

# Daily Current Affairs



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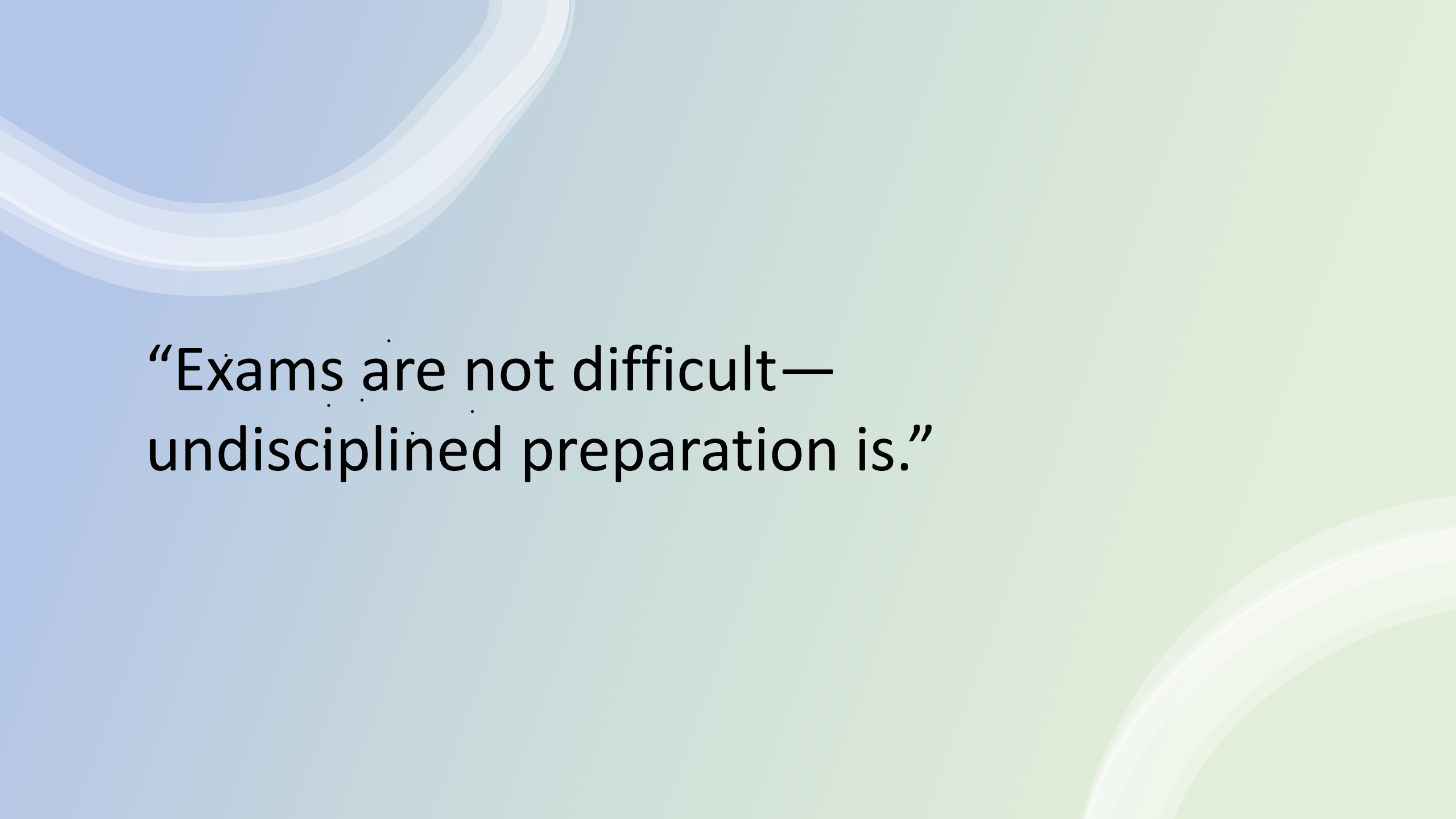


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“Exams are not difficult—  
undisciplined preparation is.”

# UMANG 360



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 Class24

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### Umang 360 Current Affairs Magazine 2026-27 by Bhunesh Sir

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Umang 360 Current Affairs Magazine 2026-27 is made very simple and easy to understand in a user-friendly and simple format for competitive exam aspirants. It includes all the important current affairs between the period of March 2026 and April 2027; Current Affairs Magazine covers all national and international events, schemes of the government, important updates, as well as exam-related MCQs. The information is articulated in a clear and tight manner, making it straightforward and quick to revamp. The magazine saves you time and boosts preparation by bringing everything together and helping you prepare effectively. Umang 360 is a good choice to help you succeed in the exams, should you need a reliable and effective source of current affairs. It is available in e-PDF format for easy access anytime, anywhere.

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# Vote-spike after SIR

Tamil Nadu and West Bengal saw historic highs in voter turnout (%) as both States (phase 1 for West Bengal) cast their votes for the 2026 Assembly polls. Figures as of Friday 12:30 a.m.

**TAMIL NADU** Total seats 234

Voter turnout **85.1%**

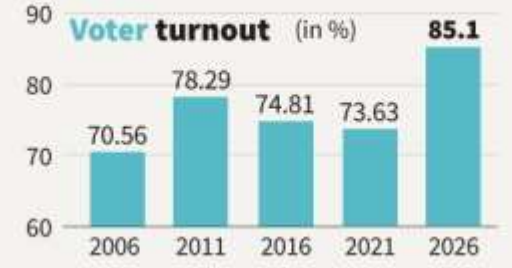
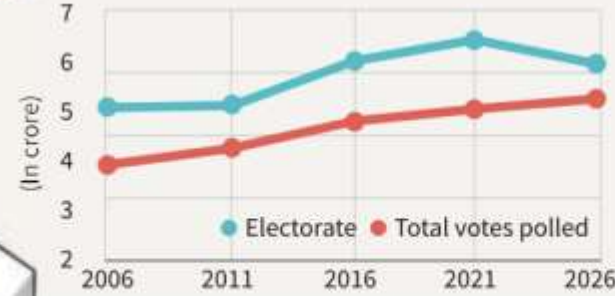


Chart features figures from the 2006 Assembly polls, as they were the first held after the 2002 SIR exercise. If the electorate had remained as it was in September 2025, prior to the SIR exercise, T.N. would have recorded a turnout of **76.1%**



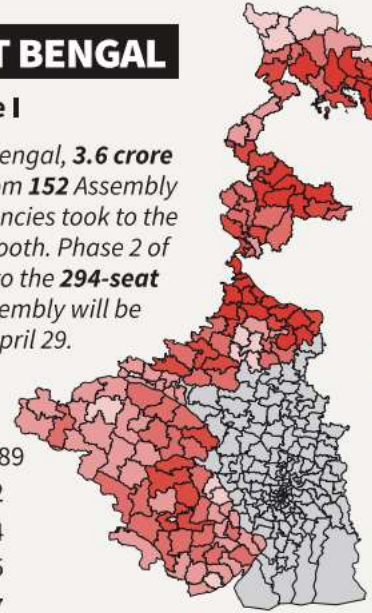
A look at total electorate and number of voters in Assembly polls since the 2002 SIR shows that turnout numbers were in line with the increases in previous election cycles, despite the SIR resulting in a reduction of the electorate by 57 lakh (since 2021)

## WEST BENGAL

### Phase I

In West Bengal, 3.6 crore voters from 152 Assembly constituencies took to the polling booth. Phase 2 of election to the 294-seat State Assembly will be held on April 29.

