

# Daily Current Affairs

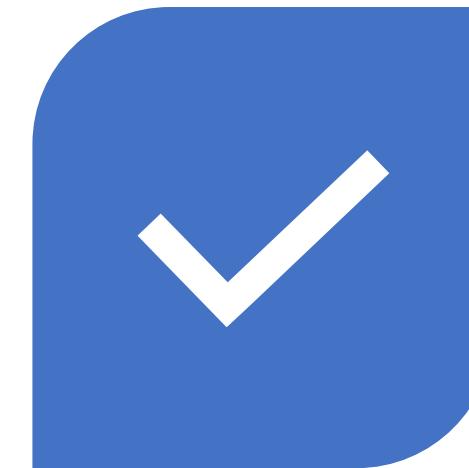




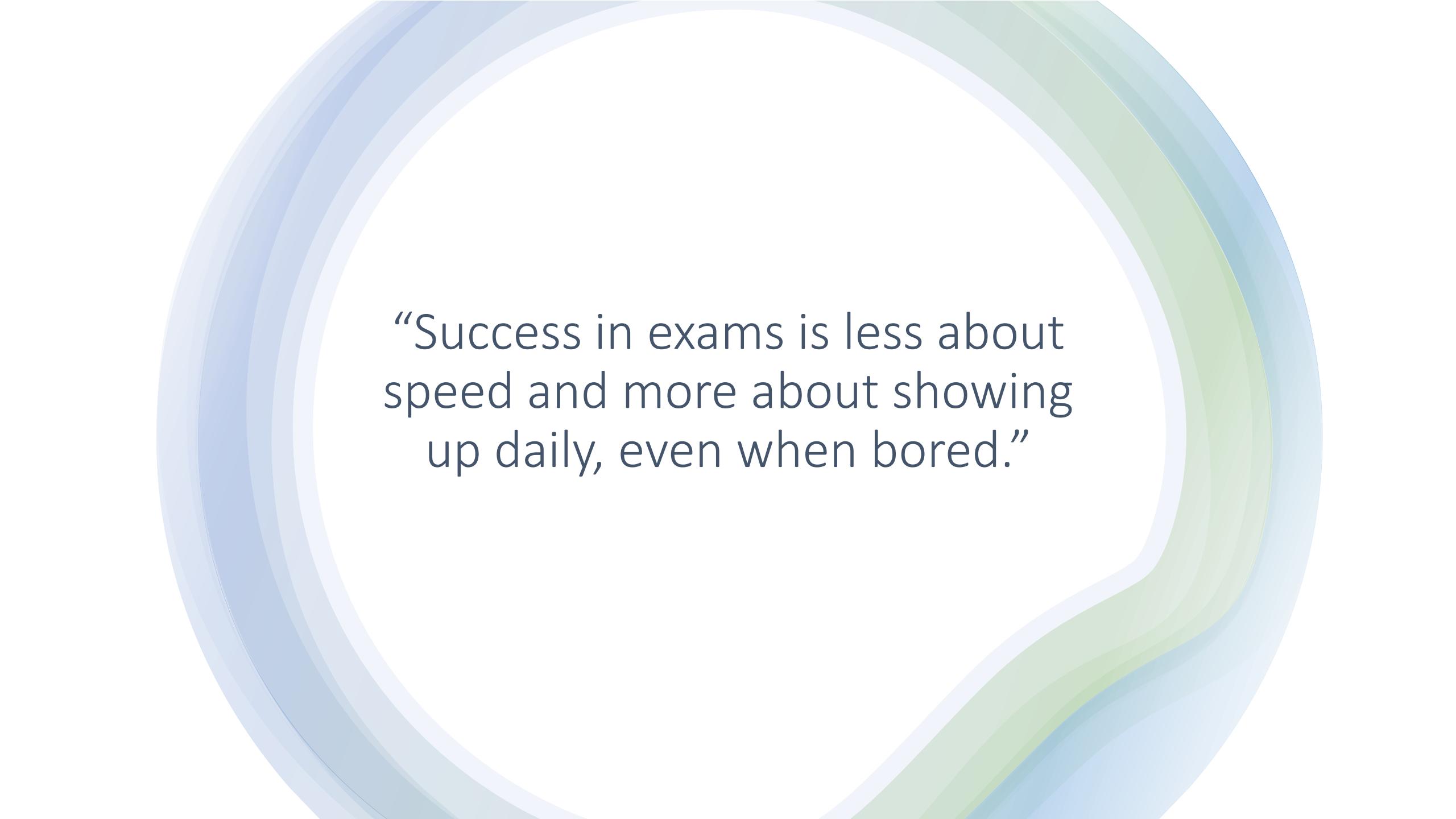
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10 MCQ QUIZ



“Success in exams is less about speed and more about showing up daily, even when bored.”

# GK-GS + + CURRENT AFFAIRS 2025-26 COMBO

BY BHUNESH SIR

## INCLUDES:

- COMPLETE GK-GS (RECORDED | 200+ HRS)
- COMPLETE CURRENT AFFAIRS (LIVE  
| JAN 2025-MAR 2026 | 20 HIGH PRIORITY TOPICS)

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DEFENCE, EPFO, IB, RRB NTPC, CET, RAS & MORE

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Class24



# Mamata, ED lock horns over raid at I-PAC office

The Bengal CM says ED took crucial data related to her party's strategy document, candidate lists

ED accuses her of removing key evidence during intervention at residence of the firm's co-founder

Amit Shah ordered raids..., BJP wants to bulldoze Bengal, but people will not bow, Mamata says

**Shiv Sahay Singh**  
KOLKATA

**T**he Directorate of Enforcement (ED) on Thursday accused West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of removing evidence from two locations during a raid against the political consultancy firm Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) in Kolkata.

The Trinamool Congress chairperson, who visited the I-PAC office and the residence of its co-founder Pratik Jain during the raid, said the search was "politically motivated to steal party data", adding that crucial information relating to the party's strategy documents and candidate lists was taken away by the Central agency.

"They [Bharatiya Janata Party] are great killers of democracy. How can they do it? What will happen if we reciprocate this ED

search by raiding BJP party offices in Bengal?" Ms. Banerjee told media persons.

Ms. Banerjee reached Mr. Jain's south Kolkata residence at about 12:44 p.m. and later visited the I-PAC office in the city's Salt Lake area, leaving it at about 4:20 p.m. When she came out of the residence, she was seen carrying a file that was not with her when she entered.

In a statement, the ED said that the Chief Minister and her aides had "forcibly removed physical documents and electronic evidences".

"Ms. Banerjee took away key evidences including physical documents and electronic devices. The CM's convoy then proceeded to I-PAC's office premises, from where Ms. Banerjee, her aides, and the State police personnel forcibly removed physical documents and electronic evidences," the ED state-



**Data tussle:** Mamata Banerjee at I-PAC co-founder Pratik Jain's residence in Kolkata on Thursday. PTI

ment said.

The agency claimed that the Chief Minister's actions "have resulted in obstruction in ongoing investigation and proceedings under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)".

The ED also clarified

that the search that was in connection with coal smuggling syndicate and entities linked to Hawala money is conducted strictly in accordance with established legal safeguards.

"It is clarified that the search is evidence based and is not targeted at any

political establishment. No party office has been searched. The search is not linked to any elections, and is part of regular crackdown on money laundering," the agency claimed.

The ED also approached the Calcutta High Court seeking judicial interven-

tion. In its petition, the agency alleged hindrance caused by the Chief Minister's actions during the searches.

## FIRs against ED

During her visit to Mr. Jain's residence, Ms. Banerjee was accompanied by Kolkata Police Commissioner Manoj Verma and other senior officials of the West Bengal police. Two FIRs were registered against ED officials at the Shakespeare Sarani police station. One was based on a *suo motu* complaint by the police that ED officials had not informed the local police before conducting the raids. The other FIR was based on a complaint by Mr. Jain's wife, alleging that important documents had been stolen during the search at his residence.

Ms. Banerjee specifically accused Union Home Minister Amit Shah of being behind the raids. "They

want to forcefully bulldoze Bengal. Bengal people will not bow their head to the BJP," she said. "Naughty and nasty Home Minister. They do not have guts?" she added. Later in the day, she urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to control his Home Minister.

