while Chamari Athapaththu was the captain of Sri Lankan side.
- Chamari Athapaththu was the Player of the Tournament for her 304 runs and three wickets in the events.

India Win T20 World Cup 2024

India beat South Africa by seven runs in the final to win the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, at the (Kensigton) Oval in Barbados on June 29, 2024.

Rohit Sharma became the second captain in the history of Indian cricket to win the ICC T20 World Cup trophy. India won the First T20 World Cup under the captaincy of Mahendra Singh Dhoni in 2007 at Wanderers Stadium, Johannesburg (South Africa).

- England and West Indies are the only two teams in T20 World Cup history to win the title twice.

Top Scorers of the Tournament

Batsman	Country/Team	Matches	Highest Score	Strike Rate	Total Runs
Rahmanullah Gurbaz	Afghanistan	8	80	124·33	281
Rohit Sharma	India	8	92	158	257
Travis Head	Australia	7	76	158	255

Top Wicket Takers of the Tournament

Bowler	Country/Team	Matches	Total Wickets	Overs	Runs conceded
Fazalhaq Faruqi	Afghanistan	8	17	25	160
Arshdeep Singh	India	8	17	30	215
Jusprit Bumrah	India	8	15	29	124

- This was the first time that co-hosts USA played in the T20 World Cup and managed to beat Pakistan and Canada to qualify for the Super 8 stages of the tournament. This was also the first time that South Africa qualified for the final of any World Cup, and the first time that any team (*i.e.*, India) won the T20 World Cup undefeated.
- Jasprit Bumrah was declared the Player of the Tournament.

India Champions Wins Cricket World Championships of Legends 2024 Title

India Legends clinched the Cricket World Championships of Legends 2024 title, beating archrival Pakistan by 5 wickets on July 13, 2024 at Edgbaston in Birmingham.

- Yuvraj Singh was the skipper of the Indian Legends squad while Younis Khan was the captain of the Pakistan Legends.
- India defeated Australia Legends in the semi-final to secure its place in the final.



North-East United Won Durand Cup 2024

North-East United clinched its maiden Durand Cup 2024 title beating defending champion Mohun Bagan in the final on August 31, 2024 at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan in Kolkata. It was the 133rd edition of the prestigious domestic football event.

The penalty shootout system was taken to decide the champion when both the finalists remained at 2-2 in the regular time.

17th UEFA European Championship 2024; Spain Emerges Champion

The 17th edition of UEFA European Championship 2024, popularly known as EURO Cup 2024 was successfully organized from June 14 to July 14, 2024 in 10 German cities including the capital, Berlin.

Total 24 teams from European football including host Germany took part in the tournament

Spain emerged champion of the UEFA European Championship 2024 (EURO Cup 2024) for record fourth time as Spanish team prevailed over England 2-1 in a nail-biting final on July 14, 2024 at Olympiastadion in Berlin. Spain had won the prestigious football crown of the European football in 1964, 2008, 2012 before this title in 2024.

EURO Cup 2024 : Major Awards Winners

- **Golden Boot (Shared) :** Harry Kane (England), Dani Olmo (Spain), Cody Gakpo (Netherlands), Georges Mikautadze (Georgia), Jamal Musiala (Germany) and Ivan Schranz (Slovakia)—Three goals each
- **Golden Glove :** Mike Maignan (France)
- **Euro 2024 Young Player of the Tournament :** Lamine Yamal (Spain)
- **Euro 2024 Player of the Tournament :** Rodri (Spain)
- **Euro 2024 Player of the Final :** Nico Williams (Spain)

Argentina Retains Copa America 2024 Football Title

Defending champion Argentina defeated Colombia 1-0 in a hard-fought final on July 14, 2024 at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami, Florida to retain the Copa America 2024 title.

Argentina became the most successful team of the tournament as it had won the title 16th time. It marked Argentina's third consecutive major title triumph following the 2022 FIFA World Cup and the previous Copa America, beating in the final held in Rio di Janeiro in 2021.

List of Copa America 2024 Award Winners :

- Golden Boot (Top scorer) : Lautaro Martinez (Argentina)
- Best Player : James Rodriguez (Colombia)
- Golden Glove (Best Goalkeeper) : Emiliano Martinez (Argentina)
- Fair Play Award : Colombia

Real Madrid Won its Record-extending 15th UEFA Champions League Title

Real Madrid emerged champion of the UEFA Champions League title for record-extending 15th time as it prevailed over Borussia Dortmund 2-0 in the final on June 1, 2024 at Wembley Stadium, London. Dani Carvajal and Vinicius Jr. scored goals in the final to help Spanish football club to lift the Champions League trophy for the 15th time.



George Russell Wins Austrian Grand Prix 2024

Mercedes' F1 driver George Russell clinched the Austrian Grand Prix 2024 on June 30, 2024 at Red Bull circuit in Spielberg, Austria, halting Max Verstappen winning momentum. Russell finished the race fastest in 01 hour, 24 minutes and 22·798 seconds, about 2 seconds faster than runner up in the race Oscar Piastri of McLaren team. This win marks Mercedes' first victory since November 2022, when Russell himself won in Brazil. Max Verstappen was the pole position holder in the race.

Lewis Hamilton Wins British Grand Prix 2024

Local lad and Mercedes' seven-time Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton emerged winner of the British Grand Prix 2024 on July 7, 2024 at Silverstone Circuit as he finished the race fastest in 01 hour, 22 minutes and 27·059 seconds. He beat Max Verstappen, the runner up of the race in a close fight. It was Hamilton's first Formula One victory since Saudi Arabia on December 5, 2021 - 56 races ago and a record 9th British GP victory.

Red Bull's triple world champion Max Verstappen finished 1·465 seconds behind, extending his overall lead to 84 points, and McLaren's Lando Norris was third in the race. George Russell of Mercedes team was the pole position holder in the race.

