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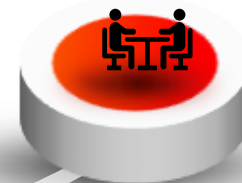
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FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 14

CJP warns of fresh protests over government's 'breach of promise'

Centre violating assurance of not taking action against protesters, says Cockroach Janta Party; hundreds of students held while many are under surveillance, says spokesperson; Bihar withdraws FIRs; Bengal and Assam follow suit, says the CJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) on Monday warned of fresh protests, accusing the Centre of violating its assurance that no punitive action would be taken against protesters.

"We are observing a complete breach of the agreement regarding no police action against the protesters. Hundreds of students have been arrested in Bihar and Bengal, and hundreds are being surveilled/harassed in Delhi and other States," CJP spokesperson Ashutosh Ranka said in a post on X.

The statement came following reports of crackdown on volunteers assisting protesters with logistics in various States.

The Bihar government announced later in the evening that it was withdrawing all FIRs against protesters registered before 6 p.m. on July 26. FIRs in West Bengal and Assam have also been withdrawn, the CJP said on Monday night.

However, Mr. Ranka, in a late-night post, said volunteers from Rajasthan were being harassed and demanded coordination between the Centre and State governments to withdraw FIRs. The CJP was awaiting a written agreement from the Centre by Tuesday, he added.

In Uttar Pradesh, Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav alleged that many students in Prayagraj have



CJP leaders Saurav Das, centre, and Ashutosh Ranka, right, with Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal and others in New Delhi. R. V. MOORTHY

been abducted by a special team of police in a vehicle without number plates.

Continued crackdown

"Under the guise of the Prayagraj protest, many students have been picked up by the U.P. Police's special team in an unmarked vehicle. When the Union government had promised that no action would be taken against any student, then on whose orders is such deceit taking place," Mr. Yadav wrote in a post on X, also posting a video news report in support of his claims. The Prayagraj police have registered two FIRs at the Civil Lines police station in connection with the alleged vandalism of two SUVs and attack during Saturday's student protest.

Rajya Sabha MP and senior advocate Kapil Sibal, who addressed a press conference with CJP leaders on Monday, said if go-

vernments file FIRs against people who peacefully protested in different parts of the country, the CJP will create a framework to track the affected people. "They (CJP) will create a website where lawyers who are willing to provide help can register their names, location and the kind of help they can offer. I will personally contribute ₹1 crore... our lawyers will support them across India," he said.

In NDA-ruled Bihar, the police issued a statement saying a total of 694 individuals were taken into custody across the State following a protest on July 25. Among those detained, 339 minors and students were released following verification, and 355 individuals involved in violent incidents have been produced before the court.

In BJP-ruled West Bengal, Kolkata Police on Monday arrested two more per-

sons in connection with the violence that erupted at Esplanade area following a police crackdown on protesters demanding the resignation of Mr. Pradhan.

With this, the total number of arrests after the violence rose to 16.

Addressing the press conference, Mr. Ranka reiterated the Centre's assurances given during the third round of talks on July 25.

"We had submitted a written draft of this agreement to J.P. Naddaji and Jitendra Singhji, and it was agreed that the government would share its written copy of the agreement with us by Tuesday. If the government does not share the written agreement by tomorrow, and if students, youth, and protesters who have been arrested or detained in different States are not released, the Cockroach Janta Party will once again be forced to protest,"

he said, adding that multiple reports have emerged in Delhi about the detention of volunteers who supported the protesters with logistics.

On Saturday, the CJP called off a 36-day protest at Jantar Mantar in Delhi after the Union government agreed to its three main demands, including the resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan as Education Minister. "We demand that all the FIRs against the protesters be immediately withdrawn, students be released and no future FIRs be filed (in line with our agreement) by Delhi police/Central investigative agencies/police in BJP-allied States, failing which we will be forced to sit on protest again," Mr. Ranka said. Congress-affiliated National Students' Union of India also accused the Centre of going back on its promise.

Congress MP Deepender Singh Hooda said in a post on X, "Multiple platforms are reporting that Jantar Mantar protesters and also protesters elsewhere are being targeted by authorities. This contradicts the promise made by the government. If anyone needs legal aid/ support, contact my team by tagging @TeamDeepender." (With inputs from Nikhil M. Babu in Delhi, Senjuti Sengupta in Kolkata, Mayank Kumar in Lucknow, Amit Bhelari and Amarnath Tewary in Patna)

RELATED REPORTS ON
» **PAGES 4 & 5**

SC mulls guidelines for police conduct during mass protests

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

Observing that the constitutional right to peaceful protest must be protected, the Supreme Court on Monday indicated that it may consider framing uniform guidelines to regulate police conduct during large-scale demonstrations.

“The right to peaceful protest is absolutely guaranteed under the Constitution. So long as it is a peaceful agitation, merely because there is agitation, there cannot be [police excesses]... If there is police excess committed, it should be independently examined. Merely because there is agitation, it does not mean there should be a lathi charge. Discipline is integral to the democratic process,” Chief Justice of India Surya Kant orally remarked. The observations came as multiple petitions concerning protests over examination issues, including pleas alleging police excesses during the July 20 march to Parliament as well as those concerning the alleged “aerial firing” by police in Bihar, were mentioned before the Bench.

The top court agreed to hear all pending petitions together on Tuesday.

The CJI-led Bench, which also comprised Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V. Mohana, said it was equally concerned about injuries suffered by both protesters and police personnel during such protests, and stressed that “self-imposed discipline” on the part of both citizens and law enforcement was

Merely because there is agitation, it does not mean there should be a lathi charge. Discipline is integral to the democratic process



SURYA KANT
Chief Justice of India

essential to the functioning of a democracy.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh urged the court to frame uniform guidelines governing police action during protests, pointing out that allegations of police excesses were not confined to Delhi but had surfaced across the country.

The Chief Justice agreed that a standard operating protocol appeared necessary: “...if some anti-social elements have done anything, that can also be looked into.”

Meanwhile, retired Intelligence Bureau Special Director Yashovardhan Azad, along with two other victims of alleged pellet-gun injuries, moved the Supreme Court on Monday seeking a ban on the use of wholly or partly metallic kinetic projectiles fired from pump-action or projectile-action guns (PAG), or pellet guns, for crowd control by law enforcement agencies. The petition also sought exemplary compensation for all those allegedly injured by pellet firing during the July 20 protests.

The Supreme Court of India has indicated that it may frame **uniform national guidelines** governing police conduct during **large-scale peaceful protests**, while emphasizing that the **constitutional right to peaceful protest must be protected**.

The observations came during the hearing of multiple petitions concerning alleged police excesses during recent student protests, including demonstrations near Parliament and incidents in Bihar.

Key Observations by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant

Observation	Details
Peaceful protest is a constitutional right	The Court reiterated that peaceful protest is fully protected under the Constitution.
Police force should not be automatic	Mere agitation does not justify police violence or lathi-charge.
Police excesses require scrutiny	Any allegation of excessive police action must be independently examined.
Democracy needs discipline	Both protesters and police must exercise restraint and discipline.

Why is the Supreme Court Hearing the Matter?

Several petitions have been filed concerning:

- Alleged police excesses during the **July 20 march towards Parliament**
- Alleged police firing in Bihar
- Injuries suffered by protesters
- Complaints against crowd-control methods

The Court decided to hear all pending petitions together.

Court's Concerns

The Bench observed that concern exists for **both sides**.

Concern	Explanation
Protesters	Injuries allegedly caused during police action
Police personnel	Injuries suffered while controlling demonstrations
Public order	Maintaining peace without violating constitutional rights

The Court stressed that:

Self-imposed discipline by both citizens and law enforcement is essential for democracy.

Proposal for National Guidelines

Senior Advocate **Vikas Singh** requested the Supreme Court to formulate **uniform nationwide guidelines** regulating police behaviour during protests.

