

# Daily Current Affairs

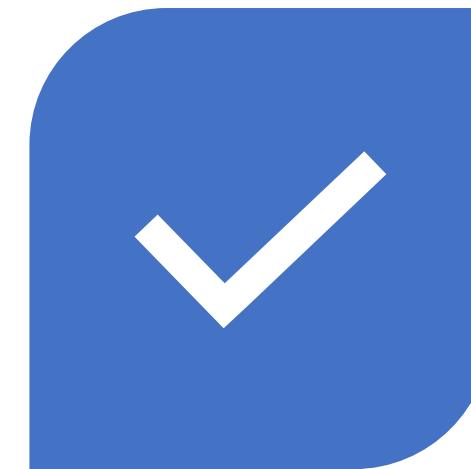




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10 MCQ QUIZ

“Consistency is silent; success is loud — exams reward the quiet discipline you practice daily.”

# **GK-GS + COMPLETE CURRENT AFFAIRS 2025-26 COMBO BATCH**

**BY BHUNESH SIR**

**SUITABLE FOR UPSC PRELIMS, STATE PCS, SSC (CGL, CHSL, GD),  
BANKING, RAILWAY, DEFENCE, EPFO, IB, RRB NTPC,  
CET, RAS, AND OTHER SIMILAR EXAMS.**

## **WHAT THIS COMBO INCLUDES**

- COMPLETE GK-GS COURSE (RECORDED)  
200+ HOURS OF CONTENT**
- COMPLETE CURRENT AFFAIRS 2025-26 (LIVE BATCH)  
CURRENT AFFAIRS FROM JANUARY 2025 TO MARCH  
2026 20 HIGH PRIORITY TOPICS WILL BE COVERED**







MEET IN NEAR FUTURE:  
Netanyahu speaks to  
Modi, hints at visit  
NEWS ▶ PAGE 4



ROLL REVISION  
EC issues  
SIR hearing  
notice to  
Amartya Sen

NEWS ▶ PAGE 8



NOTIFICATION OUT  
Census 2021 first  
phase from April 1  
NEWS ▶ PAGE 8



NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE GRID  
The search  
engine of digital  
authoritarianism  
A tool of suspicion built  
in the name of safety

EDITORIAL ▶ PAGE 8



COUNTER-ATTACK  
Bethell gives England  
a fighting chance  
SPORT ▶ PAGE 16

INSIDE



Hadi Osman's  
party rejects  
charge-sheets

**DHAKA** Main Bangladeshi student leader Sharif Osman Hadi's party has rejected the charge-sheets in the murder case against the state machinery being investigated in Dhaka. The term "state shed blood" may be forced to "take blood as well", inquired Mantha, who said, is Page 18

Centre moves to  
restore popular  
govt. in Manipur

**NEW DELHI** The Centre is holding talks to restore the popular government in Manipur where President's Rule will complete a year on January 15, 2020. The State Assembly is in suspended animation. Over the past week, two meetings were convened by the Union Amit Shah and Home Secretary Govind Singh Deo, is Page 9

X in 'compliance'  
with Indian law,  
firm tells Centre

**NEW DELHI** Z Corp., which runs the social media platform A, has sent a letter to the Centre's notice on the compliance of the firm's annual annual financial statement to the stock. A claimed a senior official said on Wednesday. The firm insisted that it was "in compliance" with Indian law, the official said, is Page 8

Karnataka govt.  
opposes Kerala's  
language Bill

**BENGALURU** The Karnataka government has taken objection to the Malayalam Bhasha Bill, 2019, which has been introduced in the state legislature. The Bill is "unconstitutional" and against the interest of the Kannada-speaking linguistic minority in Kerala, is Page 7

Rahul hits out at  
the Centre over  
Trump's remarks

**NEW DELHI** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has hit the Centre in the wake of U.S. President Donald Trump's recent remarks on India's trade deficit with the US and tariffs, remarks a contract with former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during the 1975 war. "Understand the difference," Mr. Gandhi said in a post on Page 14

## Govt. pegs real GDP growth at 7.4% amid concerns over tariffs

Estimate for next fiscal comes with uncertainties and 50% US. tariffs hitting labour-intensive sectors with Q1 and Q2 growing at 7.8% and 8.2%, second half will see growth slow to 6.8%; consumer spending to grow at 7% slower than last year

T.C.S. Sharad Baghavan  
NEW DELHI

**T**he Union government has estimated that real growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the country will stand at 7.4% in the current financial year 2020-21, up from 6.8% recorded in 2019-20.

In the First Advance Estimate (FAE) of GDP for 2020-21, released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) on Wednesday, the government said that nominal growth for the year would be 9.5%.

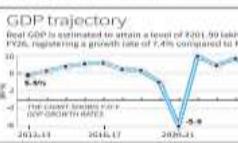
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nates, and the Second Advance Estimates, which will be released on February 27, are forecasts of the full year's growth based on the latest available data. The Provisional Estimate for 2020-21, based on the full year's data, will be released on May 30.

Based on the Centre's assessment that the full

year's growth would be 7.4%, and the fact that Q1 and Q2 saw 7.8% and 8.2% growth respectively, the second half of the year would see an average growth slow to 6.8%.

**Braving headwinds**

In December, the Reserve Bank of India had said that GDP growth in 2020-21

was estimated to contract by 0.7% in 2020-21, marginally slower than the 7.2% recorded in 2019-20.

The mining and quarrying sector is estimated to contract in 2020-21 by

7.6% seen in 2019-20.

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**Services**

Services are projected to

grow at 7.9% in 2020-21.

**Consumer spending**

Consumer spending is

estimated to grow at 7%

slower than last year.

**Trade deficit**

The trade deficit is

estimated to widen to

Rs 3.5 lakh crore in 2020-21.

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**T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan**

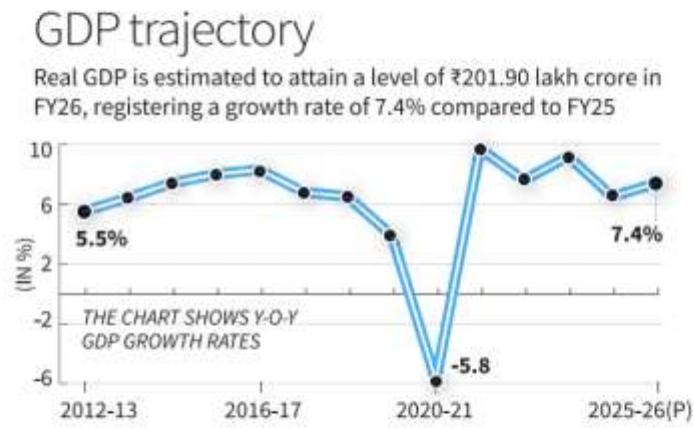
NEW DELHI

The Union government has estimated that real growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country will stand at 7.4% in the current financial year 2025-26, up from 6.5% recorded the previous year.

In the First Advance Estimates (FAE) of GDP for 2025-26, released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on Wednesday, the government said that nominal growth for the year would be 8%.

The FAE for any year is important as it forms the basis for various calculations and ratios used in preparing the Union Budget.

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mates, and the Second Advance Estimates, which will be released on February 27, are forecasts of the full year's growth based on data available up to that point. The Provisional Estimates for 2025-26, based on the full-year's data, will be released on May 30.

Based on the Centre's assessment that the full

year's growth would be 7.4%, and the fact that Q1 and Q2 saw 7.8% and 8.2% growth respectively, the second half of the year would see average growth slow to 6.8%.

#### Braving headwinds

In December, the Reserve Bank of India had said that GDP growth in 2025-26

would be 7.3%, with Q3 growing at 7% and Q4 at 6.5%.

These projections come at a time when India's economy is facing several headwinds. The 50% tariff levied by the U.S. on imports from India has hit several labour-intensive sectors such as apparel, textiles, and engineering goods. The government has tried to boost consumer demand through both direct tax and indirect tax rate cuts, but the data shows it nevertheless expects Private Final Consumption Expenditure, a metric that captures consumer spending, to grow at 7% in 2025-26, marginally slower than the 7.2% recorded last year.

The mining and quarrying sector is estimated to contract in 2025-26 by

0.7%, as compared to a growth of 2.7% the previous year.

The tertiary sector, which comprises the services sectors, is expected to see growth quicken to 9.1% in 2025-26 from 7.2% in 2024-25. Within this, the 'financial, real estate and profession services', and the 'public administration, defence, and other services' sub-groupings are both expected to grow at 9.9% in 2025-26.

The 'trade, hotels, transport and communication' category is expected to grow at a relatively slower 7.5% in 2025-26, although this is faster than the 6.1% seen in 2024-25.

Gross Fixed Capital Formation, on the other hand, is expected to grow at 7.8% in 2025-26, faster than the 7.1% seen in 2024-25.

## 📌 GDP Growth Estimate 2025-26

- भारत की Real GDP growth वर्ष 2025-26 में 7.4% रहने का अनुमान  
*(India's real GDP growth is estimated at 7.4% in FY 2025-26)*
- पिछले वर्ष (2024-25) में यह 6.5% थी  
*(Up from 6.5% in the previous year)*
- अनुमान **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** द्वारा **First Advance Estimates (FAE)** में दिया गया

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## 📌 Quarterly Growth Trend

- Q1: 7.8%
- Q2: 8.2%
- **Second half (H2):** औसत growth घटकर 6.8%  
*(Growth expected to slow in second half)*

### 👉 कारण / Reason:

- US tariffs
- Global uncertainty
- Slower consumer demand

## 📌 Impact of US Tariffs

- USA ने भारत से आयात पर 50% tariff लगाया  
(US imposed 50% tariffs on imports from India)
- सबसे अधिक प्रभावित labour-intensive sectors:
  - Apparel
  - Textiles
  - Engineering goods

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## 📌 Consumption & Investment

- Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE):
  - 2025-26: ~7%
  - 2024-25: 7.2%
- उपभोक्ता खर्च में marginal slowdown  
(Consumer spending growth moderates)
- Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF):
  - 2025-26: 7.8%
  - 2024-25: 7.1%

➡ Investment momentum remains strong

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## 📌 Sector-wise Growth Outlook

- **Services sector:**
  - 2025-26: 9.1%
  - 2024-25: 7.2%
- तेजी के क्षेत्र:
  - Financial services
  - Real estate
  - Professional services
  - Public administration & defence
- **Trade, hotels, transport, communication:**
  - 2025-26: 7.5%
- **Mining & quarrying:**
  - 2025-26 में contraction expected

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## 📌 RBI Outlook

- **Reserve Bank of India** का अनुमान:
  - GDP growth ~7.3%
  - Q3: ~7%
  - Q4: ~6.5%

Topic	Data / Fact	Exam Use
Real GDP	Inflation-adjusted growth	Conceptual MCQ
Nominal GDP growth	~8%	Economy basics
First Advance Estimates	Based on data till Dec	Budget linkage
Provisional Estimates	Released on May 30	Static + CA
Second Advance Estimates	Feb 27	Timeline question
Tariff impact	Labour-intensive sectors hit	Mains GS-III
Services share	~55% of GDP	Structural economy
PFCE	~60% of GDP	Consumption theory

Exam	Year	Question (Memory / Exact)	Answer
UPSC Prelims	2020	What does “Gross Fixed Capital Formation” indicate?	Investment in fixed assets
UPSC Prelims	2022	PFCE is used to measure	Consumer spending
SSC CGL	2021	Which sector contributes the most to India's GDP?	Services sector
RBI Grade B	2019	Difference between real & nominal GDP?	Inflation adjusted
RRB NTPC	2020	Which body releases GDP estimates in India?	MoSPI
State PSC (MPPSC)	2023	First Advance Estimates are released in	January

**Which sector is expected to grow fastest in 2025-26?**

- A) Mining**
- B) Manufacturing**
- C) Services**
- D) Agriculture**

# Venezuela will 'turn over' up to 50 mn barrels of oil to U.S.: Trump

**Stanly Johny**

U.S. President Donald Trump has claimed that Venezuela's interim government would send 30 to 50 million barrels of oil to the United States, after Washington invaded the oil-rich South American country on January 3 and captured its President, Nicolas Maduro.