- (in %)
- 82.1-89
  - 89-92
  - 92-94
  - 94-95
  - 95-97



Voter turnout **92.8%**

Seats contested 152

Source: Election Commission of India



Results on May 4

# STRAIT STANDOFF TRIGGERS GLOBAL ALARM

## HORMUZ FLASHPOINT

**~20%** global  
oil trade hit

- Shipping traffic nearly choked

**30+**  
vessels attacked



## TRUMP'S KEY ORDERS

- "Shoot and kill" Iranian boats
- "No hesitation" directive
- Mine-clearing operations tripled
- US keeps Iran port blockade

Donald Trump,  
US President



## ESCALATION ON GROUND

- US seizes Iran-linked tanker
- Iran captures cargo ships
- Drones, missiles, speedboats deployed
- Strait under Iran pressure grip

## TALKS COLLAPSE

- Ceasefire uncertain

No fresh talks timeline

Iran demands blockade lifted



# Rupee falls 23 paise to cross 94 despite RBI intervention

Central bank action fails to arrest slide as simultaneous rally in crude oil and the U.S. dollar exerts additional downward pressure; stocks fall 1% on profit booking, war-related concerns

**Lalatendu Mishra**  
MUMBAI

**D**riven by high hedging dollar demand and a broader shift toward safe-haven assets, the Indian rupee on Thursday weakened past the 94 level against the U.S. dollar.

As crude oil prices rose over \$100 a barrel owing to uncertainties around the West Asia conflict, the rupee came under pressure and fell 23 paise to 94.01 against the dollar from its previous close of 93.78 in the spot market as reflected in the Clearing Corporation of India platform.

This is the rupee's fall for the fourth consecutive session, its longest losing streak, analysts said.

Dilip Parmar, Senior Research Analyst, HDFC Securities said, "Central bank interventions failed to arrest the slide as a simulta-



**Declining trend:** This is the rupee's fall for the fourth consecutive session, its longest losing streak. REUTERS

neous rally in crude oil and the U.S. dollar exerted additional downward pressure."

"With excessive speculation in the currency markets curbed by RBI's actions, rupee is likely to move in tandem with fundamentals. The fundamental factor behind rupee's weakness is the rising current account deficit caused by high crude prices and the sustained FPI outflows

from India," said V.K. Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Ltd.

"So long as these factors remain the same, rupee will remain weak and if crude price rises again due to escalation of the conflict, rupee will depreciate further," he added.

"The low of ₹93.50 to the dollar reached on March 30 is unlikely to be reached in the near-term

since currency speculation is under check. Rupee will move inversely in tune with crude prices. Currently depreciation stands the risk of getting aggravated if FPIs turn big sellers," he further said.

Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst – Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities said, "Uncertainty around U.S.-Iran talks and tensions in the Strait of Hormuz are further supporting crude, adding to inflation concerns and limiting rupee recovery. The dollar remains steady, which is also capping any upside in the rupee."

The equity benchmark indices on Thursday fell about 1% owing to war-related worries.

The BSE Sensex fell 852 points, or 1.09%, to 77,664.

The NSE Nifty-50 index, too, fell 205 points or 0.84% to 24,173 points.

- The **Indian rupee fell 23 paise to 94.01 against the USD** — from its previous close of 93.78 — marking its **4th consecutive session of decline** (longest losing streak).
- **भारतीय रुपया 23 पैसे गिरकर 94.01** (\$1 = ₹94.01) — पिछले बंद भाव 93.78 से — **4 लगातार सत्रों की गिरावट** (सबसे लंबी गिरावट)।
- **Causes:** (1) Crude oil prices rose over **\$100/barrel** due to West Asia conflict; (2) Broader shift toward **safe-haven assets** (USD); (3) High **hedging dollar demand**; (4) Simultaneous rally in crude oil + USD.
- **कारण:** (1) पश्चिम एशिया संघर्ष से कच्चे तेल \$100/बैरल; (2) **सुरक्षित आश्रय संपत्तियों** (USD) की ओर बढ़ा बदलाव; (3) उच्च **हेजिंग डॉलर माँग**; (4) कच्चे तेल + USD में एक साथ तेजी।
- **RBI intervention** (selling USD in spot market) **failed to arrest the slide** — "fundamental factor behind rupee's weakness is the rising current account deficit (CAD) caused by high crude prices and sustained FPI outflows from India."
- **RBI हस्तक्षेप विफल** — "रुपए की कमजोरी का मूल कारण उच्च कच्चे तेल कीमतों और भारत से निरंतर FPI बहिर्वाह के कारण बढ़ता चालू खाता घाटा (CAD)।"
- **Equity markets impact:** BSE Sensex fell **852 points (1.09%)** to 77,664; NSE Nifty-50 fell **205 points (0.84%)** to 24,173 — due to war-related worries.
- **इक्विटी बाजार:** Sensex **852 अंक (1.09%)** गिरकर 77,664; Nifty-50 **205 अंक (0.84%)** गिरकर 24,173।
- **Geopolitical context:** Hormuz Strait tensions, US-Iran conflict — crude over \$100 and USD strengthening simultaneously creating "double whammy" for rupee.
- **भू-राजनीतिक संदर्भ:** होर्मुज जलसंधि तनाव, US-ईरान संघर्ष — कच्चा तेल \$100+ और USD मजबूत — रुपए पर "दोहरी मार"।

## D1. Key Numbers / मुख्य संख्याएँ

Item	Value
Rupee on Thursday	₹94.01/\$
Previous close	₹93.78/\$
Fall	23 paise
Consecutive losing sessions	4 (longest streak)
Crude oil	Over \$100/barrel
BSE Sensex fall	852 points (1.09%) → 77,664
NSE Nifty-50 fall	205 points (0.84%) → 24,173
Previous low (March 30)	₹93.50/\$

## D2. Causes of Rupee Fall / रुपया गिरावट के कारण

1. **Crude oil rally over \$100/barrel:** India imports ~85% oil; high crude → more USD demand → rupee falls; West Asia conflict driving crude higher
2. **USD safe-haven demand:** Global uncertainty → investors buy USD, gold, yen; sell rupee, emerging market currencies
3. **Hedging dollar demand:** Companies with USD liabilities hedging by buying USD forward → spot market demand
4. **FPI (Foreign Portfolio Investment) outflows:** Foreign investors selling Indian stocks/bonds → converting rupees to USD → rupee demand falls
5. **Rising Current Account Deficit (CAD):** High crude + FPI outflows → widening CAD → structural weakness

## D3. RBI's Role / RBI की भूमिका

- **RBI intervened:** Sold USD in spot market (from forex reserves) to defend rupee
- **Why it failed:** Simultaneous crude oil rally + USD rally = dual pressure too strong
- **Analysts' view:** With "excessive speculation curbed by RBI, rupee will move in tandem with fundamentals"
- **Rupee will:** Move inversely with crude prices; depreciate further if FPIs turn net sellers
- **Currency speculation check:** RBI's presence at least keeps speculation in check even if it can't stop the fall
- **RBI:** USD बेचकर हस्तक्षेप; विफल — कच्चा तेल + USD एक साथ; "मूल तत्वों के साथ"।