His argument

Current police practices:

- Differ from State to State.
- Lack uniform standards.
- Have led to repeated allegations of excessive force.

Therefore, India needs:

- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Uniform use-of-force principles
- Accountability mechanisms

Supreme Court's Response

Chief Justice Surya Kant agreed that a **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)** appears necessary.

However, he also clarified that any framework should not ignore unlawful conduct by protesters.

He observed:

| If anti-social elements commit unlawful acts during protests, those actions must also be examined.

Thus, the Court seeks a **balanced framework** protecting both constitutional rights and public order.

Petition Against Pellet Guns

A separate petition was also mentioned before the Court.

Filed by

- Former Intelligence Bureau Special Director **Yashovardhan Azad**
- Two other victims allegedly injured by pellet guns

Main Demands

The petition seeks:

Demand	Purpose
Ban on metallic kinetic projectiles	Stop the use of pellet guns and similar ammunition for crowd control
Ban on pump-action projectile guns (PAGs)	Prevent injuries during protests
Compensation	Monetary compensation for those injured during the July 20 protests

Constitutional Principle Involved

Article	Protection
Article 19(1)(a)	Freedom of speech and expression
Article 19(1)(b)	Right to assemble peacefully without arms

Possible Areas for Future Guidelines

Although no final guidelines have yet been framed, the Court's observations suggest they could cover:

Area	Possible Guideline
Use of force	Clear conditions for lathi-charge or force
Crowd control	Standard procedures before escalation
Accountability	Independent inquiry into allegations of police excess
Protest management	Protection of peaceful assemblies
Identification	Police accountability and documentation
Injured persons	Medical assistance and compensation mechanisms
Arrests	Transparent procedures and legal safeguards

Significance

Stakeholder	Impact
Citizens	Stronger protection for peaceful protests
Police	Clear nationwide operational standards
Governments	Greater accountability in handling demonstrations
Courts	Uniform legal framework for reviewing police action

To fix unemployment, fix the economy first

The Cockroach Janta Party's movement has highlighted the political urgency for reforming the economy to create more employment for India's youth. Fixing the education system alone will not solve the unemployment problem. The basic structure of the economy must be reformed. China and India, the only two countries in the world with populations exceeding one billion, have the greatest need for meaningful employment. If citizens are not fully employed, and incomes of masses do not rise, their economies cannot grow. China has done much better than India in this regard; the per capita income of Chinese citizens has risen roughly eight times faster than Indians' in the last 30 years. India's leaders find themselves in the middle of conflicting trends. First, they are pushing ahead with reforms for 'ease of doing business', diluting the rights of workers to organise and weakening environmental protection. Second, they are promoting the wide-spread application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to improve 'productivity' (and other benefits) in agriculture, industry, health and education, with productivity defined, purely in economic terms, as more output with less human input. Third, they also see the need to change the pattern of growth and increase employment elasticity. Employment elasticity is the amount of meaningful employment created with each unit of GDP growth, in which India has been a laggard since the liberal market economic reforms of the 1990s.

Since India has the largest population of youth in the world, economic growth alone cannot have the highest employment elasticity. However, the increased adoption of AI will only make it worse.

The China model
China has invested billions to become an AI superpower and has raced to integrate the technology

Arjun Maitra

Author of
Reimagining India's
Economy: The Road
to a Sustainable
Society

across a range of industries. By 2024, more than two million robots were already working in Chinese factories. And in Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen, Meituan, the nation's largest food delivery service, has experimented with using small autonomous robots to deliver food. But China's advances in AI have run headlong into a growing problem: anxiety over the workers who could be displaced. China's political and economic history reveals that, despite being an authoritarian country, the Chinese government is very attentive to what people are thinking and saying on the Internet. History has taught them that another revolution will form if disenfranchised and educated youth rise along with the disgruntled workers and peasants. They know they must respond.

Unemployment has been increasing in China. The unemployment rate for migrant workers rose to 5.7% in March this year, which has been the highest in nearly three years for China, while youth unemployment stood at 16.2% in April. Moreover, 70% of unemployed young people are university graduates, with older laid-off workers facing prolonged periods of joblessness.

However, Chinese courts have been swift to act. A court ruled in May that a tech company must be restrained from laying off a worker after replacing him with AI software.

Another ruled that, 'The development of artificial intelligence technology should be applied to liberating labour, promoting employment and increasing people's livelihoods'. And yet another ruled that 'companies that benefit from technology must, at the same time, adopt social responsibilities and protect workers' rights'.

China's Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security announced in January that it would roll out policies to address the impact of AI on jobs, including targeted support for key industries. In June, the State Council issued a plan on

implementing an "employment-first" strategy for the 2026-2030 period. Party officials have proposed sweeping government interventions such as training to help workers adapt to an AI-centric job market. The Chinese government's "people-first" ideology has served China's economy and its people well. China's leaders have remained socialist; they have always put the needs of common citizens, and the stability of China's society, above economists' demands for deregulation of markets and prices, especially with respect to labour, food, education, health, and housing.

The road ahead for India
India income levels must rise rapidly - in agriculture, manufacturing, and services. The government has added 'ease of living' to 'ease of doing business' as the purpose of the reforms required for India to become a "Viksit Bharat" by 2047. To make it the reality, it will have to put more teeth into its policies to increase employment and incomes, and to offset the negative impacts that AI will have on employment. Policies must require that employers take more responsibility for training their own workers, and a clamp on renewable energy projects such as the ultra-mega solar parks in the Kadapa and Kurunool districts, were established of subsequent years.

After a big gap thereafter, the stage has been set for yet another tranche of mass investments, the most prominent being the integrated steel plant being built by the JSW Group in Kadapa district. The rights of all workers must be firmly protected. While the views of financial investors must be heard, the views of workers and small-time entrepreneurs must be heard much more.

Royalaseema: India's new industrial hub

The TDP government has transformed the arid region into an economic hub

STATE OF PLAY

V. Raghavendra

Andhra Pradesh

Chronic drought and resultant famines have been an integral part of Rayalaseema, and its people have some of the driest landscapes in the world. However, the economic landscape here has undergone a perceptible transformation in the last decade and a half, as some mega manufacturing industries have started moving in with huge investments. Except agriculture and horticulture, which flourished in isolated pockets, Rayalaseema never had any major industrial activity to boast of, but this is rapidly changing and in no small measure.

Numerous cotton ginning and pressing, textile mills and mineral-based units were the earliest industries to come to the region in the mid-20th century. Multiple large-scale industries, including the State-owned Rayalaseema Thermal Power Plant, the cement plants of Dalma Bhatta and Zuari in the Kadapa-Kurunool districts, were established of subsequent years. After a big gap thereafter, the stage has been set for yet another tranche of mass investments, the most prominent being the integrated steel plant being built by the JSW Group in Kadapa district. The rights of all workers must be firmly protected. While the views of financial investors must be heard, the views of workers and small-time entrepreneurs must be heard much more.

Sri Sathya Sai district; and the Royal Enfield manufacturing plant near Tirupati. Then there is the Spice City poised to take shape close to the country's only rocket launchpad at Sriharikota.

These are only a few projects turning parts of the Rayalaseema region into a manufacturing hub.

A gradual boom

Due to its location in the rain shadow of the Deccan plateau and the consequent inability to fully capture the plentiful rains which the southwest and northeast monsoons normally bring, the Rayalaseema region had for centuries been starved. However, over the years, the same vast tracts of barren lands which entrepreneurs would not even look at, became beehives of industrial activity as the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) government of 2014-19 and the present TDP-led ruling coalition offered attractive incentives and created a more business-friendly environment.