Max Verstappen Wins Canadian Grand Prix 2024

Reigning Formula One champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull team won the Canadian Grand Prix for the third straight year on June 9, 2024 at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve,

Formula-1 Race 2024		
Grand Prix Tournament	**Winner**	**Runner Up**
Abu Dhabi (8 December, 2024)	Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes)	Carlos Sainz Jr. (Ferrari)
Qatar (01 December, 2024)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda)	Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)
Las Vegas (23 November, 2024)	George Russell (Mercedes)	Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)
Sao Paulo, Brazil (3 November, 2024)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda)	Esteban Ocon (Alpine-Renault)
Mexico (27 October, 2024)	Carlos Sainz Jr. (Ferrari)	Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes)
United States (20 October, 2024)	Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)	Carlos Sainz Jr. (Ferrari)
Singapore (22 September, 2024)	Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing- Honda)
Azerbaijan (15 September, 2024)	Oscar Piastri (McLaren-Mercedes)	Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)
Italy (1 September, 2024)	Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)	Oscar Piastri (McLaren-Mercedes)
Netherlands (Dutch) (25 August ,2024)	Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing- Honda)
Belgian Grand Prix (28 July, 2024)	Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)	Oscar Piastri (McLaren-Mercedes)
Great Britain (British) (7 July, 2024)	Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing- Honda)
Austria (30 June, 2024)	George Russell (Mercedes)	Oscar Piastri (McLaren-Mercedes)
Spain (23 June, 2024)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda)	Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes)
Canada (9 June, 2024)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda)	Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes)
Monaco (26 May, 2024)	Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)	Oscar Piastri (McLaren-Mercedes)
Emilia-Romagna (Italy) (19 May, 2024)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda)	Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes)
Miami (USA) (5 May, 2024)	Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing- Honda)
China (21 April, 2024)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda)	Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes)
Japan (7 April, 2024)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda)	Sergio Perez (Red Bull Racing- Honda)
Australia (24 March, 2024)	Carlos Sainz Jr. (Ferrari)	Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)
Saudi Arabia (9 March, 2024)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda)	Sergio Perez (Red Bull Racing- Honda)
Bahrain (2 March, 2024)	Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda)	Sergio Perez (Red Bull Racing- Honda)

Montreal as he finished the race fastest in 1 hour, 45 minutes and 47·927 seconds, beating runner-up Lando Norris of McLaren by about 3 seconds. George Russell, the pole sitter in the race finished third for Mercedes team.

It was Verstappen's 60th F1 victory and 6th victory of the current F1 season out of 9 races so far.



Odisha Wins 14th Hockey India Senior Men National Championship 2024

Odisha emerged champion of the 14th Hockey India Senior Men National Championship 2024, defeating two-time champion Haryana 5-1 in its first-final appearance on November 16, 2024 at Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium, Chennai. Shilanand Lakra was the hero for Odisha in the final as he scored 3 goals in quick succession to strengthen Odisha's position in the final. Rajat Akash Tirkey and Pratap Lakra also scored early goals for Odisha. Joginder Singh scored only goal for Haryana in the final.

Uttar Pradesh secured third place in the Championship to grab bronze medal with a 2-1 victory over Manipur in a third place play off.

India Won Women's Asian Champions Hockey Trophy 2024

Defending champion, Indian Women's Hockey team defeated China 1-0 in the final at Rajgir, Bihar on November 20, 2024 to retain the Women's Asian Champions Hockey Trophy 2024. India's Deepika scored the only goal of the final to hand India its third Women's Asian Champions Hockey title, making India join most successful team with South Korea in terms of title triumphs of the Women's Asian Champions Hockey event.

- It was the 8th edition of the Women's Asian Champions Hockey Trophy.
- The Hockey Women's Asian Champions Trophy is a competition involving the top six nations from the Asian Hockey Federation's member associations. This year India, China, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia and Thailand took part in the Championship.
- Deepika Sehrawat from India remained the top scorer of the tournament with 11 goals to her credit.
- Salima Tete was the captain of the Indian team.

- Japan claimed the Bronze medal of the event after defeating Malaysia 4-1 in a commanding display of skill and teamwork during the third-place contest at the 8th edition of the Women's Asian Champions Hockey Trophy 2024.

Women's Asian Champions Hockey Trophy : Results in Brief

Year	Winner	Runner-up
2010	South Korea	Japan
2011	South Korea	China
2013	Japan	India
2016	India	China
2018	South Korea	India
2021	Japan	South Korea
2023	India	Japan
2024	India	China

Indian Men's Hockey Team Win Asian Champions Trophy 2024

Indian Men's Hockey team emerged winner of the Asian Champions trophy 2024 title, beating host China 1-0 in the final on September 17, 2024 at the Moqi Hockey Training Base in Hulunbuir, China. In a closely fought final, India's Jugraj Singh scored the only goal of the final to hand India its fifth Asian Champions Trophy hockey title, making India the most successful team in the event. India, who were the defending champions, have been the most successful team in the competition with five titles—2011, 2016, 2018 (shared with Pakistan), 2023 and 2024.

- South Korea's Yang Jihun was the top scorer in the tournament with total 9 goals.
- Pakistan secured the third place in the Asian Champions trophy 2024 event and won the bronze medal as it pipped South Korea for the third place clash.
- India defeated South Korea in the semi-final while China beat Pakistan to secure its maiden final appearance in the Asian Champions Trophy.
- Harmanpreet Singh was the skipper of the champion India team.

Asian Men's Hockey Champions Trophy : Results in Brief

Year	Winner	Runner-up
2024	India	China
2023	India	Malaysia
2021	South Korea	Japan
2018	India and Pakistan (joint winners)	—
2016	India	Pakistan
2013	Pakistan	Japan
2012	Pakistan	India
2011	India	Pakistan



Aravindh Chithambaram Wins Chennai Chess Grand Masters Title

GM Aravindh Chithambaram from India emerged champion of the Chennai Chess Grand Masters title on November 11, 2024 in a closely-fought play-off. The Masters category of the Chennai Chess event witnessed a three-way tie between Aravindh, Levon Aronian of the USA and Arjun Erigaisi from India. It led to a play-off, where Aravindh defeated Aronian. He won the first blitz and drew the second with black pieces to be crowned champion of the second edition of the Chennai Chess Masters.

In the Challengers category, GM V. Pranav who remained unbeaten through the tournament, clinched the title.