## History / इतिहास

- **Rupee history:** Indian rupee was at ~₹1/\$ at Independence (1947); gradual managed depreciation; 1991 devaluation — ₹31/; *post* — 2000 *liberalisation*; 2013 "tapertantrum" — ₹68/; COVID — ₹76/; now ₹94/.
- **रुपया इतिहास:** स्वतंत्रता पर ~₹1/; 1991 अवमूल्यन ₹31/; 2013 ₹68/; *COVID* ₹76/; अब ₹94/\$।
- **1991 Balance of Payments crisis:** India nearly defaulted on foreign debt; pledged gold; IMF bailout; led to economic liberalisation; rupee devalued sharply. Most important historical precedent.
- **1991 BOP संकट:** भारत लगभग डिफॉल्ट; सोना गिरवी; IMF; उदारीकरण; तीव्र रुपया अवमूल्यन।

## Geography / भूगोल

- **Impact of Hormuz closure on India:** India imports from Persian Gulf (UAE, Saudi, Iraq, Kuwait) — these routes pass through Hormuz → closure = crude supply disruption + price spike → CAD worsens → rupee falls.
- **होर्मुज बंदी का भारत पर प्रभाव:** खाड़ी से आयात → होर्मुज → बंदी = आपूर्ति व्यवधान + कीमत उछाल → CAD → रुपया।

- **Rupee Depreciation — Sectoral Impact Table:**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Why</b>
Oil importers (OMCs)	<b>Negative</b>	Pay more rupees for same USD crude
IT sector	<b>Positive</b>	USD earnings worth more in rupees
Pharma (API imports)	<b>Negative</b>	Higher import costs
Exporters (garments, textiles)	<b>Positive</b>	Products cheaper in USD → competitive
Airlines	<b>Negative</b>	ATF + aircraft lease in USD
Foreign borrowers	<b>Negative</b>	Debt repayment costlier in rupees
Remittance recipients	<b>Positive</b>	More rupees per dollar sent

#	Exam	Year	Question	Options	✔ Answer
1	UPSC CSE Prelims	2022	A Current Account Deficit (CAD) indicates that:	(a) Government expenditure exceeds revenue (b) Foreign debt exceeds domestic savings (c) A country's imports of goods, services and transfers exceed its exports (d) Trade surplus with all countries	<b>(c) Imports exceed exports in goods, services, transfers</b>
2	UPSC CSE Prelims	2023	India follows which type of exchange rate system for the rupee?	(a) Fixed exchange rate (b) Freely floating exchange rate (c) <b>Managed floating exchange rate</b> (d) Gold standard	<b>(c) Managed floating exchange rate</b>
3	UPSC CSE Prelims	2021	The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was established in:	(a) 1947 (b) 1948 (c) <b>1935</b> (d) 1949	<b>(c) 1935</b> — nationalised in 1949
4	UPSC CSE Prelims	2022	Which of the following are "safe-haven assets" that investors typically flock to during global uncertainty? 1. US Dollar 2. Gold 3. Bitcoin 4. Japanese Yen	(a) 1 and 2 only (b) <b>1, 2 and 4</b> (c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4	<b>(b) 1, 2 and 4</b> — Bitcoin is NOT considered a safe haven (it's high risk)

5	UPSC CSE Prelims	2021	When FPIs (Foreign Portfolio Investors) sell Indian equities and repatriate money, the Indian rupee tends to:	(a) Appreciate (b) <b>Depreciate</b> (c) Remain unchanged (d) It depends only on RBI	<b>(b) Depreciate</b> — more rupees converted to USD → rupee supply increases
6	UPSC CSE Prelims	2023	The BSE Sensex comprises stocks of how many companies?	(a) 50 (b) 100 (c) <b>30</b> (d) 200	<b>(c) 30 companies</b>
7	UPSC CSE Prelims	2022	Which of the following correctly describes FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act)?	(a) It replaced FERA 1948 (b) It was enacted in 1973 (c) <b>It replaced FERA 1973 and was enacted in 1999</b> (d) It deals with domestic financial crimes	<b>(c) Replaced FERA 1973; enacted 1999</b>
8	UPSC CSE Mains GS-3	2023	"Rising crude oil prices and capital account volatility create a dangerous combination for the Indian rupee. Discuss the mechanisms through which these factors affect the exchange rate and suggest policy measures to manage exchange rate volatility."	<i>(Mains descriptive)</i>	Key: CAD mechanism; FPI flows; RBI intervention; forex reserves; hedging; import substitution for oil; renewable energy; macroeconomic stabilisation

9	UPSC CSE Prelims	2022	The NSE Nifty-50 index is composed of stocks from:	(a) 30 large companies (b) 100 large companies (c) <b>50 large companies</b> (d) All NSE listed companies	<b>(c) 50 large companies</b>
10	UPSC CSE Prelims	2021	Which of the following correctly describes the impact of a rise in crude oil prices on the Indian economy? 1. Widens Current Account Deficit 2. Puts upward pressure on inflation 3. Causes rupee appreciation	(a) 1 only (b) <b>1 and 2 only</b> (c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3	<b>(b) 1 and 2 only —</b> Statement 3 wrong: high crude DEPRECIATES rupee, not appreciates

**Consider the following statements about the factors causing the Indian rupee's depreciation: भारतीय रुपए के मूल्यहास का कारण बनने वाले कारकों के बारे में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार करें:**

1. The rupee fell 23 paise to 94.01 against the dollar, marking its fourth consecutive session of decline — its longest losing streak — driven by high hedging dollar demand and safe-haven shift toward the USD. रुपया 23 पैसे गिरकर डॉलर के मुकाबले 94.01 पर आया, चौथे लगातार सत्र की गिरावट — उच्च हेजिंग डॉलर माँग और USD की ओर सुरक्षित आश्रय बदलाव से प्रेरित।
2. The fundamental factor behind the rupee's weakness is the rising Current Account Deficit (CAD) caused by high crude oil prices and sustained FPI outflows from India. रुपए की कमजोरी के पीछे मूल कारक उच्च कच्चे तेल की कीमतों और भारत से निरंतर FPI बहिर्वाह के कारण बढ़ता चालू खाता घाटा (CAD) है।
3. RBI's intervention in the currency market by selling USD successfully arrested the rupee's decline during this episode. मुद्रा बाजार में USD बेचकर RBI के हस्तक्षेप ने इस प्रकरण के दौरान रुपए की गिरावट को सफलतापूर्वक रोका।
4. The simultaneous rally in crude oil and the US dollar exerted additional downward pressure on the rupee as crude oil prices rose over \$100 a barrel due to West Asia conflict. कच्चे तेल और अमेरिकी डॉलर में एक साथ तेजी ने पश्चिम एशिया संघर्ष के कारण कच्चे तेल की कीमत \$100 प्रति बैरल से ऊपर जाने के साथ रुपए पर अतिरिक्त नीचे का दबाव डाला।

**Which of the statements given above are correct?**

PARIS

U.K., France to sign border deal to curb small-boat migrant crossings



Britain and France are set to unveil a three-year multimillion-euro agreement on Thursday aimed at reducing the number of migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats, with more patrols and enhanced surveillance in northern France. The new deal builds on the Schengen Treaty, first signed in 2016 and renewed in 2023. AP