The establishment of India's only KIA Motors' car manufacturing plant in Anantapur (the site is now in Sri Sathya Sai district) in 2019 was a trigger for the steady flow of investment into this region. Royal Enfield's entry into Tirupati from Tamil Na-

du, which is the only State where Eicher Motors is currently making the iconic motorcycle, complements the existing automotive ecosystem in Anantapur, positioning the region as a growing hub for vehicle manufacturing.

What clearly clinched all these projects is the government's focus on 'ease of doing business', and its subsequent evolution into the 'speed of doing business', and the untiring efforts made by the government through the State Investment Promotion Board to promote Rayalaseema as an investment destination.

While going the whole hog in rolling out the red carpet to investors across the industrial manufacturing spectrum, the government now has its sights fixed on consolidating the region's leadership in the production of horticultural crops. Accordingly, the food processing sector is being aggressively promoted.

Looking back, it was the JSW Group's Rayalaseema Steel Plant, for which the foundation was laid on July 3, which gave a fillip to the industrialisation of this region; its investment in the Phasip is ₹4,500 crore (₹1 MTPA capacity) out of the overall proposed investment of ₹16,350 crore.

From then on, several major industries started taking tangible shape in Sri City, adding up to the 'core manufacturing sector' in Rayalaseema that gained momentum.

The present government has essentially gone all out to woo investors to this region that was jinxed for decades and the positive outcome of its efforts can be seen in the fact that these projects which were once only on paper have started translating into reality.

raghavendra.v@thehindu.co.in

Why India's youth compete fiercely for government jobs

While the student protests achieved accountability, India must work on reshaping investment and growth to build health, education, and employment

DATA POINT

Shilpa Nigam

What began with a single leaked entrance exam paper became, in the student protesters' own telling, a movement about unemployment, shrinking opportunity, and how much a young person's future hinges on a handful of competitive examinations.

India has dramatically expanded school and higher education; today's young Indian is far more educated than her parents. Governments across party lines have invested heavily in their universities, apprenticeships, and vocational training.

However, these investments have collided with a labour market capable of absorbing only a fraction of the millions they helped create. Of about 307 million people aged 15 to 29, some 141 million are in the labour force and 127 million are employed. Yet only about 15 million, fewer than one in eight, hold a regular salaried job with a contract and social security - what most would regard as a 'good job' with fair pay, social protection, decent working conditions, and career progression. This scarcity creates two forms of distress: often mistaken as separate problems.

At one end are young people who leave school early. Among Indians aged 15-29, whose education is largely complete, about 39% have not finished secondary school and over half hold no qualification beyond Class 10. Most are employed; joblessness among the middle-educated is below 5%. However, they work in informal, low-paid, and often subsistence jobs as casual labourers, are self-employed, or are unpaid workers in family farms and businesses (Chart 1).

For many young women, this arithmetic ends in withheld pay with wages this low, marriage and unpaid care win. Over two in five are neither working nor studying, against fewer than one in 10 men.

While conventional analyses often state that educated youth are rejecting work by holding out for comfortable jobs, the data says otherwise. Graduates face the highest unemployment rate of any group at 22.7%, more than three times the rate of those who completed school (Chart 2). They are only 17% of India's population, but 50% of all unemployed young people. While expectations have risen, the narrative suggests, "choosy graduate" narrative suggests. Only about 22% of the labour force earns more than ₹15,000 a month, with nearly 55% earning below ₹9,000. Only about one out of 100 graduates secure the salaried employment a degree promises (Chart 2).

India, then, has roughly 15 million meaningful jobs and 300 million young people.

The appeal of government jobs
Hence, the extraordinary importance of government recruitment examinations. They are among the few routes to secure work for first-generation graduates who lack degrees, and the networks of class, caste, and family that shape private-sector hiring networks which are far less open to marginalised households, regardless of talent. These exams promise to judge candidates by performance alone. In 2024, roughly 30 lakh candidates competed for about 17,000 government posts; about 170 candidates for every vacancy.

Part of the problem is that the transition from school to work is itself broken. Fieldwork by JustJobs network particularly highlights the wage-expectation mismatch. Young people express clear ambitions but cannot name the course or occupation that would get them

there; and when a job appears, the entry-level pay of ₹10,000-15,000 a month falls well below the ₹20,000-25,000 graduates say they need even locally. Moreover, a job requiring migration is worth taking only at a pay of ₹30,000-40,000. Faced with no visible path, many rationally default to a general degree and the examination queue.

These failures are symptoms of a deeper structural problem. India's economy has become efficient at generating cost, but less so at generating meaningful employment. Through much of the 2010s, growth remained strong while employment stagnated; since 2019, the rate of increase has reflected workers returning to low-productivity agriculture rather than moving into better-paying jobs. Investment has favoured capital- and technology-intensive sectors, with rising automation creating relatively fewer jobs.

Public investment has risen significantly, but it has flowed more into physical infrastructure than into health and education systems. India spends about 2.7% of its GDP on education, well below the national target of 6%, and about 1.9% on health, short of the 2.5% of its National Health Policy set for 2025.

None of this is the fault of the young people who look to the streets. The school-leaver in an unpaid family worker and the graduate on her fifth attempt face the same shortage from opposite ends. Neither lacks effort. What is scarce is not determination but good-quality jobs.

The students achieved what a protest can: accountability for an immediate failure, and national attention for a larger crisis. But recruitment reform can change the fate of 170 applicants for every vacancy. The deeper challenge is to reshape growth itself.

Until growth generates opportunity as fast as education generates aspiration, India's young will keep waiting for the economy to catch up with their ambitions.

Chasing opportunity

Data were sourced from the Periodic Labour Force Survey, the Economic Survey and national accounts, and field research by JustJobs Network. Dr. Shilpa Nigam is a Research Director at JustJobs Network.

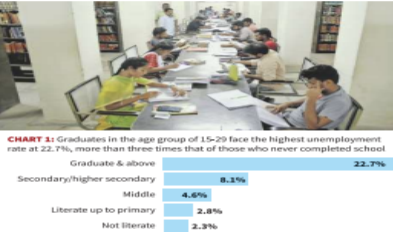


CHART 2: Education barely pays until one gets a degree, as the average monthly earnings of young workers by highest-level of education shows (in ₹)

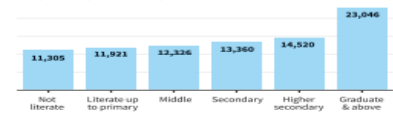


CHART 3: Only one in eight workers hold a 'good job'. The share of employed youth (aged 15-29) by status of employment

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The **THE HINDU** India.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 28, 1976

Concordance of Indus script to be published

Madras, July 27: The Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay, will publish the Concordance of the Indus script by a new process, incorporating additional study material.

More than 9,000 "seals", with signs and symbols of the Indus script have been found at the sites of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa (now in Pakistan) and in Kalibanga in Rajasthan. These valuable finds throw significant light on the Indus valley civilisation dating back to 4,000 years. Recently, Finnish scholars studied them and prepared a concordance, with the help of a computer.

The Russians have also brought out a publication in their own language. An Indian scholar, Mr. I. Mahadevan is now trying to publish the same, using the computer technique, but adopting a new method. Under this "computerised photo composition printing" process, being attempted for the first time in India, all the basic symbols in the Indus script will be drawn by an artist and the same will be microfilmed. The text, the positions, the statistical analysis of signs and other relevant information, will be typed and recorded on electronic tapes. The entire matter will then be fed into the press.

Each sign will have a code number. The computer will select the appropriate signs from the micro-film and feed them into the press by the photo composition method. By this, the entire text of the concordance, brought up to date, running to about 700 pages, will be printed in short time and made available at a comparatively cheap price.

The Finnish scholars adopted the computer plotting method in which the electronic gadget itself drew each and every sign. Under the new technique, one symbol in the micro-film can be used for several impressions.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 28, 1926

£6,800 for 'Pilgrim's progress'

London, July 27: The first edition of the Pilgrim's Progress was auctioned at Sotheby's for £6,800. The purchaser was Mr. Quaritch. Only four other perfect copies are known.

