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# 9 PM Current Affairs Weekly Compilation

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Features :

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Most complete coverage of major News Papers editorials

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# India's water crisis needs collective farming shift

**Source**: The post India's water crisis needs collective farming shift has been created, based on the article "**Ensuring sustainable water use in agriculture**" published in "**Businessline**" on 26th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3-Environment

**Context**: India's water crisis is driven by economic misalignments, not just scarcity. Agriculture consumes over 80% of freshwater, with rice and sugarcane alone using more than 60%. Current policies reward water-intensive farming. Sustainable solutions demand a shift from individual incentives to collective, cooperative strategies that align with ecological realities.

**Misaligned Incentives and Water Misuse**

1. **Input Subsidies and Output Guarantees:** Rice and sugarcane benefit the most from MSPs, procurement, and free or flat-rate electricity. This reduces the marginal cost of groundwater extraction to almost zero, encouraging overuse and depletion of aquifers.

2. **Private Gains, Public Losses:** This situation reflects **moral hazard** and **negative externalities**. Farmers act rationally for personal gain, but their choices impose long-term social and environmental costs.

3. **Limits of Conventional Schemes:** Efforts like Haryana's *Mera Pani Meri Virasat* provide ₹7,000 per acre to shift from paddy to less water-intensive crops. But uptake remains limited due to weak economic appeal and poor alignment with ground realities.

**Economic Rationality of Farmers**

1. **High Profits from Paddy Cultivation:** In districts like **Sonepat**, the basmati paddy variety **PB 1121** is popular. In 2023, it offered **net profits of over ₹50,000 per acre**, largely due to strong demand from Gulf nations.

2. **Lower Returns from Alternative Crops:** Even with subsidies, crops like **bajra** earned only about **₹32,000 per acre**, making them less attractive. The ₹7,000 incentive does not bridge this gap.

3. **Status Quo Bias Among Small Farmers:** Small and marginal farmers prefer paddy because it offers predictable, higher income. Unless alternative incentives meet or exceed this profitability, behavioral change is unlikely.

**Geographic Constraints and Spatial Externalities**

1. **Water's Diffusive Nature:** Groundwater flows across boundaries through lateral subsurface movement, capillary rise, and soil pathways. This undermines conservation efforts on individual plots.

2. **Compounding Issues in Low-Lying Areas:** In regions with high water tables and slow percolation, paddy cultivation nearby leads to over-saturation and **anoxic stress** for crops like bajra or pulses.

3. **Failure of Isolated Solutions:** Without **hydrological zoning** or collective frameworks, individual crop-switching efforts are ineffective. Spatial spillovers cancel out water-saving gains.

**Need for Collective and Cooperative Incentives**

1. **Village-Wide Incentive Models:** Linking subsidies to **group behavior**, where **60–70% of farmers** in a village adopt water-saving crops, spreads risk and encourages broader adoption.

2. **Social Accountability and Peer Monitoring:** Collective compliance reduces monitoring costs and misreporting. Villages are more likely to self-regulate when incentives are tied to community performance.

3. **Success of Decentralised Models:** The **Participatory Guarantee Mechanism (PGM)** in organic farming shows how community-led certification can replace costly external checks. Similar approaches can work for water governance.

**A New Policy Vision for Water Sustainability**

1. **Towards Cooperative Water Governance:** A scheme like *Hamara Pani Hamari Virasat* could reward entire villages that commit to crop diversification. Shared goals and peer accountability would guide implementation.

2. **Beyond Technocratic Solutions:** Water policy must reflect how farmers think under uncertainty. Aligning individual and group incentives with ecological outcomes is essential.

3. **The Next Agricultural Revolution:** India must shift from state-led food security to **community-driven ecological sustainability**. Policies must embed **collective action, spatial planning**, and **local stewardship** into resource management.

**Question for practice:**

Examine how misaligned economic incentives contribute to India's water crisis and the need for collective solutions.

## India's coal sector achieves growth through reforms and innovation

**Source**: The post India's coal sector achieves growth through reforms and innovation has been created, based on the article "**India's coal sector is stepping up to fuel our economic expansion**" published in "**Live Mint**" on 26th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper1-Resource

**Context**: India's coal sector has crossed a historic milestone by producing and dispatching **over 1 billion tonnes** of coal in 2024–25. This result stems from a decade of reforms and has triggered fresh updates to the **Shakti Policy** aimed at making coal allocation more transparent and efficient.