SEUL

North Korea, Russia aim to open new bridge linking two countries



North Korea and Russia aim to open a road bridge connecting the countries across the Tuman River as soon as possible, North Korea state media KCNA said on Thursday, as the two countries begin closer ties. The project will boost bilateral cooperation including tourism, trade and the movement of people, KCNA said. AP

RAMALLAH

Palestinian Authority says Israeli fire kills 15-year-old in West Bank



Israeli troops killed a 15-year-old boy during a raid in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron on Thursday, the Palestinian Authority health ministry said. Israeli troops or settlers fired at least 1,000 Palestinians — many of them militants, but also scores of civilians — in the region since the start of war in Gaza in 2023. AP

ISTANBUL

Turkiye MPs pass bill to restrict social media access for under-15s



Turkish lawmakers passed a bill that includes restricting access to social media platforms for children under 15. Its passage comes a week after a teenage killed nine students and a teacher in southern Turkey in a gun attack. The legislation is the latest in a global trend to protect young people from dangerous online activity. AP

Russia reports toxic rain as oil depot hit in Ukraine strike

Agence France Presse MOSCOW

Russia was struggling to extinguish a fire raging at a Black Sea oil terminal hit by Ukraine earlier this week, local authorities said on Thursday, after warning residents to stay home amid harmful toxic emissions.

Ryik struck oil facilities in the southern town of Tuzupe on Monday, triggering a huge fire and sending plumes of thick black smoke into the sky over the coastal city.

"The fire at the Tuzupe oil refinery is still ongoing... four storage tanks are ablaze," the regional emergency headquarters said on Thursday, four days after the hit.

The fire caused toxic rainfall on Wednesday, with authorities saying the concentration of toxic particles in the air was "two to three times permissible levels".

The rain left "a black coating on surfaces," authorities said.

City officials on Wednesday warned residents to close windows, limit outdoor activities and wear face masks if they need to go outside.

Lebanon, Israel to resume rare direct talks in Washington to extend truce

Lebanon President says contacts are ongoing to extend the 10-day ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah, the objective of future talks is to seek withdrawal of Israeli troops from the country and begin reconstruction process, his office says

Associated Press BEIRUT

U.S. President Donald Trump will greet Lebanese and Israeli envoys at the White House on Thursday as they meet for a second round of U.S.-facilitated talks, with Beirut seeking to extend ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah, a day after Israeli strikes killed at least five people including a journalist.

The meeting between the Lebanese Ambassador to the U.S., Saad Harb, and her Israeli counterpart, Yechiel Lurie, is the second between the two diplomats, days after they held the first round.



Fatma Zahra Husseini holds images depicting Lebanese journalist Jamal Khalil, who was killed in an Israeli drone mission.

ret talks between the two countries in three decades, Lebanon President Joseph Aoun said on Wednesday after Israeli strikes on Thursday to extend the 10-day ceasefire that went into effect on Friday.

Mr. Harb said he put forward an extension of the ceasefire during the meeting and ask for an end to ongoing Israeli home demolitions in villages and towns occupied by Israel after the latest war broke

out on March 2. Mr. Aoun said in comments released by his office. Preparations are ongoing for wide-reaching negotiations. The aim of the future talks is to "fully" strip Israeli attacks, withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon, release of Lebanese prisoners held in Israel, deployment of Lebanese troops along the border and beginning the reconstruction process, Mr. Aoun said.

Journalist killed Lebanon's leaders accused Israel on Thursday of committing a war crime, after an airstrike killed a Lebanese journalist in the country's south, with the Israeli Army saying it was reviewing the incident. Reuters and the reporter's employer on Wednesday condemned the death of Jamal Khalil, a 42-year-old journalist who worked for the Lebanese daily Al-Akhabar.

Prime Minister Nawaf Salam wrote on X that "targeting journalists and obstructing access for rescue teams constitutes a war crime".

A 10-day ceasefire has been in effect in Lebanon since Friday, pausing the war between Israel and the Iran-backed militant group that has left more than 2,400 dead in Lebanon.

With inputs from AFP, Reuters

10 people killed in attack at mining facility in Pakistan's Balochistan

Agence France Presse QUETTA

A group of militants killed at least 10 people, including a Turkish national, at a copper and gold mining project in Pakistan's Balochistan province, officials said on Thursday.

About 10 militants on motorcycles and other vehicles stormed the mining project site of Pakistani company National Resources Private Limited in the Dargawan area of Chag district on Wednesday.

"At least 10 people were killed in the incident, including a Turkish national, six workers, and three guards," a local administration official said.

No group claimed responsibility, but ethnic separatists have vowed their attacks in the region in recent years, including on mining projects.

Baluch separatists accuse Pakistan's government of exploiting the province's natural gas and mineral resources without benefiting the local population.

The Turk and three guards were killed when a fuel tanker at the mine exploded during the attack, officials said.

Another Turk abducted "The militants also abducted one Turkish national during the attack," he said. A police official said eight people were wounded. The company acknowledged the attack late on Wednesday, saying security forces responded "promptly and have secured the area."

Israel awaits U.S. green light to 'return Iran to Stone Age': Katz

Agence France Presse JERUSALEM

Israel's Defence minister Israel Katz said on Thursday that Israel was "prepared to return the war against Iran", adding that his country was seeking a green light from the United States to return Iran to the "Stone Age".

"The IDF is ready both defensively and offensively, and the targets have been marked," Mr. Katz said.

"We are awaiting a green light from the United States — first and foremost to complete the elimination of the Khamenei dynasty, and additionally to return Iran to the Dark Age and the Stone Age by destroying key energy and electricity facilities and dismantling its national economic infrastructure."

The opening U.S.-Israel attack of the war on February 26 killed Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei, whose son later succeeded him but has yet to appear in public, creating speculation over his condition and if he is still alive.

"This time, when the attack resumes, it will be different and lethal, adding devastating blows at the most sensitive points — following the tremendous strike the Iranian terror regime has already sustained — that will shake and bring down its foundations," Mr. Katz said.

China selects two Pakistani candidates as its first foreign astronauts: reports

Yasirulwan Mubashir

China announced on April 22 that it had selected Muhammad Zohran Ali and Khayran Usaid of Pakistan to be its first batch of foreign astronauts.

The China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) said in a statement that the two men will come to China as reserve astronauts for training. Global Times, a Chinese newspaper, said after completing all training and evaluation, one of them will participate in a mission to Tangguo, the Chinese space station, at a payload specialist.

Atmosphere Research Commission (CARPACC) had confirmed that Mr. Ali and Mr. Usaid had cleared the checking process and were departing for China. The mission is expected to happen later this year.

The selected astronauts will conduct scientific experiments in microgravity covering fields including material science, fluid physics, life sciences, and biotechnology, according to the reports.

Pakistan now stands to be the first country to plan a citizen space programme with Tangguo as a crew participant. Having been shut out of the ISS for more than two decades on the

issue procurement, infrastructure, and satellite technology were recently. Pakistan placed a remote sensing satellite in orbit in July 2025 launched from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in China.