The Trinamool Congress has engaged I-PAC as a political consultant over the past few years and the firm had helped the party shape its electoral and political strategy in the 2021 Assembly election and subsequent elections in West Bengal.

Ms. Banerjee said that the people of the State would respond to the ED raids and asked her party's rank and file to protest against them. In response, a huge crowd of Trinamool supporters gathered outside the I-PAC office, raising slogans as ED officials left the venue after completing their searches.

- **Key Personalities & Institutions**
- **Mamata Banerjee** – Chief Minister of West Bengal
- **Enforcement Directorate (ED)** – Central agency enforcing PMLA
- **Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC)** – Political consultancy firm
- **Amit Shah** – Union Home Minister
- **Trinamool Congress (TMC)** – Ruling party in West Bengal

- **What happened? | क्या हुआ?**
- **ED conducted raids at:**
  - I-PAC office in Kolkata
  - Residence of I-PAC co-founder Pratik Jain
- **ED alleged removal of evidence** during the raid.
- **Mamata Banerjee personally visited both locations.**

- ED's Allegations | ED के आरोप
- CM and her aides **forcibly removed**:
  - Physical documents
  - Electronic devices
- Action allegedly **obstructed investigation** under:
  - **Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)**
- ED claimed **legal safeguards were followed**.

- **Mamata Banerjee's Stand | ममता बनर्जी का पक्ष**
- Raids were:
  - Politically motivated
  - Intended to **steal party data**
- Alleged ED seized:
  - TMC strategy documents
  - Candidate lists
- Accused BJP and Amit Shah of:
  - Using ED to “**bulldoze Bengal**”
- Asserted:
  - “People of Bengal will not bow.”

## 4 Police Action & FIRs | पुलिस कार्रवाई

- Two FIRs registered against ED officials:
  - **Suo motu FIR** – ED did not inform local police
  - Complaint by Pratik Jain's wife (theft of documents)

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## 5 ED Clarifications | ED का स्पष्टीकरण

- Raid **not linked to elections**
- Investigation related to:
  - **Money laundering**
- Search:
  - Evidence-based
  - Not targeting any political party

Topic	Facts
Enforcement Directorate	Works under Dept. of Revenue, Ministry of Finance / वित्त मंत्रालय
PMLA Act	Enacted in 2002, operational since 2005 / धन शोधन रोकथाम अधिनियम
ED Powers	Search, seizure, attachment, arrest under PMLA
State Police Role	Prior intimation required during searches (as per conventions & SC observations)
Federal Issue	Central agencies vs elected State governments

Exam	Year	Question (Brief)	Answer
UPSC Prelims	2023	ED primarily enforces which law?	PMLA
UPSC Prelims	2020	ED functions under which ministry?	Finance Ministry
SSC CGL	2022	PMLA was enacted in which year?	2002
Banking (IBPS PO)	2021	Which agency attaches property under money laundering cases?	ED
RPSC RAS	2021	ED is related to which type of crimes?	Economic offences
Railway NTPC	2019	Which body investigates Hawala cases?	ED

- Registration of FIRs by state police against central agencies reflects tension related to:
  - A. Cooperative federalism
  - B. Competitive federalism
  - C. Quasi-federalism
  - D. Unitary bias

# UN body pegs India's growth at 7.2% this fiscal

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

A day after the Union government estimated the economy to grow at 7.4% in financial year 2025-26, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) said consumption and public investment can “largely offset” the impact of tariffs imposed by the U.S. and enable India to grow by 7.2% this fiscal.

However, the report warned that continuing tariffs could weigh on the economy as 18% of Indian exports are U.S.-bound. It said “tax reforms and monetary easing should provide additional near-term

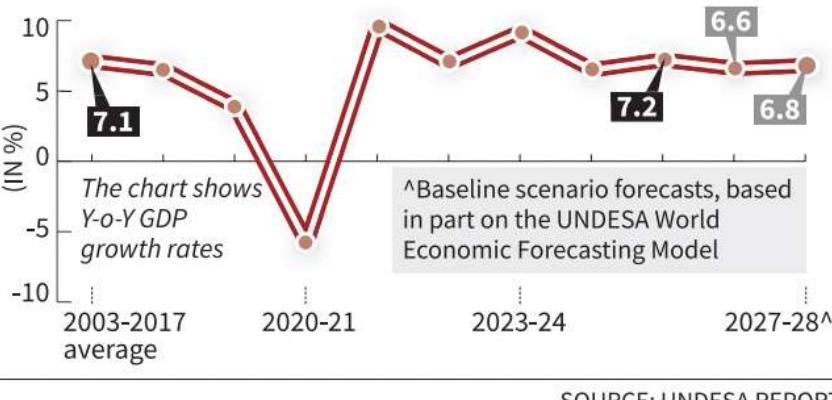
support”, adding that strong demand from other markets, including Europe and the West Asia, will limit the tariff impact.

The report predicted India's growth to be 7.4% in calendar year 2025. On a fiscal year basis, it estimated India to grow at 6.6% and 6.8% in 2026-27 and 2027-28, respectively.

“In India, growth is estimated at 7.4% for 2025 and forecast at 6.6% for 2026 and 6.7% for 2027, supported by resilient consumption and strong public investment, which should largely offset the adverse impact of higher United States tariffs,” the report, presented in the UN DESA's World Economic Situa-

## Varying forecasts

UNDESA estimates India to grow by 7.2% in FY26, slightly lower than the 7.4% estimated by the Indian government



tion and Prospects 2026, said.

On the other hand, the report added that, while the tariffs may adversely affect some product categories, key exports such as electronics and smart-

phones are expected to remain exempt.

“On the supply side, continued expansion in manufacturing and services sectors will remain a key driver of growth throughout the forecast period,”

the report said.

In 2025, “India recorded strong growth in gross fixed capital formation, led by higher public spending on physical and digital infrastructure, defence, and renewable energy”, the report said.

“The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) countries continued to undertake large-scale capital investments aligned with long-term economic diversification strategies.” However, in contrast, the report noted that China saw a contraction in its fixed asset investment through the first three quarters of 2025, due to the ongoing weakness in the property sector.

- **Key Institutions / Bodies**
- **United Nations**
- **UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)**
- **Government of India (Economic estimates for FY)**

## 1 Overall Projection | समग्र अनुमान

- UN DESA estimates India's GDP growth at 7.2% in FY 2025–26  
→ FY26 में भारत की GDP वृद्धि 7.2%
- This is slightly lower than India Govt's estimate of 7.4%  
→ सरकार के 7.4% अनुमान से थोड़ा कम

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## 2 Why growth remains strong? | वृद्धि मजबूत क्यों है?

- Resilient domestic consumption  
→ मजबूत घरेलू खपत
- High public investment in:
  - Physical infrastructure
  - Digital infrastructure
  - Defence
  - Renewable energy→ बुनियादी ढांचा, रक्षा और नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा में सरकारी निवेश

### 3 Tariff Impact | टैरिफ का प्रभाव

- U.S. tariffs may affect India, as:
  - ~18% of India's exports are U.S.-bound  
→ भारत के लगभग 18% निर्यात अमेरिका को जाते हैं
- However, demand from Europe & West Asia can offset losses  
→ यूरोप और पश्चिम एशिया की मांग नुकसान की भरपाई कर सकती है

### 4 Medium-term Outlook | मध्यम अवधि अनुमान

- Calendar year 2025: 7.4% growth
- FY 2026–27: ~6.6%
- FY 2027–28: ~6.8%  
→ धीमी लेकिन स्थिर वृद्धि पथ (Moderation with stability)

## 5 Sectoral Drivers | क्षेत्रीय कारक

- Manufacturing & Services expansion
  - विनिर्माण और सेवा क्षेत्र प्रमुख चालक
- Electronics & smartphones:
  - Some tariff impact, but phones expected to remain exempt
  - कुछ उत्पाद प्रभावित, स्मार्टफोन अपेक्षाकृत सुरक्षित

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## 6 Global Comparison | वैश्विक तुलना

- GCC countries:
  - Large-scale capital investments
  - खाड़ी देशों में बड़े पूंजी निवेश
- China:
  - Fixed asset investment contraction
  - Due to property sector weakness
  - रियल एस्टेट संकट के कारण निवेश में गिरावट

Topic	Key Facts (English + Hindi)
UN DESA	Publishes <i>World Economic Situation and Prospects</i> (WESP)
India FY26 Growth	UN DESA: <b>7.2%</b> , Govt: <b>7.4%</b>
Export Exposure	~18% exports to U.S.
Growth Drivers	Public capex, consumption, manufacturing, services
Risk Factors	Trade protectionism, global slowdown
China Context	Property sector stress, weaker fixed investment

- Approximately what share of India's exports are U.S.-bound, as per the report?  
A. 10%  
B. 14%  
C. 18%  
D. 25%

# Trump clears Bill that will slap up to 500% tariffs on nations buying Russian oil

**Suhasini Haidar**  
NEW DELHI

Doubling down on his pressure on India to stop importing oil from Russia, U.S. President Donald Trump has 'greenlit' a legislation that will empower him to levy up to 500% in tariffs on countries that buy oil or uranium from Russia, according to senior Senator Lindsey Graham.