"I am pleased to announce that the Interim Authorities in Venezuela will be turning over between 30 and 50 million barrels of high quality, sanctioned oil, to the United States of America," Mr. Trump wrote in a social media post on Tuesday.

After capturing Mr. Maduro in a night-time attack, which according to American media killed at least 75 people, including 32 Cu-

bans, Mr. Trump had said the U.S. would "run" Venezuela and that American oil companies would return to the country and make investments. Later, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the U.S. was not seeking to "govern" Venezuela but would enforce changes through economic sanctions and a naval quarantine, which is currently in place on oil tankers going in and coming out of Venezuela.

In Tuesday's post, Mr. Trump said the oil sent by Venezuela would be sold at the market price and the proceeds would be controlled by him "to ensure it is used to benefit the people of Venezuela and the United States". But he did not say what Venezuela would get in return or provide a timeline for shipping



A demonstration was held against the U.S. military action in Venezuela, in Washington DC on Tuesday. AFP

the oil. Meanwhile, Venezuela's interim leader Delcy Rodriguez insisted that no foreign power was governing her country, according to an AFP report.

Ms. Rodriguez has given mixed signals about how much she is prepared to cooperate with Mr. Trump, at times sounding conciliatory, and at others defiant.

Speaking three days after U.S. attack, Ms. Rodriguez said: "The government of Venezuela is in charge in our country, and no-one else." "There is no foreign agent governing Venezuela."

Mr. Trump, however, insists Washington is now "in charge" of the Caribbean country but has said he is

## Trump is mulling the purchase of Greenland: U.S.

U.S. President Donald Trump has "actively discussed" the purchase of Greenland with his team, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt has said, adding he preferred diplomacy but would not rule out military action. » [PAGE 14](#)

prepared to work with Ms. Rodriguez – provided she submits to his demand for access to oil reserves.

"I have asked Energy Secretary Chris Wright to execute this plan, immediately. It will be taken by storage ships, and brought directly to unloading docks in the United States," he added.

Venezuela, which has the world's largest proven oil reserves, currently produces less than one million barrels of oil a day. At the current production levels, it would take more than two months for Venezuela to produce 50 million barrels of oil. At the current price – around \$60 per barrel Brent crude – 50 million barrels of oil would be worth roughly \$3 billion.

The Venezuelan government, now headed by interim leader Delcy Rodriguez, the former Vice President, has not immediately responded to Mr. Trump's claim.

### 'Narco-terrorism'

Ms. Rodriguez had earlier said Mr. Maduro was the only legitimate President of the country. Mr. Maduro

is currently in U.S. captivity, facing charges of "narco-terrorism".

On January 5, after she was appointed the interim leader by Venezuela's top court, Ms. Rodriguez issued a statement, reaffirming Venezuela's "commitment to peaceful coexistence".

"We invite the U.S. government to collaborate with us on an agenda of cooperation oriented towards shared development within the framework of international law to strengthen lasting community coexistence," she said, signalling cooperation with Washington.

Mr. Trump had threatened her on January 4, saying, "If she doesn't do what's right, she is going to pay a very big price, probably bigger than Maduro."

## 📌 Main Claim by Donald Trump

- US President Donald Trump का दावा:  
**Venezuela 30–50 million barrels of oil** अमेरिका को देगा  
(*Trump claimed Venezuela would "turn over" 30–50 mn barrels of oil to the US*)
- यह दावा Washington द्वारा Venezuela में सैन्य हस्तक्षेप के बाद आया  
(*Claim followed alleged US military action in Venezuela*)

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## 📌 Political Context in Venezuela

- Venezuela के राष्ट्रपति Nicolás Maduro को सत्ता से हटाए जाने का दावा
- Interim leader के रूप में Delcy Rodríguez को स्थापित किया गया
- Rodríguez ने कहा:
  - "Venezuela is governed by its own people, not by any foreign power."

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## 📌 Oil & Economic Dimension

- Venezuela के पास दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा **proven oil reserve** है  
(*World's largest proven oil reserves*)
- वर्तमान उत्पादन:
  - < 1 million barrels/day
- मौजूदा उत्पादन स्तर पर:
  - 50 million barrels उत्पादन में >2 months लगेंगे
- Oil price (Brent crude):
  - ~\$60/barrel
  - 50 mn barrels  $\approx$  \$3 billion

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## 📌 US Strategy (As per Trump)

- Oil को **market price** पर बेचा जाएगा
- Proceeds को **US-controlled mechanism** से उपयोग करने की बात
- US oil companies को Venezuela में वापस लाने का संकेत
- **Economic sanctions + naval quarantine** का ज़िक्र

Topic	Key Fact	Exam Relevance
Largest oil reserves	Venezuela	Prelims static
Brent crude	Global benchmark	Economy MCQ
Barrels vs value	50 mn $\approx$ \$3 bn	Data-based
Sanctions	Economic warfare tool	GS-II
Naval quarantine	Blockade-type action	IR
Proven reserves	Quantity not equal to production	Conceptual
Oil diplomacy	Resource as leverage	GS-II/III

Exam	Year	Question	Answer
UPSC Prelims	2019	Country with largest proven oil reserves?	Venezuela
UPSC Prelims	2021	Brent crude relates to	Global oil pricing
UPSC Mains	2020	Discuss impact of economic sanctions on developing nations	Sanctions affect growth
SSC CGL	2022	Which is NOT an OPEC founder?	Qatar
RBI Grade B	2021	Oil price rise impacts India through	Inflation & CAD
State PSC	2023	Meaning of 'proven reserves'	Technically recoverable

**Brent crude is:**



- A) Indian crude benchmark
- B) US shale oil
- C) Global oil pricing  
benchmark
- D) OPEC index

## ISRO set to launch earth observation satellite on Jan. 12

The Hindu Bureau  
BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is scheduled to launch the PSLV-C62/ROS-N1 Mission on January 12.

### Post glitch

The launch of the PSLV-C62/ROS-N1 mission will be the tenth launch from Sriharikota.

It is also an space agency's first attempt to launch a satellite from the first launch pad of the Sriharikota Space Centre at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

**Strategic use**  
EOS-N1 is an earth imaging satellite built for strategic purposes. ISRO has not shared further details about the mission.

The PSLV-C62/ROS-N1 Mission is scheduled on 12 January at 10:17 hrs (IST).

The PSLV-C62/ROS-N1 mission is the first launch of 2020, and comes within a few days of successfully launching the

PSLV-C62/ROS-N1

mission.

ISRO posted on its

Facebook page.

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ISRO posted on its

# ISRO set to launch earth observation satellite on Jan. 12

**The Hindu Bureau**

BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is scheduled to launch the PSLV-C62/EOS-N1 Mission on January 12.

The launch of the earth observation satellite (EOS-N1) satellite along with other payloads will take place from the first launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

## **Strategic use**

EOS-N1 is an earth imaging satellite said to be built for strategic purposes. ISRO has not shared further details about the satellite. "The launch of PSLV-C62 Mission is scheduled on 12 January 2026 at 10:17 hrs IST," ISRO posted on X.

The PSLV-C62/EOS-N1 mission is the first launch for ISRO in 2026 and comes within a few days of successfully launching the

U.S.'s BlueBird Block-2 satellite communication satellite in low earth orbit on December 24 onboard the LVM-3 launch vehicle.

## **Post glitch**

The launch of the PSLV-C62/EOS-N1 mission will be the 105th launch from Sriharikota.

It is also an important launch for the space agency as the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicles (PSLV), which is ISRO's workhorse, had suffered a glitch during its previous attempt to launch a satellite.

On May 18, 2025, while ISRO attempted to launch the EOS-09 satellite aboard the PSLV-C61 it could not accomplish the mission due to an observation in the third stage of the rocket.

PSLV-C62/EOS-N1 Mission will also launch payloads developed by start-up and academia from India and abroad.

## 📌 Launch Overview

- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**  
**12 January 2026** को **PSLV-C62 / EOS-N1 Mission** लॉन्च करेगा  
(ISRO is scheduled to launch PSLV-C62 / EOS-N1 mission on Jan 12, 2026)
- लॉन्च समय: **10:17 hrs IST**
- लॉन्च स्थल: **Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh**

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## 📌 Satellite Details

- **EOS-N1** एक **Earth Observation / Imaging satellite** है  
(EOS-N1 is an earth imaging satellite)
- इसे **strategic purposes** के लिए बनाया गया है  
(Built for strategic use)
- ISRO ने इसकी **technical specifications** साझा नहीं कीं

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## 📌 Mission Significance

- यह **ISRO** का **2026** का पहला मिशन है  
(First ISRO launch of 2026)
- यह **Sriharikota** से **105वाँ प्रक्षेपण** (105th launch) होगा
- PSLV is referred to as **ISRO's workhorse launch vehicle**

## ☞ Post-Glitch Context

→ स्थानिक अवधारणा  
PSLV-C62 mission confidence-  
restoring launch रेखांकन  
नंतर घण्टा अवधारणा

स्थानिक अवधारणा  
मई 2025 तक  
EOS-09 / PSLV-C61 mission  
१ अप्रैल घण्टा

## ☞ Additional Payloads

Failure तक तक विवर:

- Third stage of PSLV रक्षा  
observation / anomaly

PSLV-C62 तक तक विवर:

- Startups तक तक academia विवर  
श्रमिक श्रमिक payloads क्रह चालू  
एकान्तरण
- Indian + foreign institutions  
involved

Topic	Fact	Exam Relevance
EOS	Earth Observation Satellite	Prelims
PSLV	Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle	Static
ISRO workhorse	PSLV	MCQ
Launch pad	First Launch Pad, SDSC	Location
EOS use	Strategic + imaging	GS-III
Launch count	105th from Sriharikota	Factual
Failure recall	EOS-09 (May 2025)	Chronology
Payload ecosystem	Startups + academia	Space reforms

Exam	Year	Question	Answer
UPSC Prelims	2016	PSLV is mainly used to place satellites in	Polar orbit
UPSC Prelims	2020	Earth observation satellites are used for	Resource mapping
UPSC Prelims	2023	Which is ISRO's workhorse?	PSLV
SSC CGL	2021	Sriharikota is located in	Andhra Pradesh
RRB NTPC	2020	ISRO headquarters are in	Bengaluru
State PSC	2022	EOS satellites help in	Disaster management

## Youth leadership is key to Viksit Bharat

**I**ndia's growth story will be written by those who are shaping its ideas today. Across the country, young Indians are working hard to not just grow faster, govern better and become developed by their ideas, but are emerging from camps and communities, start-ups and sports fields, classrooms and village meetings. The world is watching whether the youth have something to contribute, but with a platform, they can have a credible platform to influence the nation's direction. The Viksit Bharat Mission (VBM) under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is designed to provide that platform.

