

# CURRENT PULSE



**FEBRUARY 2026**

**ESSENTIAL, THAT  
WILL BOOST YOUR  
PREPARATION**

**CHANAKYA IAS ACADEMY  
SECTOR 25 CHANDIGARH**

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# NSO to conduct Survey on Migration across India



Survey to be conducted during July 2026 to June 2027 would capture detailed information on extent/nature of migration, rural-urban and inter-state movement, key reasons, etc.

## Recent Trends on Migration in India

- Overall migration rate stood at 28.% with sharp gender differences in patterns (Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2020-21).
- Migration rate was estimated at 10.7% among males and 47.9% among females.

## Key Reasons for Migration

- **Gender Specific:** Marriage accounted for the predominant cause among females (86.8%) while employment (labour market opportunities) accounted for the major reason among males (22.8%).
- **Pull Factor:** Driven primarily by the presence of job opportunities and the prospect of a better life. E.g., Case of Rural-to-Urban Migration.
  - Nearly one in four rural Indians (26.8%) was a migrant in 2020-21. (Economic Survey 2025-26).
- **Push Factors:** Person tend to leave their native place due to lack of job opportunities, low wages or salaries, unfavourable environmental conditions and natural calamities, etc.



## Key Measures to taken to address challenges

- **Rural Development Initiatives:** Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM); Viksit Bharat- Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025 strengthening rural employment, etc.
- **Urban Resilience Initiatives:** Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT); Smart Cities; Implementation of Transit-oriented Development (ToD), etc.
- **Workers' Welfare:** Key Schemes like Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan Yojana (PMSYM); Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY); One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) scheme for robust safety net for migrants, etc.

# SC objects to WhatsApp's 2021 privacy policy



SC was hearing appeals by Meta Platforms & WhatsApp against the NCLAT's decision upholding Competition Commission of India (CCI)'s ₹213.14 crore penalty over WhatsApp's 2021 privacy policy.

## What is WhatsApp's 2021 privacy policy?

- The policy allows WhatsApp to share users' data with Facebook and all its group companies for the purposes of commercial advertising and marketing.
- **Take-it-or-Leave-it framework:** Under the policy, WhatsApp users have **two options:** Agree to share their personal information with Facebook or delete their WhatsApp accounts.

## Issues observed in WhatsApp's 2021 privacy policy

- **Commercial exploitation of personal data:** SC noted that personal data is used to analyze behavioral trends, which Meta then leverages for a **dominant advantage in online advertising on other platforms like YouTube or email.**
- **Abuse of dominant position:** Policy abused its dominant market position by imposing unfair conditions and discriminating against those who did not accept data sharing.
- **Erosion of privacy by Data sharing:** By significantly expanding **internal sharing of personal data with Facebook** and related companies for advertising and business purposes.
- **Lack of Clarity:** SC emphasized that the policy's complex/vague language is unintelligible to common/poor citizens.

## Steps taken in India for data protection

- **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023:** To provide for processing of digital personal data in a manner that recognizes both the right of individuals to protect their personal data and the need to process such personal data for lawful purposes.
  - SC pointed out **DPDP Act,2023** does not contain provisions for "**rent sharing**" i.e. issue of value put on data shared by users to companies.
- **Judicial Oversight:** Supreme Court's Puttaswamy judgment (2017) recognized the right to privacy as a fundamental right under Article 21.
- **Justice B.N. Srikrishna Committee (2017):** Examined data protection issues and recommended a comprehensive law for data protection.

# MPLADS

Recently, a controversy broke out over the use of MPLADS funds.



- According to critics, MPLADS funds are **inefficiently utilized, diverted and poorly monitored** and the scheme should be discontinued.

## About MPLADS

- **Type:** Central Sector Scheme launched in **1993**.
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation is responsible for prescribing guidelines for implementation.
- **Objective:** To enable the Members of Parliament to recommend works for creation of durable community assets like drinking water, sanitation, etc. based on locally felt needs.
- **Implementing Agency:** Govt. departments, trusts, and cooperatives selected by Implementing District Authority (IDA) to execute MPLADS work.
- **Funds Allocation:** Each MP is entitled to ₹5 crore per annum
  - **Lok Sabha MPs** can recommend works in their Lok Sabha constituencies.
  - **Rajya Sabha MPs** can recommend works within the state of election.
  - **Nominated members** can recommend works anywhere in the country.
- **Special provisions for fund allocation to SC/ST Population**
  - MPs shall recommend at least **15% of MPLADS funds** for SC-inhabited areas and 7.5% for ST-inhabited areas every year.
  - **If LS constituency has fewer tribals:** Then MPLAD fund may be utilized in areas predominantly inhabited by Scheduled Castes and vice-versa.
- **Non-lapsable fund:** The funds not released in a particular year are carried forward for release in the subsequent years.
- **Exceptions:** MPs can recommend 25 lakh/year outside their region. In a calamity, MPs can recommend up to 1 crore for the affected district.

