

Daily Current Affairs





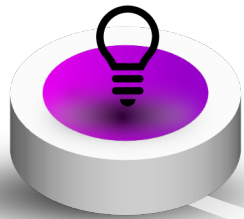
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The Hindu



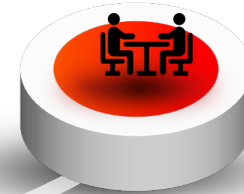
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PIB, PRS & Other newspaper



The Indian Express



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10 MCQ QUIZ


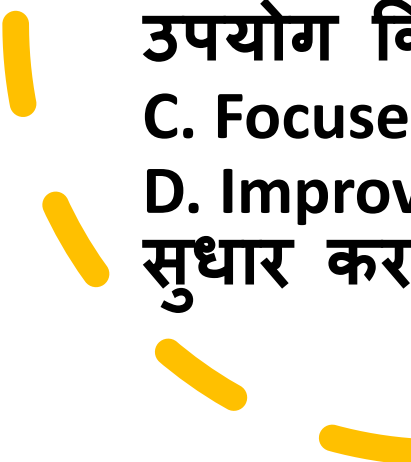
Top 10 MCQ from the session for
every exam


B²⁵

- Which recent achievement made India the fourth country to execute a satellite docking experiment?

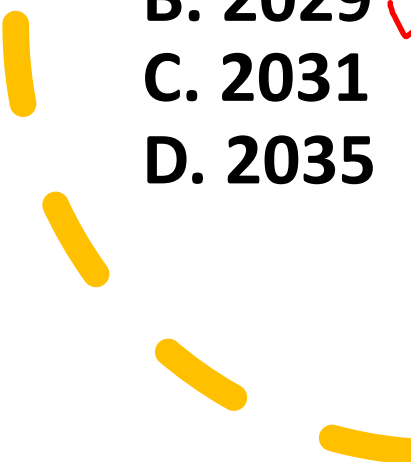
किस हालिया उपलब्धि ने भारत को उपग्रह डॉकिंग प्रयोग को सफलतापूर्वक पूरा करने वाला चौथा देश बना दिया?

- A. PSLV C60 mission / पीएसएलवी सी60 मिशन
- B. Gaganyaan mission / गगनयान मिशन
- C. Chandrayaan-4 mission / चंद्रयान-4 मिशन
- D. Mangalyaan-2 mission / मंगलयान-2 मिशन

- 
- What is the significance of ISRO's satellite docking experiment?
इसरो के उपग्रह डॉकिंग प्रयोग का महत्व क्या है?
 - **A. Demonstrates spacecraft control and payload operations after docking / डॉकिंग के बाद अंतरिक्ष यान नियंत्रण और पेलोड संचालन को प्रदर्शित करता है**
 - B. Used for space debris management / अंतरिक्ष मलबे प्रबंधन के लिए उपयोग किया जाता है
 - C. Focuses on deep-space communication / डीप-स्पेस संचार पर केंद्रित
 - D. Improves weather forecasting systems / मौसम पूर्वानुमान प्रणाली में सुधार करता है
- 



- What is the expected completion year for India's third launch pad at Sriharikota?
श्रीहरिकोटा में भारत के तीसरे लॉन्च पैड के पूरा होने का अपेक्षित वर्ष क्या है?

- **A. 2027**
 - **B. 2029** ✓
 - **C. 2031**
 - **D. 2035**
- 

- What is the strategic importance of India's third launch pad at SDSC, Sriharikota?

श्रीहरिकोटा में सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र (SDSC) के तीसरे लॉन्च पैड का रणनीतिक महत्व क्या है?

- **A. Supports new generation launch vehicles (NGLV) / नए पीढ़ी के लॉन्च वाहनों (NGLV) का समर्थन करता है**
- **B. Enhances military satellite launches / सैन्य उपग्रह प्रक्षेपण को बढ़ाता है**
- **C. Aims to support interplanetary missions / इंटरप्लेनेटरी मिशनों का समर्थन करने का लक्ष्य**
- **D. Both A and C / ए और सी दोनों**

- What major agreement is Singapore exploring with India?
सिंगापुर भारत के साथ किस प्रमुख समझौते की खोज कर रहा है?
- **A. Semiconductor ecosystem development / सेमीकंडक्टर पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र विकास**
- **B. Renewable energy collaboration / नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा सहयोग**
- **C. Data corridor between GIFT City and Singapore / GIFT सिटी और सिंगापुर के बीच डेटा कॉरिडोर**
- **D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी**

- Who will be the Chief Guest for India's Republic Day 2025?
भारत के गणतंत्र दिवस 2025 के मुख्य अतिथि कौन होंगे?
- A. Joe Biden (USA) / जो बाइडेन (अमेरिका)
- B. Vladimir Putin (Russia) / व्लादिमीर पुतिन (रूस)
- ✓ C. Prabowo Subianto (Indonesia) / प्रबोवो सुबियांतो (इंडोनेशिया)
- D. Rishi Sunak (UK) / ऋषि सुनक (यूके)

- What is the significance of India's \$450 million BrahMos missile deal with Indonesia?

इंडोनेशिया के साथ भारत के \$450 मिलियन ब्रह्मोस मिसाइल समझौते का महत्व क्या है?

- **A. Strengthens India-Indonesia defense ties / भारत-इंडोनेशिया रक्षा संबंधों को मजबूत करता है**
- **B. Makes Indonesia the second BrahMos export customer after the Philippines / इंडोनेशिया को फिलीपींस के बाद दूसरा ब्रह्मोस निर्यात ग्राहक बनाता है**
- **C. Enhances India's global defense exports / भारत के वैश्विक रक्षा निर्यात को बढ़ाता है**
- **D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी**

- Which country recently removed India's nuclear entities from its restrictive Entity List?

किस देश ने हाल ही में भारत की परमाणु इकाइयों को अपनी प्रतिबंधात्मक इकाई सूची (Entity List) से हटा दिया?

- A. United States / संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका
- B. United Kingdom / यूनाइटेड किंगडम
- C. Russia / रूस
- D. China / चीन

- What is the primary benefit of India being removed from the US Entity List?
भारत को अमेरिका की प्रतिबंधात्मक इकाई सूची से हटाने का मुख्य लाभ क्या है?
- **A. Easier access to advanced nuclear technologies / उन्नत परमाणु प्रौद्योगिकियों तक आसान पहुंच**
- **B. Strengthened international trade relations / अंतरराष्ट्रीय व्यापार संबंधों को मजबूत करना**
- **C. Faster approvals for defense exports / रक्षा निर्यात के लिए तेज़ अनुमोदन**
- **D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी**

- According to the Economic Survey, until which year will India remain in its demographic dividend phase?

आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार, भारत कब तक अपनी जनसांख्यिकीय लाभांश (Demographic Dividend) स्थिति में रहेगा?

- A. 2035
- B. 2045
- C. 2055 ✓
- D. 2065

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“What you are is what you have been. What you’ll be is what you do now.” –

Gautama Buddha, cited in
Various Buddhist Texts



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SC urges resolution of State-Governor row
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BHARAT MOBILITY GLOBAL EXPO
Aim is to make India hub for mobility sector, says Modi
NEWS » PAGE 3

SHRINKING NUMBERS
China's population declines for third year
NEWS » PAGE 12

BAT-HOLE MINING
Dying for black gold in Assam, Meghalaya
The dangerous practice continues unabated
GROUND ZERO » PAGE 7

REWARDING EXCELLENCE
National sports awards given away
SPORT » PAGE 14

INSIDE



BJP releases first part of manifesto for Delhi polls

NEW DELHI BJP president J.P. Nadda released the first part of the party's three-part 'Samiksha Patra' (manifesto) on Friday, assuring that if the BJP forms the government in Delhi, all existing welfare schemes will continue. » PAGE 4

'Threats in Gulf of Aden, Red Sea could increase'

NEW DELHI Threats in the Gulf of Aden, Red Sea and in waters adjacent to the East African countries might increase and the Indian Navy is striving to keep the sea routes safe, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Friday. » PAGE 3

Lokpal ordered just 24 probes in five years

NEW DELHI Twelve years since the Lokpal Act was passed and five years after the Lokpal started to function, it has ordered investigation in just 24 cases and granted prosecution sanction in six cases, data show. » PAGE 2

Study questions iron deficiency as anaemia's cause

NEW DELHI A study published earlier this week questions the conventional wisdom that iron deficiency is anaemia's main cause in India, highlighting other factors like Vitamin B12 deficiency and air pollution influencing anaemia. » PAGE 5

Gaza truce approved by Israel Security Cabinet

The deal will now go to Israel's full Cabinet, which is expected to give the final approval

The ceasefire could start as early as tomorrow; pact has drawn fierce resistance from Netanyahu's far-right allies

As part of the deal, 33 of 100 hostages are to be freed in exchange for hundreds of Palestinians

Israel's security Cabinet recommended approval on Friday of a ceasefire in Gaza, after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed an agreement had been reached that would pause the 15-month war with Hamas in Gaza and lead to the release of dozens of hostages held by militants there. Mediators Qatar and the U.S. announced the ceasefire on Wednesday, but the deal hung in limbo for more than a day as Mr. Netanyahu insisted there were last-minute snags he blamed on Hamas. The militants maintained they were "committed" to the deal, while resistance from many areas, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians would be able to return to what's left of their homes, and there would be a surge of humanitarian assistance. The remainder of the hostages, including male soldiers, are to be released in a second — and much more difficult — phase that will be negotiated during the first.



Celebration time: People celebrate the news of a ceasefire between Hamas and Israel, in Amman, Jordan, on Friday. REUTERS

devastating offensive that has killed over 46,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials, who do not distinguish between civilians and militants but say women and children make up more than half of those killed. Beyond the death and destruction in Gaza, the conflict has also destabilised West Asia and sparked worldwide protests. On Thursday, Israeli

strikes killed at least 72 people in Gaza. In previous conflicts, both sides have stopped up military operations in the final hours before ceasefires as a way to project strength. Mr. Netanyahu instructed a special task force to prepare to receive the hostages returned from Gaza, and said that their families were informed a deal had been reached. The Prime Minister's office said that if the deal passes, the first hostages could be freed then too. Under the deal, 33 of some 100 hostages who remain in Gaza are set to be released over six weeks in exchange for hundreds of Palestinians imprisoned by Israel. Israeli forces will pull

back from many areas, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians would be able to return to what's left of their homes, and there would be a surge of humanitarian assistance. The remainder of the hostages, including male soldiers, are to be released in a second — and much more difficult — phase that will be negotiated during the first. Call for full withdrawal Hamas has said it will not release the remaining captives without a lasting ceasefire and a full Israeli withdrawal, while Israel has vowed to keep fighting until it dismantles the group and to maintain open-ended security control over the territory.

In sync

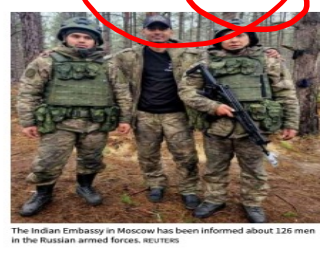


Twist and turn: Artists performing at the Russian Dance Festival 2025 organised by the Indo-Russian Cultural and Friendship Society in Chennai on Thursday. B. JOTI/ANNA/ANNA

At least 126 Indians joined Russian forces; 12 killed, 16 feared missing, says MEA

Subhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

The government is aware of at least 126 cases of Indians who joined the Russian Army to fight in the war in Ukraine, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Friday, releasing their numbers continue to rise despite efforts to stop them. According to the latest figures released, of the 126 Indian men that the Indian Embassy in Moscow has been intimated about, 96 have returned to India thus far. Of the remainder, 12 have been killed in the conflict, including one from Kerala, who died last week, and one is being treated for injuries at a hospital in Moscow. As many as 16 are believed to be "missing", MEA said they could not be traced at present. "Their whereabouts are not known, and the Russian side has categorised them as missing," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, detailing the figures. "We remain engaged with the Russian authorities to ascertain the whereabouts of the missing Indian nationals, as also seeking early release and repatriation of those who remain," he added.