Magnus Carlsen Wins Tata Steel Chess Championship 2024 Blitz and Rapid Titles

World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen from Norway completed a remarkable double clinching the Blitz Title with a round to spare on November 17, 2024 in Kolkata. He made a comeback against India's Arjun Erigaisi in the penultimate round to reach an unassailable 12 points. Carlsen finished the event defeating Vidit Gujrathi of India in the final round to record three straight wins and end with 13 points, clinching the Blitz crown of Tata Steel Chess Event. This victory marks Carlsen's second double win in Kolkata, having previously achieved the same feat in 2019.

- Carlsen won the Rapid event of the Tata Steel with a score of 7·5 out of 9 points.
- Aleksandra Goryachkina emerged winner of the Tata Steel Chess Rapid Women 2024 title with a top score of 7·5 out of 9.
- Kateryna Lagno won the Tata Steel Blitz Women 2024 title with a score of 11·5 out of 18.

Indian players performed admirably, with Erigaisi taking third place with 10·5 points, R. Praggnanandhaa finishing fourth on 9·5, and Vidit Gujrathi rounding out the top five with 9 points.

Arjun Erigaisi Won WR Chess Masters Title 2024

Indian Chess Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi on October 18, 2024 defeated France's Maxime Vachier-Lagrave in armageddon to clinch the 2024 WR Chess Masters Cup. This victory brings Arjun's live Elo rating to 2796, just shy of the 2800 mark.

On October 24, 2024 Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi became the second Indian after legendary Vishwanathan Anand and 16th worldwide to cross the gold-standard ELO rating of 2800 and occupying 4th spot in the latest rankings.

Top 5 Players with ELO Rating (As on January, 2025)

- Magnuo Carlsen-2831 (Norway)
- Fabiano Caruana-2803 (USA)
- Hikaru Nakamura-2802 (USA)
- Arjun Erigaisi-2801 (India)
- D. Gukesh-2777 (India)

45th Chess Olympiad : India Won Double Gold

- India made history by winning maiden gold medals in both Open and Women's event of the 45th Chess Olympiad, held in Budapest, Hungary. It was organized by the International Chess Federation (FIDE) from September 10-23, 2024.
- In Open section (Men's event), India defeated Slovenia, and defeated Azerbaijan in the Women's section to win the historic double team gold.
- India also retained the **Gaprindashvili Trophy**, awarded to the team with the best overall

performance across the open and women's section.

- The India Open team (Men's event) consisted of following chess players : Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa, Gukesh Dommaraju and Arjun Erigaisi.
- The Indian Women's team consisted of Harika Dronavalli, Vaishali Rameshbabu, Divya Deshmukh, Vantika Agrawal, and Tania Sachdev.
- The men's team won 27 of their 44 games, losing just one game and drawing in six games. Their final round of matches was against Slovenia, whom they defeated 3·5-0·5, while the women's team beat Azerbaijan with the same score.
- Eighteen-year-old **Divya Deshmukh** was a standout performer in the women's competition and remained undefeated, winning seven of her 11 games and drawing four.
- In addition to winning the team championships, India also won four individual gold medals at the 45th Chess Olympiad tournament. Gukesh D., Arjun Erigaisi, Divya Deshmukh and Vantika Agrawal bagged individual gold medals on their respective boards.

Viswanathan Anand Won his 10th Leon Masters Chess Title

India's Chess legend Viswanathan Anand emerged champion of the Leon Masters Chess title 2024 beating Jaime Santos Latasa from Spain in the final. It was Anand's 10th title victory at the Leon Masters Chess tournament as he had won the title in 1996, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2011 and 2016 before this one in 2024. The Leon Masters is a prestigious chess tournament held in Leon, Spain. It features four top chess players competing against each other. Apart from the two finalists, Arjun Erigaisi from India and Veselin Topalov from Bulgaria were the other two participants in the event.

Magnus Carlsen Won Norway Chess Title 2024; Ju Wenjun Won Women's Title

Magnus Carlsen emerged champion of the Norway Chess title 2024 beating Fabiano Caruana of the United States in Armageddon in the final round at Stavanger on June 7, 2024. Carlsen emerged the clear winner of the Norway Chess title for the 6th time with 17·5 points.

In the women's section of Norway Chess, Ju Wenjun from China claimed the title with 19 points ahead of Ukraine's Anna Muzychuk.

Divya Deshmukh Won FIDE U-20 Girls World Junior Chess Championship 2024; Nogerbek Kazybek Takes Boys Title

International Master Divya Deshmukh from India on June 13, 2024 clinched the FIDE U-20 Girls World Junior Chess Championship 2024 title after defeating Bulgarian Grand Master Beloslava Krasteva using white pieces in the final round.

Divya Deshmukh is the fourth Indian to win the FIDE under-20 Girl's World Chess Championship after Koneru Humpy, Harika Dronavalli and Soumya Swaminathan.



ATP Paris Masters 2024; Alexander Zverev Won Singles Title

Alexander Zverev from Germany emerged champion of the ATP Paris Masters 2024 Singles title as he prevailed over local lad Ugo Humbert in the final on November 3, 2024 at Accor Arena, Paris. With this title triumph, Zverev, 27, now boasts seven ATP1000-level titles over the course of his career, following two title wins in Rome and Madrid, as well as victories in Montreal and Cincinnati.

Wesley Koolhof from the Netherlands and Nikola Mektić from Croatia defeated Lloyd Glasspool and Adam Pavlásek in the final to win the doubles tennis title at the 2024 Paris Masters.

WTA Finals 2024; Coco Gauff Won Singles Title

Coco Gauff from the USA clinched the WTA Finals 2024 Singles title, on November 9, 2024 as she defeated China's Zheng Qinwen in the final at King Saud University Indoor Arena of the WTA Finals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Coco won this prestigious title for the first time in her career. It was the 53rd edition of the WTA Finals Singles edition.

Second seed Gabriela Dabrowski from Canada and Erin Routliffe from New Zealand clinched the WTA Finals 2024 Doubles event beating Taylor Townsend of the US and Katerina Siniakova of the Czech Republic in the final. Dabrowski became the first Canadian to win a title at the WTA Finals.