# Boost for Orange Economy



The Union Finance Minister highlighted the Orange Economy (Creative Economy) in the Union Budget 2026, recognising its role in employment generation, innovation, exports, and soft power.

## What is the Orange Economy?

- The term was coined by former Colombian President **Iván Duque Márquez** and **Felipe Buitrago** in their 2013 book “**The Orange Economy: An Infinite Opportunity**”.
- It refers to knowledge-based economic activities **where ideas and creativity are transformed into cultural goods and services**, with their value primarily **determined by intellectual property**.
- Unlike traditional manufacturing-led growth, these sectors derive their primary value from **ideas, artistic expression and cultural capital rather than physical goods**.
- **Sectors Included:** Audiovisual media (film, television), Live Entertainment like Music Concerts, Gaming Industry, Design, Theatre etc.

## Key Budget Announcements

- **AVGC (Animation, VFX, Gaming & Comics) Sector:** Support to **Indian Institute of Creative Technologies (IICT)**, Mumbai in setting up AVGC Content Creator Labs in 15,000 secondary schools and 500 colleges.
- **Strengthening Design Education:** Establishment of a new **National Institute of Design (NID)** in the eastern region through the challenge route.
  - India currently has seven NIDs, all recognised as institutes of national importance.

## Present state of Orange Economy

- Globally, the **creative economy is estimated** to generate an **annual revenue of more than \$2 trillion and generate nearly 50 million jobs**.
- According to UNCTAD estimates, the creative industries contribute between **0.5% and over 7% of GDP across countries**.
- The size of India’s **creative industry is \$30 billion with the employment share: ~8% of India’s working population**.

# 16th Finance Commission



16th Finance Commission

16th FC was constituted in 2023 under the chairmanship of Dr. Arvind Panagariya, former Vice- chairman of NITI ayog,

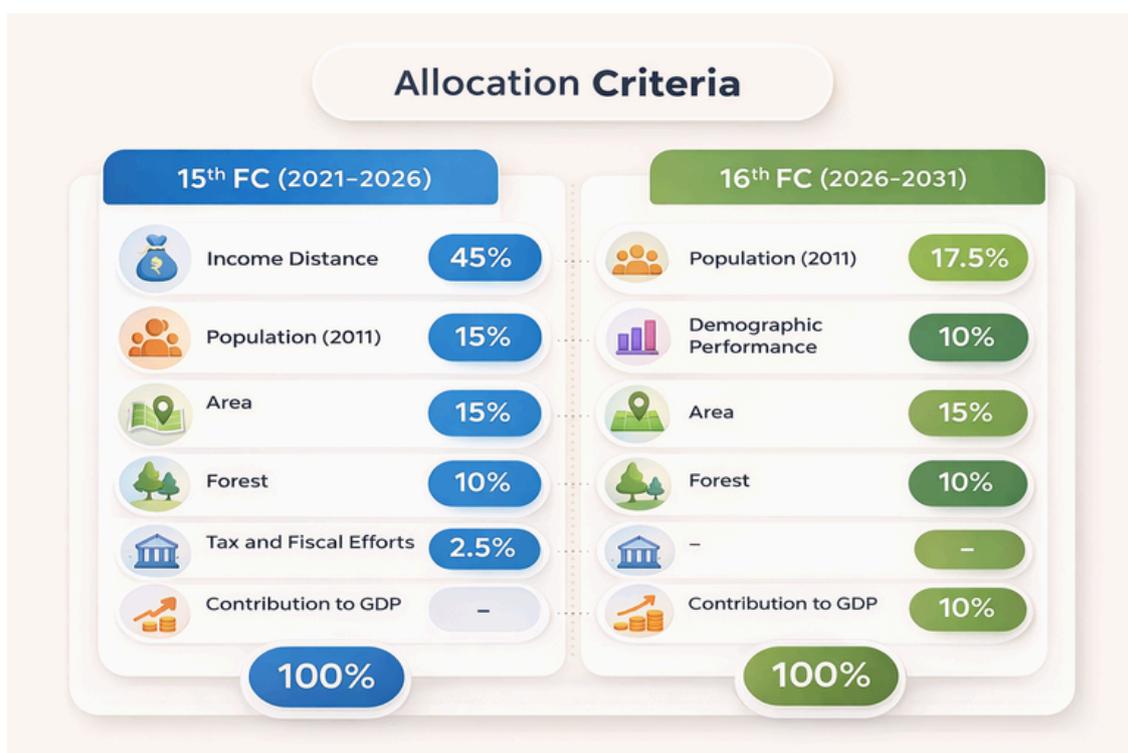
- Its key recommendations have been accepted by the Government for implementation from 2026-27 to 2030-31