Excluded by the U.S. China initially sought to take part in the International Space Station programme but was denied participation. The U.S. also considered the exclusion in 2011 with its Wolf Amendment, a law prohibiting



In the stars Khayran Usaid (left) and Muhammad Zohran Ali.

ground that its space programme was too intertwined with the military to be trusted. China is extending Outer Space Affairs to open partners that western or

west-led conditions have historically excluded. In 2016, China collaborated with the U.S. Outer Space Affairs to open Tangguo to scientific pro-

jects from other countries, selecting research projects from Switzerland, Poland, Germany, Italy, and 13 other countries.

Tangguo is one of only two currently operational space stations. It hosts a crew of three astronauts six during handovers — and has undertaken more than 260 scientific and applied research projects.

The station became fully operational in late 2023. Tangguo was briefly a candidate for the first foreign crew on Tangguo, but the U.S. Space Agency (NASA) and China signed an agreement in 2015 to boost collaboration, with the stated goal of flying Eu-

ropean astronauts to the Chinese space station. Those plans unravelled, however, with the USA saying they had neither the budgetary capacity nor the political intention to send its astronauts to Tangguo.

China has made regular crew rotations to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), which has landed a probe on the moon's south pole region, and is preparing to send its first crew into orbit as part of the "Gaganyaan" programme.

Pakistan's space capabilities have historically been far behind those of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), which has landed a probe on the moon's south pole region, and is preparing to send its first crew into orbit as part of the "Gaganyaan" programme.

There are also plans to expand Tangguo itself to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in at minimum a reversal of the usual regional optics.

# China selects two Pakistani candidates as its first foreign astronauts: reports

**Vasudevan Mukunth**

China announced on April 22 that it had selected Muhammad Zeeshan Ali and Khurram Daud of Pakistan to be its first batch of foreign astronauts.

The China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) said in a statement that the two men will come to China as reserve astronauts for training, *Global Times* and *Xinhua* reported. After completing all training and evaluation, one of them will participate in a mission to Tiangong, the Chinese space station, as a payload specialist.

The reports also said Pakistan's Space and Upper

Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) had confirmed that Mr. Ali and Mr. Daud had cleared the checking process and were departing for China.

The mission is expected to happen later this year. The selected astronaut will conduct scientific experiments in microgravity covering fields including materials science, fluid physics, life sciences, and biotechnology, according to the reports.

Pakistan now stands to be the first country to place a citizen onboard Tiangong as a crew participant. For decades now, China has been Pakistan's primary partner in de-

fence procurement, infrastructure, and satellite technology more recently.

Pakistan placed a remote sensing satellite in orbit in July 2025 launched from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in China.

## Excluded by the U.S.

China initially sought to take part in the International Space Station programme but was denied participation. The U.S. entrenched the exclusion in 2011 with its Wolf Amendment, a law prohibiting NASA from engaging with Chinese space programme. Having been shut out of the ISS for more than two decades on the



**To the stars:** Khurram Daud (left) and Muhammad Zeeshan Ali. MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING, GOVT. OF PAKISTAN/FACEBOOK

grounds that its space programme was too intertwined with the military to be trusted, China is extending Tiangong to those partners that western or

west-led coalitions have historically excluded.

In 2019, China collaborated with the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs to open Tiangong to scientific pro-

jects from other countries, selecting research projects from Switzerland, Poland, Germany, Italy, and 13 other countries.

Tiangong is one of only two currently operational space stations. It hosts a crew of three astronauts – six during handovers – and has undertaken more than 260 scientific and applied research projects.

The station became fully operational in late 2022.

Europe was briefly a candidate for the first foreign crew on Tiangong. The European Space Agency (ESA) and China signed an agreement in 2015 to boost collaboration, with the stated goal of flying Eu-

ropean astronauts to the Chinese space station.

Those plans unravelled, however, with the ESA saying they had neither the budgetary capacity nor the political intention to send its astronauts to Tiangong.

China has undertaken regular crew rotations to Tiangong. The programme is also (currently) planning to launch the Xuntian space telescope module, which will orbit independently but is capable of docking with Tiangong, in late 2026.

There are also plans to expand Tiangong itself to six modules, possibly from 2027.

This schedule has

spurred the U.S. government to redouble its commitment to the NASA Artemis programme, which plans to land American astronauts on the moon by 2028, to 'beat' China.

Pakistan's space capabilities have historically been far behind those of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), which has landed a probe on the moon's south pole region and is preparing to send its first crew into orbit as part of the 'Gaganyaan' programme.

A Pakistani astronaut in orbit ahead of an Indian one as part of 'Gaganyaan' is at minimum a reversal of the usual regional optics.

Aspect	Details
Event	China selected <b>2 Pakistani candidates</b> as its first foreign astronauts
Names	Muhammad Zeeshan Ali & Khurram Daud
Agency (China)	China Manned Space Agency (CMSA)
Pak Agency	SUPARCO (Pakistan Space & Upper Atmosphere Research Commission)
Role	Initially <b>reserve astronauts</b> , later potential mission participation
Mission Target	<b>Tiangong Space Station</b>
Timeline	Announcement: April 2026; Mission expected soon after training
Work in Space	Microgravity experiments (life sciences, fluid physics, biotechnology)
Significance	First time a <b>foreign astronaut</b> may join China's space station

## Strategic & Geopolitical Context

Dimension	Explanation
China–Pakistan Relations	Strong defence & space cooperation (satellite launches, tech support)
ISS Factor	China excluded from <b>International Space Station (ISS)</b> due to US restrictions (Wolf Amendment, 2011)
China's Strategy	Opening <b>Tiangong</b> to friendly countries to build alternative space alliances
Global Collaboration	China working with <b>UNOOSA</b> ; projects with multiple countries
ESA Factor	European astronauts earlier considered but not materialized (budget/political reasons)

## Tiangong Space Station – Key Points

Feature	Details
Status	Fully operational since <b>2022</b>
Crew	Typically <b>3 astronauts</b> (can go up to 6 during rotation)
Modules	Core module + expansion plans (6 modules by ~2027)
Projects	260+ scientific & applied experiments
Future Plan	Xuntian space telescope (to dock with Tiangong)

## Exam-Relevant Takeaways

- China positioning **Tiangong as ISS alternative**
- **First foreign astronauts → Pakistan** (important for IR + Space Tech)
- Linked with **Wolf Amendment (US law)** → limits NASA-China collaboration
- Growing **South-South cooperation in space**

- **Q. Consider the following statements:**
  - Tiangong is China's only operational space station.
  - Pakistan will be the first country to send an astronaut to Tiangong.
  - China is part of the International Space Station (ISS) programme.
  - **Which of the above is/are correct?**
- (a) 1 and 2 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) 1 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3



● BIGGEST IPO WAVE IN HISTORY PROMISES \$3 TRILLION IN VALUE — WITH NO PROFITS

# SpaceX, OpenAI, Anthropic could add trillions to public mkts

Reuters

Bengaluru, April 23

SPACEX, OPENAI and Anthropic are shaping up to deliver the largest wave of initial public offerings in history and the three companies are losing money, a combination without precedent in US market debuts.

The trio could add \$3 trillion in combined market value to the more than \$69 trillion US equity market, LPL Financial estimates, in listings likely to deliver the most consequential test of investor appetite for high-growth technology stocks in the recent decade.

"Once we move past that excitement stage where every-

body wants to own it, it's going to be really critical for these companies to show exactly what their profits are," said Anthony Saglimbene, chief market strategist at Ameriprise.