**Decade of Reforms and Record Production**

1. **From Deficit to Surplus:** In 2014, coal production was insufficient. Between 2009–10 and 2013–14, it grew at just **1.89% annually**, failing to meet the rising demand of a growing economy.

2. **Commercial Mining and Auctions:** The **2015 cancellation** of 204 coal blocks by the Supreme Court opened the door for change. **Commercial coal mining**began in 2020. By 2025, **150 mines** have been auctioned across **11 rounds**, with the 12th underway.

3. **Boost in State Revenues:** Coal reforms have benefited state governments. **₹4.4 trillion** has been earned from mining, including **₹1.6 trillion** from coal alone through **auction premiums and royalties**.

**Private Sector and Historical Shift in Policy**

1. **Era of Public Monopoly:** After Independence, coal production was state-controlled. A **1957 bill** sought greater public control. By 1956, production was only **38 million tonnes**.

2. **Slow Expansion:** The sector saw poor growth due to **distrust in private players**. By 1990, coal output was only **200 million tonnes**.

3. **Major Policy Shift:** The new **commercial auction regime** has reversed this trend. It enabled **private participation** and created a competitive environment for coal production.

**Sustainability and Technological Innovation**

1. **New Green Focus:** Sustainability is now a priority. Coal India is investing in **solar, wind, and pumped storage projects**. It also acquired a **non-coal mineral block**.

2. **Clean Transport Methods:** The ministry is pushing for **90% mechanized coal loading** through eco-friendly conveyor belts as part of **first-mile connectivity projects**.

3. **Underground Mining and Closures:** Underground mining is safer and more eco-friendly. A roadmap to reach **100 million tonnes by 2029–30** is underway. **Mine closure guidelines** are also being revised.

**Future Role of Coal in Energy Mix**

1. **Declining Share, Strong Presence:** Coal's share in installed capacity has declined from **60% in 2014–15** to **47%**, but it still supplies **79% of India's electricity**.

2. **Meeting Peak Demand:** A summer action plan ensures stable supply. As of 21 May, **thermal plants held 54.56 million tonnes** of coal—enough for **20 days**.

3. **Coal and Viksit Bharat:** With **per capita electricity use** still below global levels, coal remains vital. India aims for a **$35 trillion economy by 2047**, with **carbon neutrality by 2070**.

**Modernization and Global Leadership**

1. **Technology Upgrade:** Digital platforms with **AI, 5G, and GPS** are being used. A **coal trading exchange** is being developed for better efficiency and safety.

2. **Sector Image Revamped:** Once seen as corrupt, the sector is now a symbol of **modern, transparent, and sustainable mining**, ready for **global leadership**.

**Question for practice:**

Discuss how reforms in India's coal sector since 2014 have transformed production, sustainability, and transparency.

## Digital gap in Indian schools remains a serious concern

**Source**: The post Digital gap in Indian schools remains a serious concern has been created, based on the article "**Digital divide in schools needs to be bridged**" published in "**Businessline**" on 26th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2- governance-Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education.

**Context**: The **UDISE+ 2023–24 report** highlights the widening **digital divide in Indian schools**. Despite increased investment in education, more than half the schools still lack access to basic digital infrastructure, especially in **rural areas**. This deepens inequality and hinders hybrid learning.

**Digital Infrastructure Remains Inadequate**

**Limited Availability of Devices and Internet:** According to the **2023–24 UDISE+ report**, only **52.7% of schools have functional computers**, and **53.9% have internet access**. This shows that nearly half of schools still lack basic digital tools.

**Slow Progress in Recent Years:** In **2021–22**, only **44.9% of schools** had computers and **33.9% had internet**. The **2022–23 and 2023–24 reports** were released late, in **December 2024**, with only **marginal improvement**.

**Lack of Access in Rural Areas:** Despite higher spending, rural schools remain digitally excluded. Many students still **cannot access online resources**, a problem that existed even **during and after the pandemic**.