## About FC

- It is a **Constitutional body** under **Article 280**, constituted by the President of India every 5 years or earlier.
- **Composition:** Chairman and 4 other members appointed by the president for a term specified by him.
- Under **Article 281**, Government lays the Finance Commission's report and an Action Taken Memorandum before Parliament.

## Key recommendation

- **Vertical devolution:** States' share in the divisible pool remains at **41%**, unchanged from the 15th FC.
  - The divisible pool consists of gross tax revenue **excluding the cost of collection, cesses, and surcharges**
- **Horizontal Devolution:** how the 41% is divided among states
  - **Southern States** will see higher devolution due to inclusion of Contribution to GDP as a criteria, reduced weightage to Income distance and area.
- **Path to Macro and Fiscal Stability:** States' fiscal deficit should be capped at 3 % of their respective GSDP (excluding loans under Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) scheme).



# Creating Champion MSMEs

It recognises a three-pronged approach to help MSMEs grow as 'Champions' for Viksit Bharat.



## Three-pronged approach Includes

- **Equity Support**
  - Dedicated ₹10,000 crore **SME Growth Fund** for incentivizing enterprises based on select criteria.
  - Proposed to top up the **Self-Reliant India Fund** set up in 2021, with ₹2,000 crore to micro enterprises.
- **Liquidity Support**
  - Maximizing the potential of the **TReDS (Trade Receivables Discounting System)** platform through four specific measures:
    - **Mandatory TReDS Use:** All CPSE purchases from MSMEs to be settled via TReDS.
    - **Credit Guarantee Support:** CGTMSE to provide guarantees for invoice discounting on TReDS, reducing lender risk. **GeM-TReDS Integration:** Linking GeM with TReDS to share government purchase data with financiers, enabling faster and cheaper MSME credit.
    - **Secondary Market Development:** Introduction of TReDS receivables as asset-backed securities to boost liquidity.
- **Professional Support (Corporate Mitras)**
  - These **accredited para-professionals** will help MSMEs meet compliance requirements at affordable costs.
  - Professional institutions like ICAI, ICSI, and ICMAI will be facilitated to design short-term, modular courses to train these professionals.

## About TReDS (Trade Receivables Discounting System)

- TReDS is an **electronic platform** set up to facilitate MSMEs to unlock working capital by converting their receivables into cash.

## About Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE)

- Set up in 2000 by **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises** and SIDBI
- The scheme aims to **provide credit guarantees** for the credit facilities extended to MSEs by the Member Lending Institutions (MLIs), without collateral security or third-party guarantees.