The Indian Embassy in Moscow has been informed about 126 men in the Russian armed forces. REUTERS

On the two most recent casualties, Mr. Jaiswal said that the Indian embassy in Moscow was in touch with Russian authorities to ensure the military discharge and return of Binil Babu, a 32-year-old from Thrissur district in Kerala who succumbed to injuries from a drone attack last week, are brought back to India. Mr. Babu was reportedly in contact with the embassy and had wanted to return home. "He remains now in Moscow, is being treated for his injuries, and the MEA said that

he would return to India after his discharge from Moscow. The government's acceptance of the figure of 12 deaths indicates that there may have been more Indian casualties in the past few months, despite persistent efforts, including during two meetings between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin, to resolve the issue. In August last year, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar told Parliament that of the 91 Indians known to have been recruited, eight had been killed, and India was seeking the military discharge and return of 69 Indians from the conflict zone. In December, in written responses to parliamentary questions, the MEA further updated the House that "19 Indians are now remaining in the Russian armed forces". It is unclear how many others might be in the Russia-Ukraine conflict zone, who haven't reached out to the government to be repatriated back to India. When asked, an official told The Hindu that the figure of 126 was likely to represent "the total" number of recruits. The MEA had been the first to report on the cases of Indians joining the Russian Army in February 2024.

Saif's attacker on the run; 10 police teams to investigate case; actor's condition improves

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

A day after the knife attack on actor Saif Ali Khan, the man who entered the actor's house with a concealed intention to rob is still absconding. On Friday, the Bandra police detained one person and brought him in for questioning, but he was later released. "No one has been detained in Mr. Khan's case. The person detained had no connection with the case," a police officer said. "The police are looking for the suspect in Vasai, Nalasopara, and Virar, all neighbouring regions of Mumbai. They said the suspect



Amidst moments: Saif Ali Khan's mother Sharmila Tagore leaves the Lilavati Hospital in Mumbai on Friday. PTI

was last seen at the Bandra railway station, around two kilometres from the actor's residence in Bandra West, and might have taken the first train heading towards Vasai-Virar. At least 10 teams are probing the case, with Crime Branch teams investigating it under officer Daya Nayak. The police have taken possession of the piece of

knife that was removed from the spine of Mr. Khan. They are looking for the remaining part of the weapon used to stab the actor during the scuffle with the intruder. Speaking to the media, Bhagan Singh Kana, the autorickshaw driver who took Mr. Khan to the hospital, said, "He [Mr. Khan] was talking when we reached the hospital. He came accompanied by a child and a young man. All he asked me was 'how much time will it take to reach the hospital?'. Mr. Kana said they reached the Lilavati Hospital in 10 minutes. The team of doctors at the hospital said the actor's "parameters have improved". "Mr. Khan has been shifted from the ICU to a special room," said Nijaj Uttamini, chief operating officer of Lilavati Hospital. Consultant neurosurgeon Nitin Dange has advised Mr. Khan to restrict his movement for a week as he has an injury in his spine which can get infected. "He is doing excellent and recovering," he said. In Pune, Maharashtra Minister of State for Home Yogesh Kadam dismissed the involvement of any gang in the attack. "No gang is involved. He [the intruder] came with the intention of robbery which is clear in the FIR," he said.

Gaza truce approved by Israel Security Cabinet

The deal will now go to Israel's full Cabinet, which is expected to give the final approval

The ceasefire could start as early as tomorrow; pact has drawn fierce resistance from Netanyahu's far-right allies

As part of the deal, 33 of 100 hostages are to be freed in exchange for hundreds of Palestinians

Associated Press

JERUSALEM

Israel's security Cabinet recommended approval on Friday of a ceasefire deal after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed an agreement had been reached that would pause the 15-month war with Hamas in Gaza and lead to the release of dozens of hostages held by militants there.

Mediators Qatar and the U.S. announced the ceasefire on Wednesday, but the deal hung in limbo for more than a day as Mr. Netanyahu insisted there were last-minute snags he blamed on Hamas.

The militants maintained they were "committed" to the deal, while resi-

dents of Gaza and families of the hostages anxiously waited to see if it would materialise.

The deal now goes to the full Cabinet of Ministers for final sign-off. It is expected to approve the ceasefire, which could start as soon as Sunday, even though it has drawn fierce resistance from Netanyahu's far-right coalition partners.

Their objections could destabilise his government, however.

Oct. 7 attack

Hamas triggered the war with its October 7, 2023, cross-border attack into Israel that killed some 1,200 people and left some 250 others captive.

Israel responded with a



Celebration time: People celebrate the news of a ceasefire between Hamas and Israel, in Amman, Jordan, on Friday. REUTERS

devastating offensive that has killed over 46,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials, who do not distinguish between ci-

vilians and militants but say women and children make up more than half of those killed.

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destruction in Gaza, the conflict has also destabilised West Asia and sparked worldwide protests.

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strikes killed at least 72 people in Gaza. In previous conflicts, both sides have stepped up military operations in the final hours before ceasefires as a way to project strength.

Mr. Netanyahu instructed a special task force to prepare to receive the hostages returning from Gaza, and said that their families were informed a deal had been reached.

The Prime Minister's office said that if the deal passes, the first hostages could be freed then too.

Under the deal, 33 of some 100 hostages who remain in Gaza are set to be released over six weeks in exchange for hundreds of Palestinians imprisoned by Israel.

Israeli forces will pull

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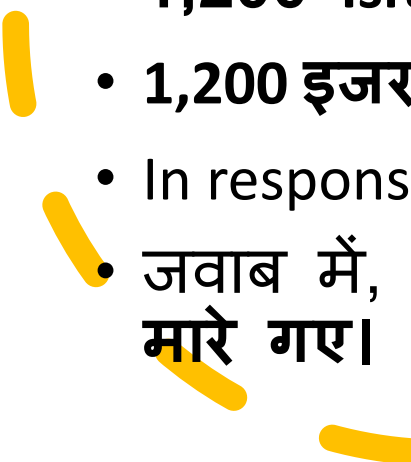
Call for full withdrawal






Hamas has said it will not release the remaining captives without a lasting ceasefire and a full Israeli withdrawal, while Israel has vowed to keep fighting until it dismantles the group and to maintain open-ended security control over the territory.

- **Ceasefire Agreement Between Israel and Hamas / इजरायल और हमास के बीच युद्धविराम समझौता**
- Israel's Security Cabinet has approved a ceasefire deal after weeks of negotiations.
- इजरायल की सुरक्षा कैबिनेट ने कई सप्ताह की वार्ता के बाद युद्धविराम समझौते को मंजूरी दी।
- The ceasefire aims to **pause the 15-month-long war in Gaza.**
- इस युद्धविराम का उद्देश्य गाजा में 15 महीने से चल रहे युद्ध को रोकना है।
- The deal includes the **release of dozens of hostages held by Hamas.**
- इस समझौते में हमास द्वारा बंधक बनाए गए लोगों की रिहाई भी शामिल है।

- **Political & Strategic Importance / राजनीतिक और रणनीतिक महत्व**
- The deal is facing ~~strong opposition~~ from Netanyahu's far-right coalition partners.
- इस समझौते का नेतन्याहू के दक्षिणपंथी गठबंधन सहयोगियों द्वारा कड़ा विरोध किया जा रहा है।
- **Israel's full Cabinet must give the final approval** for the ceasefire to take effect.
- **युद्धविराम को लागू करने के लिए इजरायल की पूर्ण कैबिनेट को अंतिम मंजूरी देनी होगी।**
- The deal was mediated by Qatar and the United States.
- इस समझौते को कतर और अमेरिका की मध्यस्थता में किया गया।

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- **Hostage Release & Humanitarian Aid / बंधकों की रिहाई और मानवीय सहायता**
 - **33 of 100 Israeli hostages** will be released in exchange for **hundreds of Palestinian prisoners**.
 - **100 इजरायली बंधकों में से 33 को सैकड़ों फिलिस्तीनी कैदियों के बदले में रिहा किया जाएगा।**
 - The ceasefire will allow **hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians** to return home.
 - यह युद्धविराम हजारों विस्थापित फिलिस्तीनियों को अपने घर लौटने की अनुमति देगा।
 - There will be a **surge of humanitarian aid** into Gaza.
 - गाजा में **मानवीय सहायता में वृद्धि होगी।**

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- **Historical Context & War Timeline / ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ और युद्ध की समयरेखा**
 - The war started on **October 7, 2023**, when Hamas launched a **cross-border attack into Israel**.
 - यह युद्ध 7 अक्टूबर, 2023 को शुरू हुआ जब हमास ने इजरायल पर सीमा-पार हमला किया।
 - **1,200 Israelis were killed and 250 were taken hostage.**
 - **1,200 इजरायली मारे गए और 250 बंधक बनाए गए।**
 - In response, **Israel launched airstrikes that killed over 46,000 Palestinians.**
 - जवाब में, इजरायल ने हवाई हमले किए जिससे 46,000 से अधिक फिलिस्तीनी मारे गए।
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- **Future Challenges & Call for Full Withdrawal / भविष्य की चुनौतियां और पूर्ण वापसी की मांग**
 - **Hamas has stated that it will not release the remaining hostages without a lasting ceasefire.**
 - **हमसा ने कहा है कि वह स्थायी युद्धविराम के बिना शेष बंधकों को रिहा नहीं करेगा।**
 - **Israel vows to keep fighting until Hamas is dismantled.**
 - **इजरायल ने कहा है कि वह हमसा के खात्मे तक लड़ाई जारी रखेगा।**
 - **The ceasefire could face collapse if disagreements persist.**
 - **यदि असहमति जारी रही, तो युद्धविराम समाप्त हो सकता है।**
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INDIA Inflation matrix

December's price rise numbers

DO NOT RINK IN ENOUGH RELIEF

The first inflation print before the Union Budget for 2025-26 is presented, followed by the first review of the monetary policy led by the new Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in early February, the price rise faced by Indian consumers eased to 5.22% in December. Although a four-month low, this still marks only a mild decline from November's 5.5% uptick in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and was largely driven by a sequential easing in food prices. Food inflation moderated from over 9% in the previous month to 8.4% last month, and though inflation in vegetables cooled from 29.3% to 26.6%, it still remained generally high. Households still forked out a lot more for their meals than they did a year ago — it must be recalled that overall inflation was 5.7% and food price rise, over 9.8% in December 2023. While prices of some food items, including vegetables, are seen cooling further this month, those of a few critical ingredients have started spiking, including of edible oils, that rose at a 23-month high pace of 14.6% in December. Eggs, meat and fruits also saw inflation accelerating last month along with the relatively humble potato (up 6% to 25%).

Moreover, inflation in wholesale prices has gained pace, signalling that there is room for higher costs to be passed on to consumers for food items as well as manufactured products. The government and industry want the RBI to cut interest rates to reinvigorate consumption and fading growth impulses by looking through "volatile" food inflation. But even industry captains admit that just keeping food prices out of the interest rates and growth-inflation balancing act will not suffice. Moreover, even if the weightage for food in the CPI is reduced in line with the recent household consumption spending survey results, food price trends have a material impact on the spending propensity of households and their inflation expectations. Inflation may yet average 4.5% through January to March, as the RBI expects, but the central bank that has committed to a durable 4% target before outgoing President Joe Biden gave his final address to the American people on January 15, 2025, Israel and Hamas announced that the long-olusive ceasefire agreement over Gaza had been struck. The state of Qatar, long stuck in between as a mediator, said the deal was to take effect from January 19, 2025, a day before Mr. Trump took charge. An exchange of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners is at the centre of this arrangement.

Script reading The deciphering of the Indus script should not be clouded by politics.