ATP Finals 2024; Jannik Sinner Won Singles Title

Jannik Sinner from Italy clinched the season-ending ATP Finals 2024 Singles title, beating Taylor Fritz from the USA in the final on November 17, 2024 in Turin, Italy. It was Sinner's first ATP Finals Singles title. Sinner is the first Italian to win the Finals, doing so days after becoming the first from his nation to top the ATP's end-of-year rankings. His Tour-leading 70th win of the season made him the first player since Ivan Lendl in 1986 to win the tournament without dropping a set.

Eighth seeded German duo Kevin Krawietz and Tim Puetz clinched their maiden ATP Finals 2024 doubles title, beating Marcelo Arevalo from El Salvador and Mate Pavic from Croatia in the final. It is the first German pair to win the title.

Jannik Sinner Won ATP Shanghai Masters 2024 Singles Title

Jannik Sinner from Italy clinched the ATP Shanghai Masters 2024 Singles title, beating Novak Djokovic from Serbia in the final on October 13, 2024 at Qizhong Forest Sports City Tennis Center in Shanghai, China. Sinner became the first man to win more than six titles in a season since Andy Murray won nine in 2016.

Wesley Koolhof from the Netherlands and Nikola Mektic from Croatia clinched the ATP Shanghai Masters 2024 Doubles title beating Argentina duo Maximo Gonzalez and Andres Molteni in the final.

Carlos Alcaraz Won ATP China Open 2024 Singles Title; Coco Gauff Won Women's Title

Carlos Alcaraz from Spain clinched ATP China Open 2024 Singles title as he prevailed over Jannik Sinner from Italy in the final on October 2, 2024 in Shanghai. With the win, he became the first player to win ATP 500 titles on all three surfaces since the series was launched in 2009.

Coco Gauff from the USA clinched the WTA China Open 2024 Singles title beating Karolina Muchova from Czech Republic in the final on October 6, 2024.

Winner of Men's Double : Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori.

Winner of Women's Double : Sara Errani and Jasmine Paolini.

US Open 2024; Jannik Sinner and Aryna Sabalenka Won Singles Titles

Jannik Sinner from Italy emerged champion of the US Open 2024 Men's Singles title beating Taylor Fritz. It was Sinner's second Grand Slam Singles title after his title victory in the Australian Open 2024. Along with becoming the first Italian man to win this championship, Sinner is just the fourth man to win the Australian and US Open titles in the same year since both tournaments were held on hard courts from 1988.

Aryna Sabalenka from Belarus clinched the US Open Women's Singles title 2024 for the first time as she outplayed American Jessica Pegula. This was Sabalenka's third career grand slam singles title, having won the Australian Open for the second consecutive year back in January 2024. She is the first woman to sweep the hard court grand slams since Angelique Kerber in 2016. This was the second year in a row Sabalenka reached the US Open final.

Australian duo Max Purcell and Jordan Thompson won the US Open 2024 Men's Doubles title beating German pair of Kevin Krawietz and Tim Putz in the final. Thompson and Purcell became the first all-Australian team to win the US Open Men's Doubles title since Hall of Famers Mark Woodforde and Todd Woodbridge in 1995 and 1996.

Jelena Ostapenko of Latvia and Lyudmyla Kichenok of Ukraine emerged champion of the US Open 2024 Women's Doubles title as they defeated Zhang Shaui from China and Kristina Mladenovic from France in the final. The win marked the first

Grand Slam Titles 2024

Tournament	Men's Singles	Women's Singles	Men's Double	Women's Double	Mixed Double
Australian Open 2024 (Melbourne Park, 14-28 January, 2024)	**Winner-**Jannik Sinner (Italy) **Runner Up-** Daniil Medvedev (Russia)	**Winner-**Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus) **Runner Up-** Zheng Qinwen (China)	**Winner-**Rohan Bopanna (India) and Matthew Ebden (Australia) **Runner Up-** Simone Bolelli (Italy) and Andrea Vavassori (Italy)	**Winner-** Hsieh Su-Wei (Taiwan) and Elise Martens (Belgium) **Runner Up-** Lyudmyla Kichenok (Ukraine) and JeJena Ostapenko (Latvia)	**Winner-** Hsieh Su-Wei (Taiwan) and Jan Zielinski (Poland) **Runner Up-** Desirae Krawczyk (USA) and Neal Skupski (Great Britain)
French Open 2024 (Stade Roland Garros, 26 May to 9 June, 2024)	**Winner-**Carlos Alcaraz (Spain) **Runner Up-** Alexander Zverev (Germany)	**Winner-** Iga Swiatek (Poland) **Runner Up-** Jasmine Paolini (Italy)	**Winner-** Marcelo Arevalo (El Salvador) and Mate Pavic (Croatia) **Runner Up-** Simone Bolelli (Italy) and Andrea Vavassori (Italy)	**Winner-** Coco Gauff (USA) and Katerina Siniakova (Czech Republic) **Runner Up-** Sarra Errani (Italy) and Jasmine Paolini (Italy)	**Winner-** Laura Siegemund (Germany) and Edouard Roger Vasselin (France) **Runner Up-** Desirae Krawczyk (USA) and Neal Skupski (Great Britain)
Wimbledon Open 2024 (All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, 1-14 July, 2024)	**Winner-** Carlos Alcaraz **Runner Up-** Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	**Winner-** Barbora Krejcikova (Czech Republic) **Runner Up-** Jasmine Paolini (Italy)	**Winner-** Harri Heliövaara (Finland) and Henry Patten (Great Britain) **Runner Up-** Max Purcell (Australia) and Jordon Thompson (Australia)	**Winner-** Katerina Siniakova (Czech Republic) and Taylor Townsend (USA) **Runner Up-** Gabriela Dabrowski (Canada) and Erin Routliffe (New Zealand)	**Winner-** Jan Zielinski (Poland) and Hsieh Su-Wei (Taiwan) **Runner Up-** Santiago Gonzalez (Mexico) and Giuliana Olmos (Mexico)
US Open 2024 (Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, New York City, August 26 – September 8, 2024)	**Winner-** Jannik Sinner (Italy) **Runner Up-** Taylor Fritz (USA)	**Winner-** Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus) **Runner Up-** Jessica Pegula (USA)	**Winner-** Max Purcell (Australia) and Jordon Thompson (Australia) **Runner Up-** Kevin Krawietz (Germany) and Tim Putz (Germany)	**Winner-**Lyudmyla Kichenok (Ukraine) and Jelena Ostapenko (Latvia) **Runner Up-** Kristina Mladenovic (France) and Zhang Shuai (China)	**Winner-** Sara Errani (Italy) and Andrea Vavassori (Italy) **Runner Up-** Taylor Townsend (USA) and Donald Young (USA)

women's Grand Slam doubles title for former French Open singles champion Ostapenko and Kichenok.