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India has dramatically expanded school and higher education; today's young Indian is far more educated than her parents. Governments across party lines have invested heavily in skilling, apprenticeships, and vocational training.

However, these investments have collided with a labour market incapable of absorbing the aspirations they helped create. Of about 307 million people aged 15 to 29, some 141 million are in the labour force and 127 million are employed. Yet only about 15 million, fewer than one in eight, hold a regular salaried job with a contract and social security – what most would regard as a 'good job' with fair pay, social protection, decent working conditions, and career progression. This scarcity creates two forms of distress, often mistaken as separate problems.

At one end are young people who leave school early. Among Indians aged 15-29, whose education is largely complete, about 39% have not finished secondary school and over half hold no qualification beyond Class 10. Most are employed; joblessness among the middle-educated is below 5%. However, they work in informal, low-paid, and often subsistence jobs as casual labourers; are self-employed; or are unpaid workers in family farms and businesses (Chart 3).

A worker who completed only Class 8 earns roughly ₹12,300 a month, and finishing secondary school adds barely another

₹1,000. For many young women, this arithmetic ends in withdrawal: with wages this low, marriage and unpaid care win. Over two in five are neither working nor studying, against fewer than one in 10 men.

At the other end are graduates. While conventional analyses often state that educated youth are rejecting work by holding out for comfortable jobs, the data says otherwise. Graduates face the highest unemployment rate of any group at 22.7%, more than three times that of those who never completed school (Chart 1). They are only 17% of India's youth population, but 56% of all unemployed young people. While expectations matter, it is far lesser than what the "choosy graduate" narrative suggests. Only about 22% of the labour force earns more than ₹15,000 a month, with nearly 55% earning below ₹9,000. Only about 17 out of 100 graduates secure the salaried employment a degree promises (Chart 2).

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CHART 1: Graduates in the age group of 15-29 face the highest unemployment rate at 22.7%, more than three times that of those who never completed school

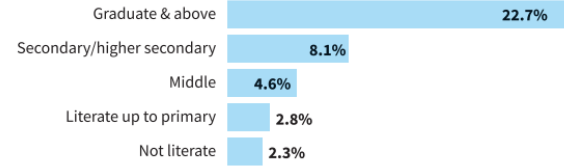


CHART 2: Education barely pays until one gets a degree, as the average monthly earnings of young workers by highest-level of education shows (In ₹)

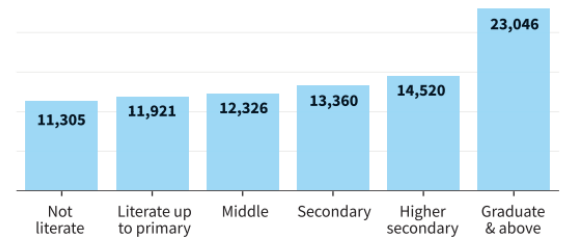
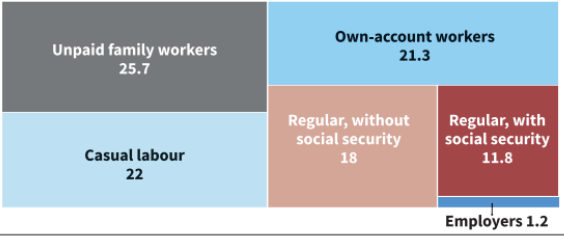


CHART 3: Only one in eight workers hold a 'good job'. The share of employed youth (aged 15-29) by status of employment



Chasing opportunity

Data were sourced from the Periodic Labour Force Survey, the Economic Survey and national accounts; and field research by JustJobs Network. Dr. Shipra Nigam is a Research Director at JustJobs Network



CHART 1: Graduates in the age group of 15-29 face the highest unemployment rate at 22.7%, more than three times that of those who never completed school

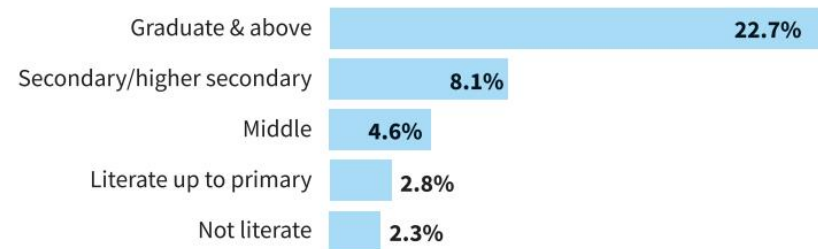


CHART 2: Education barely pays until one gets a degree, as the average monthly earnings of young workers by highest-level of education shows (In ₹)

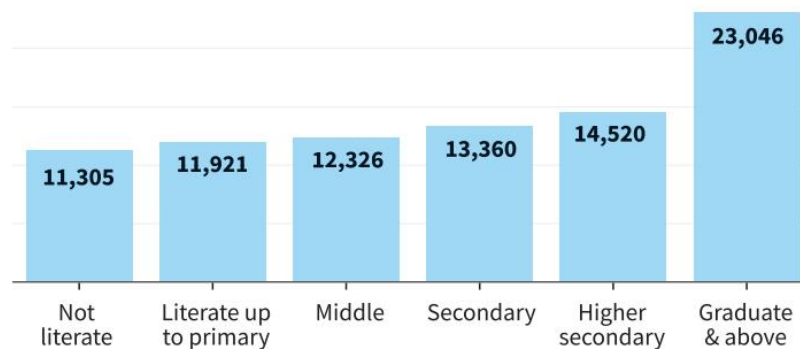


CHART 3: Only one in eight workers hold a 'good job'. The share of employed youth (aged 15-29) by status of employment



The article argues that the recent student protests were **not merely about an exam paper leak**, but reflected a much deeper crisis:

- **Lack of quality employment**
- **Shrinking economic opportunities**
- **Heavy dependence on government jobs**
- **Mismatch between education and employment**

While the protests achieved accountability in the short term, India now needs structural reforms to generate enough good-quality jobs.

Why Government Jobs Have Become So Important

The article identifies several reasons:

Reason	Explanation
Job security	Stable income and long-term employment
Social security	Pension, provident fund, medical benefits
Better working conditions	Compared with informal jobs
Merit-based recruitment	Exams provide opportunities irrespective of social background
Limited private-sector opportunities	Especially for graduates from modest backgrounds

India's Education Success

India has significantly expanded:

- School education
- Higher education
- Skill development programmes
- Apprenticeships
- Vocational training

Today's youth are more educated than previous generations.

However, the economy has **not created enough quality jobs** for these graduates.

Labour Market Problem

Population (Age 15–29)

Category	Number
Total youth	307 million
In labour force	141 million
Employed	127 million

Despite these numbers:

- Only about **15 million** hold regular salaried jobs with social security.
- Around **300 million young people** compete for a relatively small pool of desirable employment.

Only One in Eight Has a "Good Job"

According to the article:

Employment Status	Share (%)
Unpaid family workers	25.7%
Casual labour	22.0%
Own-account workers (self-employed)	21.3%
Regular job without social security	18.0%
Regular job with social security ("good jobs")	11.8%
Employers	1.2%

Key takeaway

Only **11.8% (roughly one in eight)** employed young people have what most would consider a secure, quality job with social security.

Education Does Not Guarantee Employment

Unemployment Rate by Education

Education Level	Unemployment Rate
Graduate & above	22.7%
Secondary/Higher secondary	8.1%
Middle school	4.6%
Literate up to primary	2.8%
Not literate	2.3%

Observation

Graduates experience the **highest unemployment rate**, more than **10 times** that of people without formal schooling.

This reflects that while education has expanded, graduate-level jobs have not kept pace.