The recent announcement by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, of a \$1-million prize scheme for deciphering the script of the Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC), seems to have revived popular interest in the subject, which remains a puzzle to archaeologists, linguists and linguists. His invitation for further research was made in the context of the 75th anniversary celebration of the IVC discovery, which was published by then chief of the Archaeological Survey of India, John Marshall, in September 1924. Spread across 1.5 million square kilometres in the territories of modern-day India, Pakistan and Afghanistan during the Bronze Age (3000-1500 BCE), the IVC, also known as Harappan Civilisation, was regarded as the most advanced urban civilisations of Mesopotamia, Egypt and China. The Indus civilisation was essentially urban. Even though there has been a large number of objects and materials of archaeological value in support of the IVC, the decipherment of seals and tablets has not been to the satisfaction of all. About 20 years ago, a group of western scholars had argued that writing was not a necessity of ancient urban settlements, not even those as massive as those of the Harappans, and that "a handful of unknown symbols" could no longer be claimed as evidence of writing. Since then, there has been an exchange of scholarly views for and against the theory of the Indus civilisation being a highly literate society. It is against this context that Mr. Stalin's announcement needs to be seen. There is also a school of thought that there was a script which was "proto-Dravidian", "non-Aryan" and "pre-Aryan". This could be a reason why a southern State, Tamil Nadu, has made the offer. The State government has also supported a study on Indus signs and graffiti marks of Tamil Nadu as part of a project of the documentation and the digitisation of graffiti and Tamil (Tamil-Brahmi)-inscribed potsherds of Tamil Nadu. Researchers face certain challenges while resolving the Indus riddle. There is a complaint that the entire database regarding the seals has not yet been made available in the public domain. While allowing free access to these resources, central and State authorities should ensure that context for them is also provided. More importantly, studies should be carried out without any interference. The likelihood of the proposed study's findings going against the established and particular narrative should not be allowed to cloud intellectual pursuit. There is also scope for well-coordinated work among South Asian countries, including Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan, to unravel the mystery. But if political differences are permitted to adversely impact the execution of any such study, the world, and India, will be much the poorer for it.

The First Advance Estimates (FAE) of National Accounts for 2024-25 show a real GDP growth of 6.4% and a nominal GDP growth of 9.7%. These numbers have fallen short of the Reserve Bank of India's revised growth estimate of 6.6% for real GDP, as in its December 2024 monetary policy statement and 10.5% for nominal GDP growth as the 2024-25 Union Budget presented in July 2024. The annual growth of 6.4% can be seen as consisting of 6% growth in the first half and 6.7% growth in the second half. There is, thus, a clear improvement expected over the Q2 growth of 5.4%. The sharp fall in 2024-25 annual GDP growth from that of the previous year at 8.2% is seen only in the respect of GDP. With respect to Gross Value Added (GVA), this difference, between 7.2% and 6.4%, is much less. On the GVA side, it was the manufacturing sector which suffered a sharp fall in sectoral growth from 9.9% in 2023-24 to 5.3% in 2024-25.

Growth prospects for 2025-26
The Gross Fixed Capital Formation rate at constant prices has ranged between 33.3% and 33.5% during 2023-24 to 2024-25. Thus, it appears to have stabilised at around 33.4%. It is expected to continue at this level in 2025-26. The average Incremental Capital Output Ratio (ICOR) has been marginally higher than 5 in 2023-24 and 2024-25. Assuming ICOR to be 5.1 in 2025-26, we may consider a 6.5% real GDP growth.

There may not be much change in the global economy even though the government's assumption of office may create some uncertainty. India will have to largely depend on

In particular, the Government of India has to ensure that there is no relaxation in its investment expenditure. In fact, the slightly lower

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Over the next five years, the best that India may hope for is a steady real GDP growth of 6.5%

growth in 2024-25 is largely linked to the slowdown in the Government of India's investment growth which has remained negative at (0)2-3% even after eight months into the fiscal year.

With a lower nominal GDP growth in 2024-25 of 9.7% as compared to the budgeted nominal GDP growth of 10.5%, the Government of India's Revenue (GTR) of 338.4 lakh crore may not be realised if the budgeted buoyancy of 1.03 is maintained. As per the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) data, GTR growth for the first eight months was 10.7%, but this growth has not been maintained for the remaining months also, the realised buoyancy would be about 1.1, which is less than the budgeted buoyancy. In such a case, tax revenue shortfall will be minimal. In other words, any revenue constraint or likely pressure on fiscal deficit would not constrain the government's ability to achieve its capital expenditure target of ₹11.1 lakh crore.

Reason for the dip
However, after the first eight months, the level of the Government of India's capital expenditure has remained limited to ₹5.14 lakh crore, that is 46.2% of the Budget target. In the remaining four months, the Government of India's capital expenditure may be below the Budget target all fall well short of the target. This has been the main reason for the dip in overall real GDP growth in 2024-25.

Going forward in 2025-26, the Government of India will have to continue to improve its accelerated capital expenditure growth which can be kept at least at 20% on the revised Budget for 2024-25. Sustained investment capital expenditures can have a favourable effect on private investment. The overall pattern of investment expenditure of the government

should be designed to accelerate private investment as well.

Medium- to long-term growth prospects
Over a period of next five years, the best that India may hope for is a steady real GDP growth rate of 6.5%. This is in line with the International Monetary Fund's real GDP growth projection for the Indian economy, as in its October 2024 release, which is at 6.5% over the period 2025-26 to 2029-30. This real GDP growth may be accompanied by an implicit price deflator (IPD)-based inflation of about 4% which can give a nominal GDP growth in the range of 10.5%-11%. In years in which global conditions improve and the contribution of export to GDP growth becomes significant, real GDP growth may touch even 7%. If a real growth of around 6.5% and a nominal growth in the range of 10.2%-11% are maintained over the long run with an average exchange rate depreciation of 2.5% per annum, India should be able to reach a per capita GDP level consistent with a developed country status in the next two and half decades. But the task is not going to be easy. It will be hard to grow at 6.5% as the base keeps on increasing. In fact, in the earlier years, the growth rate will have to be higher. But, at present, the potential rate of growth appears to be 6.5%. However, it can change.

In the light of a potential growth rate of 6.5%, the achievement of 6.4% in 2024-25 should not be considered as disappointing. In fact, the achievement of 8.2% in 2023-24 should be considered as a flash in the pan. The current year's growth rate of 6.4% as in the first advance estimates should be seen in the context of India's potential growth rate.

The views expressed are personal

India's real growth rate and the forecast

The multiple layers of the Gaza ceasefire

Kabir Taneja
is Deputy Director and Fellow, Strategic Studies Programme, Observer Research Foundation

Despite the complexities, the international community must play its role by pushing for the sustainability of this deal

reigning in Israel's military posturing. It is in all likelihood not a coincidence that the Israeli leadership agreed to the deal — which, in parallel with Hamas, it has scuttled many times — to send a message of partnership and resolve to Mr. Trump.

Why Mr. Netanyahu would go out of the way to court Mr. Trump, even after a return to regularity invited by the Republicans to address a joint session of Congress in July 2024, is a question that has to stump the American public. It is personal or party policy. Agreeing to this deal with Hamas is offering Mr. Trump a victory that is potentially big domestic costs for Mr. Netanyahu. For long, Mr. Netanyahu has maintained that only a complete victory over Hamas would be complete. With this deal, he becomes an Israeli Prime Minister who has cut a political deal with the arch foe, but without a complete elimination of Hamas.

On Hamas and Israel
There is no doubt that Hamas and also Hezbollah in Lebanon have had their capacities diminished over the past year after leadership decapitation operations conducted by Israel.

Simultaneously, outgoing U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has also said that assessments show that Hamas has recruited as many new militants as it has lost. The lack of a political track acting as insurance for the ceasefire remains a concern. Hamas is expected to continue to be in control of Gaza in the time to come. Any movements to have taken place to reorganise Palestinian politics in a way where the ground is not left to be filled by more mainstream Palestinian-led political ecosystem.

Pushed by itself, will remain steadfast in its ideology against Israeli security and sovereignty, while Hamas and Israel continue to remain on the sidelines against a two-state solution. Any global push for this being the only viable option

available for lasting peace. The prevailing situation of this status quo, despite the ceasefire, can be leveraged by Mr. Netanyahu in case Hamas resumes attacks against Israeli territories and populations. In such a situation, Mr. Netanyahu will be able to approach Mr. Trump from a vantage point, having agreed to the Hamas deal. A return to regularity in this juncture will in all likelihood come with the full support of Mr. Trump, manoeuvring the Israeli position back to one of strength. Mr. Netanyahu has publicly stated that there would be 'hell to pay' for Hamas if Israeli hostages, which includes American citizens, are not released.

Gaza and its rebuilding
Beyond the political intricacies of this ceasefire arrangement, the most important deliverable would be that of critical aid to the people in Gaza as food and medical shortages surpassed the critically a long time ago. Beyond the aid front, the rebuilding of Gaza may yet be premature. Discussion until alternative political mechanisms are envisioned within the Palestinian fold. This is where the Arab powers have an opportunity to exert influence, and seek a remoulding, a re-shaping, and a revitalisation of the Palestinian authority to better equate the political space as a core stakeholder for a challenging future, where the much sought-after two-state solution remains a distant reality.

Finally, the international community must also play its role to push for the sustainability of this deal. The future of West Asian prosperity, newer geo-economic architecture such as the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, a potential expansion of the Abraham Accords, and the radicalism of a Saudi Arabia-Israel normalisation, ultimately hinges on this momentum. At the end of the day, the management of regional geopolitics by regional powers will determine all outcomes.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Disbanded
Expectedly, on the eve of Donald Trump assuming the presidency of the United States, high profile Hindenburg Research has announced its closure (Page 1, January 17). The short seller's abrupt closing of the firm is undeniably a blessing in disguise for the Adani conglomerate, which was rocked by its startling revelations. One can make a safe guess that the high-pitched calls by the Opposition parties in India, and the challenges while resolving the Indus riddle. There is a complaint that the entire database regarding the seals has not yet been made available in the public domain. While allowing free access to these resources, central and State authorities should ensure that context for them is also provided. More importantly, studies should be carried out without any interference. The likelihood of the proposed study's findings going against the established and particular narrative should not be allowed to cloud intellectual pursuit. There is also scope for well-coordinated work among South Asian countries, including Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan, to unravel the mystery. But if political differences are permitted to adversely impact the execution of any such study, the world, and India, will be much the poorer for it.

of allotting vast acreage of land for this purpose. A more viable option would be to set up an institute for economic research in Dr. Singh's name or have a museum, a library or a park which would be of much greater benefit to the people as well as a more befitting memorial for a great leader.

Effect is visible
There is little doubt that, on the performance of Indian batters in the longer versions of the game has been underlining for some time. And, if statistics are not enough, for one's temperament to stand up and carry the day with sound technique (Opinion page - Parley, January 17). While India's dominance in limited-overs formats continues, its performance in Test cricket has been inconsistent. This shift raises the important question whether the passion for the longest

format has been replaced by the T20 cricket. Also, the influx of foreign players in the Indian Premier League and the overwhelming attention given to it have overshadowed the value and the importance of Indian domestic cricket.

R. Sivakumar,
Puducherry

The debate on whether exposure to T20 cricket has an impact on the performance of Indian batters in the longer versions of the game has been underlining for some time. And, if statistics are not enough, for one's temperament to stand up and carry the day with sound technique (Opinion page - Parley, January 17). While India's dominance in limited-overs formats continues, its performance in Test cricket has been inconsistent. This shift raises the important question whether the passion for the longest

Cheteshwar Pujara an asset for this purpose. A more viable option would be to set up an institute for economic research in Dr. Singh's name or have a museum, a library or a park which would be of much greater benefit to the people as well as a more befitting memorial for a great leader.