# Bharat-VISTAAR for Agricultural

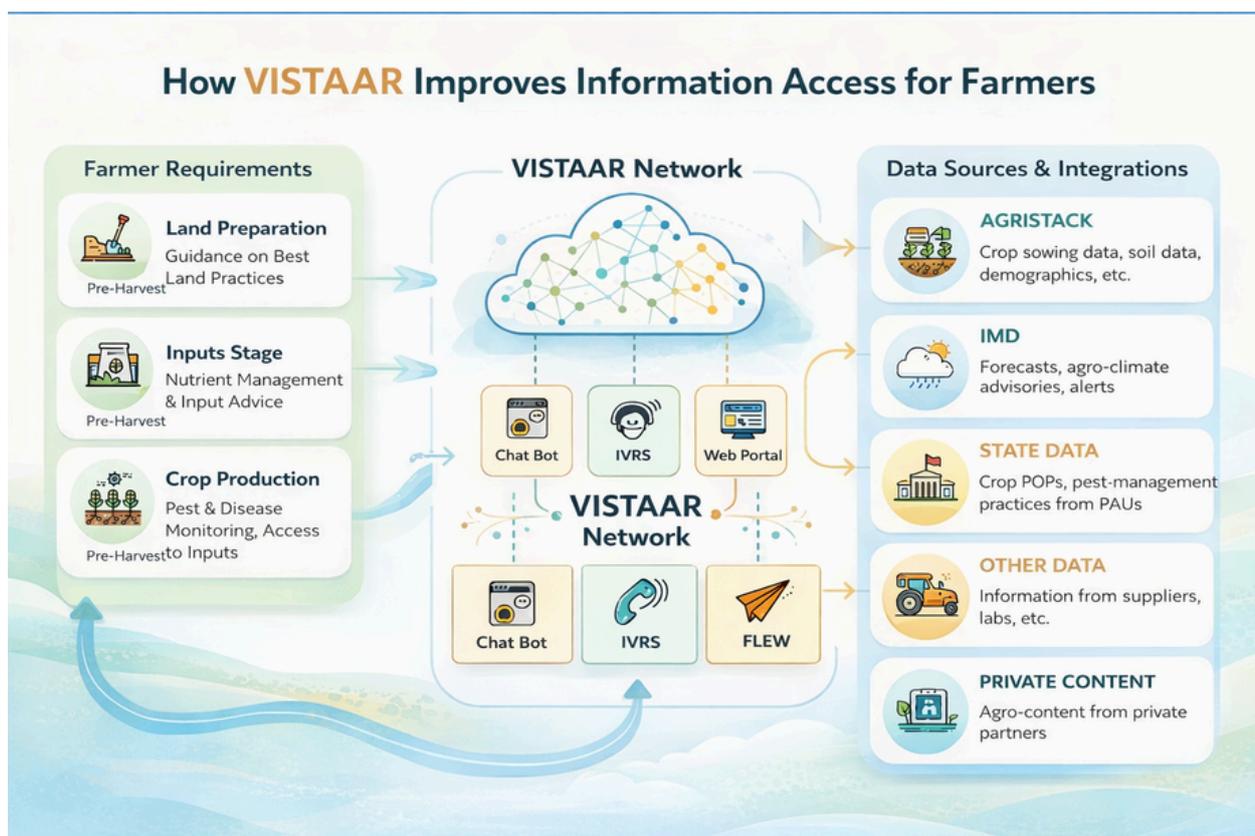
Bharat VISTAAR (Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources) will be a multilingual AI (Artificial Intelligence) tool that will integrate the AgriStack portals and the ICAR package on agricultural practices with AI systems.



- AgriStack has been envisaged as a **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** for Agriculture, based on India's **Digital Ecosystem Architecture (InDEA) 2.0**.

## About Bharat-VISTAAR

- VISTAAR is an **open, interoperable, and federated public network** dedicated to **agricultural information and advisory services**.
- A decentralized repository, it will facilitate the **discovery & fulfillment of verified agriculture content, best practices, and agri-skilling** across diverse private and public provider platforms.
- **Potential Significance:**
  - Enhancing **farm productivity** through data-driven and timely interventions.
  - Improving **farmer decision-making** at every stage (input, crop production, market etc.) by providing accurate, localized insights, best practices and data services.
  - **Reducing market risks** via customized, crop- and region-specific advisory support.
  - **Supporting Government** in real-time monitoring, improved delivery of agriculture extension services, and targeted intervention.



# Dedicated Rare Earth Corridors

Corridors to be developed in Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu for mining, processing, research, and manufacturing of Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPMs).



## What are REPMs?

- They are amongst the **strongest types of permanent magnets** with high magnetic strength and stability.
- **Applications:** Advanced engineering applications such as **electric vehicle motors, wind turbine generators etc.**
- **Significance:** REPM demand is expected to **double by 2030.**

## Significance for India

- **Strategic Self-Reliance:** Ensures access to **critical materials** reducing India's heavy dependence on imports, particularly from **China**.
  - India imported **60-80% (value-wise)** and **85-90% (quantity-wise)** REPMs from China (2022-25).
- **Climate Goals:** REPMs support India's **clean-energy transition and Net Zero 2070 vision.**
- **National Security:** Ensures reliable domestic supply for **defence equipment and precision sensors**, reducing vulnerability to global supply chain disruptions.

## Key government Initiatives

- **REPM Manufacturing Scheme:** 7,280 crore Scheme to establish an **integrated domestic REPM manufacturing ecosystem** with **6,000 MTPA capacity**, covering the full value chain from rare-earth oxides to finished magnets.
- **National Critical Minerals Mission (NCMM):** Creation of a long-term, **end-to-end supply chain** for critical minerals including rare earths.
- **MMDR Amendment Act, 2023:** Amendments to the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957**, providing Dedicated list of **critical and strategic minerals**, **Auction of mineral concessions etc.**



# Agricultural Credit Societies

The Government aims to establish new multipurpose PACS/dairy/fisheries cooperatives to cover all panchayats and villages over the next 5 years.