Mr. Graham, a close associate of Mr. Trump, said the U.S. President on Wednesday has "greenlit" the Russia Sanctions Bill, which could be voted in Congress "as early as next week".

"This Bill would give President Trump tremendous leverage against countries like China, India, and Brazil to incentivise them to stop buying the cheap Russian oil that provides the financing for [Russian President Vladimir] Putin's bloodbath against Ukraine," Mr. Graham said.

The bipartisan Bill has thus far got 84 co-sponsors in the Senate (out of 100 members), and 151 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives, suggesting it will be passed smoothly once brought to a vote.

**'Top priority'**  
The move came just ahead of the arrival of U.S. Ambassador-designate Sergio Gor to New Delhi, who had said that ensuring India ends its import of Russian oil is a "top priority".

Mr. Gor, who was confirmed and sworn in to the position months ago will begin his tenure as Ambassador to India and "Special

## Tariff target

The Bill gives the U.S. President discretion to choose tariff figures over and above the 25% penalty tariffs already imposed on India

- The Bill, introduced in the Senate in April 2025, has enough co-sponsors from Republican and Democratic parties to suggest a smooth passage once brought to vote
- 84 co-sponsors in Senate out of a total of 100 members
- 151 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives



They [India] must stop buying Russian oil. The President has only imposed a 25% tariff [thus far]

SERGIO GOR  
U.S. Ambassador-designate

Envoy to South and Central Asia" on Monday, and is expected to outline his mission with a public statement.

Earlier this week, Mr. Trump, who had jointly addressed the press along with Mr. Graham, announced they had a "great legislation coming", as Mr. Graham said the Bill would give the U.S. President discretion to choose the figure of the tariffs over and above 25% penalty tariffs already imposed on India.

As a result, Mr. Gor's first order of business in Delhi would likely be to push for a full stop to Indian oil imports from Russia, not just a reduction.

This week, Reliance announced that it has not received any cargo of Russian oil at its Jamnagar refinery through most of December, and does not expect any in January, indicating that it has stopped orders of the oil for now.

Indian PSUs increased their intake sharply in November 2025, but with Reliance stopping all such imports and Nayara Energy, the other big importer under sanctions from Western countries unable to import, it is unlikely that

India's Russian oil purchases can recover to previous levels.

In 2018, under similar pressure from the previous Trump administration, India had "zeroed out" its oil imports from Iran and Venezuela as well.

Meanwhile in Paris, Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski expressed "satisfaction" that India has reduced its oil imports from Russia, during a joint press appearance with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Foreign Ministers of France and Germany.

In September, during his Senate Foreign Relations Committee confirmation hearings, Mr. Gor said that Mr. Trump had been "crystal clear" on the issue of India's oil purchases.

"They (India) must stop buying Russian oil. And I believe almost every single member of this committee has co-sponsored Senator Graham's legislation which has proposed a 500% tariff on secondary purchase and reselling of Russian oil. The President has only imposed a 25% tariff [thus far]," he added, referring to the Russia Sanctions Act.

## 1 What is the Bill? | बिल क्या है?

- Russia Sanctions Bill cleared by Donald Trump  
→ रूस प्रतिबंध विधेयक को ट्रंप की मंजूरी
- Allows U.S. President to impose up to 500% tariffs  
→ रूसी तेल/यूरेनियम खरीदने वाले देशों पर 500% तक टैरिफ

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## 2 Target Countries | लक्ष्य देश

- Countries buying oil or uranium from Russia, including:
  - India
  - China
  - Brazil

→ रूस से तेल/यूरेनियम खरीदने वाले देश निशाने पर

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## 3 How tariffs work | टैरिफ कैसे लागू होंगे?

- President gets discretion to:
  - Impose tariffs above existing 25% penalty tariffs

→ 25% मौजूदा टैरिफ से ऊपर अतिरिक्त दंडात्मक शुल्क

#### 4 Political Support in U.S. | अमेरिका में समर्थन

- Bipartisan Bill (Republicans + Democrats)
- Support base:
  - 84 co-sponsors in Senate (out of 100)
  - 151 co-sponsors in House of Representatives

→ आसानी से पास होने की संभावना

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#### 5 Strategic Objective | रणनीतिक उद्देश्य

- Pressure countries to:
  - Stop buying cheap Russian oil
  - Cut financial support to Russia in Ukraine war

→ यूक्रेन युद्ध में रूस की फंडिंग रोकना

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#### 6 India-specific Angle | भारत से जुड़ा पक्ष

- U.S. envoy-designate Sergio Gor:
  - Ending India's Russian oil imports is a "top priority"
- Under similar pressure in 2018, India:
  - Zeroed out oil imports from:
    - Iran
    - Venezuela

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## 7 Current Indian Oil Status | वर्तमान स्थिति

- Reliance Industries:
  - No Russian oil cargoes at Jamnagar refinery in December
- Indian PSUs:
  - Imports rose in Nov 2025
  - But halted by December due to sanctions pressure

→ संकेत: भारत रूसी तेल से धीरे-धीरे दूरी बना रहा है

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## 8 European Position | यूरोप की प्रतिक्रिया

- Poland FM Radosław Sikorski:
  - Expressed satisfaction that India has **reduced Russian oil imports**

→ पश्चिमी देशों का समन्वित दबाव

Topic	Key Facts (English + Hindi)
Secondary Sanctions	Penalties on third countries trading with sanctioned states / तृतीय देशों पर दंड
Tariff Ceiling	Up to <b>500%</b> under proposed U.S. Bill
Existing Penalty	<b>25% tariff already imposed</b>
India Oil Shift (2018)	Iran & Venezuela imports stopped
Russia-Ukraine War	Energy trade as a geopolitical weapon
Jamnagar Refinery	World's largest refinery complex (Reliance)

- The Bill primarily represents which type of sanctions?
  - A. Primary sanctions
  - B. Sectoral sanctions
  - C. Secondary sanctions
  - D. Monetary sanctions



# Cashless treatment scheme for road accident victims

**Iagriti Chandra**

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to launch a nationwide cashless treatment scheme for road accident victims, offering coverage of up to ₹1.5 lakh and a cash award for Good Samaritans who rush victims to hospitals.

The scheme will cover road accidents anywhere in the country, and not just on national highways, Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari said during a two-day conference of Transport Ministers, Secretaries and Commissioners of all States and union territories here.

## AIIMS study

Mr. Gadkari cited an AIIMS study and said road fatalities could be reduced by 30% if there was timely medical intervention. The first 60 minutes after a severe accident is known as the "Golden Hour" during which immediate and necessary medical attention could increase the survival rate of a victim.

The medical coverage would be under the third

**The scheme will cover road accidents anywhere in the country, and not just on National highways**

party insurance bought at the time of a car purchase, and where a vehicle was not insured, the government would fund the medical expenses under the Road Safety Fund.

A person who brings a victim to the hospital, who the government is calling "*rahavir*", would be given a cash award of ₹25,000. This could not be claimed by more than one individual, Mr. Gadkari said.

## Pilot successful

A pilot for cashless treatment had been successfully carried out in Assam, Chandigarh, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand and Puducherry.

The government also plans to bring a slew of amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, which will include recommendations made by States during the two-day conference.