**Urban–Rural Divide Widening**

1. **Digital Disparity Across Regions:** As per MoE data, **68.7% of urban schools** have digital infrastructure, compared to only **44.9% of rural schools** — a gap of **23.8%**.

2. **Uneven Connectivity:** Internet access in rural schools lags behind urban schools by **29%**. This gap stems from the **unequal availability of resources**.

**Policy Failures and Delayed Projects**

1. **Ineffective Outcomes of Government Initiatives:** The **Digital India School programme** has failed in rural areas due to poor connectivity. The **BharatNet Project**, launched in **2011**, aimed to connect **6.3 lakh villages** with broadband.

2. **Repeated Delays and Missed Targets:** By **October 2024**, only **2,14,283 villages** were connected. The earlier **May 2023 deadline** was missed, and the project is now expected to complete in **2025**.

**Gaps in Tele-density and Electricity Supply**

**1. Tele-density Shows Stark Contrast:** As of **March 2024**, **urban tele-density** was **133.72%**, while **rural tele-density** stood at just **59.19%**, a huge gap of **74.53 percentage points**.

2. **Electricity Issues Undermine Progress:** Though **89.7% of schools** report having electricity, **frequent outages** in rural areas limit usability. Even existing digital tools become **redundant without stable power**.

**3. Basic Amenities Must Precede Digitisation:** If schools lack **electricity and water**, they likely lack digital tools too. **Fixing these essentials** must come first.

**Question for practice:**

Discuss how the UDISE+ 2023–24 report highlights the digital divide between urban and rural schools in India.

## India builds strength through reform and innovation

**Source**: The post India builds strength through reform and innovation has been created, based on the article "**An operation that was also about a self-reliant India**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 27th May 2025
**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3- Growth and Development
**Context**: India has experienced a decade of major transformation under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. His vision focuses on making India a global economic, strategic, and technological power. The article outlines key reforms and strategic efforts that helped India become a resilient, self-reliant nation.
**Industrial Resurgence and Manufacturing Push**

1. **Shift in Manufacturing Strategy:** The launch of ***Make in India*** **in 2014** marked a decisive change. India aimed to become a core player in global manufacturing. Major reforms improved ease of doing business and encouraged investment.

2. **Boost through Incentives and Focus Areas:** ***Production-linked incentive (PLI) schemes*** enhanced India's appeal as a manufacturing hub. Sectors like electronics, defence, and automobiles received focused support.

3. **Self-Reliance through Atmanirbhar Bharat:** The ***Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan* in 2020** pushed this further. It aimed to make India a global hub in *state-of-the-art manufacturing*, focusing on defence, semiconductors, pharmaceuticals, and critical minerals. These are not only economic sectors but also crucial for *national security*.

**Rise of Innovation and Start-up Ecosystem**

1. **Global Recognition in Start-ups:** India is now the *world's third-largest start-up ecosystem*. Start-ups in fintech, agritech, edtech, and health tech are solving local problems and competing globally.

2. **Strategic Tech Advancements:** Start-ups contribute to *defence tech, AI, cybersecurity, and space*. These areas have strategic implications for India's long-term capabilities.

**3. Partnerships for Technological Growth:** Collaborations like the *U.S.-India TRUST initiative* and *India-France roadmap* are strengthening cooperation in *AI, quantum, and defence technology*.

**Indigenous Defence Capability and Strategic Confidence**

1. **Validation through Operation Sindoor:** *Operation Sindoor* showed India's capability to strike with precision using *indigenous defence technologies*. This was a result of long-term investment under *Make in India* and *Atmanirbhar Bharat*.

2. **Surge in Defence Exports:** *India's defence exports* reached ₹23,622 crore in FY25, covering nearly *80 countries*. The *private sector contributed ₹15,233 crore*, showing growing strength.

3. **From Importer to Exporter:** India is moving from a dependent arms importer to a global exporter of defence equipment, reinforcing *technological self-reliance*.

**Pursuit of Technology Leadership**

1. **National Missions in Critical Areas:** Government-led missions like the *National Quantum Mission* and *India Semiconductor Mission*, along with *ISRO's Chandrayaan and Gaganyaan*, reflect India's growing technological maturity.