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The debate on whether exposure to T20 cricket has an impact on the performance of Indian batters in the longer versions of the game has been underlining for some time. And, if statistics are not enough, for one's temperament to stand up and carry the day with sound technique (Opinion page - Parley, January 17). While India's dominance in limited-overs formats continues, its performance in Test cricket has been inconsistent. This shift raises the important question whether the passion for the longest

Deadly event
The report in this daily, "Six persons die in Jallikattu and other bull-related sports in TN" (January 17), highlights the urgent need to ban 'Jallikattu', a savage sport and an annual event during Pongal festivities. How this abhorrent and abominable sport attracts youth participation is unfortunate. One wonders how the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu continue their stoic silence. Readers must be hard on the Chief Minister to end this 'sport' once and for all.

Mani Natarajan,
Chennai

The disturbing picture in the report, of a group of people trying to tame a bull, and nothing short of torture and violence inflicted on a lone animal. Ancient Tamil literature describes Jallikattu only as 'Yru Thazuvudhal' (embracing the bull) without causing the animal any harm or pain. There is no gansaying

the fact that today's Jallikattu is a blood sport. The humane treatment of bulls has been described in classical Tamil literature.

Kangayam R. Narasimhan,
Chennai

It is painful to note both man and animal are experiencing trauma for the sake of some cash awards for the winner. There is cruelty to animals and death to many innocent people.

A.J. Rangarajan,
Chennai

'Lit for Life' Literature has the power to inspire, challenge and transform lives and it is wonderful that *The Hindu* 'Lit for Life', a festival for the exchange of ideas, stories and creativity, begins in a few hours. Many of us look forward to celebrating the magic of words in Chennai.

S. Karthik,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letterstothehindu@rediffmail.com must carry the postal address.

India's real growth rate and the forecast

The First Advance Estimates (FAE) of National Accounts for 2024-25 show a real GDP growth of 6.4% and a nominal GDP growth of 9.7%. These numbers have fallen short of the Reserve Bank of India's revised growth estimate of 6.6% for real GDP, as in its December 2024 monetary policy statement and 10.5% for nominal GDP growth as in the 2024-25 Union Budget presented in July 2024.

The annual growth of 6.4% can be seen as consisting of 6% growth in the first half and 6.7% growth in the second half. There is, thus, a clear improvement expected over the Q2 growth of 5.4%. The sharp fall in 2024-25 annual GDP growth from that of the previous year at 8.2% is seen only in the case of GDP. With respect to Gross Value Added (GVA), this difference, between 7.2% and 6.4%, is much less. On the GVA side, it was the manufacturing sector which suffered a sharp fall in sectoral growth from 9.9% in 2023-24 to 5.3% in 2024-25.

Growth prospects for 2025-26

The Gross Fixed Capital Formation rate at constant prices has ranged between 33.3% and 33.5% during 2021-22 to 2024-25. Thus, it appears to have stabilised around 33.4%. It is expected to continue at this level in 2025-26. The average Incremental Capital Output Ratio (ICOR) has been marginally higher than 5 in recent years. Assuming ICOR to be 5.1 in 2025-26, we may consider a 6.5% real GDP growth to be realistic.

There may not be much change in the global economy even though Donald Trump's assumption of office may create more uncertainty. India will have to largely depend on domestic demand.

In particular, the Government of India has to ensure that there is no relaxation in its investment expenditure. In fact, the slightly lower



C. Rangarajan

is former Chairman, Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, and former Governor, Reserve Bank of India



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is Honorary Professor, Madras School of Economics, and Member, Advisory Council to the Sixteenth Finance Commission

Over the next five years, the best that India may hope for is a steady real GDP growth rate of 6.5%

growth in 2024-25 is largely linked to the slowdown in the Government of India's investment growth which has remained negative at (-)12.3% even after eight months into the fiscal year.

With a lower nominal GDP growth in 2024-25 of 9.7% as compared to the budgeted nominal GDP growth of 10.5%, the budgeted Gross Tax Revenue (GTR) of ₹38.4 lakh crore may not be realised if the budgeted buoyancy of 1.03 is maintained. As per Controller General of Accounts (CGA) data, GTR growth for the first eight months was 10.7%. If this growth is maintained for the remaining months also, the realised buoyancy would be about 1.1, which is higher than the budgeted buoyancy. In such a case, tax revenue shortfall will be minimal. In other words, any revenue constraint or likely pressure on fiscal deficit would not constrain the government's ability to achieve its capital expenditure target of ₹11.1 lakh crore.

Reason for the dip

However, after the first eight months, the level of the Government of India's capital expenditure has remained limited to ₹5.14 lakh crore, that is 46.2% of the Budget target. In the remaining four months, the Government of India's capital expenditure may be accelerated. It may still fall well short of the target. This has been the main reason for the dip in overall real GDP growth in 2024-25.

Going forward in 2025-26, the Government of India will have to continue to rely on an accelerated capital expenditure growth which can be kept at least at 20% on the revised estimates for 2024-25. Sustained government capital expenditures can have a favourable effect on private investment. The size and the pattern of investment expenditure of the government

should be designed to accelerate private investment as well.

Medium- to long-term growth prospects


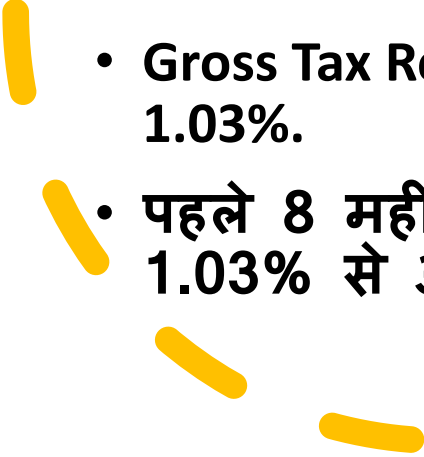
Over a period of next five years, the best that India may hope for is a steady real GDP growth rate of 6.5%. This is in line with the International Monetary Fund's real GDP growth projection for the Indian economy, as in its October 2024 release, which is at 6.5% over the period 2025-26 to 2029-30. This real GDP growth may be accompanied by an implicit price deflator (IPD)-based inflation of about 4% which can give a nominal GDP growth in the range of 10.5%-11%. In years in which global conditions improve and the contribution of net exports to GDP growth becomes significant, real GDP growth may touch even 7%. If a real growth of around 6.5% and a nominal growth in the range of 10.5%-11% are maintained over the long run with an average exchange rate depreciation of 2.5% per annum, India should be able to reach a per capita GDP level consistent with a developed country status in the next two and half decades. But the task is not going to be easy. It will be hard to grow at 6.5% as the base keeps on increasing. In fact, in the earlier years, the growth rate will have to be higher. But, at present, the potential rate of growth appears to be 6.5%. However, it can change.


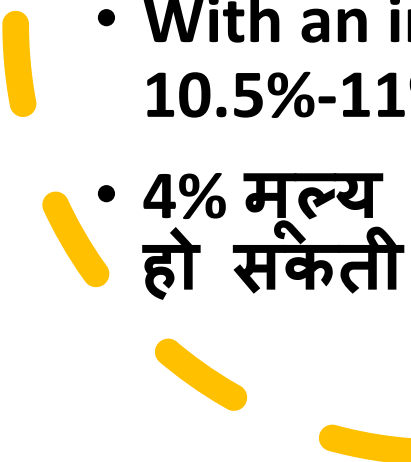
In the light of a potential growth rate of 6.5%, the achievement of 6.4% in 2024-25 should not be considered as disappointing. In fact, the achievement of 8.2% in 2023-24 should be considered as a flash in the pan. The current year's growth rate of 6.4% as in the first advance estimates should be seen in the context of India's potential growth rate.



- India's GDP Growth for 2024-25 / 2024-25 के लिए भारत की GDP वृद्धि
- Real GDP growth is estimated at 6.4% and nominal GDP growth at 9.7% for 2024-25.
- 2024-25 के लिए वास्तविक GDP वृद्धि 6.4% और नाममात्र GDP वृद्धि 9.7% रहने का अनुमान है।
- These figures are lower than the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) forecast of 6.6% real GDP growth.
- ये आंकड़े भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक (RBI) के 6.6% वास्तविक GDP वृद्धि के पूर्वानुमान से कम हैं।


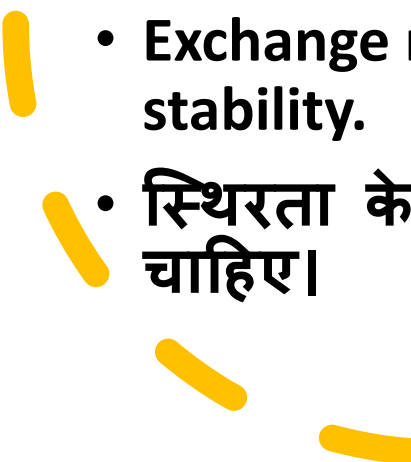
- Growth in first half of the year was 6.0%, and for the second half, it is expected to be 6.7%.
- पहली छमाही में वृद्धि 6.0% थी, और दूसरी छमाही में 6.7% होने की संभावना है।
- The manufacturing sector's growth dropped sharply from 9.9% in 2023-24 to 5.3% in 2024-25.
- निर्माण क्षेत्र की वृद्धि 2023-24 में 9.9% से घटकर 2024-25 में 5.3% हो गई।

- Economic Growth Forecast for 2025-26 / 2025-26 के लिए आर्थिक वृद्धि का पूर्वानुमान
- The Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) rate has been stable at around 33.4%.
- सकल स्थिर पूंजी निर्माण (GFCF) दर लगभग 33.4% पर स्थिर बनी हुई है।
- Real GDP growth is expected to be around 6.5% in 2025-26.
- 2025-26 में वास्तविक GDP वृद्धि लगभग 6.5% रहने की संभावना है।
- Incremental Capital Output Ratio (ICOR) is estimated at 5.1, meaning higher efficiency in capital use.
- परिवर्धित पूंजी उत्पादन अनुपात (ICOR) 5.1 होने का अनुमान है, जिससे पूंजी उपयोग की दक्षता अधिक होगी।

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- **Impact of Investment on Growth / निवेश का विकास पर प्रभाव**
 - Government's investment growth has remained negative (-)12.3%, leading to lower GDP growth.
 - सरकारी निवेश वृद्धि (-)12.3% रही, जिससे GDP वृद्धि प्रभावित हुई।
 - Capital expenditure target of ₹11.1 lakh crore needs to be achieved to sustain growth.
 - ₹11.1 लाख करोड़ के पूंजीगत व्यय लक्ष्य को प्राप्त करना आवश्यक है।
 - Gross Tax Revenue (GTR) growth in first 8 months was 10.7%, exceeding the budgeted 1.03%.
 - पहले 8 महीनों में सकल कर राजस्व (GTR) वृद्धि 10.7% थी, जो बजट अनुमान 1.03% से अधिक है।
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- Medium to Long-Term Growth Prospects / मध्यम से दीर्घकालिक वृद्धि संभावनाएं
 - IMF predicts India's real GDP growth at 6.5% from 2025-26 to 2029-30.
 - IMF का अनुमान है कि 2025-26 से 2029-30 तक भारत की वास्तविक GDP वृद्धि 6.5% होगी।
 - With an implicit price deflator (IPD) of 4%, nominal GDP growth could be 10.5%-11%.
 - 4% मूल्य अपस्फीतिकारक (IPD) के साथ, नाममात्र GDP वृद्धि 10.5%-11% हो सकती है।
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- If global economic conditions improve, real GDP growth could even touch 7%.
 - यदि वैश्विक आर्थिक परिस्थितियां सुधरती हैं, तो वास्तविक GDP वृद्धि 7% तक पहुंच सकती है।
 - India could reach developed country status in the next two and half decades
 - .भारत अगले ढाई दशकों में विकसित देश का दर्जा प्राप्त कर सकता है।
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- . Challenges and Recommendations / चुनौतियां और सिफारिशें
 - Government must accelerate capital expenditure growth at 20% per year.
 - सरकार को पूंजीगत व्यय वृद्धि को प्रति वर्ष 20% पर बनाए रखना होगा।
 - Private investment should be encouraged through policy reforms.
 - नीतिगत सुधारों के माध्यम से निजी निवेश को प्रोत्साहित किया जाना चाहिए।
 - Exchange rate depreciation of 2.5% per annum should be maintained for stability.
 - स्थिरता के लिए विनिमय दर का प्रति वर्ष 2.5% अवमूल्यन बनाए रखा जाना चाहिए।
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Aspect	Real GDP	Nominal GDP
Definition	Measures the total value of goods and services adjusted for inflation.	Measures the total value of goods and services at current market prices.
Adjustment for Inflation	Adjusted using a base year's prices.	Not adjusted; includes the effects of inflation.
Reflects	The actual purchasing power of an economy.	The raw economic output in current prices.
Used For	Comparing economic growth over time without the effect of inflation.	Measuring economic activity in a given year but does not reflect price stability.
Formula	$\text{Real GDP} = \text{Nominal GDP} / \text{GDP Deflator} \times 100$	$\text{Nominal GDP} = \text{Quantity of Goods} \times \text{Current Price}$
Impact of Inflation	Remains stable as it accounts for price changes.	Increases with inflation, making it less accurate for comparison.
Economic Analysis	More reliable for long-term growth trends.	Useful for current economic size comparison but misleading for trend analysis.
Example	If a country produces 1,000 units of a product at ₹100 each in 2010 (base year), and the same quantity in 2025 but at ₹150 each, Real GDP remains ₹1,00,000, while Nominal GDP becomes ₹1,50,000.	If inflation rises, Nominal GDP can increase even if actual production doesn't , leading to a distorted economic picture.