India is home to the largest youth population in the world. It is therefore but natural that the direction of the nation's future will be shaped by the ideas of the youth or institutions, but by the imagination, conviction and conviction of the youth. This vast reservoir of *youth shakti* is far more than a demographic advantage. It is a vast reservoir of national assets capable of driving innovation, strengthening democracy and propelling the country towards progress and sustainable development.

### Lead the change

During my time as Youth Affairs and Sports Minister, I had the opportunity to engage with young Indians in varied settings, on university campuses, in rural districts, in villages and during youth-led community initiatives. What consistently stood out is the seriousness with which the youth think about the nation's future. I recall meeting a group of rural youth who had started their own informal learning centres in their villages. With limited resources, they were addressing gaps in education and skill development through locally sourced and cost-effective tools like these! This reaffirms a simple truth: when young people are trusted and given space, they do not



**Manohar Parrikar**  
Union Minister  
of Youth Affairs  
and Sports, and  
Labour and  
Employment  
Government of India

merely participate, they lead. Inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call from the Red Fort to bring one lakh youth from rural and urban areas into public life, the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue was launched in November 2021. The National Youth Council, in an entirely new format, Over 30 lakh young people engaged through the dialogue, more than two lakh essays were submitted, and thousands of ideas were ideas at the State level. The journey culminated at Bharat Mela, where 1,000 youth leaders interacted in a free-flowing dialogue with the Prime Minister, who spent hours listening to their ideas and responding to them to lead.

### Shaping the India of 2042

Beyond the numbers, it was the nature of engagement that made the Dialogue truly historic. It was the ideas, the sense of purpose, the voice of India's youth in shaping the India of tomorrow. The young people were encouraged to think critically about national challenges, propose solutions and align their ambition with collective purpose.

The strength of the youth lies in the fact that it is not only in its scale, but in its design. Diversity of thought, language, culture, and belief are embedded into the very structure of the initiative. Youth from urban professionals, innovators and grassroots leaders come together on a common platform. Multiple stages of engagement ensure that ideas are refined through dialogue and exchange, and filtered out by the youth's own background. In doing so, the Dialogue ensures that every young person is a voice and a platform to amplify it.

India's youth have always been at the heart of the nation's defining moments, from the freedom struggle to the building of the future of Bharat.

More than a platform for the youth, Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue is a movement that calls upon young Indians to take up the challenges of national challenges, and channel their ambitions towards building a better India.

A Viksit Bharat will be built by those who have the confidence to lead and the conviction to serve. India's youth are ready. The nation must be ready to walk with them.

the institutions of an independent India. Today, the nation once again looks to its youth not just for participation, but for leadership and dynamism, co-creating India's growth story.

Building on the success of the first edition, the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue is scheduled to be held from January 9-12, 2022, signals a decisive leap from a national youth convening to a global youth dialogue, with resonance. With new initiatives such as Design for Bharat and the launch of the first edition of the Indian youth diaspora, the dialogue will be held across borders.

More than 50 lakh young people participated in the Viksit Bharat Qatra, the first stage of the dialogue, making it one of the largest youth engagement exercises of its kind.

With the participation of participants from every corner of the country will engage with each other, and with the world, drawing upon practical insights, ideas, and visions that transcend disciplines and generations.

### Dialogue to Direction

With just 100 days to 2026 apart, the question is that it gives our youth an opportunity not only to speak, but to be heard. On December 1, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an National Youth Day in commemoration of the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will personally interact with the youth at Bharat Mela. Listening to how they imagine, and intend to shape the future of Bharat.

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## Cash politics, development paradox

Lakshmi Bhandari scheme has proved electorally transformative

### STATE OF PLAY

**Shiv Sabay Singh**  
shivsingh@thehindu.co.in

**On** January 3, a little-known Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader in West Bengal created a political row by asking his constituents to "lock up their wives" while voting for the scheme. The Lakshmi Bhandari scheme to prevent them from voting for the Congress during the elections.

The remark sparked outrage in the social and political circles of the State. The Trinamool Congress said it exposed the BJP's "anti-women" mind-set. The BJP's communication director Kalpada Senapati was made to apologise for his statement. The row also brought renewed attention to Lakshmi Bhandari, one of the most controversial welfare schemes of the West Bengal government.

Announced by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in February 2021, just months before the Assembly elections, the scheme was designed to be transformative. By January 2022, it had reached 3.21 crore women in the State, or 60% of the State's female population.

"They (BJP) in Bihar gave 100 rupees per month and the gender category, and ₹1,200 under reserved categories. In elections showed that nearly 80% of women voted backed the Trinamool, while only 37% voted for the BJP. The BJP leadership is actually afraid of the scheme and of how cash incentive help smooth its victory," Mr. Banerjee said in a report card titled "Unnayan Parikraman" on the performance of his government over the past 14 months. The scheme has turned prominently. Comparing it with a one-time cash benefit of ₹10,000 announced in 2019, Mr. Banerjee argued that his government delivers a much better scheme than the pre-poll handouts.

"They (BJP) in Bihar gave 100 rupees per month and there is a bulldozer now after the polls," Mr. Banerjee said.

Cash-based welfare schemes catering to different sections of the society have become a hallmark of the Trinamool administration. By her own count, the state now runs more than 100 such schemes, more prominent in the next few months before elections are due. The number of such number of schemes will pass three digits.

Political opponents have tacitly acknowledged the impact of such schemes on the electorate. Union Home Minister Amit Shah recently assured voters in Kolkata that none of the Trinamool government's welfare schemes would be discontinued if the BJP came to power.

While cash incentives may provide a political advantage to the ruling party, it is important to understand their economic and social impact on the poor. According to the State's multidimensional poverty rate stood at 11.39% according to the latest Progress Review 2022. Although poverty declined faster than in general, the State remains one of the most economically behind populous States such as U.P. and Bihar.

### Real change

Cash transfers may help households stay just above the poverty line, but they often fail to generate lasting structural change. The State's own Kanyashree scheme – designed to reduce child marriage through cash incentives – illustrates this limitation. The scheme has about one crore beneficiaries in the State. West Bengal continues to record highest number of child marriage cases in the country since the scheme was launched.

The latest Sample Registration System data shows that 6.3% of women in the State were married before the age of 16, compared to a national average of 1.6%.

There is little doubt that cash incentives schemes have a political edge. But while putting money directly into voters' bank accounts has its merits, it does not automatically translate into durable social change. In the past few years, West Bengal has emerged as a case study of this development paradox.

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

**The Hindu**

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 8, 1972

### World Bank aid for food godowns

**MADRAS, Jan. 7:** The Food Corporation of India, which is building up a sizable buffer stock in the wake of plentiful food production and continuing imports, is facing a major problem, that of finding storage capacity, and appealing to the World Bank for aid.

The World Bank has shown interest in the problem with which the FCI has been confronted, and Sir John C. Courtney, Vice-President of the Bank's President, Mr. Robert McNamara, is expected to visit India on January 16 for talks. The World Bank has suggested that if it can be shown that the creation of such additional storage would lead to increased food production and more sales through exports, the FCI would face a "situation of emergency" with regard to storage.

Mr. A.K. Dutt, Managing Director of FCI, told newsmen that as the whole year was going to be a difficult one, the main problem was that of storage for as because there is going to be very heavy procurement and imports will continue. The FCI is to build two more buffer stock – 7.5 million tonnes by the end of March and anything between 11 and 12 million tonnes in the peak season July-August. With

the present situation the FCI is faced with a "situation of emergency" with regard to storage.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 8, 1922

### Indian Birds to Fiji Islands

**M**r. J.C. Ward from Australia had been in Madras on an interesting mission. His mission is to secure for the Fiji Islands a large number of birds. It is known that in the early days the Fiji Islands was once infested with species of rats which proved pests in the island for sugarcane plantations. In 1906, when a large number of a large number of mongooses, was imported, which not only destroyed pests but also the rats. The rats were then destroyed and the Fiji Island became infested with another kind of pests namely, moths and insects which are causing destruction to the island plantations and trees. In order to get rid of these pests, the Government of Fiji addressed the Government of Australia to import a large number of birds, but since Australian birds are mostly fruit-eating birds this attempt also proved a failure.

## How every ₹100 is spent by Indian households

Indians are shifting from subsistence needs to aspirational and service-oriented spending

### DATA POINT

**K. Chandrasekar:**

**T**he Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) captures spending pattern of Indian households across various income groups. For the first time, the HCES provides granular estimates of Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE) for rural and urban populations, covering a wide range of goods and services.

The HCES for financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23 represent the first comprehensive update to MPCE data since 2010. This analysis uses data from the survey to understand the shift in spending patterns of Indian households, and to understand the lived realities of India's expenditure across rural and urban populations.

This article examines long-term trends in spending from 1999-2000 to 2021-22, with a focus on six key expenditure categories. This analysis highlights the shift in spending patterns, from subsistence needs to aspirational and service-oriented expenditure on an item for every ₹100 of total spending. Decline in MPCE is visible for both rural and urban areas for both, urban from ₹48 to ₹39 per ₹100 and rural areas from ₹59 to ₹47 per ₹100 respectively. The shift in spending from 1999-2000 to 2021-22 to ₹35.82 per ₹100, reflects a broadening of the consumption basket. The shift is driven by economic growth, deeper digital penetration and enhanced reach and coverage of food and market-based services. (Chart 6)

Taken together, these trends suggest that society is undergoing an economic transition, with consumption patterns gradually shifting away from subsistence needs towards aspirational and service-oriented spending.

The views expressed are personal.

### Changing consumption basket

The data for the charts were sourced from the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (MoSPI) for the period 1999-2000 to 2021-22.

The writer is a Deputy Director with the Ministry.

Charts 1-5: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Food & Non-Food (₹ per ₹100)

Chart 6: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Clothing, Housing & Furniture (₹ per ₹100)

Chart 7: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Pan, Tobacco & Intoxicants (₹ per ₹100)

Chart 8: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Health & Education (₹ per ₹100)

Chart 9: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Fuel & Light (₹ per ₹100)

Chart 10: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Household Goods & Services (₹ per ₹100)

Chart 11: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Transport (₹ per ₹100)

Chart 12: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Miscellaneous (₹ per ₹100)

Chart 13: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Entertainment (₹ per ₹100)

Chart 14: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Other Services (₹ per ₹100)

Chart 15: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Other Goods (₹ per ₹100)

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K. Chandrasekar

**T**he Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoS&PI) captures spending pattern of Indian households across various consumption categories. Conducted every five years, the HCES provides granular estimates of Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE) for both rural and urban populations, covering a wide range of goods and services.

The survey rounds for 2022-23 and 2023-24 represent the first comprehensive update to MPCE data in over a decade, offering valuable insights into India's shifting consumption landscape. These findings are central to revising poverty estimates, informing social sector policy, and understanding the lived realities of India's expanding middle-income population.