## ◆ Key Persons / Institutions

- **Narendra Modi** – Prime Minister of India
- **Nitin Gadkari** – Minister for Road Transport & Highways
- **All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)**
- **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH)**
- **Road Safety Fund**

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## 📌 Point-wise Summary (Bilingual – Together)

### 1 What is the scheme? | योजना क्या है?

- A nationwide cashless treatment scheme for road accident victims  
→ सड़क दुर्घटना पीड़ितों के लिए देशव्यापी कैशलेस इलाज योजना
- Expected to be launched by PM Narendra Modi

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### 2 Coverage & Scope | दायरा और कवरेज

- Medical coverage up to ₹1.5 lakh per victim  
→ प्रति पीड़ित ₹1.5 लाख तक का इलाज
- Applicable across India, not limited to National Highways  
→ पूरे देश में लागू, केवल राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग तक सीमित नहीं

### 3 Golden Hour Focus | "गोल्डन ऑवर" पर ज़ोर

- First 60 minutes after a severe accident = Golden Hour  
→ दुर्घटना के बाद पहले 60 मिनट को गोल्डन ऑवर
- AIIMS study:
  - Timely medical intervention can reduce fatalities by ~30%  
→ समय पर इलाज से मौतें 30% तक घट सकती हैं

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### 4 Funding Mechanism | वित्तीय व्यवस्था

- Treatment covered under:
  - Third-party insurance (if vehicle insured)
  - Road Safety Fund (if vehicle uninsured)  
→ बीमा न होने पर सरकार खर्च उठाएगी

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### 5 Good Samaritan Incentive | "रहवीर" प्रोत्साहन

- Person bringing victim to hospital is called "Rahavir"  
→ पीड़ित को अस्पताल पहुँचाने वाला व्यक्ति = "रहवीर"
- Cash award: ₹25,000
- Award only to one individual per case  
→ एक दुर्घटना में एक ही व्यक्ति को पुरस्कार

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## 6 Pilot Projects | पायलट परियोजनाएँ

- Successful pilots conducted in:
  - Assam
  - Chandigarh
  - Uttar Pradesh
  - Punjab
  - Haryana
  - Uttarakhand
  - Puducherry

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## 7 Legal Backing | कानूनी समर्थन

- Government plans **amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988**  
→ मोटर वाहन अधिनियम, 1988 में संशोधन प्रस्तावित
- Amendments to include:
  - Recommendations from States & UTs

Topic	Key Facts (English + Hindi)
Golden Hour	First 60 minutes critical for survival
Road Accident Deaths	India accounts for ~11% of global road deaths
Motor Vehicles Act	Major amendment in <b>2019</b>
Good Samaritan Law	Protects helpers from legal harassment
Road Safety Fund	Created under Motor Vehicles Act
SDG Link	SDG 3.6 – Halve road traffic deaths

<b>Exam</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Question (Brief)</b>	<b>Answer</b>
UPSC Prelims	2023	‘Golden Hour’ is associated with?	Emergency trauma care
UPSC Prelims	2020	Which Act governs road safety in India?	Motor Vehicles Act
SSC CGL	2022	Third-party insurance relates to?	Motor vehicles
IBPS PO	2021	Road Safety Fund is related to?	Accident victims
RPSC RAS	2022	Good Samaritan guidelines issued by?	Supreme Court / Govt
Railway NTPC	2019	AIIMS functions under which ministry?	Health Ministry

- If a vehicle involved in an accident is uninsured, treatment expenses will be borne by:
  - A. State government only
  - B. Insurance company
  - C. Road Safety Fund
  - D. Hospital



# Voice for people-driven conservation

Madhav Gadgil, who passed away in Pune on Wednesday, shifted the paradigm in global conservation discourse, giving primacy to human rights over exclusive wildlife protection; Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel he headed recommended strict but people-driven protection for the ghats

**Divya Gandhi**  
BENGALURU

**M**adhav Gadgil, a pioneering scholar and iconic people's conservationist, passed away in Pune on Wednesday after a brief illness. He was 83.

As someone who started off with the upper-class "urban conservationist approach to nature conservation", Mr. Gadgil metamorphosed into an ecologist who advocated the rights of the marginalised communities for whom the forest was home. He called them the "common people of India", and saw them as "constituents of the ecosystem".

Nothing sums this up better than his own admission in his autobiography, *A Walk Up the Hill: Living with People and Nature*, published in 2023. Writing about his early days as a young conservationist, Mr. Gadgil confessed: "I subscribed to the urban conservationist approach to nature conservation, namely, protection through the devices of wildlife sanctuaries and national parks... I also subscribed to the view that it was necessary to remove habitations from within

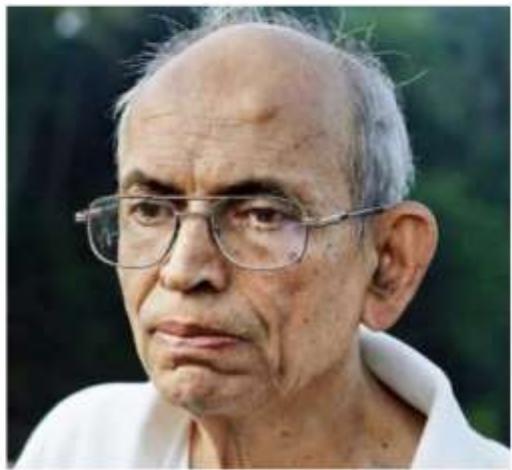
such habitats to safeguard them."

All that changed in the 1980s, when Mr. Gadgil "started thinking about alternative ways of following my passion to conserve nature, working with rather than against the common people of India".

Writing in the foreword to the book, the late M.S. Swaminathan, veteran agriculture scientist, said of Mr. Gadgil: "Madhav has had an illustrious career as one of India's leading researchers in the fields of ecology and environment, but more importantly, his thinking has been combined with action on environmental and ecological security in the service of humanity."

#### Paradigm shift

Mr. Gadgil would go on to shift the paradigm in the global conservation discourse, giving primacy to human rights over exclusive wildlife protection. He was distraught by the obsession of governments with commercial interests and their disregard for the rights of farmers and indigenous people. In fact, he began to view the Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972 as a weapon at the hands of the Forest departments "to



MADHAV GADGIL (1942 - 2026)

#### Gadgil was an ecologist who advocated for rights of the marginalised communities

subjugate the common people of India", especially by criminalising hunter-gatherer communities and farmers.

The Western Ghats, where he was born in 1942, received his particular attention. This interest acquired the sharpest clarity in his 2011 report as chair-

man of the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel. The Manmohan Singh government, having responded to an alarm sounded by experts and local populations on the destruction of the fragile ecosystem and people of the Western Ghats by industrialisation, climate change and commercial greed, had tasked Mr. Gadgil with rendering advice on how to save the ghats from an ecological disaster.

Mr. Gadgil scoured the region he knew so intimately, interacted with communities, both forest-

and village-based, panchayats and forest officials, and recommended strict but people-driven protection for the ghats. Advocating the setting up of a Western Ghats Ecology Authority, he asked for the major part of it to be declared environmentally sensitive. No new polluting industries were to be set up in the zones earmarked as particularly endangered and existing industries were to be phased out.

Vested interest groups resisted the ideas, leading, typically and predictably, to the setting up of another panel. Headed by the eminent space scientist K. Kasturirangan, the panel recommended in 2013 that a reduced area (37% of the ghats) be protected. But even that was not accepted.

Till today, the Western Ghats remains a zone of contestation between the dogma of development and the calls for conservation.

Mr. Gadgil also championed the "Save the Silent Valley" movement in Kerala in the 1970s and early 1980s to protect the rainforests, as he campaigned for the forests of Bastar. A "product" of Harvard and a citizen of the world, he focused on the fragilities of

India's ecosystems and the human inhabitants.

Paying tributes on X, former Union Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh said Mr. Gadgil "was a top-notch academic scientist, a tireless field researcher, a pioneering institution-builder, a great communicator, a believer in people's networks and movements, and friend, philosopher, guide, and mentor to many.."

Historian Ramachandra Guha, who co-authored two books with Mr. Gadgil in the 1990s, described him as "an exemplary scientist and citizen, and, to me, a friend and mentor for forty years and more".

Mr. Gadgil leaves behind a rich legacy for the future generations. He had hoped that this "will be the third generation of people born in free, democratic India whose Constitution professes values of social justice, equity, equality, non-racism and non-sexism, human dignity, an open society, accountability and the rule of law." To achieve that, the ecologist must, as he said, "talk of many things, not just air and water and the bird that sings, but of men and money and economic reforms..."