What sets these listings apart is a stark gap between valuation and fundamentals. In private markets, the three command valuations rivaling Meta and Palantir, but without their track record of sustained earnings.

Elon Musk's SpaceX alone is targeting a \$1.75 trillion valuation in what would be the largest IPO ever, eclipsing Meta Platforms and Tesla in size. OpenAI is reportedly seeking a valuation of around \$1 trillion and rival Anthropic was valued



SpaceX is targeting a \$1.75 tn valuation, while OpenAI is seeking about \$1 tn, Anthropic was valued at \$380 bn in a Feb funding round. REUTERS

at \$380 billion in a February funding round. SpaceX, which is planning an IPO as early as June, posted a nearly \$5 billion loss on

more than \$18.6 billion of revenue last year, according to excerpts of the company's confidential registration statement

reviewed by Reuters. OpenAI and rival Anthropic are in early-stage preparations for their IPOs and are also unprofitable according to media reports.

The bull case is straightforward. SpaceX's Starlink satellite internet business is viewed by many investors as a potentially game-changing growth engine, even as the parent firm burns cash on its AI startup xAI and in developing reusable rockets under its Starship program.

OpenAI and Anthropic, meanwhile, sit at the center of the AI boom, with ChatGPT and Claude achieving rare mainstream traction for enterprise software. The trio is tapping into investor appetite for high-

growth technologies that have handed a small group of companies an outsized grip on the S&P 500.

The so-called Magnificent Seven — Apple, Microsoft, Alphabet, Amazon, Nvidia, Meta and Tesla — now account for about a third of the index weight.

That concentration shows years of earnings dominance.

Earnings also matter for index eligibility and could unlock the trillions of dollars in automatic buying that index inclusion triggers. S&P Dow Jones Indices requires four consecutive quarters of profit and at least 12 months of public trading before a company can be considered for the S&P 500.

Aspect	Details
Headline	Biggest IPO wave could add <b>\$3 trillion</b> to markets
Companies	SpaceX, OpenAI, Anthropic
Combined Impact	Could push US equity market beyond <b>\$69 trillion</b>
Profit Status	All three are <b>currently loss-making</b>
Core Issue	Gap between <b>high valuation vs low profitability</b>

### 💰 Valuation & Financial Snapshot

Company	Expected Valuation	Key Business	Financial Status
SpaceX	~\$1.75 trillion	Starlink (satellite internet), reusable rockets	~\$5 billion loss (recent)
OpenAI	~\$1 trillion	AI (ChatGPT, enterprise AI tools)	Not profitable
Anthropic	~\$380 billion	AI (Claude models)	Not profitable

## Growth Drivers (Bull Case)

 Try Codex ×

Factor	Explanation
AI Boom	OpenAI & Anthropic at center of enterprise AI adoption
Space Tech Expansion	SpaceX's Starlink seen as global internet disruptor
High Investor Demand	Strong appetite for high-growth tech IPOs
Future Potential	Large TAM (Total Addressable Market) in AI & space

## Risks & Concerns


Risk	Explanation
No Profits	All companies currently loss-making
Valuation Bubble Risk	Trillion-dollar valuations without earnings track record
Market Correction Risk	If growth slows, sharp fall possible
Index Inclusion Criteria	S&P 500 requires profitability → may delay inclusion



- **Q. Consider the following statements:**

- All companies planning major IPOs must be profitable to list in US markets.
- SpaceX's Starlink is a satellite-based internet service.
- High valuations without profits can indicate speculative market behaviour.

- **Which of the above are correct?**

- (a) 2 and 3 only
  - (b) 1 and 2 only
  - (c) 1 and 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 

# ₹5,000-cr incentive for states to fast-track mining reforms

FE BUREAU

New Delhi, April 23

**THE CENTRE HAS** earmarked ₹5,000 crore as incentives for accelerating reforms and boosting production in the mining sector, with a strong focus on faster operationalisation of mines and improved governance. The scheme, structured in three components, will provide financial incentives to states on a first-come, first-served basis, encouraging them to streamline administrative processes and adopt technology-driven monitoring systems.

States completing key reform measures — integrating with the national mining portal, setting up coordination committees, and publishing annual auction calendars — will be eligible for incentives under the first component, which has an outlay of ₹2,000 crore.

Another ₹2,500 crore has been earmarked for mine operationalisation. States will receive ₹20 crore per mineral block auctioned with pre-embedded clearances, subject to a cap, while an additional ₹250 crore incentive is tied to

## MINERAL OUTPUT

■ An outlay of **₹2,000 crore** has been made for reform measures such as setting up coordination committees



■ Another **₹2,500 crore** has been earmarked for mine operationalisation and meeting timelines

■ The third component links incentives to performance under State Mining Readiness Index

achieving operationalisation of at least 10% of auctioned blocks within a specified timeline. This is expected to address long-standing bottlenecks in land acquisition, environmental approvals, and logistical preparedness that often delay production.

The third component of the scheme links incentives to performance under the State Mining Readiness Index (SMRI), with ₹675 crore set aside to reward top-performing states across different categories. This ranking-based approach is designed to foster

competition and improve sectoral efficiency.

Officials said the reforms aim to increase mineral output, enhance state revenues, and ensure transparency in allocation and monitoring. The ministry of mines will evaluate reform progress and recommend eligible states for fund disbursement. With clear timelines set for proposal submissions and approvals, the initiative is expected to push states towards faster execution while strengthening the overall regulatory framework in the mining sector.

Component	Details
Total Outlay	₹5,000 crore
Objective	Fast-track mining reforms, boost mineral output, improve governance
Approach	Incentives to states on <b>first-come, first-served</b> basis
Focus Areas	Faster mine operationalisation, transparency, tech-driven monitoring

### Component-wise Breakdown

Component	Allocation	Key Features
1. Reform Measures	₹2,000 crore	Integration with <b>National Mining Portal</b> , coordination committees, annual auction calendar
2. Mine Operationalisation	₹2,500 crore	₹20 crore per mineral block (with pre-clearances), incentives for meeting timelines
3. Performance-based Incentive	~₹675 crore	Linked to <b>State Mining Readiness Index (SMRI)</b> rankings

## Key Conditions for States

Criteria	Requirement
Operationalisation Target	At least <b>10% of auctioned blocks</b> within timeline
Reforms Required	Digital integration, transparency, coordination committees
Clearances	Faster land, environment & logistics approvals
Monitoring	Tech-based systems & central evaluation

## Objectives & Expected Outcomes

Area	Impact
Production	Increase mineral output
Revenue	Higher state earnings
Governance	Transparent allocation & monitoring
Efficiency	Reduced delays (land, environment clearance bottlenecks)
Competition	Ranking-based incentives via SMRI



• **Q. Consider the following statements:**

- The ₹5,000 crore mining incentive scheme is fully based on performance ranking only.
  - States must operationalise at least 10% of auctioned mineral blocks to qualify.
  - Incentives are partly linked to the State Mining Readiness Index (SMRI).
- **Which of the above is/are correct?**
- (a) 2 and 3 only
  - (b) 1 and 2 only
  - (c) 1 and 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3

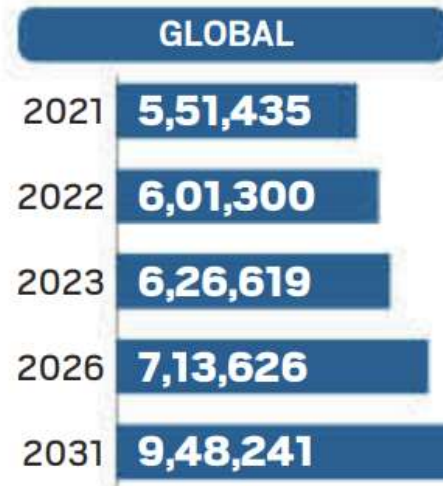
# ULTRA-RICH INDIANS NEAR 20K

**THE NUMBER OF** ultra-high networth individuals (UHNWI), those with a wealth of over \$30 million, rose 63% between 2021 and 2026 from just over 12,000 to 19,877, Knight Frank said on Thursday. It reflects

extraordinary wealth creation across technology, industrials and capital markets, it said. The country now has the sixth largest UHNWI population in the world.