Italian combination of Sara Errani and Andrea Vavassori captured the Mixed Doubles title at the US Open 2024 with a victory over the unseeded American pair of Taylor Townsend and Donald Young in the final. The triumph secured Errani and Vavassori their first Grand Slam Mixed Doubles title in just their third major tournament together.

Cincinnati Open 2024

Jannik Sinner from Italy defeated Frances Tiafoe from the USA to win the Western and Southern Open popularly known as the Cincinnati Open 2024 Men's Singles title. Sinner is the youngest men's champion in Cincinnati since Britain's Andy Murray won the tournament in 2008 at the age of 21. It was Sinner's fifth ATP Singles title in 2024.

Aryna Sabalenka clinched the Cincinnati Open (also known as the Western and Southern Open) Women's Singles 2024 title, beating Jessica Pegula from the USA. It was Sabalenka's 6th WTA 1000 title and 15th WTA title.

Mate Pavic from Croatia and Marcelo Arevalo from El Salvador clinched the Cincinnati Open 2024 Men's Doubles title 2024 beating American duo Mackenzie McDonald and Alex Michelsen. It was the first Masters 1000 crown that Arevalo and Pavic have won together.

New Zealand tennis player Erin Routliffe won the Cincinnati Open Women's Doubles titles, teaming up with Asia Muhammad of the US as they pipped Leylah Fernandez from Canada and Kazakhstan's Yulia Putintseva.

Wimbledon Open 2024; Carlos Alcaraz and Barbora Krejcikova Won Singles Titles

Wimbledon Open 2024, the third Grand Slam tournament of Lawn Tennis was successfully organized from July 1 to 14, 2024 in London. Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz from Spain defeated Novak Djokovic from Serbia. It was Carlos' fourth Grand Slam singles title as he had won US Open (2022), French Open (2024) Wimbledon Open (2023 and 2024).

Barbora Krejcikova from Czech Republic emerged champion of the Wimbledon Open 2024 Women's Singles title as she defeated Italy's Jasmine Paolini. It was her second Grand Slam Singles title after her French Open Singles success in 2021.

French Open 2024; Carlos Alcaraz and Iga Swiatek Won Singles Titles

Third seed Carlos Alcaraz from Spain emerged champion of the French Open 2024 Men's Singles title as he prevailed over fourth seed Alexander Zverev from Germany. It was third Grand Slam singles title of Carlos Alcaraz and first French Open title. With the win, Alcaraz becomes the youngest player to win a men's singles Major on three different surfaces. His first Grand Slam title came on the hard courts of the US Open in 2022, followed by the grass-court title at Wimbledon in 2023.

Iga Swiatek from Poland defeated 12th seed Jasmine Paolini from Italy in the final of the French Open 2024 Women's Singles and achieved the rare feat of winning a third successive French Open women's singles title. She is the fourth woman in the Open era to lift the French Open title four times—after Justine Henin, Chris Evert and Steffi Graf.



Pankaj Advani Won IBSF World Billiards Championship 2024

India's star cueist Pankaj Advani emerged champion of the IBSF World Billiards Championship 2024 title as he prevailed over Robert Hall of England 4-2 in the final on November 9, 2024 in Doha, Qatar. It was Advani's record 28th world title triumph. It also happened to be his seventh world title in a row, a streak that began in 2016.

Pankaj Advani Won Songhe Singapore Open Billiards Title

Ace Indian cueist Pankaj Advani won the coveted Songhe Singapore Open title with a 5-1 win over local favourite Jaden Ong in Singapore on October 6, 2024. Advani took the first two frames before Ong won the third, but a key snooker by Advani in the fourth helped him regain control. He wrapped up the match with a dominant 74-6 win in the final frame.

IBSF World 6-Red Snooker Championship 2024; India's Kamal Chawla Wins Gold

In snooker, Indian veteran Kamal Chawla clinched his maiden IBSF World 6-Red title with a commanding 6-2 victory over Pakistan's Asjad Iqbal in the final at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on September 25, 2024.

India also won three more bronze medals in the IBSF World 6-Red Snooker Championship 2024 through Malkeet Singh, Vidya Pillai and Keerthana Pandian. In the women's category, India's Vidya was unable to defend her title, finishing with a bronze medal after a hard-fought semifinal loss to Hong Kong's Ng On Yee, 22-year-old Pandian also settled for bronze, falling 0-4 to Fong Mei Mei of Hong Kong in her semi-final match. Malkeet Singh clinched the bronze in the men's category after losing his semifinal to 0-6 to Asjad Iqbal earlier. Ng On Yee from Hong Kong defeated her compatriot Mei Mei Fong 4-3 in the final to win the IBSF World Women 6 Red Snooker Champion for the year 2024.

India's Dhruv Sitwala Won Asian Billiards Championship 2024 Title; Anupama Ramachandran Won Women's Asian Snooker Title

Dhruv Sitwala from India clinched Asian Billiards Championship 2024 title beating compatriot Pankaj Advani 5-2 in the final on July 5, 2024 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Dhruv Sitwala secured his third Asian Billiards title, adding to his wins in 2015 and 2016.

Anupama Ramachandran from India defeated Panchaya Channoi from Thailand by 3-1 in the final to win the Women's Asian Snooker title 2024, her first major international title in Snooker.

Thailand clinched the Asian Men's Team Snooker Championship 2024 title with a straight sets victory in the final over Pakistan.