(With inputs from  
Vinaya Deshpande Pandit)

#### ◆ Key Personality / Panels

- **Madhav Gadgil** – Ecologist, conservation thinker (1942–2026)
- **Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP / Gadgil Committee)**
- **Kasturirangan** – Headed subsequent panel on Western Ghats

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#### 📌 Point-wise Summary (Bilingual – Together)

##### 1 Who was Madhav Gadgil? | माधव गाडगिल कौन थे?

- A pioneering Indian ecologist who **championed people-centric conservation**  
→ जन-केंद्रित संरक्षण के प्रबल समर्थक
- Advocated rights of **marginalised communities** as “**constituents of ecosystems**”  
→ हाशिए के समुदायों को पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का हिस्सा माना

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##### 2 Paradigm Shift | संरक्षण में वैचारिक परिवर्तन

- Shifted global discourse from **exclusive wildlife protection** to **human rights-first conservation**  
→ केवल वन्यजीव संरक्षण से आगे, मानव अधिकारों को प्राथमिकता
- Critiqued fortress conservation (parks/sanctuaries that displace people)  
→ स्थानीय आबादी के विस्थापन-आधारित संरक्षण की आलोचना

### 3 Western Ghats Vision | पश्चिमी घाट पर दृष्टि

- As Chair of WGEEP, recommended:
  - Strict but people-driven protection
  - Village-level participation (panchayats, forest officials, communities)  
→ कठोर परंतु सहभागितापूर्ण संरक्षण मॉडल
- Proposed ecologically sensitive zones (ESZs) with graded protection  
→ पर्यावरणीय संवेदनशील क्षेत्रों का चरणबद्ध संरक्षण

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### 4 Key Recommendations | प्रमुख सुझाव

- No new polluting industries in highly sensitive zones
- Phase-out of existing harmful industries
- Creation of a Western Ghats Ecology Authority  
→ पश्चिमी घाट पारिस्थितिकी प्राधिकरण

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### 5 Resistance & Follow-up | विरोध और आगे की प्रक्रिया

- Recommendations faced **strong resistance from vested interests**
- A second panel under Kasturirangan suggested **reduced protected area (~37%)**, which too saw limited acceptance  
→ कार्यान्वयन में राजनीतिक-आर्थिक बाधाएँ

Theme	Key Facts (English + Hindi)
Western Ghats	UNESCO World Heritage Site; biodiversity hotspot
WGEEP (2011)	Classified Ghats into ESZ-1/2/3 (graded protection)
Kasturirangan Panel	Reduced ESZ footprint; development-conservation balance
Community Forestry	Aligns with FRA, 2006; participatory governance
SDG Link	SDG-15 (Life on Land), SDG-16 (Institutions), SDG-10 (Inequality)

Exam	Year	Question (Brief)	Answer
UPSC Prelims	2014	Western Ghats panel chaired by Madhav Gadgil?	Yes
UPSC Prelims	2018	UNESCO tag linked to Western Ghats?	World Heritage
SSC CGL	2022	Biodiversity hotspot in India?	Western Ghats
RPSC RAS	2021	Silent Valley movement relates to?	Forest conservation
Railway NTPC	2020	Community participation in conservation refers to?	People-centric approach



# India to scrap curbs on Chinese firms that bid for govt. contracts

Plan follows ministries' requests to ease shortages and project delays; projects awarded to Chinese bidders fell 27% from a year earlier in 2021

**Reuters**  
NEW DELHI

**T**he finance ministry plans to scrap five-year-old restrictions on Chinese firms bidding for government contracts, two government sources said, as New Delhi seeks to revive commercial ties in an environment of reduced border tensions.

The curbs, imposed in 2020 after a deadly clash between the countries' troops, required Chinese bidders to register with an Indian government committee and obtain political and security clearances.

The measures effectively barred Chinese firms from competing for Indian government contracts that were estimated to be worth \$700 billion to \$750 billion.

*Reuters* is the first to report on the plan to ease the restrictions.

One of the sources said officials were working to remove the registration re-



**Boomerang effect:** Curbs on Chinese imports for the power sector hindered India's plans to raise thermal power capacity. FILE PHOTO

quirement. Both sources said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office will make the final decision.

The finance ministry and the PMO did not respond to *Reuters* requests for comment. The restrictions had a significant impact: months after they were made public, China's State-owned CRRC was disqualified from bidding for a \$216 million train-manufacturing contract. The Ministry of Finance's plan to ease the curbs followed requests from other government departments that

face shortages and project delays due to the 2020 restrictions, the sources said.

Soon after India imposed its restrictions, the value of new projects awarded to Chinese bidders fell 27% from a year earlier to \$1.67 billion in 2021, according to Observer Research Foundation.

Specifically, curbs on imports from China of equipment for the power sector have hindered India's plans to raise its thermal power capacity to about 307 GW over the next decade.

## 1 What is the decision? | निर्णय क्या है?

- India plans to scrap restrictions on Chinese firms bidding for government contracts  
→ सरकार चीनी कंपनियों पर लगी बोली प्रतिबंध हटाने की योजना बना रही है
- Restrictions were around 5 years old

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## 2 Why were curbs imposed? | प्रतिबंध क्यों लगाए गए थे?

- Imposed in 2020 after deadly India–China border clash  
→ 2020 में भारत–चीन सीमा संघर्ष के बाद
- Chinese firms were required to:
  - Register with Indian government committee
  - Obtain political & security clearances  
→ राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा आधारित जांच अनिवार्य

### 3 Why remove curbs now? | अब हटाने का कारण

- Requests from multiple ministries due to:
  - Equipment shortages
  - Project delays
    - परियोजनाओं में देरी और संसाधन संकट
- Aim to **revive commercial ties amid reduced border tensions**
  - घटे सीमा तनाव के बीच व्यापारिक संबंध सुधारना

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### 4 Economic impact of restrictions | आर्थिक प्रभाव

- Chinese firms were effectively barred from:
  - Govt contracts worth **\$700–750 billion**
- Example:
  - China's state-owned **CRRC** disqualified from **\$216 million train contract**

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### 5 Data highlight | आँकड़ों का संकेत

- Value of projects awarded to Chinese bidders:
  - Fell 27% in 2021
  - Declined to **\$1.67 billion** (Observer Research Foundation)
    - प्रतिबंधों का प्रत्यक्ष प्रभाव निवेश पर पड़ा

## 6 Power sector impact | बिजली क्षेत्र पर प्रभाव

- Import curbs on Chinese power equipment:
  - Hampered plans to raise **thermal power capacity** to ~307 GW over next decade  
→ ऊर्जा सुरक्षा और इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर प्रभावित

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## 7 Decision-making authority | अंतिम निर्णय

- PM Narendra Modi's Office (PMO) will take final call
- Finance Ministry & PMO did not officially comment

# Textiles ministry signs MoUs with 15 States under Tex-RAMPS scheme

**The Hindu Bureau**

COIMBATORE

The Ministry of Textiles has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with 15 States as part of the

'Textiles focused Research, Assessment, Monitoring, Planning And Start-Up' (Tex-RAMPS) scheme.

The MoUs were signed on the first day of the two-day national textile minis-

ters' conference in Guwahati on the theme 'India's Textiles: Weaving Growth, Heritage & Innovation'.

The scheme is designed to improve the coverage, quality, timeliness, and

credibility of textile-related statistical products and research, according to a press release.

The initiative drives integrated planning for key sectors including han-

dlooms, handicrafts, apparel, and technical textiles by focusing efforts directly at the cluster and district levels, the release said.

The Ministry provides an annual grant of ₹12 lakh

to each State or Union Territory. An additional grant of ₹1 lakh a year will be provided for each district, based on the development and execution of specific district action plans.

## 1 What happened? | क्या हुआ?

- Ministry of Textiles signed MoUs with 15 States  
→ कपड़ा मंत्रालय ने 15 राज्यों के साथ समझौता ज्ञापन (MoU) पर हस्ताक्षर किए
- Under the Tex-RAMPS scheme

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## 2 About Tex-RAMPS | Tex-RAMPS योजना क्या है?