— Raghavendra Kamath

## UHNW population (with wealth of over \$30 million)



## Billionaire Count



\* over 2700

Source: Knight Frank

# Bikaji Foods founder Shiv Ratan no more

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi, April 23

**SHIV RATAN AGARWAL**, who built a humble, family-run namkeen business into one of India's most recognisable packaged snack brands Bikaji, taking the gritty flavours of Bikaner to supermarket shelves across the country and beyond, died on Thursday.

The 75-year-old complained of uneasiness and was rushed to a private hospital in Chennai, where he breathed his last, family sources said. He was in Chennai after his wife recently underwent heart bypass surgery there.

Born into the famous Haldiram family, Agarwal, who studied only till class 8, spread the bhujia empire from the bylanes of Bikaner to supermarket shelves across continents.

His rise tracked India's own consumption boom. He moved decisively from loose, unbranded snacks to packaged products, betting early on branding, scale and distribution



at a time when much of the sector remained fragmented. Under his watch, Bikaji expanded aggressively beyond its Rajasthan base, investing in factories, supply chains and exports — while fiercely protecting the taste profiles that made its bhujia and sweets staples in Indian households.

Known as a hands-on entrepreneur with a sharp instinct for both margins and mass appeal, Agarwal navigated intense competition from entrenched regional players and larger rivals, carving out a space in the fast-growing savoury snacks market.



Aspect	Details
Name	Shiv Ratan Agarwal
Age	75 years
Company Founded	Bikaji Foods International Ltd
Origin	Bikaner, Rajasthan
Background	From Haldiram family
Education	Studied till Class 8
Demise	April 2026, Chennai (post heart surgery complications)

## Business Journey

Phase	Key Development
Early Stage	Started with traditional <b>bhujia &amp; namkeen</b> business in Bikaner
Transformation	Shifted from <b>loose snacks</b> → <b>packaged products</b>
Expansion	Built strong <b>branding, scale, and distribution network</b>
Global Reach	Expanded to supermarkets across India & overseas
Industry Impact	Made <b>Bikaneri snacks</b> mainstream national products

Strategy	Explanation
Early Branding Focus	Recognized importance of packaging & brand identity
Mass Market Appeal	Balanced affordability with quality
Supply Chain Strength	Invested in factories & logistics
Export Orientation	Took Indian snacks to global markets
Competition Handling	Competed with regional & national players effectively

### Leadership Traits

Trait	Description
Hands-on Entrepreneur	Deep involvement in operations
Risk-Taker	Early shift to packaged foods
Market Understanding	Strong instinct for consumer demand
Scalability Vision	Focus on expansion beyond Rajasthan



# Finland's Nuclear Waste Vault (Onkalo)

Country	Finland
Project Name	Onkalo Repository
Location	Olkiluoto Island
Type	World's first <b>permanent deep geological repository</b>
Purpose	Disposal of <b>high-level radioactive nuclear waste</b>
Depth	~400–450 metres underground
Storage Duration	Up to <b>100,000 years</b>
Operational Status	Near operational (2026)

### How the Onkalo Repository Works

Step	Mechanism
1. Waste Handling	Spent nuclear fuel placed in metal canisters
2. Sealing	Encased in <b>copper capsules</b> (corrosion-resistant)
3. Buffer Layer	Surrounded by <b> bentonite clay</b> (swells, blocks leakage)
4. Geological Barrier	Stored deep in <b>stable bedrock</b>
5. Passive Safety	No human intervention needed after sealing

## ⚠ Nuclear Waste Challenge

Issue	Explanation
Global Waste	~400,000 tonnes of spent nuclear fuel globally
Current Storage	Mostly temporary (cooling pools, dry casks)
Risk	Remains radioactive for <b>thousands of years</b>
Problem	Lack of permanent disposal solutions

## 🌍 Significance

Dimension	Importance
Technological	First real long-term nuclear waste solution
Environmental	Reduces risk of radiation leakage
Energy Policy	Supports expansion of nuclear energy
Global Model	Blueprint for other countries

**CURRENT EVENTS OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE**

1. Which country has recently launched its ICBM missile named Hwasong?

- a) China
- b) North Korea
- c) Japan
- d) Ira

1. କେଉଁ ଦେଶ ନିକଟରେ ହ୍ୱାସଙ୍ଗ ନାମକ ICBM କ୍ଷେପଣାସ୍ତ୍ର ଉତ୍ତରଣପତ୍ର କରିଛି?

- a) ଚୀନ
- b) ଉତ୍ତର କୋରିଆ
- c) ଜାପାନ
- d) ଇରାନ

2. What is the theme of the 17<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit?

- a) Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a more Inclusive and Sustainable Governance
- b) Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability,
- c) Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security

2. ୧୭ତମ ବ୍ରିକ୍ସ (BRICS) ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର ବିଷୟବସ୍ତୁ କ'ଣ?

- a) ଅଧିକ ସମାବେଶୀ (Inclusive) ଏବଂ ସ୍ଥାୟୀ (Sustainable) ଶାସନ ପାଇଁ ଗ୍ଲୋବାଲ୍ ସାର୍ଥକ ସହଯୋଗକୁ ମଜବୁତ କରିବା
- b) ଏକତା, ସମାନତା, ସ୍ଥିରତା,
- c) ନ୍ୟାୟପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବିଶ୍ୱ ବିକାଶ ଏବଂ ସୁରକ୍ଷା ପାଇଁ ବହୁପକ୍ଷବାଦକୁ (Multilateralism) ମଜବୁତ କରିବା

ଉତ୍ତର  
କରିବା  
ନାହିଁ।  
ଉତ୍ତର  
କରିବା  
ନାହିଁ।

1. Which country has recently launched its ICBM missile named Hwasong?

- a) China
- b) North Korea
- c) Japan
- d) Ira

2. What is the theme of the 17<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit?

- a) Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a more Inclusive and Sustainable Governance
- b) Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability,
- c) Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security
- d) Building Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability

-3. Who assumed the additional charge as the CEO of NITI Aayog 2026?