Salary by Education

Average monthly earnings of young workers:

Education	Average Monthly Earnings
Not literate	₹11,305
Primary	₹11,921
Middle	₹12,326
Secondary	₹13,360
Higher secondary	₹14,520
Graduate & above	₹23,046

What this means

Graduates earn more **if they secure employment**, but many remain unemployed while searching for such jobs.

Many Graduates Wait Instead of Working

The article notes:

- Young people often reject low-paying jobs while preparing for competitive exams.
- Many expect salaries of **₹20,000–25,000 per month**, whereas available entry-level jobs may offer only **₹10,000–15,000**.
- Migration to another city for a job paying only ₹30,000–40,000 may not be financially worthwhile after living costs.

As a result, many continue preparing for government recruitment exams.

Structural Economic Problem

The author argues the issue is deeper than recruitment delays.

During the 2010s

- Economic growth remained relatively strong.
- Employment growth stagnated.

Since 2019

Much of the increase in employment has been in:

- Agriculture
- Low-productivity work
- Informal employment

rather than higher-paying, formal-sector jobs.

Technology and Automation

Investment has increasingly favoured:

- Capital-intensive industries
- Technology-intensive production
- Automation

While these sectors raise productivity, they create **fewer jobs**, limiting employment opportunities for young graduates.

Public Investment Imbalance

The article argues that public investment has focused more on physical infrastructure than on human development.

Government Spending

Sector	Spending (% of GDP)
Education	2.7%
Health	1.9%

The author notes:

- Education spending remains below the long-standing target of **6% of GDP**.
- Health spending is below the **2.5% of GDP** goal set in the National Health Policy.



Indicator

Value

Youth population (15–29)

307 million

Youth in labour force

141 million

Youth employed

127 million

Youth with regular jobs & social security

~15 million (11.8% of employed youth)

Graduate unemployment rate

22.7%

Graduate average monthly earnings (if employed)

₹23,046

Education spending

2.7% of GDP

Health spending

1.9% of GDP



Gadkari can sue Meta, X over AI deepfakes on E20: Bombay HC

Omkar Gokhale
Mumbai. July 27

UNION TRANSPORT Minister Nitin Gadkari can file a civil suit against Meta platforms, X Corp, Google LLC, and others over allegedly defamatory AI-generated deepfake videos and manipulated digital content linked to the ethanol-blended fuel controversy, the Bombay High Court ruled on Monday.

The suit seeks the removal of “defamatory” content, which, according to Gadkari, “falsely” associates him with the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme and the E20 initiative. According to his plea, both are administered exclusively by the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and Gadkari has no role in either programme.

Justice Abhay Ahuja allowed Gadkari, represented by advocate Sandeep S Ladda, to institute the suit in the Bombay High Court. The court will hear his application for interim relief, including a temporary injunction on Tuesday.

The Union Ministries of Electronics and Information Technology and Telecommunications have also been named as respondents. In the suit, Gadkari said purpose of his civil suit against Meta Platforms, X Corp, Google LLC and others was not to prevent public discussion or criticism of his actions or government policies.

“The purpose and object of filing the suit is not to curtail or prevent the public at large from engaging in discussion, debate, analysis or fair, just and bona fide criticism of any decision taken by the plaintiff himself or by his office,” the plea said.

It added that Gadkari “does not seek to stifle or restrain fair criticism, dissent, debate or bona fide expression of opinion concerning his public life, governmental policies or official functions”. The defamatory and deepfake content published by defendant platforms are “false, fabricated and defamatory with respect of the plaintiff”.

The suit argues the content in question is “ex facie false, fabricated, malicious, abusive and



Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari during the Monsoon session of Parliament in New Delhi on Monday. PTI

grossly defamatory”, and that the deepfake videos amount to an unauthorised use of Gadkari’s personality and publicity rights without his consent.

It says, “Plaintiff has no role or nexus whatsoever with EBP or the E20 initiative, which is administered exclusively by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. The Defamatory Content, insofar as it consists of profane and abusive language directed at the Plaintiff, falls outside the ambit of legitimate political criticism or satire. The Deep Fake Content constitutes

an unauthorised exploitation of the Plaintiffs personality and publicity rights. That the balance of convenience lies in favour of the Plaintiff, who continues to suffer irreparable harm to his reputation not compensable in terms of money.”

In his plea, Gadkari has alleged that some unknown persons circulated posts and deepfake content, falsely portraying him as personally responsible for the EBP and E20 initiatives. The suit claimed these posts also allege that he and his family had financially benefited from it.

Gadkari claimed the objectionable content “falsely portrays” plaintiff as personally responsible for the decisions and falsely allege that he and/or his family have “derived undue pecuniary benefit from the programme, insinuating corruption, conflict of interest and abuse of office”.

The suit calls the allegations false and designed to create a misleading impression that Gadkari misused his public office for private gain, causing irreparable harm to his reputation. It seeks directions to the defendants to remove, disable and stop the circulation of the allegedly defamatory and manipulated content.

After Gadkari dismissed claims that EBP damages vehicles, saying manufacturers had attributed the reported breakdowns to contaminated or non-standard fuel, the BJP’s Nagpur social media cell chief filed a complaint accusing several influencers of spreading misinformation and using abusive, defamatory language against the minister.

The **Bombay High Court** has allowed Union Road Transport and Highways Minister **Nitin Gadkari** to proceed with a **civil defamation suit** against **Meta, X (formerly Twitter), Google LLC**, and others over allegedly AI-generated **deepfake videos and manipulated digital content** related to the **E20 (20% ethanol-blended petrol)** initiative.

The Court has permitted Gadkari to institute the suit and will hear his request for **interim relief**, including a temporary injunction, to prevent further circulation of the content.

Why Did Gadkari File the Suit?

Gadkari alleges that AI-generated deepfake videos and manipulated posts:

- Falsely portray him as personally responsible for the E20 ethanol-blended fuel policy.
- Claim that he or his family financially benefited from the policy.
- Suggest corruption, conflict of interest, and abuse of public office.
- Damage his personal and professional reputation.

According to the petition:

The content is **false, fabricated, malicious, abusive, grossly defamatory**, and created using AI without his consent.

What is the E20 Programme?

The article notes that:

Item	Details
E20	Petrol blended with 20% ethanol
Administered by	Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas
Gadkari's role	He states he has no administrative role in implementing either the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme or the E20 initiative.

Gadkari argues that the viral posts wrongly attribute the policy entirely to him.

Defendants in the Case

The suit has been filed against:

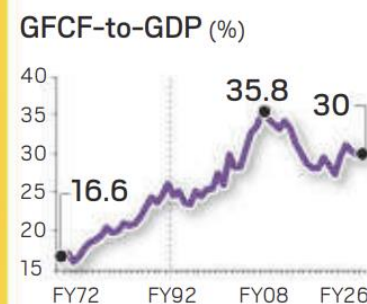
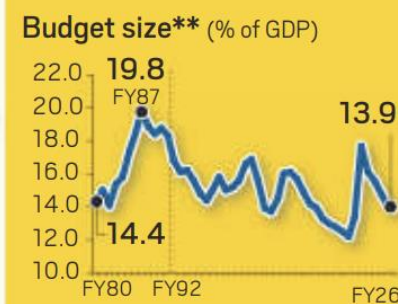
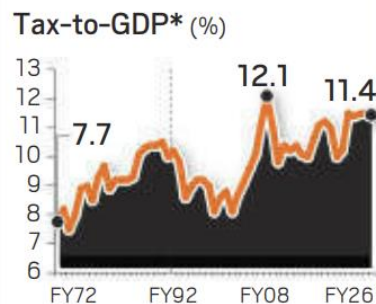
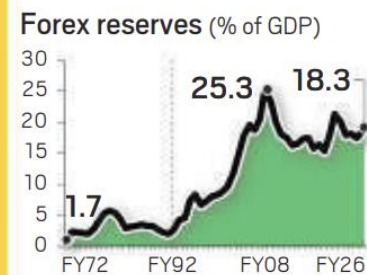
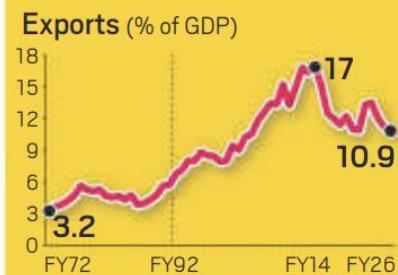
Defendant	Reason
Meta Platforms	Hosting and circulating the alleged content
X Corp	Hosting the posts/videos
Google LLC	Distribution/search-related role
Other unknown persons	Alleged creators and publishers of the manipulated content
Union Ministries of Electronics & IT and Telecommunications	Named as respondents in the proceedings