- Full form: Textiles focused Research, Assessment, Monitoring, Planning and Start-Up  
→ कपड़ा क्षेत्र में अनुसंधान, मूल्यांकन, निगरानी, योजना और स्टार्ट-अप पर केंद्रित योजना
- Objective:
  - Improve coverage, quality, timeliness, and credibility of textile-related data & research  
→ टेक्सटाइल आँकड़ों और शोध की गुणवत्ता व विश्वसनीयता बढ़ाना

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## 3 Where were MoUs signed? | MoU कहाँ हस्ताक्षरित हुए?

- Signed during a national textile ministers' conference in Guwahati
- Conference theme:
  - “India’s Textiles: Weaving Growth, Heritage & Innovation”  
→ भारत के वस्त्र: विकास, विरासत और नवाचार

#### 4 Key Focus Areas | प्रमुख फोकस क्षेत्र

- Integrated planning at:
  - Cluster level
  - District level
- Priority textile segments:
  - Handlooms
  - Handicrafts
  - Apparel
  - Technical textiles

→ स्थानीय स्तर पर लक्षित विकास रणनीति

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#### 5 Financial Support | वित्तीय सहायता

- ₹12 lakh annual grant to each State / UT
- Additional ₹1 lakh per district per year

→ Based on:

- Development
- Execution of district action plans

Topic	Key Facts (English + Hindi)
Textile Sector	Second-largest employer after agriculture
India in Textiles	Among top global producers of cotton & man-made fibres
Technical Textiles	Sunrise sector; promoted under National Technical Textiles Mission
Cluster Approach	Used in handloom & handicraft development
Guwahati	Major conference hub for NE-India policy outreach

- An additional district-level grant under Tex-RAMPS is:
  - A. ₹50,000
  - B. ₹1 lakh
  - C. ₹2 lakh
  - D. ₹5 lakh

## ANKARA

**Turkey ready to help Syria against Kurdish fighters: Defence Ministry**



Turkey's military is ready to "support" Syria in its battle with Kurdish fighters in the northeastern city of Aleppo if Damascus asks for help, the defence ministry said on Thursday. Turkey has long been hostile to the Kurdish SDF, seeing it as an extension of the banned Kurdish militant group PKK.

## BEIRUT

**Lebanese military concludes first phase of disarming Hezbollah**



Lebanon's military said on Thursday it had concluded the first phase of a plan to fully deploy across southern Lebanon and disarm Hezbollah's main military wing. The development was encouraging but "far from sufficient," and its Foreign Ministry said the group still has dozens of compounds.

## DUBAI

**Saudi Arabia says UAE helped Yemen separatist leader flee**



Saudi Arabia alleged on Thursday that the United Arab Emirates smuggled Abderrahman al-Jabri, the leader of Southern Transitional Council, across its border to Yemen and flew him to Abu Dhabi. The UAE had no immediate reaction to it, which further escalates tensions between the neighbouring nations.

## WASHINGTON

**U.S. Senate to vote on reining in Trump on action in Venezuela**



The U.S. Senate is due to consider a resolution on Thursday that would block President Donald Trump from taking further military action in Venezuela without congressional consent. Analysts and lawmakers said the measure could pass in a close vote. Mr. Trump's party holds a 53-47 majority in the Senate.

## U.S. govt. unveils plans to control Venezuela's oil sales 'indefinitely'

Energy Dept. says it has begun marketing Venezuelan crude globally; Trump claimed that 30-50 million barrels of oil would be transported to U.S., adding that South American nation will use funds from sales to purchase only U.S.-made products

## Stony silence

The U.S. Department of Energy said on Wednesday that it has begun marketing Venezuelan crude in the global market and has started the sales of the South American country's oil "indefinitely", a day after President Donald Trump claimed that Caracas would "turn over" up to 80 million barrels of oil to the United States.

"We have engaged the world's oil and energy industry, marketers and key banks to execute and provide financial support for the crude oil and crude products sales," it said in a fact sheet.



The U.S. attacked Venezuela on January 3 and captured its President Nicolás Maduro, who now faces narcotics charges in the U.S., facing charges of narcotics. Mr. Trump claimed on

Wednesday that 30 to 50 million barrels of Venezuelan oil would be taken by storage tanks, and brought directly to marketing desks in the U.S. He said he has authorised Energy Secre-

tary Chris Wright to execute this plan.

According to the fact sheet, Mr. Wright and the Department of Energy are "working with the interim Venezuelan authorities to ensure the necessary steps are taken to execute this deal".

It said proceeds from the sale of Venezuelan crude oil and crude products would initially be kept in U.S.-controlled accounts before being transferred "for the benefit of the Venezuelan people and the Venezuelan economy under the direction of the U.S. government".

A plan of sales began immediately after the immediate sale of approximately 30-50 million bar-

rels. They will continue indefinitely," added the Department.

In a social media post on Wednesday, Mr. Trump said Venezuela will purchase "only American made products" and the money the country receives from oil sales by the U.S. "These purchases will include purchases of Agricultural Products, and American Made Medical Devices and Equipment to improve Venezuela's Electric Grid and other infrastructure. In other words, Venezuela is committing to doing business with the United States of America and that's a wise choice," wrote Mr. Trump.

## Trump withdraws U.S. from UNFCCC, a key climate treaty

## Agence France-Presse

WASHINGTON



U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris climate change treaty was slammed on Thursday by the EU, which vowed to keep tackling the environmental crisis.

The White House on Wednesday flagged the U.S. to withdraw from organisations and treaties – roughly half affiliated with the Paris accord – that it identified as "contrary to the interests of the United States".

Most notable among them is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the parent treaty underpinning all major international climate agreements.

## Russian strikes leave one million without water, heat in Ukraine

## Agence France-Presse

Kiev

The treaty adopted in 1992 is a global pact by nations to cooperate to drive down global warming and combat climate change.

European Union climate chief Yvo de Boer said the UNFCCC "underpins the Paris Agreement and brings nations together in the collective fight against the crisis".

"The decision by the world's largest economy and second largest emitter to retreat from it is regrettable and unfortunate," Mr. Boer said.

In previous winters, Russia has intensified its attacks on energy infrastructure, leading to heating and water outages in heating and power plants and refineries, seeking to cut off Moscow's vital energy exports.

Ukrainian officials strategy to war against the civilian population.

The large-scale Russian strikes have knocked out power in the Zaporizhzhia region, leaving thousands without electricity and the grid operator Ukrenergo said late Wednesday.

Mr. Boer responded to the long-running targeting of its energy grid with an urgent call for the international economy and global politics, and the reason is why I'm here," he said.

India's relationship with the EU and with Europe in general remains strong, among all its major relationships, Mr. Jaishankar said.

Paris also held bilateral discussions with France's Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault.

"I think we can bring much-needed support from the international economy and global politics, and this is why I'm here," he said.

"India's relationship with the EU and with Europe in general remains strong, among all its major relationships, Mr. Jaishankar said.

Paris also held bilateral discussions with France's Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault.

"In an increasingly vir-

ile world where balances are being questioned, it is important to build bridges between centres of stability and centres of instability," the French Minister said.

Paris has been muddling

from U.S. President Donald Trump's ambiguity about the transatlantic relationship.

"It is to give a balanced and wavering support for Ukraine in its war against Russia," Mr. Ayrault said recently, following the U.S.'s capture of Mr. Maduro.

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ile world where balances

are being questioned, it is important to build bridges between centres of stability and centres of instability," the French Minister said.

## Israeli attacks kill seven, including four children, says Gaza civil defence agency

## Agence France-Presse



Seven people, including four children, were killed when a drone strike killed a woman, according to the civil defence agency in southern Gaza.

Four people, including two children, were killed when a drone strike killed a woman, according to the civil defence agency in southern Gaza.

When asked by AFP, the Israeli military said it was checking that report.

On Thursday, the military said a projectile was launched "from the area of Gaza City toward the State of Israel" but that it fell within the Gaza Strip.

"Shortly after, the military precisely struck the launch point," it said in a statement.

Israeli forces have killed at least 428 Palestinians in Gaza since the ceasefire took effect, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

## Dhaka suspends visa service in India, seeks visa bond exception from U.S.

## Press Trust of India

DHAKA

Bangladesh's interim government on Thursday said it has issued its key ministerial posts in New Delhi, to suspend visa services over security concerns.

Foreign Affairs Adviser M. Tonmild Hossain said that Bangladesh had also sought revision of a recently imposed visa bond requirement by the United States.