- a) Amitabh Kant
- b) B.V.R Subrahmanyam
- c) Nidhi Chhibber
- d) Parameswaran Iyar

4. Who has been selected for the prestigious 60<sup>th</sup> Jnanpith Award , announced in 2026?

- a) Vinod Kumar Shukla a)
- b) R. Vairamuthu b)
- c) Gulzar c)
- d) Jagadguru Rambhadracharya d)

5. SIMBEX 2025, an Annual Naval Exercise, was conducted between which two countries?

- a) India and the USA
- b) India and Australia
- c) India and Singapore
- d) India and Japan

6. The Strait of Hormuz connects
- a) Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman
  - b) Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden
  - c) Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea
  - d) Arabian Sea with the Red Sea

7. The Corruption Perceptions Index is released annually by which organisation?
- a) Reporters without Borders
  - b) United Nations Development Programme
  - c) World Bank
  - d) Transparency International

- 8. Which one among the following sites in Odisha has been recognised as a Ramsar site?
- a) Anshupa Lake
  - b) Chandaka Lake
  - c) Kanjia Lake
  - d) Kolab Lake

- 9. The motto of the Shilp Didi Scheme is:
- a) Promotion of Women Artisans and Craft Workers
  - b) Girl Child Protection and Education
  - c) Clean cooking fuel for Women
  - d) Women's Safety
- 10. Charan Hembram was awarded the Padma Shri in 2026 in which field?
- a) Art
  - × b) Forest conservation
  - c) Literature and Education
  - d) Wildlife protection

11. As per the NITI Aayog Fiscal Health Index 2026 report, what is the rank of Odisha among the states of India?

- a) 1<sup>st</sup>
- b) 3<sup>rd</sup>
- c) 5<sup>th</sup>
- d) 9<sup>th</sup>

12. At the district level, which Zilla Parishad from Odisha has recently been honoured with the Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar?

- a) Cuttack
- b) Koraput
- c) Khurdha
- d) Keonjhar

13. India has targeted to achieve its net-zero emissions by:

- a) 2030
- b) 2047
- c) 2050
- d) 2070

-14. Who from Odisha was awarded the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar in 2025?

- a) Bidusmita Bhoi
- b) Sneha Soren
- c) Jyoshna Sabar
- d) Srabani Nanda

15. The DALKHAI initiative, launched by the Odisha Government, focused on:

- a) Promotion of culture
- b) Curbing Distress Migration
- c) Direct Cash transfer to the handloom weaver
- d) Promotion of folk song

-16. The Odisha Women's Hockey Team secured which medal at the Khelo India Youth Games 2025?

- a) Gold
- b) Silver
- c) Bronze
- d) Did not win any medal

-17. Which one of the products from Odisha has received the GI Tag recognition in 2024-25?

- a) Dahibara Aloodum
- b) Pakhala Bhata
- c) Odishara Rasagola
- d) Silver Filigree (Cuttack Rupa Tarakashi)

18. What is the primary goal of the web/smartphone-based app SATARK?

- a) Women's Safety
- b) Natural Disaster Early Warning
- c) Anti-corruption reform
- d) Cybercrime and Digital Fraud

-19. The Odisha Government is positioning which city as India's Premier Green Hydrogen and Ammonia Hub?

- a) Paradip
- b) Dhamara
- c) Jharsuguda
- d) Angul

20. Which country has recently officially greenlit a major deal to procure BrahMos missiles from India?

- a) Indonesia
- b) Israel
- c) Japan
- d) UK

21. India, in January 2026, signed a Free Trade Agreement with
- a) European Union
  - b) UK
  - c) United States
  - d) New Zealand
22. What is the rank of India in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2025?
- a) 98
  - b) 102
  - c) 105
  - d) 121
23. Name the first Indian to travel to the International Space Station (ISS) as part of the Axiom-4 mission
- a) Shubhanshu Shukla
  - b) Kalpana Chawla
  - c) Sunita Williams
  - d) Prasanth Nair

- 24. Who was the first person from Odisha to serve as the Speaker of the Lok Sabha?
- a) Rabi Ray
  - b) Surama Padhy
  - c) Bhartruhari Mahatab
  - d) Biju Pattnaik
25. Which cyber-attack uses a phone call to trick people into giving away their bank OTP?
- a) Phishing
  - b) Smishing
  - c) Vishing
  - d) Skimming

- 26. Who was recently awarded the UN Sasakawa Award for his significant contribution to Disaster Risk Reduction

- a) Sarat Chandra Sahu
- b) Abha Mishra
- c) Mrutyunjay Mohapatra
- d) Manoj Ahuja

27. Which sector of Odisha faced a major crisis in 2025 after the US President Donald Trump implemented a combined 50% tariff?

- a) Steel and Iron Ore
- b) Seafood and Shrimp Industry
- c) IT and Services
- d) Pharmaceuticals and Energy

28. The "New Pamban Bridge," India's first vertical-lift sea bridge, was inaugurated in 2025-26 to connect which spiritual and sporting destination to the mainland?

- a) Kanyakumari
- b) Dwarka
- c) Rameswaram
- d) Mahabalipuram

- 29. The "Bharatmala Pariyojana" primarily aims at:

- a) Coastal Development
- b) Highway Development
- c) Rural Electrification
- d) Smart Cities

30. The term "Purple City" in the context of Delhi refers to:

- a) Smart city initiative
- b) Women safety program
- c) Inclusive infrastructure for persons with disabilities
- d) Pollution control initiative

31. In March 2026, the Supreme Court of India delivered a landmark judgement allowing the withdrawal of life support for a patient in a persistent-vegetative state (PVS) for 13 years. This case is officially known as \_\_\_\_\_ Vs. Union of India.
- a) Aruna Shanbaug
  - b) Harish Rana
  - c) Gjan Kaur
  - d) Common Cause
32. In February 2026, Which State Government launched the 'Samikshya' portal for red time project monitoring?
- a) West Benagal
  - b) Odisha
  - c) Uttar Pradesh
  - d) Mizoram
33. "BHARATPOL" portal, which aims to strengthen India's efforts to combat transnational crimes is developed by which one of the following agencies?
- a) Central Bureau of Investigation
  - b) Enforcement Directorate
  - c) Wildlife Institute of India
  - d) Wildlife Trust of India

34. The term "DeepSeek" sometimes seen in the news in the context of :
- a) India's Artificial Intelligence (AI)-led language translation platform.
  - b) Computer programmes AI chatbot developed by China based start up which simulate human-style conversation with a user.
  - c) Cloud -based aerial traffic management system.
  - d) Artificial intelligence-based text to-image generation tool developed by Google.

35. Renowned Indian ecologist Madhav Gadgil, who passed away recently, is best known for Chairing the Ecology Expert Panel that recommended the conservation of which ecologically sensitive region?

- a) Eastern Ghats
- b) Sunderban's Mangroves
- c) Western Ghats
- d) Himalayan Biodiversity Hotspot

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# Word of the day

## **Kaput:**

destroyed or killed

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**Synonyms:** broken, ruined, defunct

---

**Usage:** *My laptop went kaput in the middle of work.*

---

**Pronunciation:** [newsth.live/kaput](http://newsth.live/kaput)

---

**International Phonetic Alphabet:** /kəpʊt/

---

# Word of the day

## **Chortle:**

a soft partly suppressed laugh

---

**Synonyms:** giggle, chuckle, cackle

---

**Usage:** *She began to chortle at the silly joke.*

---

## **Pronunciation:**

[newsth.live/chortle](http://newsth.live/chortle)

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**International Phonetic Alphabet:** /tʃɔ:təl/

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Thank you 😊