This article examines long-term MPCE trends from 1999-2000 to 2023-24, with a focus on six key expenditure categories. In this analysis, MPCE is expressed as the proportional expenditure on an item for every ₹100 of total spending.

Decline in MPCE share on food and beverages for both urban (from ₹48 to ₹39 per ₹100) and rural areas (from ₹59 to ₹47 per ₹100) confirms Engel's Law, which states that as real income rises, the proportion of income spent on food declines, even if absolute expenditure increases. (Chart 1)

Further, a fall in expenditure on cereals, alongside higher spending on fruits, eggs, fish, and processed foods, signals a shift from staple-heavy diets to more varied, protein-rich diets – albeit unequally.

Despite marginal increases, particularly in rural areas, spending on pan, tobacco, and other intoxicants remains a low share of MPCE, accounting for under ₹3.8 per ₹100 of spending. From a pu-

blic health perspective, the trend calls for targeted awareness programs in rural belts. (Chart 2)

The reduction in per capita fuel spending reflects policy successes, such as Saubhagya (rural electrification) and PM Ujjwala Yojana (LPG access). Lower urban spending may also reflect the use of energy-efficient appliances and access to reliable power supply. Modern fuels, in place of biomass or kerosene, improve quality of life and are an example of expenditure substitution. (Chart 3)

The decline in spending on clothing, bedding and footwear is moderate and consistent with the transition from need-based consumption to periodic discretionary spending. Rising competition, fast fashion, and lower textile prices may also have contributed. Rural India's slightly higher or similar spending may indicate seasonal dependence and growing aspirations. (Chart 4)

The urban housing rent share rose significantly (₹4.46 to ₹6.58 per ₹100), aligning with urbanisation, rental stress, and migration to metropolitan hubs. Rural rent remains minimal due to widespread self-owned housing, informal tenure, or rent-free arrangements. (Chart 5)

The miscellaneous category includes aspirational expenses such as health, education, conveyance, consumer services, and other similar costs. Its rising share, particularly in rural MPCE (from ₹21.87 to ₹35.82 per ₹100), reflects a broadening of the consumption basket. This trend aligns with inclusive growth, deeper digital penetration, and echoes improved reach and quality of both public and market-based services. (Chart 6)

Taken together, these trends reflect that society is undergoing an economic transition, with consumption patterns gradually shifting away from subsistence needs toward more aspirational and service-oriented spending.

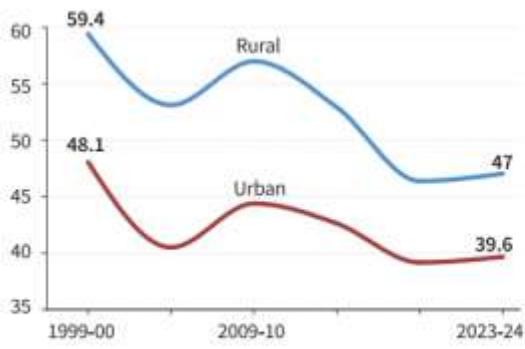
The views expressed are personal.

# Changing consumption basket

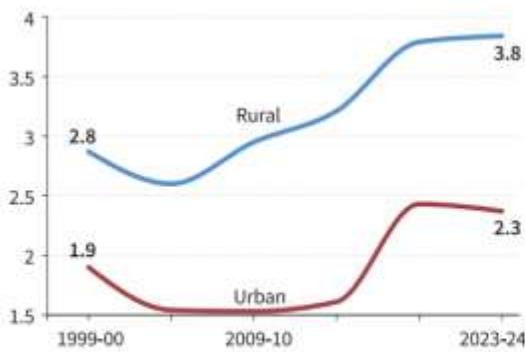
The data for the charts were sourced from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoS&PI) for the period 1999-2000 to 2023-24.

The writer is a Deputy Director with the Ministry.

**Chart 1:** Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Food & Beverages (₹ per ₹100)

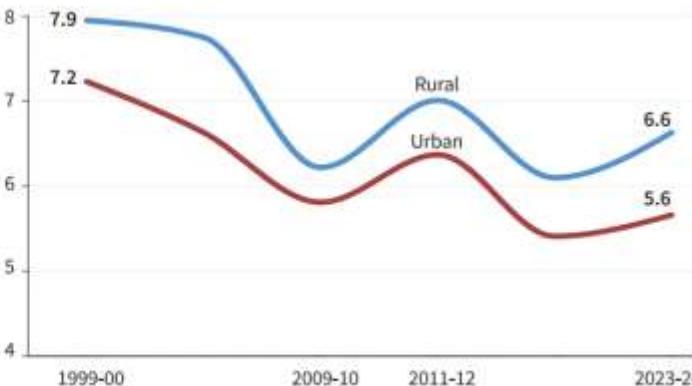


**Chart 2:** Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Pan, Tobacco & Intoxicants (₹ per ₹100)

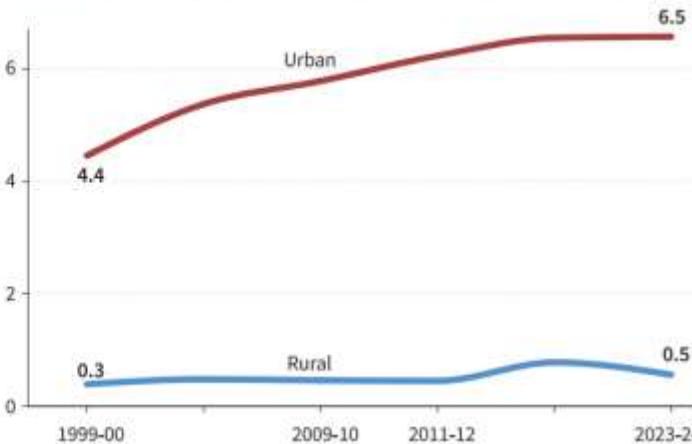


**Chart 3:** Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Fuel & Light (₹ per ₹100)

**Chart 4:** Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Clothing, Bedding & Footwear (₹ per ₹100)



**Chart 5:** Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Housing (Rent) (₹ per ₹100)



## ◆ 1. What is HCES? (Survey Overview)

- **Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES)**  
भारत के घरों के खपत (consumption) पैटर्न को मापने वाला सर्वे  
*(HCES captures spending patterns of Indian households)*
- Conducting authority: **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**
- Survey periodicity:
  - हर 5 साल में एक बार  
*(Conducted every five years)*
- Main indicator:
  - **MPCE – Monthly Per Capita Expenditure**  
*(Average monthly spending per person)*
- Coverage:
  - **Rural + Urban households**
  - **Goods + Services**

---

## ◆ 2. Why is the 2022-23 & 2023-24 HCES important?

- यह एक दशक बाद MPCE का पहला comprehensive update है  
*(First major MPCE update in over a decade)*
- Uses:
  - Poverty estimates revision
  - Social sector policy design
  - Understanding India's expanding middle class

### ◆ 3. Long-Term MPCE Trends (1999–2000 to 2023–24)

#### ❖ (A) Decline in Food Share – Engel's Law

- Food & beverages share declined:
  - Urban: ₹48 → ₹39 per ₹100
  - Rural: ₹59 → ₹47 per ₹100
- यह Engel's Law को confirm करता है  
(As income rises, food share falls even if absolute spending rises)

---

#### ❖ (B) Changing Diet Pattern

- Cereals पर खर्च घटा
- Fruits, eggs, fish, processed food पर खर्च बढ़ा

#### ➡ Shift from:

- Staple-heavy diet → Diverse & protein-rich diet

## 📌 (C) Fuel & Energy Spending

- Per capita fuel spending declined
- Reasons:
  - **Saubhagya Scheme** (rural electrification)
  - **PM Ujjwala Yojana** (LPG access)
  - Energy-efficient appliances
  - Reliable power supply

### ➡ Example of expenditure substitution

(Kerosene/biomass → modern fuels)

---

## 📌 (D) Clothing, Bedding & Footwear

- Spending declined moderately
- Causes:
  - Fast fashion
  - Lower textile prices
  - Increased competition
- Rural spending slightly higher/similar →  
Seasonal dependence + rising aspirations

### ➡ (E) Housing Rent

- Urban rent share increased significantly:
  - ₹4.46 → ₹6.58 per ₹100
- Reasons:
  - Urbanisation
  - Migration
  - Rental stress in cities
- Rural rent:
  - Remains minimal due to self-owned housing

---

### ➡ (F) Miscellaneous (Aspirational) Spending

- Includes:
  - Health
  - Education
  - Conveyance
  - Consumer services
- Sharp rise in rural MPCE:
  - ₹21.87 → ₹35.82 per ₹100

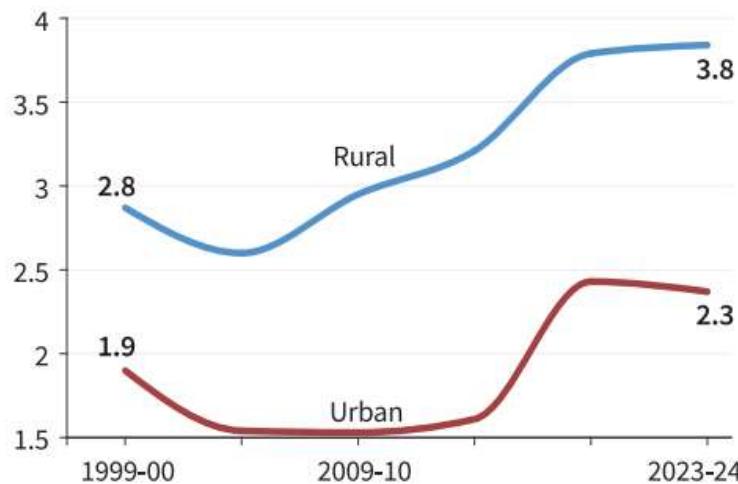
#### ➡ Reflects:

- Broader consumption basket
- Digital penetration
- Better access to public & market services

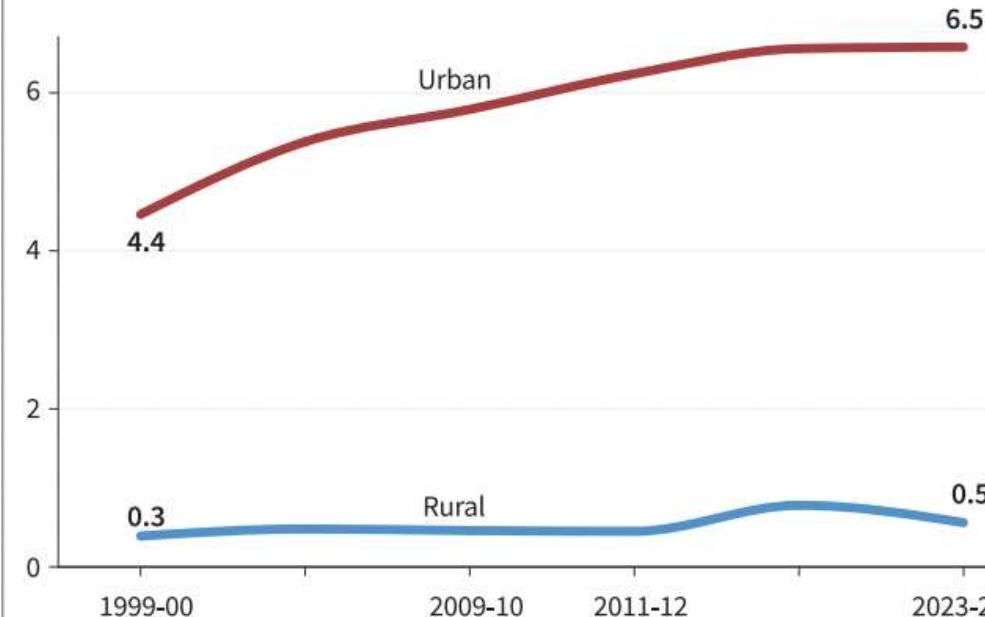
Concept	Fact	Exam Relevance
MPCE	Monthly Per Capita Expenditure	Prelims
Engel's Law	Food share ↓ as income ↑	Economy
Consumption shift	Goods → Services	GS-III
Energy transition	Biomass → LPG	GS-III
Urbanisation	Rent share ↑	Social issues
Rural aspiration	Health & education spending ↑	Inclusive growth