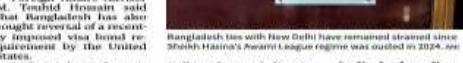
"What I have done is that I have issued our three ministerial posts and their visa sections closed for the time being. It's a security issue," Mr. Hossain said.

The adviser's comments came as the Foreign Ministry's High Commission in Kolkata overnight restricted visa services after identical moves in New

League regime was ousted following a violent student-led street protest in July-August 2023.

Mr. Hossain also told press reporters that Bangladesh was making diplomatic efforts to seek exemption from the United States' newly imposed visa bond requirement calling the decision "certainly unfortunate and painful for us". He, however, said the U.S. decision was "not abnormal" as it was an application for that visa alone and a number of countries were faced with immigration restrictions in view of the U.S. administration's measure.

When asked about Bangladesh's "potential interest" in pursuing the JV-F1 fighter jet deal from the Foreign Adviser said, "I can't tell about that today. But talks are under way."



Bangladesh ties with New Delhi have remained strained since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami

League regime was ousted following a violent student-led street protest in July-August 2023.

Mr. Hossain also told press reporters that Bangladesh was making diplomatic efforts to seek exemption from the United States' newly imposed visa bond requirement calling the decision "certainly unfortunate and painful for us". He, however, said the U.S. decision was "not abnormal" as it was an application for that visa alone and a number of countries were faced with immigration restrictions in view of the U.S. administration's measure.

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# U.S. govt. unveils plans to control Venezuela's oil sales 'indefinitely'

Energy Dept. says it has begun marketing Venezuelan crude globally; Trump claimed that 30-50 million barrels of oil would be transported to U.S., adding that South American nation will use funds from sales to purchase only U.S.-made products

**Stanly Johny**

**T**he U.S. Department of Energy said on Wednesday it has begun marketing Venezuelan crude in the global market and plans to control the sales of the South American country's oil "indefinitely", a day after President Donald Trump claimed that Caracas would "turn over" up to 50 million barrels of oil to the United States.

"We have engaged the world's leading commodity marketers and key banks to execute and provide financial support for these crude oil and crude products sales," it said in a fact sheet.



The U.S. attacked Venezuela on January 3 and captured Nicolas Maduro, who now faces narcoterrorism charges in the U.S. AP

The U.S. attacked Venezuela on January 3 and captured its President Nicolas Maduro, who is currently in the U.S. facing charges of narcoterrorism. Mr. Trump claimed on

Tuesday that 30 to 50 million barrels of Venezuelan oil would be taken by storage ships, and brought directly to unloading docks in the U.S. He said he has authorised Energy Secre-

tary Chris Wright to execute the plan.

According to the fact sheet, Mr. Wright and the Department of Energy are "working with the Interim Venezuelan Authorities and private industry to execute this deal".

It said proceeds from the sale of Venezuelan crude oil and oil products would initially be kept in U.S.-controlled accounts before being disbursed "for the benefit of the American people and the Venezuelan people at the discretion of the U.S. government".

"These oil sales begin immediately with the anticipated sale of approximately 30-50 million bar-

rels. They will continue indefinitely," added the Department.

In a social media post on Wednesday, Mr. Trump said Venezuela will purchase "only American made products" with the money the country receives from oil sales by the U.S. "These purchases will include American Agricultural Products, and American Made Medicines, Medical Devices, and Equipment to improve Venezuela's Electric Grid and Energy Facilities. In other words, Venezuela is committing to doing business with the United States of America as their principal partner - A wise choice," wrote Mr. Trump.

### 1 What has the U.S. announced? | अमेरिका ने क्या घोषणा की?

- The U.S. government plans to control Venezuela's oil sales indefinitely
  - अमेरिका वेनेज़ुएला की तेल बिक्री को अनिश्चित काल तक नियंत्रित करेगा
- The U.S. Department of Energy (DoE) has begun marketing Venezuelan crude globally
  - अमेरिकी ऊर्जा विभाग ने वेनेज़ुएला के कच्चे तेल की वैश्विक मार्केटिंग शुरू की

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### 2 Oil volumes & logistics | तेल की मात्रा और परिवहन

- 30–50 million barrels of oil expected to be moved to the U.S.
  - 3–5 करोड़ बैरल तेल अमेरिका लाया जाएगा
- Oil to be:
  - Loaded on storage ships
  - Brought to U.S. unloading docks
  - समुद्री भंडारण जहाजों से अमेरिका तक परिवहन

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### 3 Control over revenues | राजस्व पर नियंत्रण

- Proceeds from Venezuelan oil sales to be:
  - Held initially in U.S.-controlled accounts
  - Disbursed at the discretion of the U.S. government
  - तेल बिक्री की राशि पर अमेरिकी नियंत्रण

#### 4 Use of funds | धन का उपयोग

- Venezuela will use the oil revenue **only to purchase U.S.-made products**  
→ तेल से मिली राशि केवल अमेरिकी उत्पादों पर खर्च होगी
- Includes:
  - Agricultural products
  - Medicines & medical devices
  - Equipment to improve Venezuela's **electric grid and energy facilities**

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#### 5 Political context | राजनीतिक पृष्ठभूमि

- Announcement came **a day after Donald Trump's claim** that Venezuela would "turn over" oil to the U.S.
- The U.S. stated it is **working with interim Venezuelan authorities and private industry**  
→ सरकार-से-सरकार नहीं, बल्कि अंतरिम प्राधिकरणों के साथ काम

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#### 6 Duration | अवधि

- The U.S. Energy Department stated:
  - **Oil sales control will continue indefinitely**  
→ अनिश्चितकाल तक जारी रहेगा

Topic	Key Facts (English + Hindi)
Venezuela	Holds one of the <b>largest proven oil reserves</b> globally
Oil as a Weapon	Energy sanctions used for geopolitical leverage
Escrow-like Control	Revenues kept in controlled accounts
U.S. Sanctions Model	Similar approach earlier with Iran & Venezuela
Energy Security	Central to U.S. foreign policy
Petro-diplomacy	Oil trade linked with political recognition



- According to the announcement, how much Venezuelan oil may be transported to the U.S.?
  - A. 5–10 million barrels
  - B. 10–20 million barrels
  - C. 20–30 million barrels
  - D. 30–50 million barrels

# Trump withdraws U.S. from UNFCCC, a key climate treaty

**Agence France-Presse**

WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw the United States from a bedrock climate treaty was slammed on Thursday by the EU, which vowed to keep tackling the crisis with other nations.

The White House on Wednesday flagged the U.S. exit from 66 global organisations and treaties – roughly half affiliated with the United Nations – it identified as “contrary to the interests of the United States”.



Donald Trump

Most notable among them is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the parent treaty underpinning all major international climate agreements.

The treaty adopted in 1992 is a global pact by nations to cooperate to drive down planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

European Union climate chief Wopke Hoekstra said the UNFCCC “underpins global climate action” and brings nations together in the collective fight against the crisis.

“The decision by the world’s largest economy and second-largest emitter to retreat from it is regrettable and unfortunate,” Mr. Hoekstra said.

### 1 What did the U.S. decide? | अमेरिका ने क्या निर्णय लिया?

- U.S. President Donald Trump announced withdrawal from UNFCCC
  - अमेरिका ने UNFCCC से बाहर निकलने की घोषणा की
- The White House termed participation "contrary to U.S. interests"
  - अमेरिकी हितों के विरुद्ध बताया गया

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### 2 Scale of withdrawal | हटने का दायरा

- U.S. flagged exit from 66 global organisations and treaties
  - 66 वैश्विक संगठनों/समझौतों से हटने का संकेत
- About half affiliated with the United Nations
  - लगभग आधे संयुक्त राष्ट्र से जुड़े

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### 3 What is UNFCCC? | UNFCCC क्या है?