SPORTS NEWS IN NUTSHELL

U-23 Asian Wrestling Championship 2024

India's U-23 wrestling team gave a fabulous performance in the U-23 Asian Wrestling Championship 2024 held in Amman, Jordan in June 2024. Indian team clinched total 19 medals in the event in women's wrestling, Greco-Roman and free-style wrestling. Meenakshi in the 50 kg category, Pushpa Yadav in 59 kg, and Priya Malik in the heaviest weight class delivered exceptional performances, each winning gold medals in their respective divisions. The U23 Asian Wrestling Championships concluded with India topping the freestyle wrestling category, earning four gold, two silver, and two bronze medals. Abhimanyu, Jointy Kumar, Sahil Jaglan, and Anirudh Kumar were among the gold medalists, contributing to India's historic performance at the tournament. In the traditionally challenging Greco-Roman category, Indian wrestlers achieved six medals, including four silver and two bronze, highlighting significant improvement and skill in this style of wrestling.

33rd Summer Olympics 2024

- It was hosted in Paris from July 26 to August 11, 2024. Earlier, Paris had hosted the Summer Olympics in 1900 and 1924.
- The opening ceremony named *'Parade of Nations'* was organized on the River Siene on July 26, 2024. For the first time in the history of Olympics, opening ceremony was held outside the main stadium. Greece was the first country and USA was the last country to make an appearance in the 'Parade of Nations.'
- Torch bearers French Athlete Marie-Jose Perec and French Judo Practitioner Teddy Riner lit the Olympic Cauldron at the Gardens of the Tuileries during the opening ceremony on July 26, 2024.
- Achanta Sharath Kamal and PV Sindhu were flag bearers of Indian team during the opening ceremony.
- PR Sreejesh and Manu Bhaker were the flag bearers of the Indian contingent during the closing ceremony, which took place at the Stade de France on 11 August, 2024.
- Approximately 10,500 athletes, representing 206 National Olympic Committees (NOC) competed across 32 sports at the 33rd Olympic Games Paris 2024.
- It was the third successive Summer Olympics featuring the IOC Refugee Olympic Team, comprising of 37 athletes, hosted by 15 National Olympic Committees and competing across 12 sports. It was led by the Chef de Mission, Masomah Ali Zada; herself a member of the Refugee Olympic Team Tokyo 2020.
- **Official Mascot :** Phryges. Pronounced as 'FREE-jes', it is a symbol of French liberation.
- **Indian Contingent** : It consisted of 117 athletes—70 men and 47 women- competing in 69 medal events across 16 sports. Rohanna Bopanna, aged 44 years, was the oldest athlete, whereas, Dhinidhi Desinghu, aged 14 years, was the youngest. Gagan Narang was India's Chef-De-Mission for Paris Olympics 2024, replacing Mary Kom.

Indian Medal Winners at Paris Olympics 2024

Indian Athletes	Medal	Event
Manu Bhaker	Bronze	Women's 10 m air pistol event
Manu Bhaker and Sarabjot Singh	Bronze	10 m air pistol mixed team event
Swapnil Kusale	Bronze	Men's 50 m rifle 3 positions
Indian hockey team	Bronze	Men's hockey
Neeraj Chopra	Silver	Men's Javelin Throw
Aman Sehrawat	Bronze	Men's 57 kg freestyle event

33rd Paris Olympics 2024; Top 10 Medal Winner Countries

Position	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total Medals
1	United States (USA)	40	44	42	126
2	China (CHN)	40	27	24	91
3	Japan (JPN)	20	12	13	45
4	Australia (AUS)	18	19	16	53
5	France (FRA)	16	26	22	64
6	Netherlands (NED)	15	7	12	34
7	United Kingdom (GBR)	14	22	29	65
8	South Korea (KOR)	13	9	10	32
9	Italy (ITA)	12	13	15	40
10	Germany (GER)	12	13	8	33
71	**India**	**00**	**01**	**05**	**06**

Paris Paralympics 2024

- The 17th edition of the Summer Paralympics Games 2024 was hosted in Paris from August 28 to September 8, 2024. It featured 549 medal events across 22 sports.
- Earlier, France had hosted 1992 Winter Paralympics in 1992. The venue was Tignes and Albertville. For Paris, it was the first Paralympics.
- The opening ceremony was held for the first time outside a stadium, at the Palace de la Concorde on August 28, 2024. The Parade of Nations took place as a 'people's parade', from the *Arc de Triomphe* down the Champs-Élysées to the Place de la Concorde.
- John Mc Fall, Paralympian and the first astronaut with a disability to join the European Space Agency, brought the Paralympic flag to the Palace de la Concorde.
- Bhagyashree Madhavrao Jadhav and Sumit Antil were flag bearers of the Indian contingent during the opening ceremony.

2024 Paris Paralympics : India's Stellar Medalists

S.No.	Athlete	Sport	Event	Medal
1.	Rakesh Kumar/ Sheetal Devi	Archery	Mixed team compound open	Bronze
2.	Harvinder Singh	Archery	Men's Individual recurve open	Gold
3.	Preethi Pal	Athletics	Women's 200 m T35	Bronze
4.	Preethi Pal	Athletics	Women's 100 m T35	Bronze
5.	Nishad Kumar	Athletics	Men's High jump T47	Silver
6.	Yogesh Kathuniya	Athletics	Men's discuss throw F56	Silver
7.	Sumit Antil	Athletics	Javelin throw F64	Gold
8.	Deepthi Jeevanji	Athletics	Women's 400 m T20	Bronze
9.	Mariyappan Thangavelu	Athletics	Men's High jump T63	Bronze
10.	Sharad Kumar	Athletics	Men's High jump T63	Silver
11.	Ajeet Singh	Athletics	Men's Javelin throw F46	Silver
12.	Sundar Singh Gurjar	Athletics	Men's Javelin throw F46	Bronze
13.	Sachin Khilari	Athletics	Men's Shot put F46	Silver
14.	Dharambir	Athletics	Men's Club throw F51	Gold
15.	Parnav Soorma	Athletics	Men's Club throw F51	Silver
16.	Praveen Kumar	Athletics	Men's High jump T64	Gold
17.	Hokato Hotozhe Sema	Athletics	Men's shot put F57	Bronze
18.	Simran	Athletics	Women's 200 m T12	Bronze
19.	Navdeep Singh	Athletics	Men's Javelin throw F41	Gold
20.	Nitesh Kumar	Badminton	Men's Singles SL3	Gold
21.	Thulasimathi Murugesan	Badminton	Women's Singles SU5	Silver
22.	Manisha Ramadass	Badminton	Women's Singles SU5	Bronze
23.	Suhas Vathiraj	Badminton	Men's Singles SL4	Silver
24.	Nithya Sre Sivan	Badminton	Women's Singles SH6	Bronze
25.	Kapil Parmar	Judo	Men's 60 kg J1	Bronze
26.	Avani Lekhara	Shooting	Women's 10 m Air rifle standing SH1	Gold
27.	Mona Agarwal	Shooting	Women's 10 m Air rifle standing SH1	Bronze
28.	Manish Narwal	Shooting	Men's 10 m Air pistol SH1	Silver
29.	Rubina Francis	Shooting	Women's 10 m Air pistol SH1	Bronze