Rank	Country	Nominal GDP (USD trillions)	Country	Real GDP (PPP) (USD trillions)
1	United States	27.36	China	30.07
2	China	17.79	United States	25.35
3	Germany	4.46	India	13.03
4	Japan	4.21	Japan	6.11
5	India	3.54	Germany	5.74

Aspect	Real GDP (Constant Prices)	Real GDP (PPP)
Measures	inflation-adjusted GDP using a base year	GDP adjusted for cost of living across countries
Use Case	Economic growth tracking within a country	International economic comparisons
Inflation Adjustment	Yes, within a country	Yes, based on global price differences
Example	U.S. Real GDP in 2015 prices	<u>India's PPP-adjusted GDP</u> is higher than its <u>nominal GDP</u>

LOS ANGELES

Mulholland Drive and Twin Peaks director David Lynch dies at 78



David Lynch — the director of Mulholland Drive and television's Twin Peaks, who depicted the darkness and the death of the wholesome surface of American life — has died. He was 78 years old. The cause and location of death were not specified. Lynch had suffered from emphysema after years of heavy smoking. AP

WASHINGTON

Indian sentenced to eight years for attempted attack on White House



Indian national Sai Varshith Kandula, 26, was sentenced to eight years for an attempted attack on the White House with a rented truck on May 22, 2023. Born in Chandanagar, Kandula was a lawful permanent resident of the U.S. with a green card. The picture shows a police officer inspecting the site of attack. AP

WASHINGTON

U.S. Supreme Court upholds law banning TikTok in the country



The U.S. Supreme Court upheld a law that will ban TikTok, potentially depriving the video-sharing app to 170 million users in two days. The court ruled that the law does not violate free speech rights and that the U.S. government had demonstrated national security concerns about a Chinese company owning the app. AP

JUBA

South Sudan declares nighttime curfew after looting in capital



Police in South Sudan declared a nighttime curfew on Friday, the morning after anti-Sudanese protests in the capital, Juba, degenerated into looting. Protests broke out on Thursday following reports that 29 South Sudanese citizens had been killed in neighbouring Sudan earlier in the week. AP

China's population declines for third consecutive year, straining economy

China's population stood at 1.408 billion at the end of 2024, a decline of 1.39 million from the previous year. The figures follow trends worldwide, but especially in East Asia, where Japan, South Korea and others have seen birth rates plummet

Associated Press
TAIPEI

China's population fell last year for the third straight year, its government said on Friday, pointing to further demographic challenges for the world's second most populous nation, which is facing an ageing population and an estimated shortage of working-age people. China's population stood at 1.408 billion at the end of 2024, a decline of 1.39 million from the previous year. The figures announced by the government in Beijing



Rising cost of living has been attributed as one of the reasons for people to not have children. AP

The reasons are in many cases similar: rising costs of living are causing young people to put off or rule out marriage and child birth while pursuing higher education and careers. While people are living longer, that's not enough to keep up with rate of new births. Countries such as China that allow very little immigration are especially at risk. China also has a lopsided sex ratio, with as many as millions more boys born for every 100 girls, raising the possibility of social instability among China's army of bachelors. Friday's report gave the sex imbalance as 104.34 men to every 100 women, though independent groups give the imbalance as considerably higher. More disturbing for the government was the drastically falling birthrate, with China's total population dropping for the first time in decades in 2023 and China being narrowly overtaken by India as the world's most populous nation in the same year. A rapidly ageing population, declining workforce, lack of consumer markets and migration abroad are putting the system under severe pressure.

Pakistani court sentences Imran, wife to prison for graft

Associated Press
ISLAMABAD

A Pakistani court on Friday sentenced the country's already-imprisoned former Prime Minister Imran Khan and his wife to 14 and seven years in jail after finding them guilty of corruption, officials and his lawyer said. It's yet another blow for the former Premier who has been behind the bars since 2023. The couple are accused of accepting a gift of land from a real estate tycoon in exchange for laundered money when Mr. Khan was in power. Prosecutors say the businessman, Malik Riaz, was then allowed by Mr. Khan to pay fines that were all the charges against him case from the same laun-



Latest setback: Supporters of Imran Khan protest in Peshawar against the court verdict on Friday. AP

dered money of £190 million that was returned to Pakistan by British authorities in 2022 to deposit with the national exchequer. Mr. Khan has denied wrongdoing and insisted since his arrest in 2023 that all the charges against him are a plot by rivals to keep him from returning to office. A post from Khan's account on the X urged his supporters not to panic over the verdict, under which the al-Qadir University built by his wife's charity will also be taken over by authorities in Punjab.

Migrant boat capsizes off West African coast killing 40 Pakistanis

Associated Press
ISLAMABAD

More than 40 Pakistanis are feared to have drowned in the capsizing of a boat off West Africa's Atlantic coastline, which has emerged as a primary point of departure for migrants aiming to reach Europe. President Asif Ali Zardari expressed grief over the deaths. Mr. Zardari's comments in a statement late on Thursday came after a Spain-based migrant rights group, Walking Borders, said 50 people had died on their way to the Canary Islands and that 44 of them were Pakistanis. The group said the migrants began their journey on January 2. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also expressed his sorrow over the deaths. Pakistan said it had been informed by its embassy in Morocco that a boat carrying 80 passengers, including some Pakistanis, had set off from Mauritania and capsized near Dakkila, a Moroccan-controlled port city in the disputed Western Sahara.

Almost all the Pakistanis who were on the boat were from cities in the eastern Punjab province.

Ringling in New Year



Visitors look at a towering sculpture floral display of the Madam White Snake exhibit at Gardens by the Bay's Chinese New Year theme in Singapore on Friday. AP

Russia, Iran sign treaty to deepen ties in the face of Western curbs

Associated Press
MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Iranian counterpart, Masoud Pezeshkian, signed a broad cooperation pact on Friday as their countries deepened their partnership in the face of stringent Western sanctions. His visit came ahead of Monday's inauguration of President-elect Donald Trump, who has pledged to broker peace in Ukraine and take a tougher stance on Iran, which is grappling with growing economic problems and other challenges, including military setbacks in its sphere of influence across West Asia. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov dismissed any link with Trump's inauguration, saying the signing had been planned long ago. "We do consider our relations with you as vital, sensitive and strategic, and we are on this path strongly," he said. "These ties will defuse their plot,



Common interests: Vladimir Putin, right, and Masoud Pezeshkian at the Kremlin on Friday. AP

definitely." Russia's ties with Iran have grown closer after Putin sent troops into Ukraine in February 2022. Ukraine and the West have accused Tehran of providing Moscow with hundreds of drones for use to attack Ukraine, which Moscow and Tehran have denied. Last year, Iran joined the BRICS bloc of developing economies and Mr. Pezeshkian attended its summit, which was hosted by Russia in Kazan. Russia and Iran, which had troubled relations in the past, developed cordial ties after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, with Moscow emerging as a key trade partner and supplier of weapons and technologies for Tehran, which has faced bruising international sanctions. "The Russian built Iran's first nuclear plant that was launched in 2013 and is building two more nuclear reactors there.

Russia was part of the 2015 deal between Iran and six major powers of enforcing sanctions relief for Tehran in exchange for curbing its atomic program, and the Kremlin offered political support for Iran when the U.S. unilaterally withdrew from the agreement during Trump's first term. "The weary almost the only people visiting Navalny in prison while he serves his 19-year sentence. Navalny, Mr. Putin's main political opponent, communicated with the world by transmitting messages through his lawyers, which his team then published on social media. Passing letters and messages through lawyers is a normal practice in Russian prisons. "Navalny's exiled widow Yulia Navalnaya said the lawyers were "political prisoners and should be freed immediately."

Three lawyers of Alexei Navalny get jail terms in Russia

Agence France-Press
PETUSHKI

Russia on Friday sentenced three lawyers who had defended Alexei Navalny to several years in prison for bringing messages from the late opposition leader from prison to the outside world. The case, which comes amid a massive crackdown on dissent during the Ukraine offensive, has alarmed rights groups who fear Moscow will ramp up its assault against legal representatives in addition to jailing their clients. The Kremlin has sought to punish Navalny's associates even after the Russian dissident's unexplained death in an Arctic prison colony last February.

Yadim Kobzev, Alexei Liptser and Igor Sergunin were found guilty of participating in an "extremist group."

Navalny's team has accused prison authorities of having secretly filmed Navalny's meetings with his lawyers, which are meant to be confidential. His team published footage of the meetings on social media to support the claim. "New low point" The Netherlands said that pursuing the lawyers marked a "new low point in the already dire human rights situation" in Russia. Germany said that "even those meant to defend others before the law face harsh persecution". Britain's Foreign Minister David Lammy posted on X: "Nearly a year on from Navalny's death, the Russian authorities continue to crush any dissent..."

The men were sentenced after a closed-door trial in the town of Petushki — a town about 115 km east of Moscow — near the Pokrov prison where Navalny was held before he was moved to a remote colony above the Arctic Circle. "We are on trial for passing Navalny's thoughts to other people," Mr. Kobzev said in court last week. A statement from the court said they had "used their status as lawyers while visiting convict Navalny to ensure the regular transfer of information between the members of the extremist community, including those wanted and hiding outside the Russian Federation, and Navalny."

China's population declines for third consecutive year, straining economy

China's population stood at 1.408 billion at the end of 2024, a decline of 1.39 million from the previous year; The figures follow trends worldwide, but especially in East Asia, where Japan, South Korea and others have seen birth rates plummet

Associated Press

TAIPEI

China's population fell last year for the third straight year, its government said on Friday, pointing to further demographic challenges for the world's second most populous nation, which is now facing an ageing population and an emerging shortage of working age people.

China's population stood at 1.408 billion at the end of 2024, a decline of 1.39 million from the previous year.

The figures announced by the government in Beij-



Dwindling lot: Rising cost of living has been attributed as one of the main reasons for people to not have children. AFP

ing follow trends worldwide, but especially in East Asia, where Japan, South Korea and other nations have seen their birth rates

plummet. China three years ago joined Japan and most of Eastern Europe among other nations whose population is fall-

ing. The reasons are in many cases similar: rising costs of living are causing young people to put off or rule out marriage and child birth while pursuing higher education and careers. While people are living longer, that's not enough to keep up with rate of new births.