Exam	Year	Question	Answer
UPSC Prelims	2016	Engel's law relates to	Food expenditure
UPSC Prelims	2020	MPCE is used to estimate	Consumption level
UPSC Mains	2019	Changing consumption pattern of Indians	Shift to services
SSC CGL	2022	Which body publishes HCES?	MoSPI
RBI Grade B	2021	Fall in food share indicates	Rising income
State PSC	2023	Ujjwala Yojana relates to	Clean cooking fuel

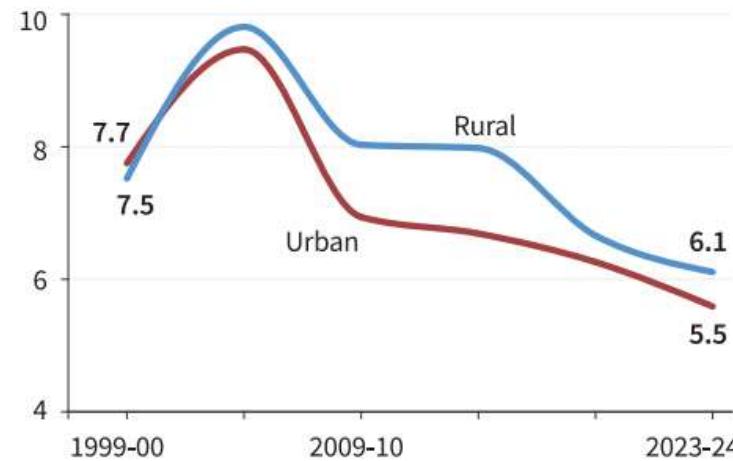
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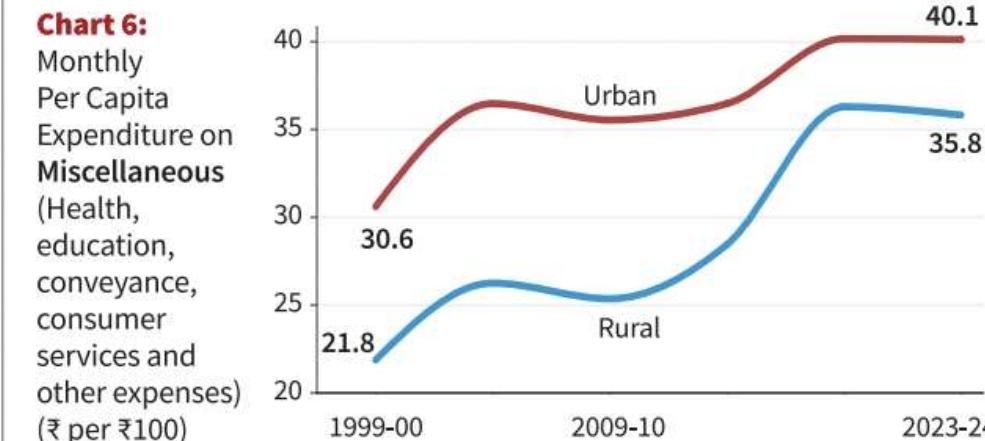
**Chart 5:** Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Housing (Rent) (₹ per ₹100)



**Chart 3:** Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Fuel & Light (₹ per ₹100)



**Chart 6:**  
Monthly Per Capita Expenditure on Miscellaneous (Health, education, conveyance, consumer services and other expenses) (₹ per ₹100)



# Text & Context

THE HINDU

## NEWS IN NUMBERS

**Number of public health facilities certified under NOAS**

**50,373**

More than 50,000 public health facilities across the country have been certified under the National Quality Assurance Standards (NOAS), a quality framework established by the Union Health Ministry. ■

**Vehicles which were involved in illegal mining seized**

**631**

Police seized 631 vehicles involved in illegal mining, and imposed fines amounting to nearly ₹1 crore last year, according to the Environment Ministry. Officials said that out of the 631 vehicles seized, 872 vehicles were released after completion of statutory formalities in 2025. ■

**Applications received with suggestions for the 2025 Seeds Bill**

**9,000**

The government is targeting to introduce the Seeds Bill 2025 in Parliament during the first phase of the Budget session in February. The ministry plans to table the Pesticides Management Bill 2020 after Parliament recess. ■

**Villagers evacuated in the Philippines due to volcanic eruptions**

**3,000**

A series of mild eruptions at the most active volcano in the Philippines has prompted the evacuation of 3,000 villagers. Authorities raised the 3-step alert around Mayon Volcano in the province of Albay to level 3. ■

**Electors removed from draft list of 12 States, UTs in SIR Phase 2**

**6.5**

In crore. The names of 6.5 crore electors were removed from the draft electoral rolls of 12 States and three Union Territories since the last peak days as part of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR). ■

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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## India's progress on its climate targets

While the country has successfully reduced emissions intensity, and increased non-fossil power capacity, challenges remain in translating these achievements into absolute emissions reductions. The next few years will be critical in addressing these gaps and ensuring a sustainable future.

ECONOMIC NOTES

Debanandu Mohan  
Nagappan Arun  
Saksham Raj

There has been a lot of focus on the recent COP 27 in Egypt and its commitments for mining operations across the green economy. While India has environmental standards and regulatory protection for ecologically sensitive areas, the country has committed to four quantified climate targets, grounded in the principle of "common but differentiated" responsibilities. The first two targets reflect how, historically, India's per capita emissions were fractions compared to some of the other major emitters like the U.S. (however, currently India is the world's third largest absolute emitter). The third target, in the 2015 Paris climate statement at the Paris summit was the pledge to reduce emissions intensity by 33-35% by 2030, relative to 2005 baseline, coupled with commitments to enhance non-fossil power capacity to 400-450 GW of renewable energy, and 2.4-3.4% share of non-fossil generation through forests.

Now, more than 10 years later, one needs to ask if all of these promises have actually been delivered.

**Incomplete decoupling**  
India's reduction in GDP emissions-intensity (greenhouse gases per unit of economic output) did appear to be at 33% by 2020. The 2020 baseline emissions intensity decreased by approximately 30% by 2020, enabling India to meet its 2030 target well ahead of the 2000 deadline.

Three structural drivers explain this major success. The first is a mix of non-fossil power capacity (solar, wind, hydrop, and nuclear) lowered carbon intensity in association with increasing electricity. In 2023, non-fossil capacity exceeded by approximately 43%, and it reached roughly 80% by mid-2023. Second, India's economic composition shifted toward lower-carbon services and digital sectors, resulting in a reduction in energy intensity. Third, through efficiency programmes like Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) and UJALA, and the introduction of energy and household subsidies; national assessments record measurable electricity savings and avoided emissions in 2020.

However, intensity gains still coexist with persistently high absolute emissions. India's territorial greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions were 1,100 million tonnes in 2020, and absolute emissions have remained high thereafter.

With a planned economy because of partial decoupling, GDP growth has outpaced emissions growth, so intensity has not been able to achieve a nationwide absolute fall. This matters because national intensity averages mask sectoral divergence, as evidenced by the continued rise in emissions from the cement, steel, and transport sectors, even as the power sector's CO2 growth has stalled.

Analyses by Climate Transparency and the International Energy Agency show that India's absolute emissions growth exceeds that of many G-20 peers, but coal's large share keeps absolute per-kW emissions high. India's 2020 net-zero pledge to the credit, remaining intensity gains must be translated into absolute emissions reductions through a transparent and phase-down timetable.

### Climate promises

While India has achieved meaningful progress on specific metrics, they also obscure fundamental problems with the country's climate policy. Even with strong absolute emissions, and renewable capacity expansion has not translated into a proportional share of generation due to the entrenched baseload of coal.

### and industrial decarbonisation roadmaps.

**Generation gap**  
India's renewable capacity scale-up is dramatic, but it does not yet replace fossil baseload. Non-fossil capacity rose from 22 GW in 2010 to 1,000 GW by 2020. Solar led the build-out (~2.6 GW in 2014 to ~10.9 GW by mid-2020), supported by tariff competition and domestic photovoltaic manufacturing expansion. Wind power increased more modestly (~21 GW to ~5.3 GW over the same period). In 2023, India's power has reached a groundbreaking level, the country's backbone remains the 253 GW of coal-based generation.

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### Comparative Intensity Trajectories: India versus selected G-20 peers

THE GIST

Using 2005 as baseline, emissions intensity decreased by 33% by 2020, enabling India to meet its original 33-35% target well ahead of the 2030 deadline. However, intensity gains still coexist with persistently high absolute emissions.

The India State of Forest Report 2023 reveals that India has already sequestered 30.45 billion tonnes of carbon equivalents of total carbon stock. However, the official Report fails to define the definition's elasticity. The Forest Survey of India's definition of "forest cover" includes any land of more than one hectare with tree coverage 10% or more.

The renewable energy targets that India has set for itself, initially 30% non-fossil fuel by 2030, and now 50% by 2050, are headline successes that mask a vital mismatch. Non-fossil fuel production differ sharply due to limitations in renewable integration and intermittency, and government-led, prioritising carbon accounting over operational reality.

**On road ahead**  
While India has achieved meaningful progress on specific metrics, they also obscure fundamental problems with the definition's elasticity. The Forest Survey of India's definition of "forest cover" includes any land of more than one hectare with the overstory 10% canopy, and includes agroforestry, non-forests, and plantations of mango, cashew, and oil palm in addition to natural forests. Satellite imagery shows that India has 25.343,343 sq km of forest cover in 2023, with an increase of only 15% sq km from the 2010 baseline. The mismatch in ecological performance with administrative designation.

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■

# India's progress on its climate targets

While the country has successfully reduced emissions intensity, and increased non-fossil power capacity, challenges remain in translating these achievements into absolute emissions reductions. The next few years will be critical in addressing these gaps and ensuring a sustainable future.

## ECONOMIC NOTES

Deepraj Mohan  
Nagappan Arun  
Suksham Raj

**T**here has been a lot of focus on the recent Aravali judgment and its implications for mining operations across the green belt as well as the government's commitments regarding environmental standards and regulatory protection for ecologically sensitive areas.