2. **Role of Industry in Hi-tech Sectors:** Industry is contributing to *semiconductors, clean tech, mobility, defence, and electronics*. It supports satellite launches and combat platform development.

3. **AI and Workforce Development:** Through initiatives like *Bhashini* and *FutureSkills Prime*, industry is building India's *AI capabilities* and training a skilled workforce.

**Strengthening Industry's Role in R&D and Collaboration**

1. **Need for Greater Investment:** The *private sector* must scale up R&D spending and form overseas partnerships to accelerate technological growth.

2. **Tripartite Collaborations:** Industry should lead in *linking academia and public research* to foster innovation and generate trained engineers and scientists.

**India's Vision for Global Leadership**

1. **A Nation Shaping the Future:** India is no longer catching up; it is *shaping the global order* with resilience, innovation, and manufacturing power.

*2.* **Call to Action:** The journey to *Viksit Bharat* requires stronger *industry-government collaboration* to build a *secure, self-reliant, globally respected India*.

**Question for practice:**

Examine how India's strategic reforms under Prime Minister Modi have strengthened its position as a self-reliant and globally competitive nation.

## Artificial intelligence is transforming science and healthcare rapidly

**Source**: The post Artificial intelligence is transforming science and healthcare rapidly has been created, based on the article "**We should prepare for a world of ever-improving super-Einsteins**" published in "**Live Mint**" on 27th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3- Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology

**Context**: The article explains how artificial intelligence (AI) is evolving rapidly—from chatbots to superintelligent systems. It highlights the growing role of AI beyond digital tools and shows how it is already transforming healthcare, scientific research, and drug discovery. This shift demands urgent attention from institutions and society.

**Evolution of AI Across Four Stages**

1. **From Chatbots to Action Agents:** The early 2020s began with chatbots—**clever but basic**. These soon gave way to **agentic systems** that perform tasks like booking flights, editing images, and managing spreadsheets.

2. **Emergence of Embodied Intelligence:** Next comes AI embedded in the physical world—**robots, smart tools, and adaptive systems**. These machines will **learn and act** by interacting with their environment.

3. **Rise of Cognitive Supremacy:** A future stage will bring **superintelligent systems** that outperform even the **most brilliant human minds** in all fields. Some models already match **Olympiad-level students in mathematics**.

4. **Endless Scaling and Improvement:** These systems will scale endlessly, becoming faster, better, and more capable without hitting a performance ceiling.

**Healthcare as the First Frontier**

1. **AI Outperforms Human Experts:** In diagnostics, AI now **outperforms radiologists** in reading **X-rays, cancer scans**, and other medical images. The improvements are **leaps in accuracy, speed, and scale**.

2. **Cognitive Strength in Real Use:** These systems show that AI can **reason through complexity**, solving tasks once limited to specialists.

3. **Decisions in Seconds, Not Days:** AI makes medical decisions in **seconds**, while humans need **days or weeks**. It is tackling complex problems directly and efficiently.

4. **The Real Transformation Has Begun:** While public attention stays on robots and gadgets, **diagnostics marks AI's real impact**—a turning point in applied intelligence.

**AI-Led Drug Discovery Revolution**

1. **Creative Intelligence in Action:** Drug discovery goes beyond pattern detection. It requires AI to **imagine solutions**, **design molecules**, and **test ideas**through simulations.

2. **Freedom from Human Frameworks:** Traditional biology used **simplified models** suited to human limits. AI operates in **vast molecular and mechanistic spaces**, beyond such constraints.

**3. Powerful New Tools:** Platforms like **Absci's zero-shot antibody generators** and **Recursion's phenomics system** create **viable drug candidates** and screen compounds at scale—**without needing prior data**.

4. **Expanding What Science Can Do:** AI lets science explore **more questions, test more ideas**, and **navigate massive solution spaces** that were previously unreachable.

**A Deeper Scientific Revolution Unfolds**

1. **Rapid Progress in Synthetic Biology:** AI now helps design **gene circuits** that work on the **first attempt**. Whole-cell simulations are becoming feasible.

2. **Prediction Without Experimentation:** AI models now predict **binding affinity, stability**, and **biological effects** without lab trials or training data.