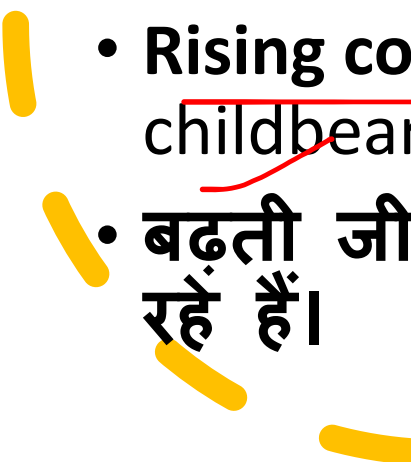
Lopsided sex ratio



Countries such as China that allow very little immigration are especially at risk. China also has a lopsided sex ratio, with as many as millions more boys born for every 100 girls, raising the possibility of social instability among Chi-

na's army of bachelors. Friday's report gave the sex imbalance as 104.34 men to every 100 women, though independent groups give the imbalance as considerably higher.

More disturbing for the government was the drastically falling birthrate, with China's total population dropping for the first time in decades in 2023 and China being narrowly overtaken by India as the world's most populous nation in the same year. A rapidly ageing population, declining workforce, lack of consumer markets and migration abroad are putting the system under severe pressure.

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- **Population Decline for Third Consecutive Year / लगातार तीसरे वर्ष जनसंख्या में गिरावट**
 - **China's population stood at 1.408 billion at the end of 2024, marking a decline of 1.39 million from the previous year.**
 - **2024 के अंत में चीन की जनसंख्या 1.408 अरब थी, जो पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में 1.39 मिलियन कम है।**
 - **This is the third straight year of population decline, causing demographic challenges.**
 - **यह लगातार तीसरा वर्ष है जब चीन की जनसंख्या में गिरावट आई है, जिससे जनसांख्यिकीय चुनौतियां बढ़ रही हैं।**
 - **China faces an ageing population and a shortage of working-age people.**
 - **चीन को बुजुर्ग आबादी और कामकाजी उम्र के लोगों की कमी का सामना करना पड़ रहा है।**

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- **Reasons for Population Decline / जनसंख्या गिरावट के कारण**
 - **Similar trends are seen in East Asian nations** like Japan and South Korea, where birth rates have fallen significantly.
 - **जापान और दक्षिण कोरिया जैसे पूर्वी एशियाई देशों में जन्म दर में भारी गिरावट देखी गई है।**
 - **Rising costs of living** discourage young people from marriage and childbearing.
 - **बढ़ती जीवन लागत के कारण युवा शादी और बच्चों के जन्म से बच रहे हैं।**
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- Younger generations prefer higher education and careers over starting families.
 - युवा पीढ़ी परिवार शुरू करने की बजाय उच्च शिक्षा और करियर को प्राथमिकता दे रही है।
 - Longer life expectancy does not offset the lower birth rates.
 - लोगों की औसत आय बढ़ रही है, लेकिन जन्म दर की गिरावट इसकी भरपाई नहीं कर पा रही।
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- **Economic and Social Implications / आर्थिक और सामाजिक प्रभाव**
 - **China has a lopsided sex ratio with 104.34 men for every 100 women, leading to social instability.**
 - **चीन में 104.34 पुरुषों के मुकाबले 100 महिलाएं हैं, जिससे सामाजिक असंतुलन बढ़ रहा है।**
 - **This imbalance creates an army of bachelors, as millions of boys are born for every 100 girls.**
 - **इस असंतुलन से लाखों पुरुषों के लिए विवाह का संकट खड़ा हो रहा है।**

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- Labour shortages and a declining workforce threaten China's economic growth.
 - श्रम की कमी और घटती कार्यबल चीन की आर्थिक वृद्धि को खतरे में डाल रही है।
 - Consumer demand is weakening, affecting industries and long-term development.
 - उपभोक्ता मांग कमजोर हो रही है, जिससे उद्योगों और दीर्घकालिक विकास पर असर पड़ रहा है।
 - China's population decline coincided with India overtaking it as the world's most populous nation.
 - चीन की जनसंख्या में गिरावट के साथ ही भारत दुनिया का सबसे अधिक जनसंख्या वाला देश बन गया।

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- **Government's Response and Future Outlook / सरकार की प्रतिक्रिया और भविष्य की संभावनाएं**
 - **China allows very little immigration, worsening its demographic crisis.**
 - **चीन में बहुत कम आप्रवासन की अनुमति है, जिससे जनसांख्यिकीय संकट बढ़ रहा है।**
 - **Economic policies need to focus on workforce retention and productivity.**
 - **आर्थिक नीतियों को कार्यबल बनाए रखने और उत्पादकता बढ़ाने पर ध्यान देना होगा।**

-
- Incentives for families to have more children could be introduced.
 - सरकार अधिक बच्चों को जन्म देने के लिए प्रोत्साहन योजनाएं लागू कर सकती है।
 - The next few decades will be crucial in determining China's ability to sustain economic growth amid population decline.
 - अगले कुछ दशक यह तय करेंगे कि चीन जनसंख्या गिरावट के बावजूद आर्थिक विकास बनाए रख सकता है या नहीं।

Rank	Country	Annual Population Decline Rate (%)	Primary Factors
1	Cook Islands	-2.24%	High emigration, low birth rates
2	American Samoa	-1.74%	Emigration, limited economic opportunities
3	Puerto Rico	-1.29%	Economic challenges, migration to mainland U.S.
4	Saint Pierre and Miquelon	-1.19%	Emigration, aging population
5	Moldova	-1.14%	High emigration, low birth rates
6	Latvia	-1.13%	Emigration, declining fertility rates
7	Lithuania	-1.04%	Emigration, low birth rates
8	Romania	-1.01%	Emigration, aging population
9	Estonia	-0.74%	Emigration, low birth rates
10	Micronesia	-0.70%	Emigration, limited economic opportunities

FINANCIAL EXPRESS

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IN THE NEWS

Budget session of Parliament from Jan 31 to Apr 4

THE BUDGET SESSION of Parliament will be held from January 31 to April 4, with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman set to table her 8th straight Budget on February 1. The session will start with President Droupadi Murmu's address to a joint sitting of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on January 31, followed by the tabling of the Economic Survey.

Cabinet gives nod to refarming of 687 MHz spectrum

COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER JYOTIRADITYA Scindia on Friday said the Cabinet has approved the refarming of 687 MHz of spectrum from various ministries for deployment of 5G & future 6G services. ■ PAGE 2

Centre provides ₹11,440-crore lifeline to RIL

THE UNION CABINET has approved a ₹11,440-crore revival plan for debt-laden Rashtriya Ispat Nigam (RINL), according to a statement released on Friday. ■ PAGE 2

Forex reserves fall to 10-month low of \$625.87 bn

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES extended their losing streak for a sixth straight week and stood at a 10-month low of \$625.87 billion as of January 10, RBI data showed, reports Reuters. ■ PAGE 19

FE SPECIAL

Harvest tax-free capital gains before Mar 31

It will reduce your future tax liability from equity holdings. ■ PERSONAL FINANCE, PP

RECORD ₹13.3L CR WIPED OUT IN FIRST 14 DAYS

Unhappy new year for investors so far

KISHOR KADAM
 Mumbai, January 17

INVESTORS LOST A record ₹13.3 lakh crore in the first fortnight of the current calendar year — the highest ever in absolute terms. In percentage terms, the 3% decline was the second highest in a decade. Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) were the primary drivers of the downturn, selling shares worth \$4.9 billion (₹42,343.3 crore). On the other hand, domestic institutional investors (DIIs) provided much-needed support to the markets, purchasing ₹49,367 crore shares. Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty fell nearly 2% each, while the broader BSE Midcap and BSE Smallcap indices fell 5.8% and 5.2%, respectively, in the first fortnight of 2025. On Friday, the Sensex fell 419 points, or 0.55%, to close at 76,619.33, while the NSE Nifty declined 108.60 points, or 0.47%, to settle at 23,203.20.

Continued on Page 6



Economic growth set to pick up: RBI bulletin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
 Mumbai, January 17

ECONOMIC GROWTH IS poised to rebound as domestic demand regains strength, though the stickiness in food inflation warrants careful monitoring, the latest bulletin by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released on Friday said. "In India, there is a conducive quickening of high-frequency indicators of economic activity in the second half of 2024-25, bearing out the implicit pick-up in real GDP growth for this period in the NSO's first annual advance estimates," it said. The article on the "State of the Economy" published in the January bulletin has been authored by a team led by Michael Patra, who demitted the office of RBI deputy governor earlier this month. "Growth is poised to rebound as domestic demand regains strength, though the stickiness in food inflation warrants careful monitoring, the article said, adding that a revival in public capex on infrastructure is likely to stimulate growth in key sectors. It also noted that rising input cost pressures in the manufacturing sector, along with weather-related exigencies and global headwinds could, however, pose risks to this outlook.

Continued on Page 6

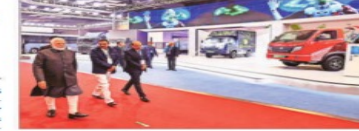
Carmakers look beyond electric in green drive

Hydrogen, hybrid & flex-fuel tech on display

VIKRAM CHAUDHARY & SWARAJ BAGGONKAR
 New Delhi, January 17

WHILE ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EVs) dominate the green mobility narrative at Bharat Mobility Global Expo, which opened on Friday, automakers are broadening their strategies with hydrogen, hybrid, and flex-fuel technologies. This would help them achieve a common goal of reducing emissions. For instance, Toyota Kirloskar Motor unveiled a multi-faceted strategy on Day 3 by showcasing diverse low-emission technologies. Its lineup includes battery electric vehicles (BEVs) such as the bZ4X and Urban Cruiser BEV concept, alongside the Hilux PHEV, Prius PHEV, Hycross HEV, and the Prius FFV-PHEV. Tadashi Aizawa, deputy MD, highlighted the Prius FFV-PHEV as a groundbreaking innovation that pairs electrification with fossil fuel substitution, achieving the lowest carbon footprint on a well-to-wheel basis. Similarly, Maruti Suzuki took a significant step by unveiling the eVitara, its first all-electric SUV.

Continued on Page 6



Prime Minister Narendra Modi after inaugurating the Bharat Mobility Global Expo, in New Delhi on Friday

Indian companies ready to take on Tesla: Jindal

NITIN KUMAR
 New Delhi, January 17

DOMESTIC ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) manufacturers are well-prepared to compete with global players such as Tesla, Sajjan Jindal, chairman and managing director of JSW Group, said on Friday. Speaking to ET on the sidelines of Bharat Mobility Global Expo, Jindal said that Indian companies possess the technological and manufacturing capabilities to challenge Tesla and other international giants, just like Chinese firms have done. "We are ready to compete with Tesla or any other EV company such as China's BYD has already done it, so if China can, why can't we?" he said. Tesla has been considering setting up a manufacturing base in India. The government has come out with a policy for EV makers like Tesla offering some incentives.

Continued on Page 6



Sajjan Jindal, JSW Group CMD

Q3 a mixed bag for IT majors

Growth for Infy, Wipro; challenges for TCS, HCLTech

PADMINI DHURVARAJ
 Bengaluru, January 17

THE OCTOBER-DECEMBER quarter broadly marked a turning point for domestic IT firms, with signs of revival in discretionary spending and a healthy order book. This led to some optimism among analysts as the quarter is usually a weak one due to flatoughs. While Infosys and Wipro exceeded Street expectations, TCS and HCLTech could not. Despite robust deal wins, challenges in total contract value (TCV) conversions and sustained growth in emerging markets remain concerns for the industry. Infosys posted sequential revenue and profit growth, driven by improved demand in financial services across the US and Europe. MD & CEO Sallu Parakkal noted, "In the last quarter, we saw discretionary spending recover in US financial services. This quarter, we are witnessing similar trends in Europe, along with improving demand in US retail and consumer products."

PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Company	Revenue (₹ Cr)	EPS Growth	Infy	Wipro
TCS	63,973	-0.4%	1.9%	3.6%
Infosys	41,764	4.5%	5.0%	0.1%
HCLTech	29,890	4.5%	5.0%	(-) 1% to 1% for Q3
Wipro	22,319	(-) 1% to 1% for Q3		

Continued on Page 6

Prices of spices fall on robust output

PRICES OF A host of spices such as cumin, coriander, turmeric, black pepper and dry chili, have declined from their peak last year, reports Sandip Das. ■ PAGE 2

Blinkit gets ₹500 cr more from Zomato

ZOMATO HAS INFUSED ₹500 crore into Blinkit, its RoC fillings showed, reports Raghav Agarwal. With this, it has injected ₹2,800 crore in its quick commerce arm. ■ PAGE 6

All a/cs must have nominations: RBI

THE RESERVE BANK OF INDIA on Friday asked banks to ensure nominations in new and all existing customers' deposit accounts and safety lockers, reports PTI.

7 Indian space firms set for US lift-off

NIVEDITA BHATTACHARJEE
 Bengaluru, January 17

SEVEN PRIVATELY-HELD startups from India have been chosen for a first-of-its-kind India-US space and defence collaboration programme, potentially unlocking a lucrative and strategic market for the domestic firms, an investor who co-launched the project told Reuters on Friday. The companies include space imaging company KaleidEO, rocket makers EtherealX and AI-driven company Shyam VNI. They will participate in a programme for defence and dual-use technology and explore opportunities to work with the US Defense Innovation Unit, the Department of Defense and other government agencies on satellite observation and emerging space and defence technologies. Indian investor Indusbridge Ventures and US-based FedTech, which established the programme in September 2024, selected seven Indian companies and talks are under way to set up specific projects. "This programme offers valuable resources, mentorship, and essential connections with industry leaders in the US and we look forward to partnering with FedTech on this initiative to accelerate private sector partnership between the two countries in strategic sectors — defence and dual-use technology," said Rahul Devjani, the managing partner at Indusbridge Ventures. The startups will get access to the world's biggest defence and space market and potentially work with US defence industry leaders like Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin and RTX.



TECH COLLAB

- Shortlisted firms to participate in a programme for defence and dual-use tech
- Explore opportunities to work with US Defense Innovation Unit, other govt agencies on satellite observation, emerging space & defence tech



Indian investor Indusbridge Ventures and US-based FedTech, which established the programme in September 2024, selected the domestic startups

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Har Pal Aapke Saath



Govt. of Uttarakhand



देवभूमि रजत उत्सव
75



युवा कार्यक्रम
एवं खेल मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
YOUTH AFFAIRS
AND SPORTS



38 वें राष्ट्रीय खेल
उत्तराखण्ड 25
रजत जयंती वर्ष

A WARM WELCOME TO

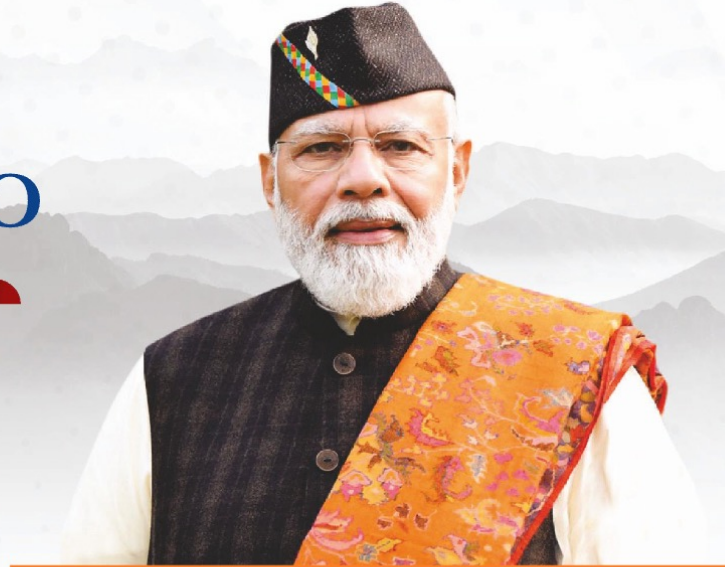
38th National Games

UTTARAKHAND

28th Jan - 14th Feb 2025



Pushkar Singh Dhami
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand



Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

SANKALP SE SHIKHAR TAK

Venues for National Games

Dehradun: Squash, Archery, Shooting Pistol & Rifle, 5x5 & 3x3 Basketball, Gymnastics, Netball, Wushu, Judo, Rugby Sevens, Lawn Bowl, Athletics, Weightlifting, Badminton, Table tennis, Tennis

Rishikesh & Tehri: Extreme slalom, Canoeing slalom, Beach handball, Beach Volleyball, Beach Kabaddi.

UdhamSingh Nagar: Cycling Trek, Cycling Road, Handball, Volleyball, Shooting Trap, Skate, Mallakhamb.

Haldwani: Football, Kho-Kho, Taekwondo, Modern Pentathlon, Swimming, Fencing, Triathlon.

Haridwar: Hockey, Kabaddi, Kushti, Kalaripayattu.

New Tehri: Kayaking and Canoeing (Spring), rowing.

Nainital(Bhimtal): Cycling MTB.

Almora: Yogasan

Pithoragarh: Boxing

Champawat: Rafting

About 10,000 players from across the country will showcase their sporting skills

Organization of the National Games will provide a new platform to the sporting talent of Uttarakhand.

Players from across the country will showcase their strength across 35 sports events.

Yoga and Malkhamb have been included in the National Games.



Tejaswini (Torch)




Mauli (Mascot)



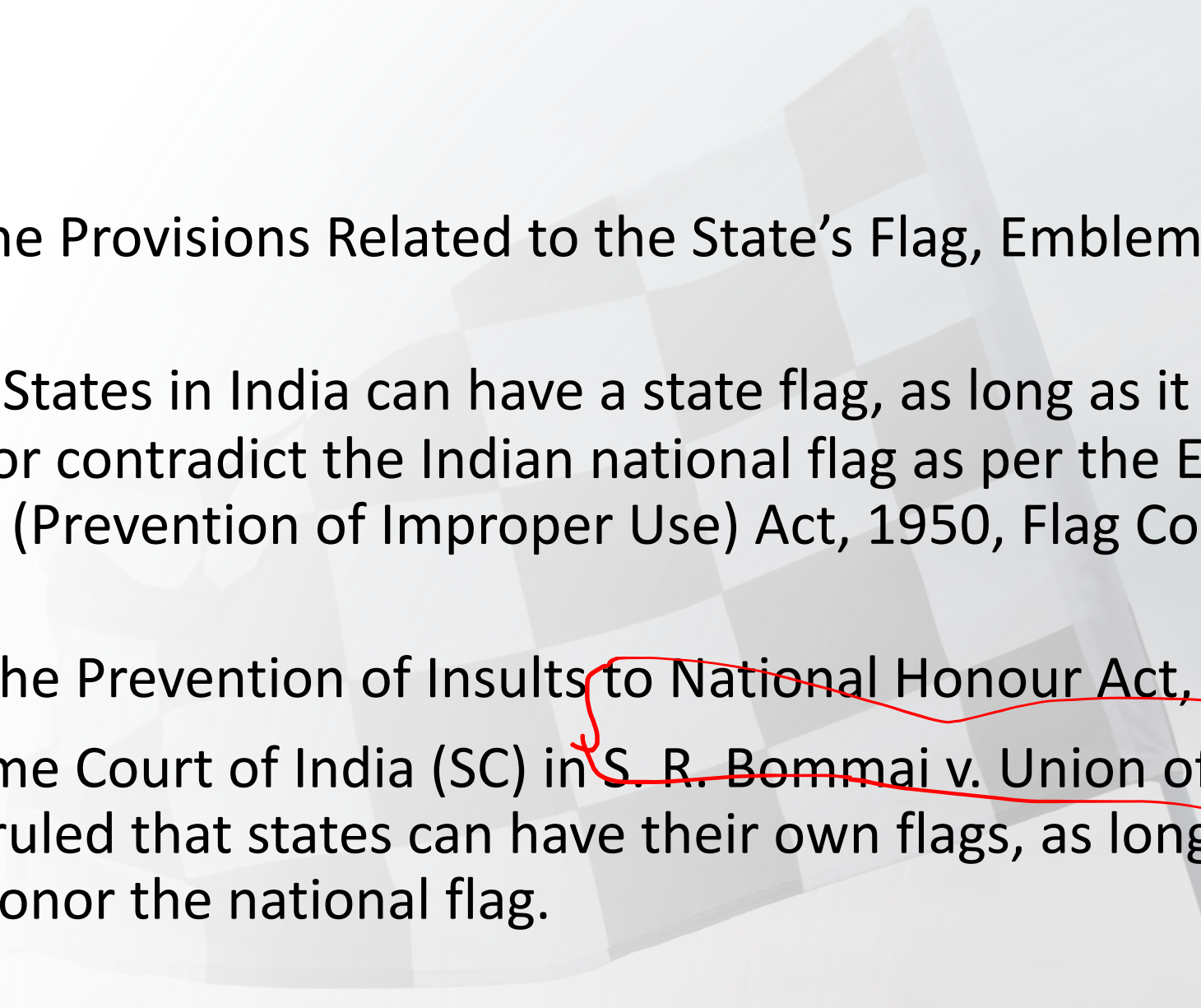
Symbols of State

Tripura unveiled its first **official state emblem** after approval from the **Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**.

The proposal for the **emblem of the Government of Tripura** has been approved under **Rule 4(2) of the State Emblem of India (Regulation of Use) Rules, 2007**





- 
- What are the Provisions Related to the State's Flag, Emblem and Song?
 - State Flag: States in India can have a state flag, as long as it does not supersede or contradict the Indian national flag as per the Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950, Flag Code of India,
 - 2002 and the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971.
 - The Supreme Court of India (SC) in S. R. Bommai v. Union of India Case 1994 ruled that states can have their own flags, as long as they do not dishonor the national flag.

SC further stated that the **Constitution of India does not prohibit states from having their own flags.**

It held that the **state flag should always be flown below the national flag, cannot be flown alongside it, and cannot be used for official or statutory purposes.**

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- **State Emblem:** The **State Emblem of India** is regulated under the **State Emblem of India (Prohibition of Improper Use) Act, 2005**.
 - **States in India** can adopt their emblem but require **Union Home Ministry approval for state symbols**.
 - Authorized **uses of states' emblems include official seals**, stationery, vehicles, and key public buildings. Unauthorized use for personal, organizational, or commercial purposes is strictly prohibited.




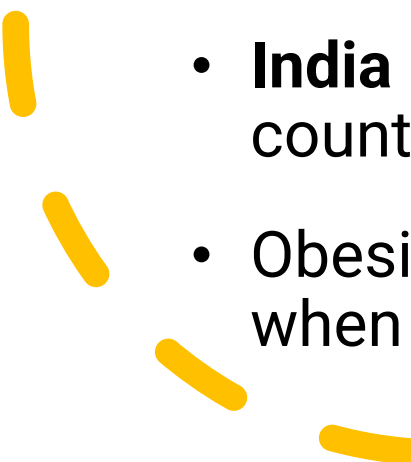
Reevaluating Obesity
Metrics

The long-standing reliance on Body Mass Index (BMI) for diagnosing obesity is increasingly being questioned due to its limitations.

BMI can overestimate obesity in muscular individuals like athletes and underestimate obesity in those with excessive fat but low muscle mass.