SPORT » PAGE 19

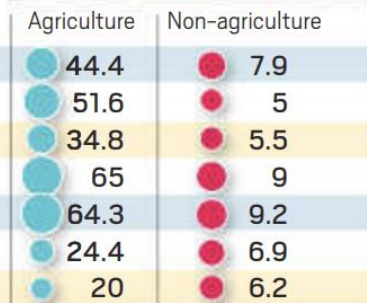
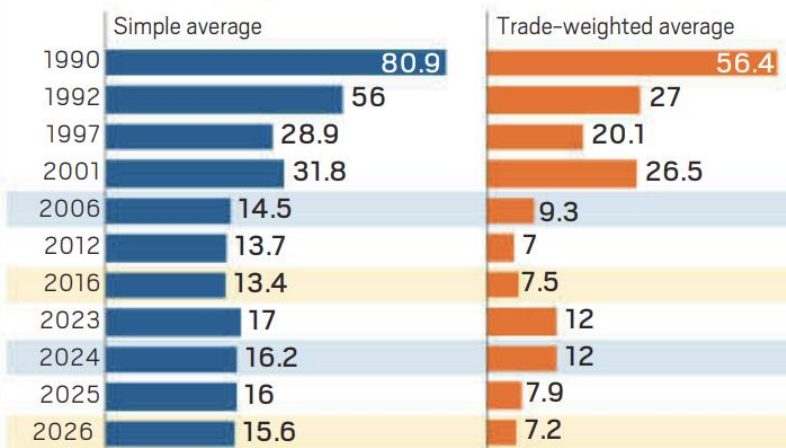
LIBERALISATION: 35 YEARS HENCE

THE 1991 ECONOMIC reforms have accelerated India's growth, underscoring the salience of an open, optimally deregulated economy. Several indicators, such as exports, investments, and foreign exchange reserves rose at rates faster than the GDP thanks to the large-scale policy liberalisation undertaken 35 years ago. Tax buoyancy has improved significantly but tax-GDP ratio (~18% for Centre and States combined) needs to rise further for government Budgets to be large enough. Policy directions will need recalibration to ensure growth is inclusive and faster. The much-feared middle-income trap can be avoided only by strengthening growth impulses adequately and

without delay. Public spending on education, healthcare, and assured infrastructure sectors requires more impact. Structural reforms should promote entrepreneurship, ease of doing business and reduce logistics costs. Policies must aid the growth of MSMEs and ensure competition. Manufacturing needs more incentives to diversify across labour-intensive and new-age tech-driven sectors. Adequate wages and reasonable social security cover for workers are critical for raising purchasing power. Capital allocation must be more productive. Public resources ought to be apportioned in the right spirit of cooperative federalism.



India's tariffs# (in %)



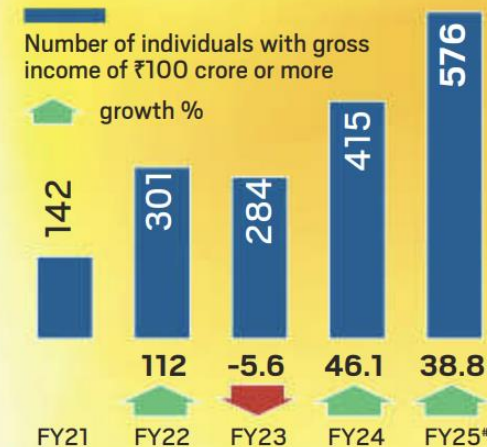
* Centre's tax ** Centre's budget, GFCF – Gross fixed capital formation; #GTRI estimates, Compiled by Saikat Neogi

Source: MoSPI, CMIE

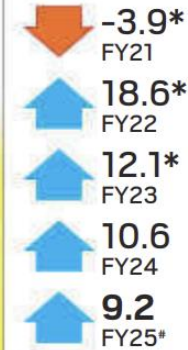
FOURFOLD SURGE IN PEOPLE WITH ₹100-CR+ INCOME

THE NUMBER OF individuals with gross total income of ₹100 crore or more have increased four-fold in the five years through FY25, the finance ministry told Lok Sabha on Monday. In FY25, 576 individuals reported gross total income of ₹100 crore or more, compared with 415 in the previous fiscal, an y-o-y growth of 39%. In contrast, India's real GDP grew 7.1% in FY25, nominal GDP by 9.7%.

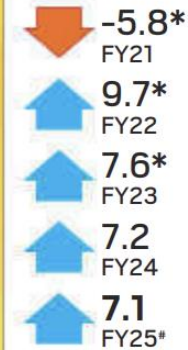
— SHUBHAM RANA



Nominal per capita net national income
(growth %)



Real GDP growth
(in %)



* Figures based on FY12 GDP series
* Assessment year 2025-26



ASSESSMENT YEAR	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS	YOY GROWTH
AY 2021–22	142	—
AY 2022–23	301	+112%
AY 2023–24	284	–5.6%
AY 2024–25	415	+46.1%
AY 2025–26	576	+38.8%





Income

Money earned during a year

Measured through tax returns

Used in this Finance Ministry
data



Wealth

Total assets owned

Measured through net worth

Used in rich lists like Forbes and
Bloomberg



Comparison with Forbes and Bloomberg

Forbes

According to **Forbes**:

- India has **229 US-dollar billionaires** (based on **net worth**).

Since **US\$1 billion $\approx$ ₹96–100 billion**, a dollar billionaire typically has a net worth of around **₹9,600–10,000 crore** or more.

Bloomberg Billionaires Index

- Estimates **23 Indians** among the world's **500 richest people**, again based on **net worth**.

Household Income Data Gap

The article notes that India currently lacks comprehensive, up-to-date household income data.

To address this:

- The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** has launched the **first National Household Income Survey**.

Timeline

Item	Details
Survey started	April 2026
Survey ends	March 2027
Results expected	After additional processing, likely a few months later

Government's Position on Inequality

In Parliament, the Finance Ministry stated that:

- It **does not maintain official data on the aggregate wealth of taxpayers**.
- It has **not conducted a dedicated study** on the impact of increasing concentration of income and wealth on:
 - income inequality,
 - investment,
 - employment generation,
 - inclusive growth.

Measures Cited by the Government

The government highlighted several developments:

Indicator	Government's Observation
Labour market	Recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic
Unemployment	Declined to 3.1% in 2025 (Periodic Labour Force Survey)
Rural & urban inequality	Gini coefficients declined in the latest Household Consumption Expenditure Survey
Public spending	Increased spending on food, health, education, housing and social security
Tax policy	Progressive income-tax structure aimed at reducing inequality

Independent Research Mentioned

The article also cites the **World Inequality Report 2026** (published by the Paris School of Economics), which presents a different perspective:

- Income inequality in India remains among the highest globally.
- There has been relatively little reduction in inequality in recent years.
- The **top 10% of earners** account for roughly **58% of national income**.
- The **bottom 50%** receive only about **15% of national income**.