## About PACS

- PACS are the **grass-root level institutions** of the **short-term co-operative credit structure** and it acts as a **last-mile link** between borrowers and higher financing institutions such as Scheduled Commercial Banks and RBI/NABARD.
- **Status: PACS sanctioned: 79,630, New PACS registered: 32,802, PACS digitised: 61,478**
- **Regulation:**
  - **Multi State PACS:** Entry 44 of Union List of the Constitution and are centrally administered by **Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies (CRCS)** under provisions of **Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act, 2002**.
  - **Single State PACS:** Entry 32 of State List of the Constitution and are administered by the concerned **State Registrar of Cooperative Societies (RCS)** under respective **State Cooperative Societies Act**.

## Potential & Significance of PACS

- **Agriculture:** Enhanced infrastructure and post-harvest support through the **World's Largest Decentralized Grain Storage Plan** (which establishes godowns and custom hiring centres).
- **Dairy Sector:** Enhance milk procurement by **50% over 5 years** through registration of **>21,000 new Dairy Cooperative Societies**.
- **Fisheries sector:** Improve market linkages and value addition through **converting 1,000 fisheries cooperative societies into Fish Farmer Producer Organisations (FFPOs)**.

## Initiatives taken for PACS Promotion

- **PACS Computerization Project:** Computerization of PACS under a common ERP-based national software.
- **National Cooperation Policy (NCP) 2025:** Membership expansion and leadership roles for women and weaker sections.
- **Adoption of Model Bye-laws:** Enabling PACS to function as multipurpose service centres (PM Kisan Samridhi Kendras, Common Service Centres, warehousing, custom hiring centres, primary processing).
- **Inclusive Governance:**
  - Mandatory representation of women and SC/ST members in cooperative boards under **Multi-State Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Act, 2023**.
  - Inclusion of SHGs, small & marginal farmers and tribal communities.

# Strengthening Capital Goods Sector



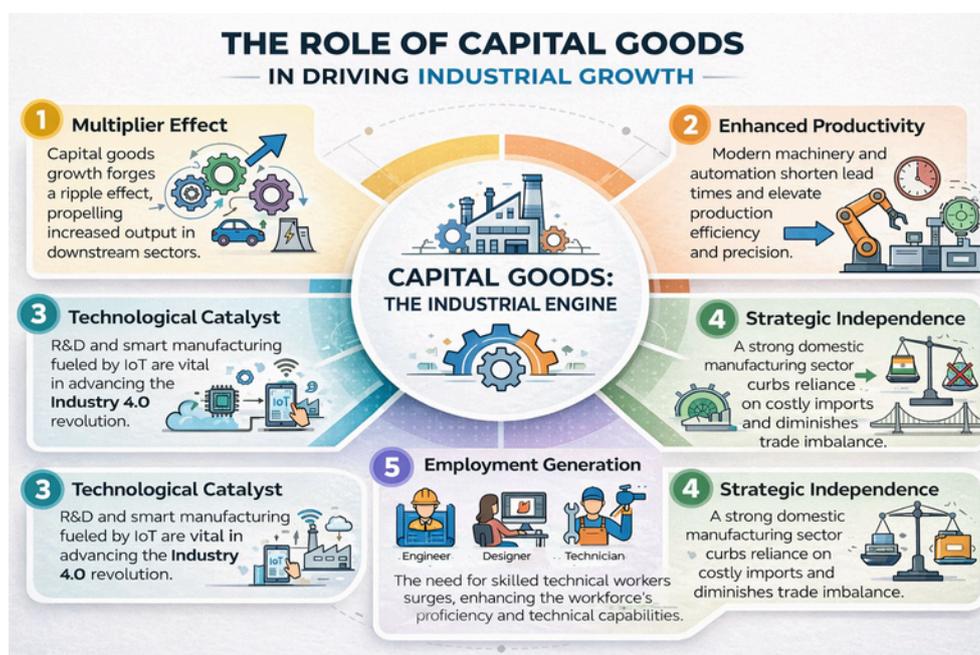
**Capital Goods** means any plant, machinery, equipment or accessories required for manufacture or production, either directly or indirectly, of goods or for rendering services, including those required for replacement, modernization, technological up-gradation or expansion.

## Budget Focus on Capital Goods

- **Infrastructure Engine:** Increased public capex by ~9% to ₹12.2 lakh crore in FY 2026–27 aimed at increased inland shipping and expanding high-speed rail corridors.
- **High-Tech Tool Rooms:** Establishment of CPSE-led hi-tech tool rooms to locally design and manufacture high-precision components at scale.
- **CIE Scheme:** Launch of the Scheme for Enhancement of Construction and Infrastructure Equipment (CIE) to boost indigenous production of tunnel-boring machines.
- **Logistics Boost:** Outlay of ₹10,000 crore for a new Container Manufacturing Scheme to reduce import dependency and logistics costs.
- **Duty Exemptions:** Extension of Basic Customs Duty (BCD) exemptions for capital goods used in Lithium-ion cell manufacturing and critical mineral processing.
- **Income tax exemption:** For a period of five years to any non-resident entity that provides capital goods, equipment or tooling to a toll manufacturer operating in a bonded zone.