Paris Paralympic Games 2024 : Major Medal Winning Countries (Top 10 Countries)

Order	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	China	94	76	50	220
2	Great Britain	49	44	31	124
3	USA	36	42	27	105
4	Netherlands	27	17	12	56
5	Brazil	25	26	38	89
6	Italy	24	15	32	71
7	Ukraine	22	28	32	82
8	France	19	28	28	75
9	Australia	18	17	28	63
10	Japan	14	10	17	41
18	India	07	09	13	29

Do You Know ?

- Manu Bhaker became the first medal winner for India at the Paris Olympics 2024. She created history by becoming the first Indian to win two medals at a single edition of the Olympics. She also became the first Indian woman to win an Olympic shooting medal.
- Swapnil Kusale added a third medal in shooting to make it India's biggest haul in a sport in a single edition of the Olympics.
- Aman Sehrawat became India's youngest Olympic medallist after winning bronze in wrestling's 57kg freestyle category.
- Neeraj Chopra became the fifth two-time Olympic medallist from India, after Norman Pritchard, Sushil Kumar, PV Sindhu and Manu Bhaker. He is also only the third athlete besides Sushil Kumar and PV Sindhu to win medals at two separate Summer Games.
- Avani Lekhara successfully defended her women's 10m air rifle shooting standing SH1 title at the Paris 2024 Paralympics, becoming the first Indian woman to win two gold medals in consecutive editions of Paralympics.
- Sumit Antil became the first Indian male para-athlete to win two gold medals in consecutive editions of Paralympics. He won the gold medal in the men's javelin throw F64 class at Paris Paralympics 2024.
- Leon Marchand of France won the maximum individual gold medals in the Paris Olympics 2024. His total medal tally was 5: 4 Gold and 1 Bronze. Yufei Zhang of China won the maximum individual medals: 5 Bronze and 1 Silver but no Gold.
- Georgian shooter Nino Salukvadze became the first woman to compete at 10 Olympic Games in a career which began in 1988. She is the only Olympian to compete at 10 Summer Games in a row. Ian Miller, having participated in 10 Olympic Games, had boycotted 1980 Moscow Olympics.
- Vinesh Phogat was disqualified for being overweight ahead of a final in the women's 50kg wrestling event at the Paris 2024 Olympics.
- Los Angeles will host the 2028 Olympics Games, including Paralympics 2028.

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- Archer Harvinder Singh and sprinter Preethi Pal were the flag bearers of the Indian contingent during the closing ceremony, which took place at the Stade de France on 8 September, 2024.
- **Official Mascot :** Phryges
- **Indian Contingent :** 84 para-athletes competed across 12 disciplines, including in three new sports—para cycling, para rowing, and blind judo. Satya Prakash Sangwan appointed as Chef de Mission for India's 84 para-athletes at Paris Paralympics 2024.

Important Appointments/ Elections in Sports World

- Gautam Gambhir was appointed as the head coach of Indian Men's National Cricket team on July 9, 2024. He succeeded Rahul Dravid whose term ended after the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in which India had defeated South Africa. He will remain in charge of the Indian team till the end of 31 December, 2027.
- On August 8, 2024, Hockey India announced P.R. Sreejesh as the new head coach of Junior Men's Hockey team of India.
- On August 9, 2024, Abhinav Bindra was elected as the Second Vice Chair of the International Olympic Committee's Athletes Commission. He is India's first individual gold medallist who was earlier appointed as the member of the Athletes Commission in 2018. Emma Terho, a Finnish ice-hockey player, was re-elected as the Chair of the Athletes Commission and Maja Wloszczowska, a Polish cycling player, was elected Vice-Chair along with Bindra.
- In September, 2024, All India Football Federation (AIFF) appointed Santosh Kashyap as the new head coach of the national senior women's team, replacing former international player Chaoba Devi.
- Randhir Singh became the first Indian to be elected as the President of Olympic Council of Asia unanimously from 2024 to 2028. A five-time Olympic shooter, he earlier served as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) member from 2001 to 2004.
- The International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) named Sharath Kamal, an Indian professional table tennis player, as its newest Ambassador. Alongside fellow Foundation Ambassadors, Galia Dvorak and Ryu Seung-min, Kamal is expected to drive positive change within the global table tennis community.
- Tayyab Ikram from Pakistan was re-elected the President of the International Hockey Federation for 4 years term, at the 49th FIH Statutory Congress in Muscat, Oman, on November 9, 2024. He had succeeded Narendra Batra in 2022, who had resigned midway through his tenure.
- Jay Shah assumed charge as the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Chairperson w.e.f December 1, 2024. He succeeded Greg Barclay who served as the Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC) from 2020 to 2024. Jay Shah had earlier served as the BCCI Secretary from 2019 to 2024.
- Neeta Ambani was re-elected unanimously as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) member from India at the 142nd IOC session in Paris, on July 24, 2024. She had been earlier elected as the IOC member in 2016, becoming the first Indian woman to join the IOC.