3. **From Linear to Exponential Growth:** Each breakthrough fuels another. Science is shifting from a **step-by-step process** to an **exponential transformation**.

**Reframing the Public Discourse**

1. **Beyond Entertaining AI Feats:** Public focus is still on **AI composing emails or jingles**, but these are outdated examples.

2. **Birth of Non-Human Minds:** We are now creating **new kinds of minds**. These systems won't just assist—they will **co-create knowledge** using **alien and powerful reasoning**.

3. **Unanswered Ethical Questions:** There are rising concerns about **ethics, accountability**, and **AI governance**. These issues need urgent attention, though this article only flags them.

4. **Preparing for the True AI Era:** The real change isn't about digital assistants. It's about **minds we barely understand**, already reshaping science, society, and the future.

**Question for practice:**

Discuss how artificial intelligence is reshaping science and healthcare, according to the article.

## Exclusionary nationalism is weakening Indian constitutional values

**Source**: The post Exclusionary nationalism is weakening Indian constitutional values has been created, based on the article "**We should prepare for a world of ever-improving super-Einsteins**" published in "**Indian Express**" on 27th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-Constitution of India —historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant
provisions and basic structure.

**Context**: The recent **India-Pakistan conflict** has revealed a fundamental shift in Indian nationalism. The inclusive, democratic spirit inherited from the freedom struggle is now replaced by a **narrow, imitative, and exclusionary ideology** that endangers constitutional values and national unity.

**Distortion of Indian Nationalism**

1. **Imitating Foreign Models:** Indian nationalism now mimics **German ethnonationalism**, the **Israeli security state**, and **Pakistan's religious identity model**. This departs from the original idea of a secular and plural India.

2. **Collapse of Constitutional Discourse:** In the **Ali Khan Mahmudabad case**, the **Supreme Court** did not refer to **freedom of expression or constitutional rights**. Legal reasoning was overshadowed by rhetoric around **national interest**, and dissent was treated as betrayal.

3. **Citizens Positioned Against the Nation:** A **false binary** now exists: **loyalty to the nation vs. personal liberty**. Even nuanced critiques of policy are condemned as **anti-national**, stifling democratic dialogue.

**Undermining Democratic Norms**

1. **Government Becomes the Nation: Criticism of government silence** on issues like the US President's remarks is punished, while **leaders use propaganda and military optics** freely. Questioners are accused of playing politics; leaders are exempt.

**2. Loss of Democratic Accountability:** In contrast, **Atal Bihari Vajpayee** demanded a **special Parliament session after the 1962 war**, and **Ram Manohar Lohia** criticised **Nehru's China policy**. Neither was branded anti-national.

3. **Uniformity Replaces Unity:** Calls for **One-Nation-One-Something** confuse **unity with sameness**. Victims of hate, like **Mahmudabad**, are blamed for division, while those spreading hate avoid scrutiny.

**Legacy of Indian Nationalism**

1. **Belonging Without Othering:** Original Indian nationalism focused on **fighting colonialism**, not attacking communities or neighbours. It supported **anti-colonial movements in Asia, Africa, Latin America**, and **anti-apartheid struggles in South Africa**.

**2. Mutual Respect Across Communities:** Majorities often defended minorities. **Hindi speakers supported non-Hindi regions**, while **non-Hindi speakers worked for the Nagari Pracharini Sabha**. Indian identity embraced **religious and linguistic diversity**.

3. **Pluralist Democratic Nationhood:** India adopted a **state-nation model**, not a European-style **nation-state**. It allowed **debate over national identity**, balancing **democracy with deep differences**.

**Rise of Narrow and Aggressive Nationalism**

1. **Neglect of Real Issues:** Today's nationalism obsesses over **Kashmir and Muslims**, ignoring pressing issues like **Manipur**, or **inter-state disputes** between **Punjab-Haryana** or **Karnataka-Tamil Nadu**. Ideological division takes priority over real governance.

2. **Strategic Weakness and Isolation:** Despite aggressive posturing, there is **meekness before China or the US**. Obsession with Pakistan has **diplomatically coupled India with it** and alienated neighbours, creating **hostile borders** on all sides.