## Recent Policy Support Strengthening Capital Goods Sector

- **PLI Schemes:** Production-Linked Incentives driving technology adoption & scale.
- **Scheme for Enhancement of Competitiveness in the Indian Capital Goods Sector:** Focusing on advanced Centers of Excellence and testing infrastructure.



# Minimum Alternate Tax



Union Budget 2026-27 proposed making Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT) a final tax and reducing its rate from 15% to 14%.

- It also proposed to provide exemption from MAT to all non-residents who pay tax on presumptive basis.

## About MAT

- It is a tax that requires a company to pay a minimum amount of its book profit when its normal income-tax liability is minimal or zero.
  - A company is required to pay higher of either MAT or corporate tax.
- **Legal basis** - it is levied under Income Tax Act 1961.
- **Applicable:** To both domestic and foreign companies.

# Bond Yields



Benchmark 10-year bond yield settled at around 6.77%, sharply higher than the previous session with its highest close since mid-Jan 2025.

## About Bond Yields

- It represents the **annual return** an investor earns by **holding a security until maturity**, taking into account both **interest payments and the principal repayment relative to the purchase price**.
- It has **inverse relations with bond prices**. A rise in yields translates into lower bond prices in the secondary market.
- **Impact of Higher bond yields:** Reduce the market value of existing bond; raise borrowing costs for companies, etc.

# Power Gap Index

Economic Survey 2025-26 cited the Power Gap Index to show that India is operating below its full strategic potential.



## About Power Gap Index

- It is a **secondary analysis** derived from the **Asia Power Index**, an **annual index** produced by the **Australia-based Lowy Institute**.
- It measures **resources and influence** to rank the **relative power of states in Asia**.
- Ranks **27 countries and territories** through **131 indicators across 8 thematic measures**:
  - Military capability and defence networks, Economic capability and relationships, Diplomatic and cultural influence, as well as Resilience and Future resources.
- As per 2025 Edition, India is **operating below its full strategic potential** with a **power gap score of -4.0**.

# Debt-to-GDP ratio

India is on track to reach debt-to-GDP ratio of  $50 \pm 1$  percent by 2030-31 as debt-to-GDP ratio is estimated to be 55.6 percent of GDP in BE 2026-27.



- Debt-to-GDP ratio is being increasingly used as the **primary policy target** instead of **fiscal deficit–GDP ratio** used under **Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2003**.
- FRBM Act aims to guide the government's fiscal policy towards a sustainable path, thereby promoting economic stability.

## About Debt-to-GDP ratio

- It is a financial metric that compares a **country's public debt** to its **gross domestic product (GDP)**, indicating the **nation's ability to repay its debt**.
- The **higher the debt-to-GDP ratio**, the **less likely** it becomes that the country will **pay back its debt** and the **higher its risk of default**.

# Advance Pricing Agreement

Union Budget rationalises Advance Pricing Agreement (APA) rules etc., indicating a more investor-friendly tax regime.



## Key Changes for IT sector

- Consolidation of **IT services** into a single category of **Information Technology Services** with a **uniform safe harbour** margin to reduce disputes and litigation.
  - Threshold for **safe harbour eligibility** raised (₹300 crore to ₹2,000 crore); automated, rule-based approvals.
- **Advance Pricing Agreement (APA)** process **fast-tracked** to be completed within 2 years (extendable 6 months).
  - **APA is a pre-emptive arrangement** between a **taxpayer and tax authorities** that determines transfer pricing methodology for specified transactions in advance, ensuring **tax certainty and reducing disputes**.
  - **Transfer Pricing** means **fixing fair prices** for transactions between related companies so that **profits are not shifted to avoid tax**.

# Gross Value Added

As per the provisional estimates(PE), GVA of the agriculture sector registered a growth of 10.4% during 2024-25.



- The government has raised the budget allocation of Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare(DA&FW) to Rs. 1.27 lakh crore (2025-26).
- GVA percentage growth in agriculture and allied sector including crops, livestock, fisheries and horticulture, during the last five years (at current prices) is as under:

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
10.0	10.6	8.5	9.6	10.4

- **GVA** is the value of **total output** produced in the economy less the value of **intermediate consumption** (the output which is used in production of output further, and not used in final consumption).
  - **GVA at basic prices** includes the net production taxes but not net product taxes.