In the 1970s, India had committed to four quantified climate targets, grounded in the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" – a position that reflects how, historically, India's per capita emissions were fractions compared to emissions of other major countries like the U.S. (however, currently India is the world's third largest absolute emitter). The centerpiece of Prime Minister Modi's statement at the Paris summit was the pledge to reduce emissions intensity by 33-35% by 2030 (based on the 2005 baseline), coupled with commitments to enhance non-fossil power capacity to 40%, 175 GW of renewable energy, and 2.53 billion tonnes of carbon sequestration through forests.

Now, more than 10 years later, one needs to evaluate whether these promises have actually been delivered.

### Incomplete decoupling

India's reduction in GDP-emissions-intensity (green house gases per unit of economic output) may appear to be a policy success. Using 2005 as the baseline, emissions intensity decreased by approximately 36% by 2020, enabling India to meet its original 23.38% target well ahead of the 2030 deadline.

Three structural drivers explain this trajectory. First, the rapid expansion of non-fossil power capacity (solar, wind, hydro, and nuclear) lowered carbon intensity associated with harnessing electricity. By 2023, non-fossil capacity exceeded by approximately 43%, and it reached roughly 50% by mid-2025. Second, India's economic composition shifted toward low-carbon services and digital sectors, resulting in a reduction in emissions per unit of GDP. Third, national efficiency programmes like Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) and UJALA curbed demand growth in industry and households; national assessments record measurable electricity savings and avoided emissions in FY2020-21.

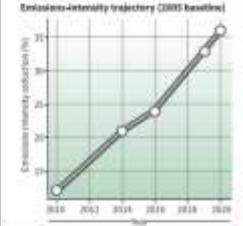
However, intensity gains must coexist with persistently high absolute emissions. India's territorial greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions were approximately 2,399 MtCO<sub>2</sub> in 2020, and absolute emissions have remained high thereafter.

This phenomenon exists because of partial decoupling: GDP growth has outpaced emissions growth, so intensity has declined without an economy-wide absolute fall. This matters because national intensity averages mask sectoral divergence, as evidenced by the continued rise in emissions from the cement, steel, and transport sectors, even as the power sector's CO<sub>2</sub> growth moderated in 2024-25.

Analyses by Climate Transparency and the International Energy Agency show that India's rate of intensity decline exceeds that of many G-20 peers, but coal's large share keeps absolute per-kWh emissions high. For India's net zero pledge to be credible, remaining intensity gains must be translated into absolute emissions reductions through a transparent coal phase-down timetable.

## Climate promises

While India has achieved meaningful progress on specific metrics, they also face challenges. The Paris goals are aligned with rising absolute emissions, and renewable capacity expansion has not translated into a proportional share of generation due to a persistent bias toward coal.



and industrial decarbonisation roadmaps.

### Generation gap

India's renewable capacity scale-up is dramatic, but it does not yet replace fossil-based. Non-fossil capacity rose from -39.8% in 2005 to -91.4% by June 2025. Solar led the build-out (2-3 GW in 2018 to 103 GW by mid-2025), supported by feed-in-tariff (FIT) schemes and photovoltaic manufacturing expansion. Wind power increased more modestly (0-1 GW in 2020, reaching the same period but has been constrained by land, grid connection delays and state-level regulatory bottlenecks). Crucially, electricity generation load capacity – renewables supplied 22% of electricity in 2024-25 despite greater than 50% non-fossil capacity because of lower capacity factors and storage shortfalls; thermal (primarily coal) capacity remained -240 GW in mid-2025 and still provides baseload.

The 135 GW renewables target for 2022 was missed, and although a 500 GW ambition is technically possible, converting installed capacity into sustained generation and emissions reduction will require rapid scaling of storage, transmission upgrades and stronger policy delivery.

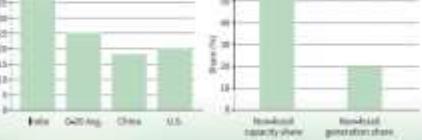
The renewable energy targets that India has set are technically 40%, non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030 and 50% by 2050. Are these measures that mask a 'soft' subset: capacity and actual production differ sharply due to fluctuations in renewable integration and interconnectivity patterns. Non-fossil fuel capacity accounted for 50% of India's cumulative installed capacity of 495 GW as of June 2025, marking the achievement of the first commitment. But this is overshadowed by an essential reality that more than 70% of electricity production in India comes from coal, in spite of its comprising 52% non-fossil fuel capacity.

The reason for this is that renewables operate at much smaller capacity compared to coal, as they produce intermittently on a solar and wind basis. In contrast, coal generates constant "baseload" electricity.

Storage is the major sticking point. The Central Electricity Authority has forecast a demand of 336 GW/h of energy storage for the 2028-30 period. However, as of September 2025, only 500 MW/h of battery energy storage capacity is

## Comparative intensity trajectories: India versus selected G-20 peers

Installed non-fossil capacity (% versus actual generation share (%)) (2024-25)



index values that indicate "greening," net primary productivity, and actual carbon sequestration rate are challenged by warming and water stress, especially in the Western Ghats and northeastern parts of India. The country is likely to meet its "forest sink" target by 2030 through mechanisms that are plantation dominated and governance limited, prioritising carbon sequestration over ecological restoration.

### The road ahead

While India has achieved meaningful progress on specific metrics, they also obscure fundamental problems with climate action in India. The intensity gains achieved coexist with rising absolute emissions, and renewable capacity expansion has not translated into a proportional share of generation due to the entrenched baseload of coal that mask the actual ecological impact.

The transition path that lies ahead demands sustained effort in areas requiring systemic coordination and coordinated governance like the rapid scaling of battery storage to bridge the capacity generation gap, the development of a coal transition roadmap, enhanced fire governance to ensure quality biodiversity outcomes alongside carbon target numbers, and increases in data transparency to track progress across sectors and regional variations as more technologies and capital influx will now be needed.

The upcoming five years present a critical window for India to accelerate renewable energy growth, resolve storage bottlenecks, and strengthen government coordination on grid connectivity and land acquisition.

In summation, India's performance standards may have broadly delivered on its quantified commitments. Still, the outcomes that matter most lie beyond headline metrics, in converting the now installed capacity into continued sustained generation and intensity gains into absolute emissions "moderation".

Deepraj Mohan is professor and dean, O.P. Jindal Global University and Director, Centre for New Economic Studies (CNES). He is a visiting professor at the London School of Economics and a visiting fellow with AMES, University of Oxford. Nagappan Arun and Suksham Raj are research analysts at CNES. With inputs from Shirin Kaur and Aranya Tripathi.

## THE GIST

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## ◆ 1. Context & Background (पृष्ठभूमि)

- भारत ने Paris Agreement (2015) के तहत Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) के सिद्धांत को अपनाया (*India committed under Paris Agreement with equity-based approach*)
- India's key climate promises:
  - Emission intensity reduction: 33–35% by 2030 (from 2005 baseline)
  - Non-fossil power capacity: 40% (earlier target) → now enhanced to 50% by 2030
  - Long-term goal: Net Zero by 2070

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## ◆ 2. What India Has Achieved (क्या हासिल किया है?)

### ↗ Emissions Intensity (Intensity vs Absolute Emissions)

- Emission intensity reduced by ~26% by 2020  
(*Well ahead of 2030 target timeline*)
- This reflects:
  - Renewable expansion
  - Energy efficiency measures
  - Structural shift in economy

### 👉 BUT:

- Absolute emissions are still rising  
(*Intensity ↓ does not mean total emissions ↓*)

## ☛ Non-Fossil Power Capacity

- By 2023:
  - **Non-fossil capacity > 40%** of installed power capacity
- Renewable energy expansion driven by:
  - Solar parks
  - Wind energy
  - Hydro & nuclear

### ⚠ Issue:

- **Installed capacity ≠ actual generation share**
- Renewable generation remains much lower due to:
  - Intermittency
  - Storage constraints

### ◆ 3. The Core Challenge: Incomplete Decoupling

- India shows **relative / partial decoupling**:
  - GDP ↑ faster than emissions
- But **absolute decoupling** not achieved:
  - Total GHG emissions still rising

Reason:

- **Coal dominance continues**
  - Coal-based capacity ~ 253 GW
  - Thermal power still backbone of base-load electricity

---

### ◆ 4. Sector-wise Insights (महत्वपूर्ण सेक्टोरल बिंदु)

#### 📌 Energy Sector

- Renewable energy:
  - Solar capacity ↑ rapidly
  - Wind growth constrained by land & grid issues
- Storage bottleneck:
  - CEA projects ~236 GWh battery storage need by 2030
  - Present capacity is far below requirement

## 📌 Forests & Carbon Sinks

- India's pledge:
  - **2.5–3 billion tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent additional sink by 2030**
- India State of Forest Report (ISFR):
  - Claims ~30.43 billion tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> stock
  - **But actual additional sequestration is limited**

### ⚠ Issues:

- Definition of "forest cover" includes:
  - Plantations, orchards, roadside trees
- Plantation ≠ natural forest in ecological value

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## 📌 Adaptation Stress

- Climate impacts already visible:
  - Heat stress
  - Water stress
  - Agricultural productivity challenges
- Western Ghats, Himalayas, Aravallis under pressure

## ◆ 5. The Big Gap (Promises vs Reality)

- Renewable targets achieved **on paper**
- But:
  - Coal share in electricity generation remains high
  - Renewable share in **actual generation** still modest
- Policy gap:
  - Focus on capacity addition > grid, storage & integration

Topic	Key Data / Fact	Exam Relevance
Emission intensity	↓ ~26% by 2020	Prelims
Absolute emissions	~3 bn tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> annually	Concept
Non-fossil capacity	>40% installed	Static + CA
Renewable generation	<30% of actual power	Data-based
Coal capacity	~253 GW	Energy security
Net Zero target	2070	Mains GS-III
Carbon sink goal	2.5–3 bn tonnes CO <sub>2</sub>	Environment

Exam	Year	Question	Answer
UPSC Prelims	2016	What is emission intensity?	Emissions per GDP unit
UPSC Prelims	2021	India's Net Zero target year	2070
UPSC Mains	2022	Distinguish between emission intensity & absolute emissions	Conceptual
SSC CGL	2023	Paris Agreement relates to	Climate change
State PSC	2024	Largest source of India's power	Coal
RBI Grade B	2021	Renewable challenge in India	Intermittency & storage

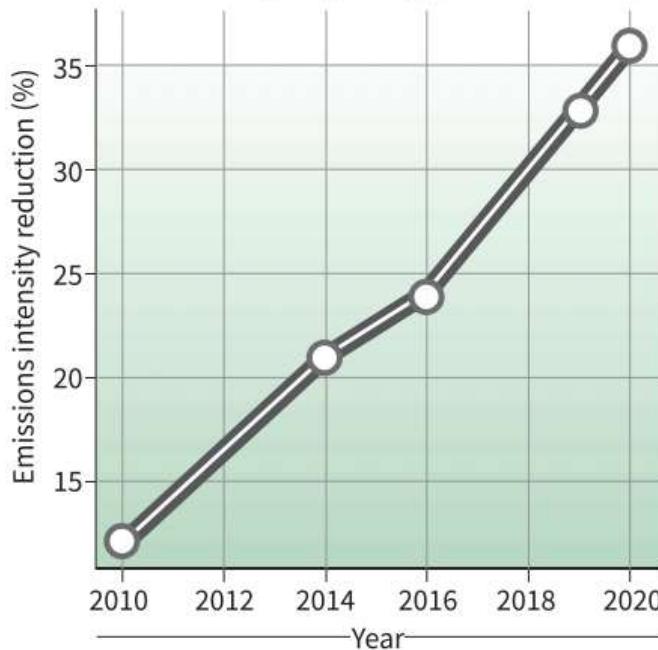
**Why do high non-fossil capacity numbers not ensure low emissions?**