This is presented as an external research finding and not as the government's official position.

Key Takeaways

Topic	Key Point
Individuals earning over ₹100 crore	576 in AY 2025–26
Growth since AY 2021–22	More than 4×
Basis of data	Income Tax Returns (annual income)
Forbes/Bloomberg	Measure wealth , not income
Household Income Survey	India's first nationwide survey is underway
Government's stance	No official aggregate wealth database or dedicated inequality study
Independent research	Suggests income inequality remains high

Feature	Income Inequality	Wealth Inequality
Measures	Salary, wages, business income	Assets such as land, houses, shares, gold and savings
Common indicator	Gini Index	Wealth Gini / wealth shares
Usually higher?	Lower	Much higher in most countries
Example	Sweden has relatively low income inequality	Sweden has among the highest wealth inequality in Europe

Topic

Fact

Highest income inequality

Namibia

Highest wealth concentration (widely cited)

South Africa

Income inequality measure

Gini Index

Wealth inequality measure

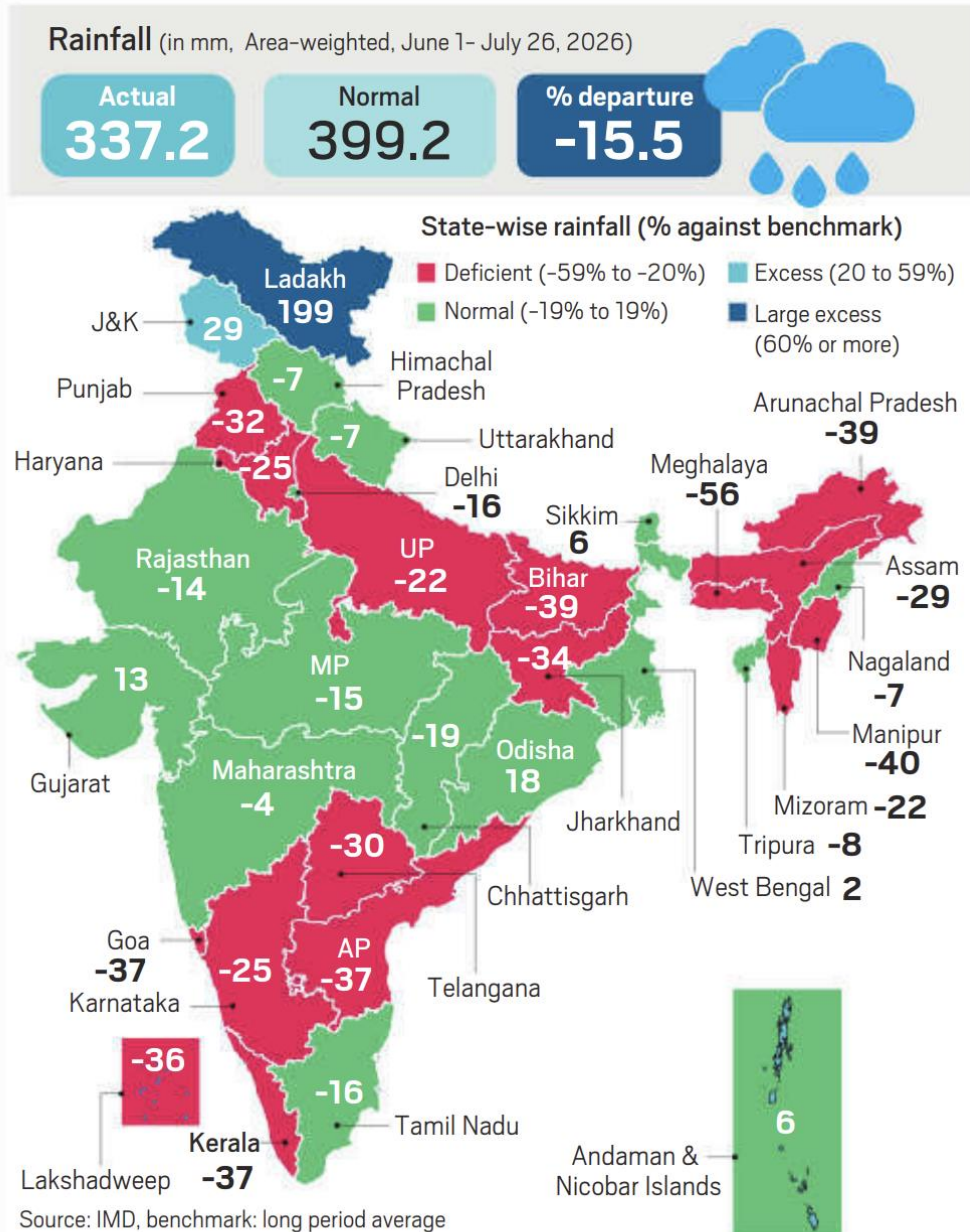
Wealth Gini / Wealth Share

India

Top 1% owns about **40% of national wealth** according to recent World Inequality Lab estimates. ([Time](#))

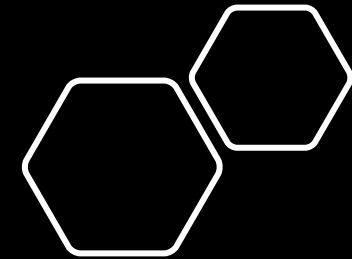
MONSOON DEFICIT DOWN TO 15.5%

AFTER A 40% deficiency in June, the southwest monsoon has been largely active in July which has brought down the overall shortfall in rainfall to 15.5%, reports **Sandip Das**. States including Andhra Pradesh (-37%), Kerala (-37%), Bihar (-39%), Jharkhand (-34%) have received deficient rainfall against the benchmark so far. Cumulative rainfall during June 1-July 26 was 337.7 mm against the benchmark LPA of 399.2 mm, which is still in the 'deficient' range. July rainfall has been just 1% below benchmark. "There has been a strong intra-seasonal rainfall variability during July, which is likely to continue in August," Akshay Deoras, senior research scientist at the Department of Meteorology, University of Reading, UK, told *FE*.

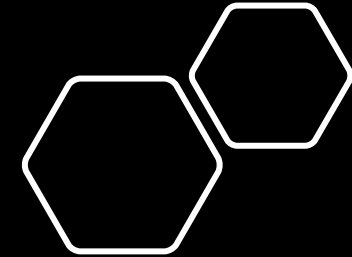


Parameter	Value
Average annual rainfall	1,170 mm (117 cm)
Average Southwest Monsoon (June–September) rainfall	~880 mm (88 cm)
Share of annual rainfall from Southwest Monsoon	About 75%
Northeast Monsoon contribution	Mainly affects Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, south Andhra Pradesh and parts of Kerala (October–December)

Season	Months	Contribution to Annual Rainfall
Southwest Monsoon	June– September	~75%
Northeast Monsoon	October– December	~11%
Pre-monsoon	March–May	~10%
Winter Rainfall	January– February	~4%



Region	Approximate Annual Rainfall
Western Rajasthan (Thar Desert)	<100 mm
Indo-Gangetic Plain	600–1,200 mm
Central India	900–1,400 mm
Western Ghats	2,000–4,000 mm
Northeast India (Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh)	2,000–11,000 mm



Topic

Fact

Average annual rainfall in India

1,170 mm (117 cm)

Monsoon season

June–September

Rainfall received during SW
Monsoon

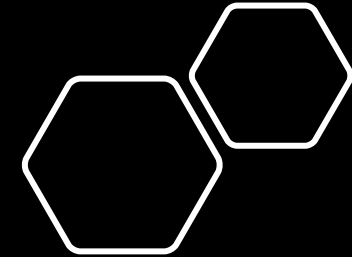
About 75% of annual rainfall

Wettest place in India

Mawsynram, Meghalaya

Driest region

**Western Rajasthan (Thar
Desert)**



ANNAM.AI Smart Weather Stations Deployed in Kerala



Kerala has begun deploying **ANNAM.AI Smart Weather Stations** to support **climate-smart agriculture**. The initiative aims to provide farmers with **hyperlocal, AI-based weather information** for better crop planning, irrigation, pest management, and disaster preparedness.