# Integrated Programme for the Textile Sector announced in Union Budget 2026-27

**Integrated Programme is a comprehensive and integrated policy framework that aims to strengthen the entire textile value chain—from fibre to fashion, from village industries to global markets.**

- It consists of five sub-components.

## **Five sub-components of the Integrated Programme**

- **National Fibre Scheme:** Aimed at achieving self-reliance across the fibre spectrum.
  - The scheme will support natural fibres such as silk, wool and jute, man-made fibres, and new-age fibres.
- **Textile Expansion and Employment Scheme:** Focuses on modernisation of traditional textile clusters through capital support for machinery, technology upgradation, and the establishment of common testing and certification centres.
- **National Handloom and Handicraft Programme:** Existing schemes for handloom and handicrafts will be integrated and strengthened under a unified national programme.
- **Tex-Eco Initiative:** Aims to promote globally competitive, environmentally sustainable textiles and apparel manufacturing.
- **Samarth 2.0:** Aims to modernise the textile skill ecosystem through deeper collaboration with industry and academic institutions.

## **Another initiative announced for the Textile Sector**

- **Mahatma Gandhi Gram Swaraj Initiative:** It will strengthen khadi, handloom and handicrafts. The initiative will focus on global market linkage, branding, etc.
  - It will support the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative.
- **Mega Textile Parks and Technical Textiles:** It will support growth in technical textiles, a high-potential segment critical for industrial, medical, defence and infrastructure applications.

# India-US trade Deal

## India and the United States sign Landmark Trade Agreement



### About the Trade Agreement

- US reciprocal tariffs on Made in India products will now be **reduced from 25% to 18% effective immediately**. US has also **withdrawn the additional 25% duty**.
  - **In August 2025**, the US imposed a tariff of up to **50%** comprising a **25%** reciprocal tariff plus an **additional 25% duty** over **Russian oil imports**.
- As reported by the US, **India** has agreed to scale up **imports of American goods**, including over **\$500 billion** worth of energy, technology products, and nuclear equipment.
  - India will **progressively reduce its Tariffs and Non-Tariff Barriers** against the US.

### Significance of the deal

- **Economic Significance:** Provides increased opportunities for farmers, MSMEs, entrepreneurs, and skilled workers to **Make, Design and Innovate in India for the world**.
  - It will help India get **technology** from the US.
- **Strategic Reset in Bilateral Relations:** The deal ends a phase of tariff-led escalations and upholds **momentum and trust** in India–US strategic and economic engagement.
- **Geopolitical implications:** It strengthens India's position in the **global supply chain**, potentially countering **China's dominant position** in global trade and manufacturing.
- **Macroeconomic Stability:** The deal potentially helps stabilise capital flows, supports the rupee, and improves investor confidence amid global uncertainty.

### About India-US trade

- **Largest Trading Partner:** The US is one of India's top trading partners; India runs a **trade surplus** with the US, driven mainly by services and high-value goods exports.
- **FDI investment:** USA is the 3rd largest investor in India with cumulative foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows of US\$ 70.65 billion (2000-2025).
- **Trade volume:** Bilateral trade has stood at a record US\$ 132.2 billion in FY25 as against US\$ 119.71 billion in FY24.
- **Key Indian exports to US:** Pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, electronics, gems & jewellery etc.
- **Key US exports to India:** Crude oil, LNG, aircraft and parts, defence equipment etc.

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The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has send notice to 'X' over misuse of its AI tool 'Grok' to generate obscene, indecent, sexually explicit synthetic images/videos of women and children.

## Issues flagged by Government

- **Non-compliance with Indian IT laws:** Failure to meet **due-diligence obligations** under IT Act, 2000 and IT Rules, 2021.
- **Violation of privacy and dignity:** AI-generated content undermining women's privacy, dignity, and safety.

## Regulation of social media in India

- **Information Technology Act, 2000**
  - **Section 66E:** Punishes violation of privacy (**capturing/transmitting private images without consent**).
  - **Section 67:** Punishes **publishing or transmitting obscene material** in electronic form.
    - **Section 67A:** Punishes **sexually explicit content in electronic form**.
    - **Section 67B:** Specifically covers **sexual content involving children**.
- **IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (under IT Act, 2000)**
  - **Rule 3 (Due diligence by intermediaries):** Platforms must **remove unlawful content, stop hosting obscene/sexual content**.
  - **Rule 4 (Additional rules for Significant Social Media Intermediaries):** They must appoint **Chief Compliance Officer, Grievance Officer, enable traceability of unlawful content etc.**
  - Non-compliance risks loss of **'safe harbour protection'** (which shields from liability for user-generated content).
- **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023:** Platforms must inform police when they detect serious **cognisable offences especially involving women or children**.