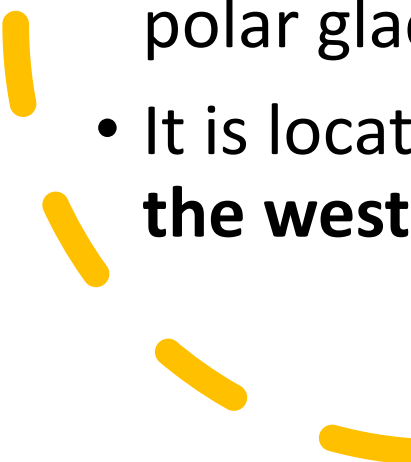
The Lancet recommends using alternative metrics such as waist circumference, waist-hip ratio, and waist-height ratio, which consider gender, age, and ethnicity differences.



Obesity should be classified as pre-clinical (no organ dysfunction) and clinical (with organ dysfunction and activity impairment).

- 
- **BMI** is a measure used to **assess** whether a person has a **healthy body weight** for a given **height**. It is calculated using a person's weight and height.
 - **Obesity in India:** As per **The Lancet**, **70%** of India's **urban population** is classified as **obese or overweight**.
 - **India ranks 3rd**, just behind the **US and China**, in the list of top 10 countries with the **highest number** of obese individuals.
 - Obesity is a health condition caused by **excessive body fat**, diagnosed when **BMI is 30 or higher**.
- 

A wide-angle landscape photograph of the Siachen Glacier region. The scene is dominated by rugged, dark grey mountain peaks and ridges, many of which are partially covered in snow. The foreground and middle ground show a vast, flat expanse of snow and ice, with some rocky outcrops visible. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The text "Siachen Glacier" is overlaid in the center in a white, sans-serif font.

Siachen Glacier


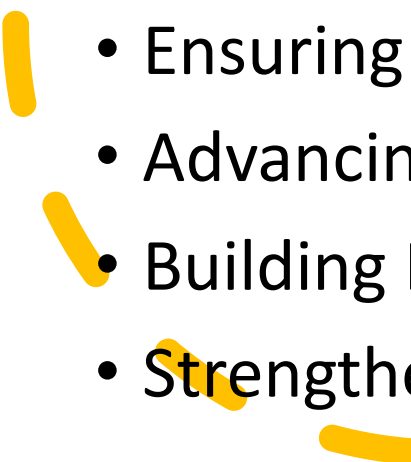
- 
- Siachen Glacier, the world's highest and coldest battlefield, has now been equipped with high-speed 4G and 5G connectivity.
 - **About Siachen Glacier**
 - The Siachen Glacier is a **Piedmont glacier**, which spreads out on a plain at the base of mountains. It is the world's second-longest non-polar glacier after the **Fedchenko Glacier in Tajikistan**.
 - It is located in the **Karakoram Range**, between the **Salto Ridge to the west and the main Karakoram Range to the east**.
- 

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- The glacier originates near **Indira Col West**, marking the boundary between Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent.
 - The glacier feeds the **Nubra River, which is a tributary of the Shyok River**. The Shyok River is part of the larger Indus River system.
 - India took control of the glacier under **Operation Meghdoot (1984)**, preempting Pakistan's plans to occupy it.
- 



Kampala Declaration

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- The **Kampala Declaration** for Africa's agri-food systems from 2026 to 2035 was adopted in the Extraordinary African Union Summit on the **Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP)**.
 - **About**
 - The new declaration is the successor to the **Malabo Declaration**.
 - During the summit, African leaders endorsed the **ten-year CAADP action plan (2026–2035)**, outlining a detailed roadmap for transforming agriculture across Africa.
- 

- 
- **Objectives of Kampala Declaration**
 - **Intensifying sustainable food production**, agro-industrialization, and trade,
 - **Boosting Investment and Financing** for Accelerated Agrifood Systems Transformation,
 - Ensuring Food and Nutrition Security,
 - Advancing Inclusivity and Equitable Livelihoods,
 - Building Resilient Agrifood Systems,
 - Strengthening Agrifood Systems Governance.
- 

A blurred photograph of a modern office interior. In the background, several people are seated around a long wooden table, appearing to be in a meeting. The scene is brightly lit, likely by large windows, creating a soft, out-of-focus atmosphere. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

Top 10 MCQ from the session for
every exam

- Who mediated the ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas?
- इजरायल और हमास के बीच युद्धविराम समझौते में किसने मध्यस्थता की?
- A. United Nations and Russia / संयुक्त राष्ट्र और रूस
- B. Qatar and the United States / कतार और अमेरिका
- C. European Union and Turkey / यूरोपीय संघ और तुर्की
- D. Saudi Arabia and Egypt / सऊदी अरब और मिस्र

- What is India's estimated Real GDP growth for 2024-25?
- 2024-25 के लिए भारत की अनुमानित वास्तविक GDP वृद्धि क्या है?
- A. 5.8%
- B. 6.4%
- C. 7.2%
- D. 6.9%

- What is the key reason for the drop in India's manufacturing sector growth in 2024-25?
- 2024-25 में भारत के निर्माण क्षेत्र की वृद्धि में गिरावट का मुख्य कारण क्या है?
- A. Decline in global demand / वैश्विक मांग में गिरावट
B. High interest rates / उच्च ब्याज दरें
C. Reduced government spending / सरकारी खर्च में कमी
D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी

- Which country experienced a third consecutive year of population decline?
- कौन सा देश लगातार तीसरे वर्ष जनसंख्या में गिरावट देख रहा है?
- A. Japan / जापान
- B. South Korea / दक्षिण कोरिया
- C. China / चीन
- D. Germany / जर्मनी

- What is the key factor behind China's population decline?
- चीन की जनसंख्या गिरावट के पीछे मुख्य कारक क्या है?
- A. High cost of living / जीवन यापन की उच्च लागत
- B. Low birth rates / कम जन्म दर
- C. Aging population / वृद्ध होती जनसंख्या
- D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी

- Which glacier was recently equipped with high-speed 4G and 5G connectivity?
- कौन से ग्लेशियर को हाल ही में हाई-स्पीड 4G और 5G कनेक्टिविटी से लैस किया गया है?
- A. Siachen Glacier / सियाचिन ग्लेशियर
- B. Gangotri Glacier / गंगोत्री ग्लेशियर
- C. Zemu Glacier / जेम ग्लेशियर
- D. Milam Glacier / मिलम ग्लेशियर

- Under which operation did India take control of the Siachen Glacier?
- भारत ने किस ऑपरेशन के तहत सियाचिन ग्लेशियर पर नियंत्रण प्राप्त किया?
- A. Operation Vijay / ऑपरेशन विजय
- B. Operation Meghdoot / ऑपरेशन मेघदूत
- C. Operation Parakram / ऑपरेशन पराक्रम
- D. Operation Cactus / ऑपरेशन कैक्टस

- What is the significance of the Kampala Declaration?
- काम्पाला घोषणा पत्र का महत्व क्या है?
- A. Focuses on Africa's agricultural transformation / अफ्रीका के कृषि परिवर्तन पर केंद्रित
- B. Supports space research and innovation / अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान और नवाचार का समर्थन करता है
- C. Addresses global climate change policies / वैश्विक जलवायु परिवर्तन नीतियों को संबोधित करता है
- D. Establishes a trade agreement between African nations / अफ्रीकी देशों के बीच व्यापार समझौता स्थापित करता है

- Where is the world's largest book located?
- दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी किताब कहां स्थित है?
- A. India / भारत
- B. Myanmar / म्यांमार
- C. China / चीन
- D. Sri Lanka / श्रीलंका



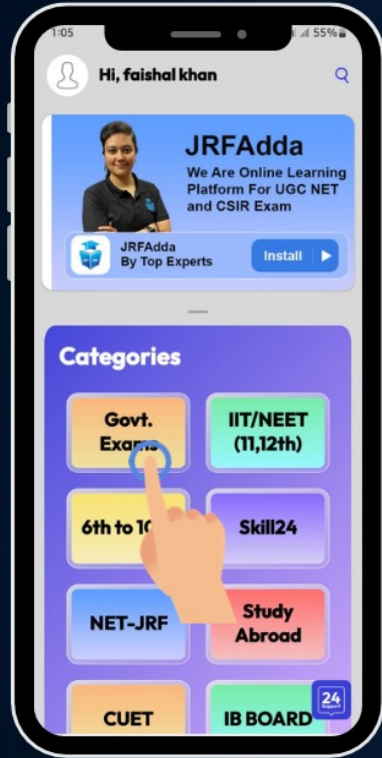
Fun Fact

World's Largest Book

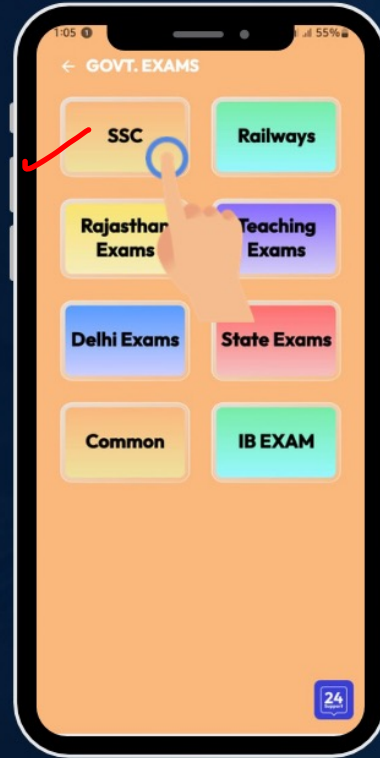
- The **Kuthodaw Pagoda** in is home to the **world's largest book**, consisting of **729 marble slabs** inscribed with Buddhist scriptures.



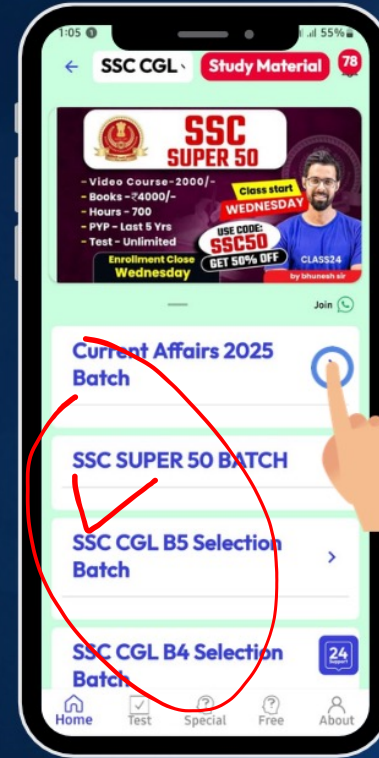
Step 1



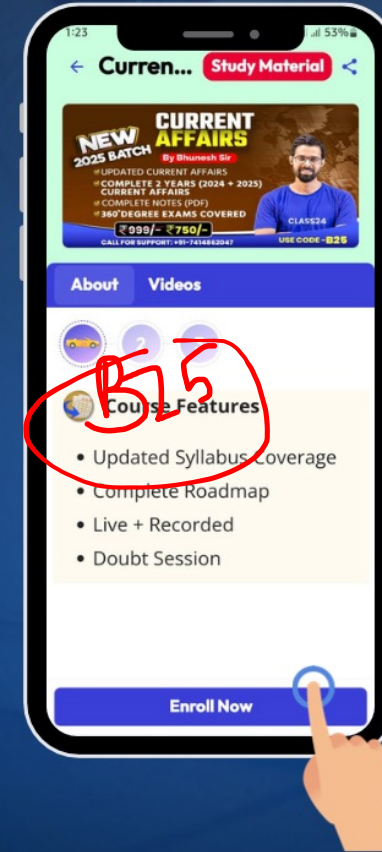
Step 2




Step 3



Step 4



A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. The focus is on the hands in the foreground, with some people in the background also clapping. The lighting is soft and blue-toned, creating a warm and appreciative atmosphere. There are some red dots and an orange bar in the top left corner, likely part of a graphic design.

Thank you
guys.