ANNAM.AI has been developed by the **Centre of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture at IIT Ropar**, with support from the **Ministry of Education**.

What is ANNAM.AI?

ANNAM.AI (Artificial Intelligence for Agriculture) is a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) platform for agriculture that combines:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Internet of Things (IoT)
- Weather sensing
- Satellite and ground observations
- Data analytics

to provide real-time agricultural advisories.

Deployment in Kerala

The smart weather stations have been deployed under Kerala's climate adaptation efforts to:

- Improve agricultural decision-making.
- Help farmers cope with changing weather.
- Reduce crop losses.
- Increase productivity.

Features of Smart Weather Stations

Feature	Details
Coverage	Weather information every 3 km
Technology	AI + IoT sensors
Real-time monitoring	Yes
Hyperlocal forecasting	Yes



Parameter

Rainfall

Temperature

Humidity

Wind speed & direction

Solar radiation

Soil moisture

Importance

Irrigation planning

Crop growth

Disease prediction

Spraying operations

Crop productivity

Water management



Benefit

Irrigation scheduling

Pest prediction

Fertiliser planning

Weather alerts

Crop advisory

Insurance support

Impact

Saves water

Reduces crop losses

Improves efficiency

Disaster preparedness

Better yields

More accurate loss assessment

Made-in-Bharat Chips for Space Rockets Announced



Why Are Space Chips Special?

Unlike ordinary electronic chips, space-grade semiconductors must withstand:

- Extreme vibration
- Radiation
- Vacuum
- Very high and very low temperatures
- Launch shocks

Applications

Space chips are used in:

System	Function
Flight computers	Navigation
Guidance systems	Rocket control
Telemetry	Data transmission
Communication	Spacecraft communication
Power management	Energy control

ISRO's Semiconductor Roadmap

ISRO announced plans to develop indigenous space-grade semiconductors within the next few years.

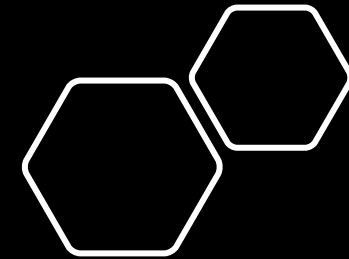
The programme includes:

- Radiation-hardened processors.
- Mission-specific controllers.
- Indigenous onboard electronics.

Significance

Benefit	Impact
Atmanirbhar Bharat	Reduced import dependence
National security	Greater strategic autonomy
Space industry	Supports private space companies
Cost reduction	Lower long-term dependence on foreign suppliers

Rank	Country	Global Strength	Major Companies	Key Capabilities	Approx. Global Foundry Share*
1	Taiwan	World's leading chip manufacturer	TSMC, UMC	2 nm, 3 nm, 5 nm, AI chips, advanced foundry	~65–70%
2	South Korea	Memory chip leader	Samsung Electronics, SK Hynix	DRAM, NAND Flash, advanced logic chips	~12–15%
3	China	Fastest-growing domestic manufacturing	SMIC, Hua Hong	Mature nodes (28–7 nm), expanding capacity	~8–10%
4	United States	Design and advanced manufacturing	Intel, GlobalFoundries, Micron, Texas Instruments	CPUs, GPUs, defence chips, memory	~6–8%
5	Japan	Specialty chips and semiconductor materials	Kioxia, Renesas, Sony	Automotive chips, image sensors, power semiconductors	~5–6%
6	India	Emerging semiconductor ecosystem	Tata Electronics, CG Power, Kaynes Semicon, Micron India (ATMP), ISMC (planned)	Chip packaging (ATMP/OSAT), semiconductor fabs under development, chip design	<1%



Government Approves Polymer ₹10 and ₹20 Banknotes

The Government of India has approved the **Reserve Bank of India's proposal** to introduce **polymer ₹10 and ₹20 banknotes**.

The approval is for **field trials**, and nationwide circulation will begin only if the trials are successful.

What Are Polymer Banknotes?

Polymer banknotes are printed on **plastic-based polymer substrate** rather than traditional cotton-paper.

Features

Feature	Benefit
Waterproof	Longer life
Tear-resistant	Difficult to damage
Dirt resistant	Cleaner notes
Longer circulation	Reduced replacement cost
Better security	Harder to counterfeit

Country

Australia

Canada

New Zealand

United Kingdom

Romania

Vietnam

Status

Pioneer

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Selected denominations

Advantages

Longer lifespan than paper notes.

Better hygiene.

Lower replacement costs.

Enhanced anti-counterfeiting features.



Challenges

Higher initial printing cost.

Special recycling arrangements required.

Public adaptation to a new note material.



Type

Examples

Source

Natural polymers

Cellulose, starch, proteins, DNA,
natural rubber

Plants & animals

Synthetic polymers

Plastic, nylon, polyester, PVC, Teflon

Man-made

Polymer

Used In

Polyethylene (PE)

Plastic bags, bottles

Polypropylene (PP)

Food containers, ropes

PVC

Water pipes, electrical cables

Nylon

Clothes, fishing nets

Polyester

Fabrics

Silicone

Medical devices, sealants

Rubber

Tyres, erasers



Paper Note

Tears easily

Absorbs water

Gets dirty quickly

Wears out faster

Easier to counterfeit

Polymer Note

Tear-resistant

Waterproof

Easy to clean

Lasts 2–4 times longer

Better security features

Word of the day

Laconic:

through the use of as few words as possible

Synonyms: terse, succinct, concise

Usage: *The Minister remained laconic despite persistent queries from reporters.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/laconic

International Phonetic Alphabet: /lə'kɒnɪk/





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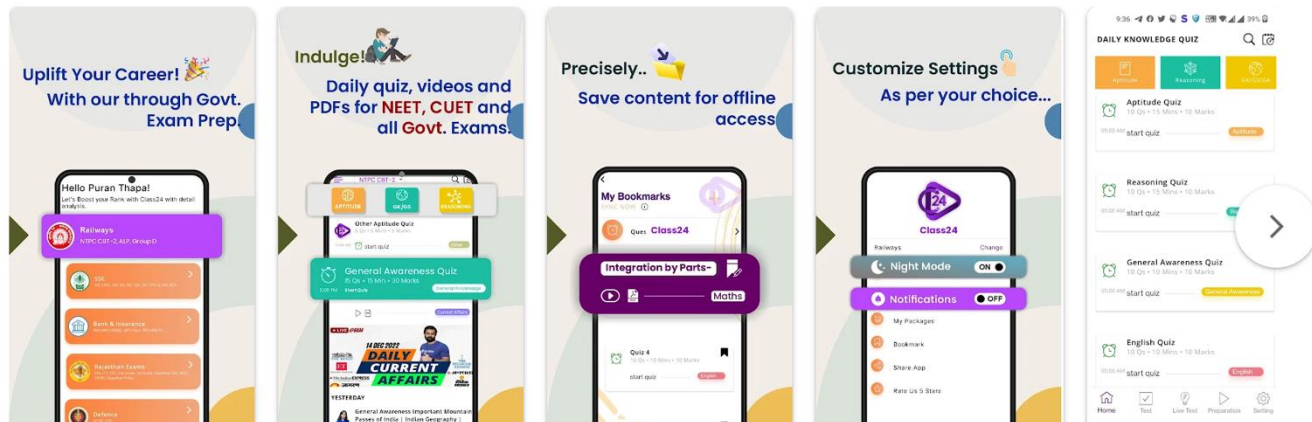
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