# Announcement of Biopharma SHAKTI



Union Finance Minister announced 'Biopharma SHAKTI (Strategy for Healthcare Advancement through Knowledge, Technology & Innovation)'.

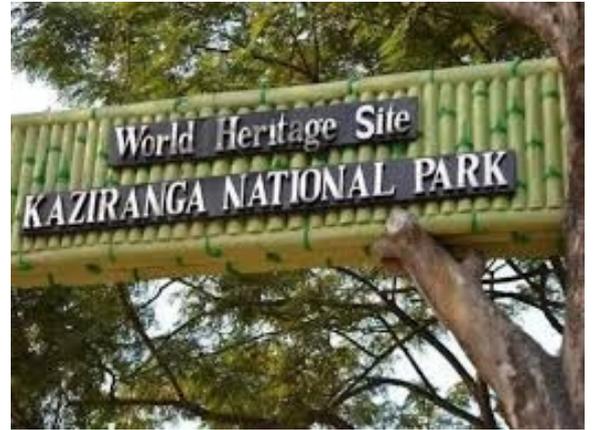
## About Biopharma SHAKTI

- **Objective:** Develop India into a global biopharmaceutical manufacturing hub by building the ecosystem for domestic production of biologics and biosimilars.
  - **Biologics** are class of medicines which are made from natural and living sources like animal and plant cells, and microorganisms. These include vaccines, blood and blood components, somatic cells, gene therapy, proteins etc.
  - **Biosimilars** are copies of biologics that are highly similar to biologics and have no clinically meaningful differences from the reference product.
- **Funding:** Outlay of ₹ 10,000 crores over the next 5 years.
- **Strategy:**
  - Biopharma-focused network with **3 new National Institutes of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER)** and upgrading 7 existing ones.
  - Creating a network of over **1000 accredited India Clinical Trials sites**.
  - **Strengthening the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)** to meet global standards and approval timeframes through a dedicated scientific review cadre and specialists.
- **Potential Outcomes:**
  - Catalysing investments in **advanced biomanufacturing infrastructure**, promote innovation and enhance India's capabilities in high-value, next-generation therapies.
  - Enhancing the **quality and credibility of clinical research** in India, and accelerating drug development timelines.
  - Developing a **highly skilled workforce**, promoting industry-academia collaboration, and supporting the growth of a globally competitive biopharmaceutical sector.

## India's Bioeconomy

- **Bioeconomy** uses renewable resources like plants, animals, and microorganisms to produce food, energy, and industrial goods.
- India's bioeconomy grew from **USD 10 bn (2014) to USD 165.7 bn (2024), targeting USD 300 bn by 2030**.
- It contributes **4.25%** to the national GDP.
- India's bioeconomy is **powered by four key subsectors:** BioIndustrial (47%), BioPharma (35%), BioAgri (8%), and BioResearch (9%).

# Kaziranga National Park



A study by Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP) has examined reasons behind decline and present confinement of megaherbivores, especially Indian one-horned rhinoceros to Kaziranga NP.

- Study shows through fossil evidence that the species was once **widely distributed across the Indian subcontinent**, but this distribution greatly **reduced since the Holocene**.

## About Kaziranga National Park

- **Geography:** Located in Assam's **Brahmaputra floodplains** between the Brahmaputra River and the Karbi (Mikir) Hills in Assam, India.
- **Status:** Declared **UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985** and a **Tiger Reserve**.
- **Biodiversity:** The park hosts two-thirds of the world's one-horned rhinos, Tiger, Elephant, Asiatic Water Buffalo, and Eastern Swamp Deer.
- **Conservation:** Established as a **Reserve Forest in 1905**, it is now an recognized **Important Bird Area** by birdlife international.

# Turtle Trails

The Union Budget's 'turtle trails' announcement has drawn apprehension from conservationists and wildlife researchers.



## Turtle Trails

- **Budget Proposal:** The Centre plans **ecologically sustainable Turtle Trails** along key coastal nesting sites in Odisha, Karnataka, and Kerala.
- **Ecological Threat:** Experts argue **Arribada** (mass nesting) sites must remain **no-go zones**, as artificial light and movement disorient turtles.
- **Conservation vs. Tourism:** Researchers warn against building infrastructure at critical rookeries like Rushikulya, **citing past ecotourism failures in sensitive habitats**.
- **Sustainability Path:** non-invasive infrastructure, low carbon impact, community engagement.