3. **Principle-Free Foreign Policy:** India lacks **reliable global allies** in times of crisis. The recent episode showed that **without principle-driven diplomacy**, national interest cannot be protected.

**Shared Responsibility and the Path Forward**

1. **Elite Disconnection from People:** Post-independence elites promoted **shallow modernity** devoid of **emotional or spiritual content**. Their **cosmopolitanism** did not connect with the masses, leaving a void filled by **exclusionary ideologies**.

2. **Vacuum in Nationalist Ownership:** Haunted by **European fascism**, liberal elites abandoned nationalism. This allowed forces with **no contribution to the freedom movement** to capture the nationalist narrative.

**3. Urgent Need for Reclaiming Legacy:** The most pressing task today is to **reclaim the inclusive, democratic, and plural Indian nationalism**. It must be re-rooted in **justice, belonging, and diversity**.

**Question for practice:**

Examine how the rise of exclusionary nationalism in India has distorted its constitutional values and democratic legacy.

## Urban India battles hidden metabolic health crisis

**Source**: The post Urban India battles hidden metabolic health crisis has been created, based on the article "**India's new urban worry — rising overnutrition**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 28th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2- governance-Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health

**Context**: A recent Nature article revealed a striking prevalence of Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Fatty Liver Disease (MAFLD) among IT workers in Hyderabad, with 84% affected. This highlights a broader public health crisis fueled by chronic stress, unhealthy eating habits, disrupted sleep, and sedentary lifestyles prevalent in India's rapidly urbanizing technology sector.

For detailed information on **Preventive Healthcare in India** read this article here

**Urban Health Crisis in India**

1. **Double Burden of Malnutrition:** India faces simultaneous challenges of undernutrition and overnutrition. Globally, it ranked second in obesity prevalence in 2021. Urban IT hubs especially reflect this issue, creating a silent metabolic crisis. India's paradoxical nutrition scenario partly explains its poor Global Hunger Index ranking.

2. **Prevalence of Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs):** WHO's 2024 report warns that NCDs caused 74% of global deaths in 2019, disproportionately affecting India and other middle-income countries. Economic productivity suffers, with South-East Asia unlikely to achieve 2030 SDG targets for reducing NCD-related deaths.

3. **Health Data Insights from Tamil Nadu:** Tamil Nadu's 2023-24 STEPS Survey shows 65% of deaths in Chennai due to NCDs. Blood pressure control remains low among hypertensive patients (16%), worse among young adults (9.3%). Only 9.8% of young diabetics achieve glycemic control. Overweight and obesity prevalence stands at 31.6% and 14.2%, respectively.

**Growing Obesity Trends**

1. **Age and Economic Disparities:** Obesity rises with age, from 7% in younger males (15-19 years) to 32% in middle-aged men (40-49 years). Wealth significantly impacts obesity rates, from 10% in lower-income groups to 37% in higher-income ones, reflecting a broad demographic crisis rather than a confined occupational hazard.

2. **Gender and Urban-Rural Divide:** Waist-to-hip ratio, another critical marker, worsens with age: 46% to 65% in women and 28% to 60% in men (ages 15-49). Tamil Nadu urban areas have higher overweight and obesity rates (46.1% men, 43.1% women) than rural regions (35.4% men, 31.6% women).

3. **Youth Vulnerability and Future Predictions:** India's working-age population (18-59) faces heightened NCD risks. A Lancet 2025 study projects India's overweight adult population to reach 450 million by 2050. Childhood obesity surged by 244% over three decades and may rise an additional 121% in the next three.

**Regulatory Actions and Challenges**

1. **Role of Regulators and Industry:** Awareness alone is insufficient; regulatory intervention is crucial. Despite consumer knowledge increasing, unhealthy ultra-processed food dominates markets. FSSAI's "Eat Right India" initiative promotes healthier eating but faces implementation challenges.

2. **Efforts in Food Labelling and Standards:** FSSAI proposed the Health Star Rating (HSR) for clearer nutritional information, sparking debates on effectiveness. The Supreme Court requested technical guidance on labelling norms. Effective regulation demands stricter enforcement and broader multisectoral efforts.