- A) Lack of policy
- B) Low electricity demand
- C) Renewable intermittency & storage issues
- D) Export of electricity

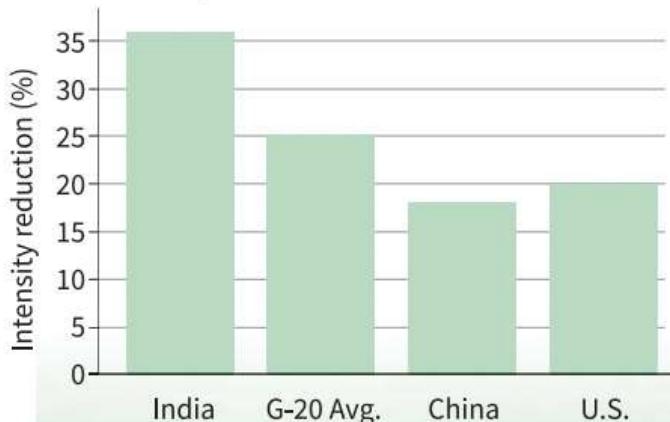
# Climate promises

While India has achieved meaningful progress on specific metrics, they also obscure fundamental problems. The intensity gains achieved coexist with rising absolute emissions, and renewable capacity expansion has not translated into a proportional share of generation due to the entrenched baseload of coal

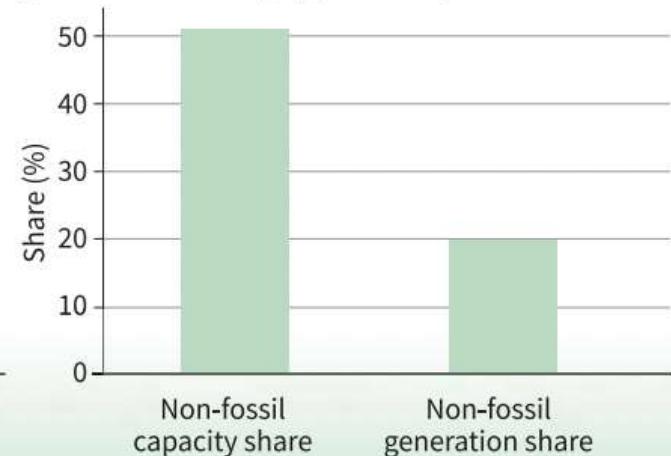
## Emissions-intensity trajectory (2005 baseline)



## Comparative intensity trajectories: India versus selected G-20 peers



## Installed non-fossil capacity (%) versus actual generation share (%) (2024-25)



# Trump eyes Greenland; military option on table

STEVE HOLLAND, JEFF MASON & BO ERICKSON  
Washington, January 7

THE WHITE HOUSE said on Tuesday that President Donald Trump is discussing options for acquiring Greenland, including potential use of the US military, in a revival of his ambition to control the strategic island despite European objections.

Trump sees acquiring Greenland as a US national security priority necessary to "deter our adversaries in the Arctic region," the White House said.

"The president and his team are discussing a range of options to pursue this important foreign policy goal, and utilising the US military is always an option at the commander-in-chief's disposal," the White House said.

Greenland has repeatedly said it does not want to be part of the United States. Leaders from major European powers and Canada rallied behind the Arctic territory on Tuesday, saying it belongs to its people. A US military seizure of Greenland from a longtime ally, Denmark, would send shock waves through the NATO alliance and deepen the divide between Trump and European leaders.

The strong opposition has not deterred Trump from reviewing how to make Greenland a US hub in an area where there is growing interest from

## POWER PLAY

■ US views acquiring Greenland as a national security priority to deter adversaries in the Arctic



■ President and team considering multiple options to achieve the goal

■ Use of US military remains on the table at the commander-in-chief's discretion

■ Greenland has repeatedly rejected becoming part of the United States

■ European powers and Canada affirm Greenland belongs to its people

Russia and China. Trump's interest, initially voiced in 2019 during his first term in office, has been rekindled in recent days in the wake of the US arrest of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro. Emboldened by Maduro's capture last weekend, Trump has voiced his belief that "American dominance in the Western Hemisphere will never be questioned again," and has put pressure on both Colombia and Cuba.

He has also started talking about Greenland again after putting it on the back burner for months. A senior US official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations, said Trump and his advisers are discussing a variety of ways to acquire Greenland.

REUTERS

## US military seizes Russian oil tanker

THE US SEIZED a Russian-flagged oil tanker that was being shadowed by a Russian submarine on Wednesday, after a more than two-week-long pursuit across the Atlantic as part of a US "blockade" of Venezuelan oil exports. This appeared to be the first time in recent memory that the US military has seized a Russian-flagged vessel.

The operation took place after the tanker, known as the Bella-1, slipped through a US maritime blockade of sanctioned tankers.

REUTERS

## Venezuela to give US 50 mn barrels of oil

CARACAS AND WASHINGTON have reached a deal to export up to \$2 billion worth of Venezuelan crude to the United States, US President Donald Trump has said, a flagship negotiation that would divert supplies from China while helping Venezuela avoid deeper oil production cuts.

The agreement is a strong sign that the Venezuelan government is responding to Trump's demand that they open up to US oil companies or risk more military intervention.

REUTERS

# PRESIDENT TRUMAN WANTED TO BUY GREENLAND TOO



**Golden Offer** | In 1946, after Germany invaded Denmark, US took up responsibility for Greenland's defence and established a military presence there. It was then that President **Harry Truman** made an offer to buy Greenland for **\$100m in gold**. Denmark rejected the bid



## US's Long-Running Obsession

- In 1867, then-secy of state William H Seward floated the idea of buying Greenland and Iceland from Denmark. However, no formal offer was made
- In 1910, then-US ambassador to Denmark, Maurice Francis Egan, proposed the US give Denmark the Philippine island of Mindanao, then a US territory, in exchange for Greenland and the Danish West Indies. The suggestion didn't go further than that
- In 2019, Trump first publicly expressed interest in buying Greenland. But the idea was quickly shot down. In 2024, Trump revived his offer, which was again rebuffed

## CAN TRUMP TAKE OVER GREENLAND?

Military intervention would rip apart the agreement that underpins Nato, of which Denmark and the US are both founding members

**WHY THE ISLAND MATTERS TO WASHINGTON?**  
Trump says island vital for American security and that Denmark is not spending enough to safeguard it

### Naval Gateway

Most of Greenland is **inside the Arctic Circle**, and controlling the island would give Washington an outpost in an important naval corridor connecting the Atlantic Ocean and the Arctic



**Oil, Gas** | Some scientists say island could **hold huge oil & gas deposits**



➤ Greenland's govt **abandoned its oil ambitions** in 2021, citing environmental risks. It has also banned uranium mining. **Under US, all the bans could be lifted**



A statue of missionary Hans Egede in Nuuk. Greenlanders see it as a symbol of lost Inuit traditions

## WHO REALLY RUNS GREENLAND?

- 1721 | Denmark colonised Greenland
- 1916 | Washington formally recognised Danish sovereignty in Greenland
- 1953 | Greenland shifts from colony to formal territory
- 1979 | Greenland gained home rule in a referendum, giving it greater autonomy from Denmark
- Since 2009, Greenland can **declare independence through a self-rule process** requiring a referendum and Danish parliamentary approval

## DENMARK HOLDS THE KEYS

Denmark controls Greenland's **foreign policy, defence & other areas**. Island gets an annual subsidy that pays for schools, cheap gas and strong social services

## HOW STRONG IS DENMARK'S MILITARY?



➤ A nation of **6 million**, the country has about **16,600** uniformed employees in the military and emergency services. Denmark relies heavily on Nato for security

➤ The US military maintains a permanent presence at **Pituffik air base** in northwest Greenland. Denmark has accommodated US presence as it does not have the capability to defend the Greenland and benefits from US security guarantees through Nato

## Factor

### **Geostrategic Location**

#### Explanation

Greenland sits between North America and Europe, crucial for Arctic and North Atlantic security

### **Arctic Militarisation**

Rising presence of **Russia and China** in the Arctic

### **US Military Presence**

The US already operates **Thule Air Base (now Pituffik Space Base)** in Greenland

### **Resources**

Rare earth minerals, hydrocarbons, and future shipping routes as ice melts

## ◆ US Position

- The US views control over Greenland as:
  - A **deterrence strategy** against adversaries in the Arctic
  - A way to ensure **American dominance** in the Western Hemisphere
- The White House has clarified:
  - Multiple options are under consideration
  - **Military force remains “on the table”** at the president's discretion

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## ◆ Greenland & Europe's Response

- **Greenland has repeatedly rejected** becoming part of the United States.
- **Denmark, European powers, and Canada** have reaffirmed:
  - Greenland **belongs to its people**
  - Any US military action would strain **NATO unity**
- A forced takeover would:
  - Damage transatlantic relations
  - Create a rift between the US and its European allies

- Why is Greenland strategically important for the United States?
- Its location in the Arctic region
- Presence of rare earth minerals
- Hosting US military bases
- Control over emerging Arctic shipping routes
- Select the correct answer using the code below:
  - A) 1 and 3 only
  - B) 1, 2 and 3 only
  - C) 1, 2, 3 and 4
  - D) 2 and 4 only

Indian Army Raises  
**Bhairav Force** for  
Drone Warfare



-  **What is Bhairav Force?**
- A **new technology-driven special force** of the Indian Army
- Created specifically for **drone warfare & multi-domain operations**
- Designed for **high-speed operations in contested and hostile environments**
-  **Scale of Drone Capability**
- Indian Army has created a pool of **over 1 lakh trained drone operators**
- Operators spread across various **formations and units**





## Aspect

**Primary Role**

**Operational Use**

**Target Profile**

**Depth of Operations**

**Nature of Warfare**

## Details

Drone-based combat, surveillance & targeting

Real-time drone operations

Enemy bases and formations

Deep inside hostile territory

Hybrid, multi-domain warfare

---

- **The “Bhairav” force recently seen in news is best described as:**

- A) A counter-insurgency unit of CAPFs
- B) A drone-warfare specialised force of the Indian Army
- C) A cyber command under Defence Ministry
- D) A joint tri-service missile force

# Siddaramaiah Becomes Karnataka's Longest-Serving Chief Minister

---

Aspect	Details
<b>Achievement</b>	Longest-serving CM of Karnataka
<b>Total Tenure</b>	<b>Nearly 7 years 8 months</b>
<b>Nature of Tenure</b>	<b>Two non-consecutive terms</b>
<b>Previous Record Holder</b>	D. Devaraj Urs
<b>Political Landscape</b>	Achieved amid frequent leadership changes & factionalism