- Adopted in 1992
  - 1992 में अपनाया गया
- A global pact to:
  - Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
  - Adapt to climate change impacts

→ जलवायु परिवर्तन से निपटने का आधारभूत समझौता

#### 4 Why is UNFCCC important? | UNFCCC क्यों महत्वपूर्ण है?

- Parent treaty of major climate agreements such as:
  - Kyoto Protocol
  - Paris Agreement

→ सभी प्रमुख वैश्विक जलवायु समझौतों की आधारशिला

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#### 5 International reaction | अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रतिक्रिया

- European Union criticised the decision strongly
  - यूरोपीय संघ ने कड़ी आलोचना की
- EU vowed to continue global cooperation on climate action
- EU Climate Chief:
  - Called the move "regrettable and unfortunate"
  - Stated UNFCCC underpins global climate action

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#### 6 Global significance | वैश्विक महत्व

- U.S. is:
  - World's largest economy
  - Second-largest emitter of greenhouse gases

→ अमेरिका का हटना वैश्विक प्रयासों को कमज़ोर करता है

Topic	Key Facts (English + Hindi)
UNFCCC	Adopted at Rio Earth Summit, 1992
Kyoto Protocol	1997; binding targets for developed nations
Paris Agreement	2015; temperature goal “well below 2°C”
COP	Conference of Parties under UNFCCC
Major Emitters	China (1st), USA (2nd)
Climate Governance	Based on CBDR principle

Exam	Year	Question (Brief)	Answer
UPSC Prelims	2016	UNFCCC was adopted in which year?	1992
UPSC Prelims	2018	Paris Agreement is under which treaty?	UNFCCC
SSC CGL	2022	Which body conducts COP meetings?	UNFCCC
RPSC RAS	2021	CBDR principle relates to?	Climate change
IBPS PO	2020	GHG emissions mainly include?	CO <sub>2</sub>
Railway NTPC	2019	Second-largest GHG emitter?	USA

- The U.S. is the world's \_\_\_\_\_ largest emitter of greenhouse gases.
  - A. First
  - B. Second
  - C. Third
  - D. Fourth

# The last Russia-U.S. nuclear treaty is about to expire; what happens next?

**Reuters**

LONDON

Even at the height of their Cold War nuclear rivalry, the United States and the Soviet Union thrashed out a series of treaties to keep the arms race from spiralling out of control.

Though they agreed on little else, leaders in Moscow and Washington saw value in talks – from 1969 until long after the Soviet collapse in 1991 – to create a stable and predictable framework limiting the size of their nuclear arsenals.

Now the last U.S.-Russia nuclear treaty, New START, is just weeks away from expiring on February 5, and what comes next is uncertain. The two countries, preoccupied by the war in Ukraine, have not held any



Trump has not formally responded to Putin's proposal that they agree to adhere to New START limits for a further 12 months. AFP

talks on a successor treaty.

Russian President Vladimir Putin proposed in September that both parties should agree for a further 12 months to adhere to the New START limits, which cap the number of deployed nuclear warheads at 1,550 on each side.

U.S. President Donald

Trump has yet to deliver a formal response, and Western security analysts are divided about the wisdom of accepting Mr. Putin's offer.

On one hand, it would buy time to chart a way forward, while sending a political signal that both sides want to preserve a vestige of arms control.

On the other hand, it would allow Russia to keep developing weapons systems outside the scope of New START, including its Burevestnik cruise missile and Poseidon torpedo.

## The Chinese factor

Former U.S. defence planner Greg Weaver noted in a paper for the Atlantic Council that Russia had refused since 2023 to accept mutual inspections that would provide Washington with assurances that Moscow is still complying with the treaty.

Agreeing to Mr. Putin's proposal, Mr. Weaver added, would also send a message to China that the United States would not build up its strategic nuclear forces in response to China's fast-growing nuclear arsenal.

### 1 What is New START | न्यू स्टार्ट संधि क्या है?

- Last remaining nuclear arms control treaty between the U.S. and Russia  
→ अमेरिका-रूस के बीच अंतिम परमाणु हथियार नियंत्रण संधि
- Caps deployed nuclear warheads at 1,550 each  
→ दोनों देशों के लिए 1,550 तैनात परमाणु वारहेड की सीमा

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### 2 Current situation | वर्तमान स्थिति

- New START is set to expire on February 5  
→ न्यू स्टार्ट 5 फरवरी को समाप्त होने वाली है
- No talks held due to:
  - Ukraine war
  - Worsening U.S.-Russia relations  
→ भविष्य को लेकर अनिश्चितता

---

### 3 Putin's proposal | पुतिन का प्रस्ताव

- Russia proposed both sides should:
  - Adhere to New START limits for another 12 months  
→ 12 महीने का अस्थायी विस्तार प्रस्ताव
- Aimed at:
  - Buying time
  - Preserving minimum arms control structure

#### 4 U.S. response | अमेरिकी प्रतिक्रिया

- Donald Trump has not formally responded  
→ अमेरिका की ऐपचारिक सहमति अभी नहीं
- Western security analysts:
  - Divided on whether extension is wise

---

#### 5 If treaty expires | यदि संधि समाप्त हो जाती है

- No legal limits on:
  - Nuclear warheads
  - Delivery systems  
→ परमाणु हथियारों की दौड़ का खतरा
- Russia could develop weapons **outside New START scope**, including:
  - Burevestnik nuclear-powered cruise missile
  - Poseidon nuclear torpedo

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#### 6 Inspection issue | निरीक्षण विवाद

- Since 2023, Russia has:
  - Refused mutual inspections  
→ पारस्परिक निरीक्षण प्रणाली ठप
- Raises U.S. concerns about:
  - Compliance verification

## Topic

Cold War Arms Control

New START

Verification

Russia–Ukraine War

Nuclear Triad

China

## Key Facts (English + Hindi)

Began with SALT-I (1972)

Signed in 2010; entered force in 2011

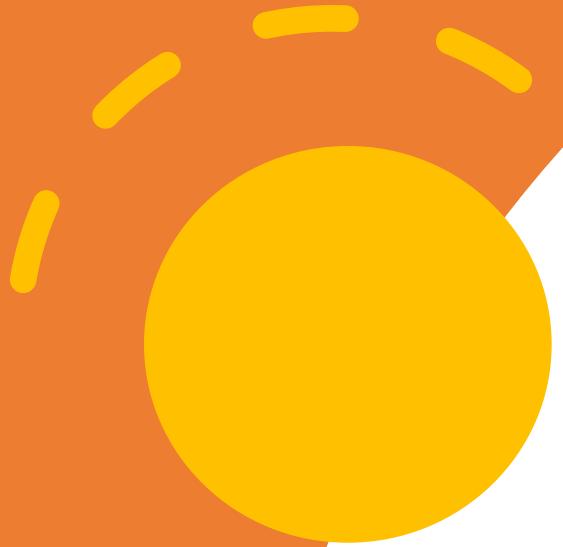
Includes data exchanges & on-site inspections

Severely impacted arms control dialogue

ICBMs, SLBMs, strategic bombers

Estimated fastest-growing nuclear arsenal

- New START treaty limits the number of deployed nuclear warheads to:
  - 1,000
  - 1,250
  - 1,550
  - 2,000



India launches Raisina  
Science Diplomacy  
Initiative (RSI) 2026

- India has launched the **Raisina Science Diplomacy Initiative (RSDI) 2026** to strengthen the **interface between science, technology, and diplomacy**
  - भारत ने विज्ञान, प्रौद्योगिकी और कूटनीति के समन्वय को मजबूत करने के लिए रायसीना साइंस डिप्लोमेसी इनिशिएटिव (RSDI) 2026 की शुरुआत की।
- The initiative aims to **institutionalise science diplomacy** within India's flagship geopolitical dialogue, the **Raisina Dialogue**
  - इसका उद्देश्य रायसीना डायलॉग के तहत विज्ञान कूटनीति को संस्थागत रूप देना है।
- RSDI is jointly launched by the **Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) and Observer Research Foundation (ORF)**
  - यह पहल प्रधान वैज्ञानिक सलाहकार कार्यालय (PSA) और ORF द्वारा संयुक्त रूप से शुरू की गई है।
- The partnership was announced by **PSA Prof. Ajay Kumar and ORF President Dr. Samir Saran**
  - इस साझेदारी की घोषणा प्रो. अजय कुमार और डॉ. समीर सरन ने की।
- The initiative reflects India's recognition of **science and technology as strategic tools of foreign policy**
  - यह पहल भारत की विदेश नीति में विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी के बढ़ते रणनीतिक महत्व को दर्शाती है।

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# Word of the day

## **Clampdown:**

sudden restriction on an activity

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**Synonyms:** curb, quash, suppress

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**Usage:** *There was a clampdown on illegal activities.*

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**Pronunciation:** newsth.live/  
clampdownrpo

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**International Phonetic  
Alphabet:** /klæmpdaʊn/

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Thank you ☺