Important Retirements in Sports World

- Sunil Chhetri, the professional football player from India, formally announced his retirement from international football, on May 16, 2024. His final game for India was on June 6, 2024 in Kolkata against Kuwait during the FIFA World Cup qualifier for 2026.
- Ravichandran Ashwin announced his retirement from international cricket on 18 December, 2024, at the end of third Test match of the Border-Gavaskar series against Australia in Brisbane. With 765 wickets in his credit, he is the second-highest wicket-taker from India after Anil Kumble. He is also 7th on the overall list of wicket-takers. He is the second fastest to take 500 Test wickets, just in 98 matches. He also has 37 5-wicket-hauls in an innings, the second most behind Sri Lanka's legendary Muttiah Muralitharan.
- Rafael Nadal, also known as 'King of Clay', announced his retirement from international tennis in October, 2024. Aged 38, he has 22 Grand Slams, and Olympic Gold Medals in Singles (Beijing 2008) and Doubles (Rio 2016.) He has won French Open Men's Singles for 14 times, the highest by any tennis player. He has won the Australian Open twice (2009 and 2022), Wimbledon Open twice (2008 and 2010), and US Open 4 times (2010, 2013, 2017 and 2019.)
- P.R. Sreejesh, former Indian Hockey captain and goalkeeper, announced his retirement from international hockey on July 22, 2024. His last international hockey appearance was in Paris Olympics 2024. He has been awarded the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award in 2021. He is the only second sportsperson from India to be awarded the World Games Athlete of the Year 2021. He has been awarded FIH Goalkeeper of the Year Awards consecutively in 2021 and 2022.

Miscellaneous

- Rohit Sharma became first batsman in the world to hit 600 sixes in the International Cricket, surpassing Chris Gayle's record of 533 sixes. As on December 9, 2024, he had hit 624 sixes in 488 international matches: 331 in ODIs, 203 in T20Is, and 88 in Tests.
- India will host the FIH Hockey Men's Junior World Cup 2025, in December 2025. From 2021 onwards the tournament has been held every two years. Earlier, India had hosted it in New Delhi in 2013, Lucknow in 2016, Bhubaneshwar in 2021. In 2023, It was hosted in Malaysia in which Germany defeated France.

- Glasgow has been confirmed as the host of 2026 Commonwealth Games. It had earlier hosted the Game in 2014. The last edition (22nd) was held in Birmingham. It is held every four years and is open to 74 nations and territories. It was established in 1930 as the British Empire Games and has been named as Commonwealth Games since 1978.
- On October 16, 2024, Alastair Cook (England), Neetu David (India) and Ab de Villiers (South Africa) were inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame. Neetu David who was the first Indian woman cricketer to take 100 wickets in One-Day Internationals (ODIs), also became the second Indian woman cricketer to enter ICC Hall of Fame after Diana Edulji.
- Former Indian tennis players Leander Paes and Vijay Amritraj were inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in Newport, USA, on 20th July, 2024, becoming the first tennis players from Asia to be inducted into the Hall of Fame.
- On October 24, 2024, Maria Sharapova and American twins-Bob and Mike Bryan-were selected for the International Tennis Hall of Fame's Class of 2025. They will be officially inducted on August 23, 2025, at the Hall of Fame in Newport, Rhode Island.
- Pankaj Advani was inducted into the Hall of Fame at the World Billiards Museum in Shangrao City in China, on March 19, 2024.
- India's Nitin Menon and Javagal Srinath were retained in the International Cricket Council's Elite Panel of Umpires and Match Referees, respectively. Nitin Menon has been retained in the list of Elite Panel of Umpires for consecutively fifth year.
- The World's First High-Altitude Para Sports Centre is set to be established in Leh, Ladakh. It will be established under MoU between Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) and the Aditya Mehta Foundation.
- India is set to host the first-ever Kho-Kho World Cup at the IGI Stadium in New Delhi from January 13 to 19, 2025. It will witness the participation from 24 countries from six continents.

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Upcoming Sports Events and Venue

Sports/Tournamnets	Year	Venue
Cricket		
ICC Men's T20 World Cup	2026	India and Sri Lanka
ICC Men's ODI World Cup	2027	South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia
ICC Men's ODI World Cup	2031	India and Bangladesh
ICC Women's ODI World Cup	2025	India
ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup	2025	Malaysia
Football		
23rd FIFA Men's World Cup	2026	USA, Canada and Mexico
10th FIFA Women's World Cup	2027	Brazil
24th FIFA Men's World Cup	2030	Morocco, Spain and Portugal
Hockey		
16th Men's Hockey World Cup	2026	Belgium and Netherlands
FIH Junior Men's Hockey World Cup	2025	India
Olympics		
34th Summer Olympics and Paralympics	2028	Los Angeles (USA)
35th Summer Olympics and Paralympics	2032	Brisbane (Australia)
25th Winter Olympics	2026	Milano-Cortina (Italy)
23rd Commonwealth Games	2026	Glasgow (Scotland)
20th Asian Games	2026	Aichi Nagoya (Japan)
World Badminton Championship	2026	India
2025 National Games of India (38th edition)	28 January, 2025 to 14 February, 2025	Uttarakhand

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A well-established posture balances confidence, approachability, engaging content, and reflective practice, creating an effective classroom presence.

116. (A) Untreated sewage is the largest source of water pollution in major rivers of India. Other sources of pollution include agricultural runoff and unregulated small-scale industry. Most rivers, lakes and surface water in India are polluted due to industries, untreated sewage and solid wastes.
117. (D) Differentiation refers to the use of a wide range of teaching strategies and lesson modifications by teachers to instruct a diverse group of students with varying learning requirements in the same course, classroom, or learning setting. However, it is not a defined method of learning.
118. (A) **Indian States/Union Territories with the coast on the Bay of Bengal :** West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Thus, Odisha has a coast on the Bay of Bengal.
119. (A) Learning is a developmental process that often requires personal effort, support from parents, and guidance from teachers. While all these factors play a role, the primary emphasis in the given options is on the individual's own efforts. Individuals must take initiative by actively seeking knowledge, practicing skills, and applying what they learn. Therefore, the correct answer is (A).
120. (D) The acronym UNESCO stands for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

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