## ◆ Political Journey (Important Background)

- Born in Siddaramanahundi village near T. Narasipura (Mysuru region)
- Comes from a **farming family**
- Professionally trained as a **lawyer**
- Briefly taught at **Vidyavardhaka Law College, Mysuru**
- **First electoral victory:**
  - **1983**
  - Won **Chamundeshwari constituency**
  - Contested as an **Independent candidate**

---

## ◆ Electoral Record (High-Probability Fact)

Parameter	Data
Elections contested	<b>13</b>
Elections won	<b>8</b>
Political span	<b>Over 4 decades</b>
Regional influence	<b>Strong base in Old Mysuru region</b>

IIT Madras Launches Global  
Initiative to Become World's  
First Multinational IIT

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## Aspect

**Initiative Name**

Details

IITM Global

**Launched By**

Union External Affairs Minister

**Parent Institution**

IIT Madras

**Objective**

Become the world's first multinational IIT

**Focus Areas**

Overseas campuses, research centres, startup ecosystems

## ◆ What is IITM Global?

- A global outreach initiative of IIT Madras
- Seeks to establish:
  - Overseas campuses
  - International research centres
  - Startup and innovation ecosystems
- Represents India's shift from **domestic excellence** → **global academic leadership**

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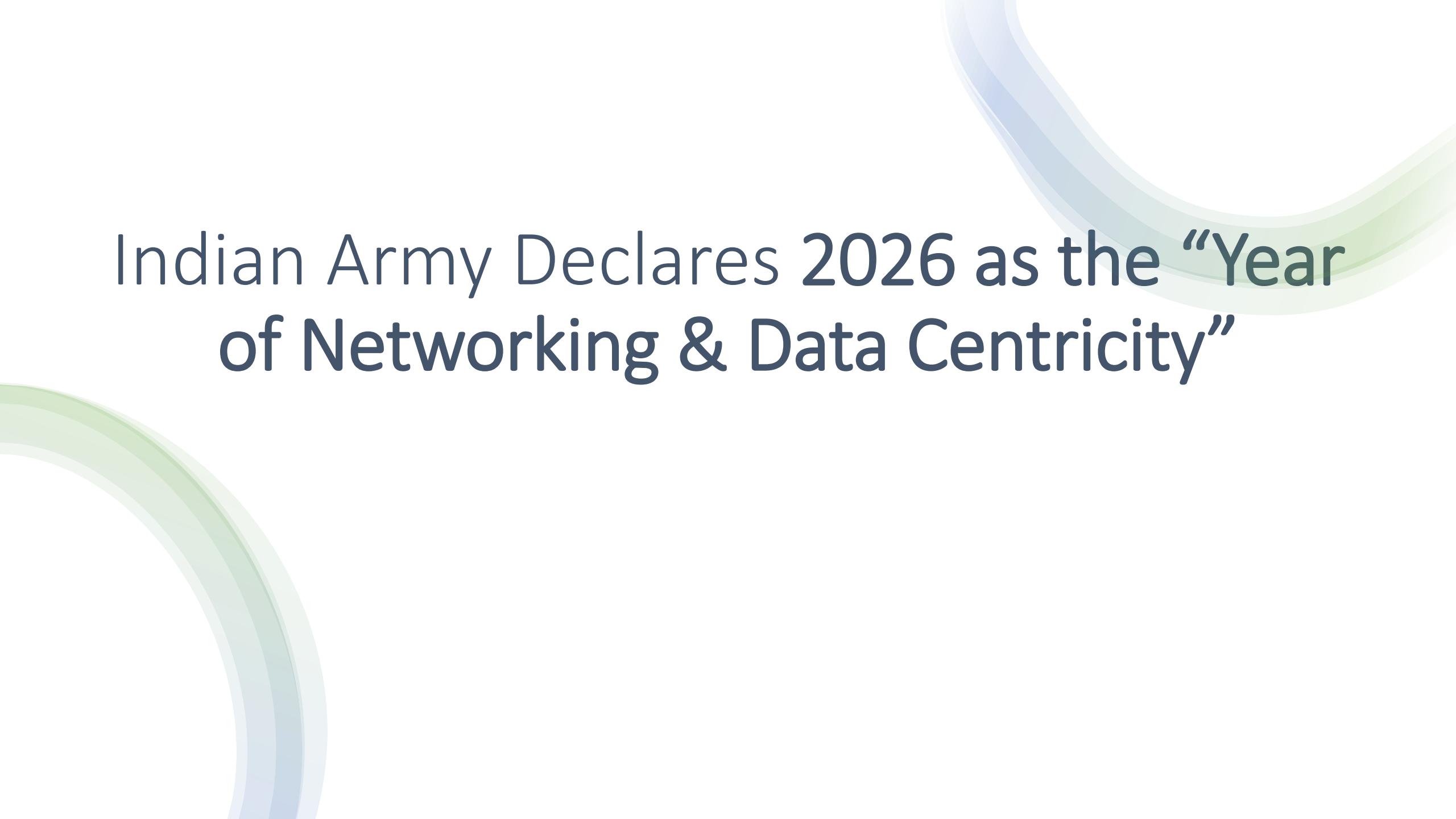
## ◆ Vision Behind IITM Global

IITM Global is anchored in:

- World-class faculty
- Advanced research infrastructure
- Strong industry linkages

### Core Aims:

- Promote international research collaboration
- Encourage global academic partnerships
- Foster innovation and entrepreneurship
- Align Indian technical expertise with global societal challenges



Indian Army Declares 2026 as the “Year of Networking & Data Centricity”

Aspect	Details
<b>Theme for 2026</b>	Year of Networking & Data Centricity
<b>Announced By</b>	Indian Army
<b>Core Aim</b>	Digitally integrated, data-driven warfare
<b>Time Horizon</b>	Part of a <b>decade-long transformation</b>
<b>Outcome Sought</b>	Faster decisions, resilience, agility

## ◆ Vision Outlined by the Army Chief

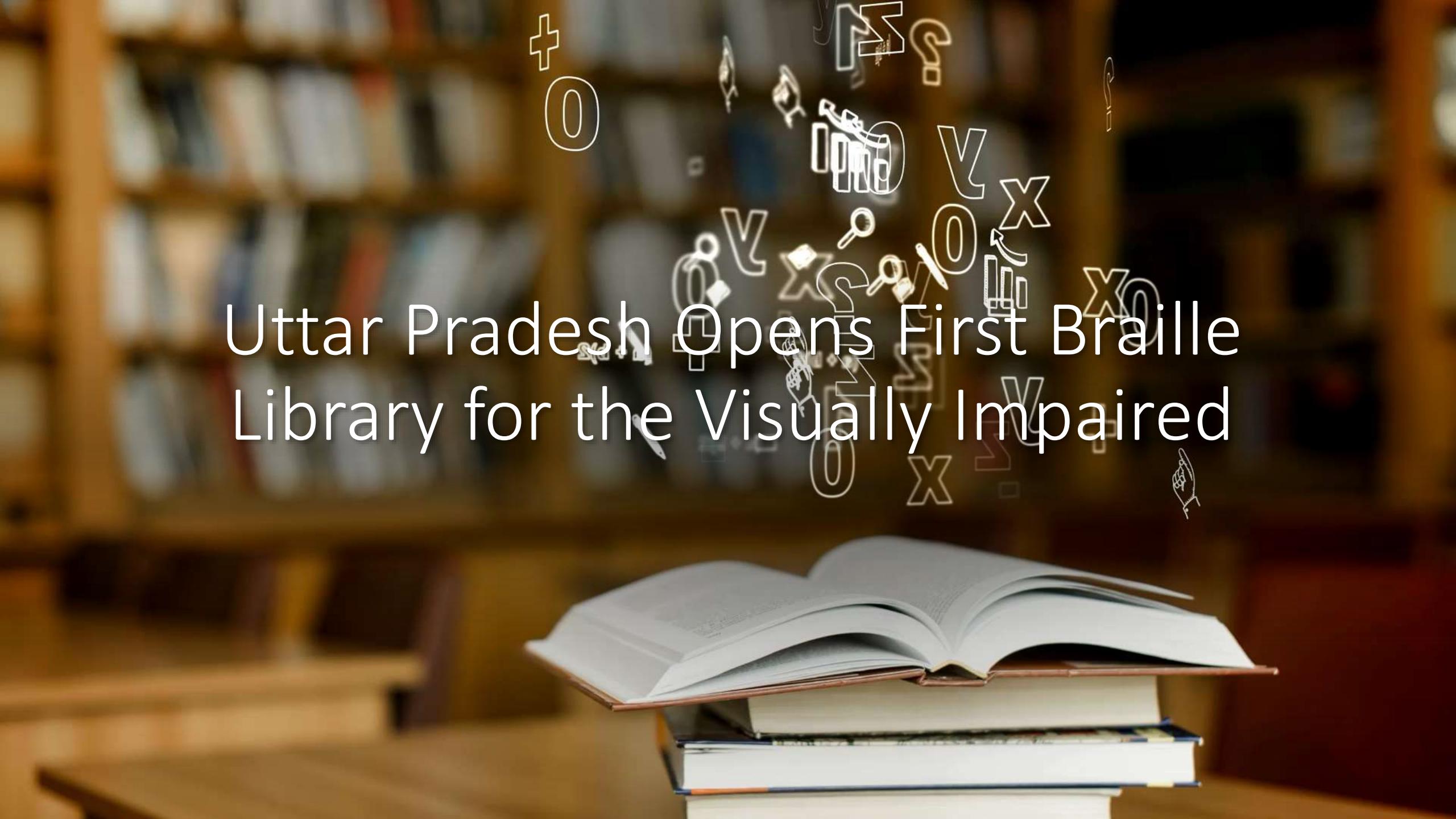
- Upendra Dwivedi stated that the Indian Army is undergoing a “decade of transformation”.
- The transformation is anchored on:
  - Jointness
  - Self-reliance (Atmanirbharta)
  - Innovation
- Emphasis on:
  - Indigenous technologies
  - New operational concepts
  - Continuous reforms
- Networking and data-centricity are providing fresh momentum to military modernisation.

---

## ◆ What Does “Networking & Data Centricity” Mean?

*(Conceptual clarity for Prelims + Mains)*

Concept	Explanation
Networking	Seamless connectivity between sensors, shooters, and commanders
Data Centricity	Decisions driven by real-time, accurate, shared data
Operational Impact	Reduced decision cycle, enhanced situational awareness
Warfare Model	Network-centric & multi-domain operations



Uttar Pradesh Opens First Braille  
Library for the Visually Impaired

Aspect	Details
<b>Initiative</b>	First Braille Library of Uttar Pradesh
<b>Target Group</b>	Visually impaired learners
<b>Location</b>	Swami Vivekananda Central Library (1st floor)
<b>Institution</b>	Dr Shakuntala Mishra National Rehabilitation University
<b>City</b>	Lucknow
<b>Inaugurated By</b>	Vice-Chancellor Acharya Sanjay Singh

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# Word of the day

## **Marginalia:**

notes written in the margin

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## **Synonyms:** note

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**Usage:** *Some of their chats were printed as marginalia in the book.*

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## **Pronunciation:**

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

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## **International Phonetic**

**Alphabet:** /mər'jɪnəli.ə/

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Thank you ☺