3. **Comprehensive Health Policy: Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030** successfully integrates NCD prevention into national policies, enforcing calorie labelling, imposing taxes on sugary drinks and energy drinks, and limiting sodium in processed foods. This cohesive approach has significantly improved public health outcomes.

**Urban Lifestyle and Public Health Risks**

1. **Rise of Unhealthy Eating Habits:** Cities like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, and Chennai are economic hubs driven by IT sectors. Flexible work hours fuel the demand for nutrient-poor, energy-dense foods from late-night eateries and cloud kitchens, exacerbating nutritional health risks.

2. **Need for Regulatory Reforms:** Reversing the growing burden of NCDs requires urgent regulatory reforms in the food industry. Introducing taxes on unhealthy foods high in sugar and salt could be a significant and effective health-promoting measure.

**Question for practice:**

Examine how urban lifestyles and regulatory gaps contribute to the rising burden of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) in India.

## Indo-German Strategic Partnership at 25 Years

**Source**: The post Indo-German Strategic Partnership at 25 Years has been created, based on the article "**The silver jubilee of a strategic partnership**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 28th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2- Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

**Context**: India and Germany celebrate 25 years of strategic partnership. The partnership has steadily evolved and now addresses contemporary global challenges. Recent interactions between German and Indian leaders indicate a commitment to deepen collaboration, outlined explicitly in Germany's 'Focus on India' strategy and the German Coalition Treaty.

**Peace and Stability**

1. **Shared Global Vision:** India and Germany both value a peaceful, stable, and rules-based world. Central to their relationship are Intergovernmental Consultations, effectively coordinating governmental cooperation.

2. **Defence Sector Cooperation:** Joint military exercises, such as the Tarang Shakti Exercise (2024), strengthen strategic ties. Increased port visits by the German Navy underscore Indo-Pacific importance. Future collaboration will enhance strategic coordination and integration of defence industries.

3. **Strategic Coordination:** High-level dialogues reinforce trust and strategic alignment. Leaders from both nations consistently coordinate to address global security challenges, affirming mutual geopolitical interests.

**Economic Prosperity**

1. **Thriving Economic Relations:** About 2,000 German companies operate in India, creating over 750,000 jobs. The Delhi-Meerut Rapid Rail, operated by Deutsche Bahn, symbolizes successful German-Indian industrial collaboration.

2. **Integrated Supply Chains:** Indian companies increasingly integrate into Germany's high-tech supply chains, highlighting deep mutual trust. This cooperation could expand significantly with the anticipated India-EU Free Trade Agreement.

3. **Science and Technology Partnership:** Joint research ventures enhance prosperity, with Indian researchers prominent in German institutions. Technology collaboration transforms environmental challenges into profitable ventures.

**People-to-People Connections**

1. **Indian Community in Germany:** Over 50,000 Indian students constitute Germany's largest foreign student group. These individuals contribute significantly to Germany's economy and society, deepening cultural and personal ties.

2. **Cultural Integration and Exchanges:** Young Indians adapt and thrive in Germany, often returning home enriched by their experience. Personal stories from these individuals enhance mutual understanding, creating stronger emotional bonds.

3. **Increasing Language Engagement:** Interest in learning German is growing across India, requiring innovative solutions to address the need for qualified German teachers. Conversely, Germany encourages more citizens to study Indian languages and culture, fostering deeper mutual appreciation.

**Green and Sustainable Development**

1. **Significant Financial Commitment:** In 2022, Germany pledged €10 billion in preferential loans and grants over ten years under the Indo-German Green and Sustainable Development Partnership (GSDP), focusing on renewables, biodiversity, and smart cities.

2. **Renewable Energy Initiatives:** Private sector collaborations notably contribute to renewable energy projects in Gujarat, utilizing German technology for wind turbine components. This partnership significantly supports India's energy transition goals.

3. **Environmental Cooperation for Future Resilience:** Joint efforts address environmental sustainability and climate resilience. Projects span large-scale renewable infrastructure, emphasizing mutual commitments to ecological sustainability.

**Future Prospects**

1. **Strong Foundations for the Future:** Years of diplomatic engagement have established robust foundations for continued growth. The past 25 years have set the stage for expanded bilateral relations in coming decades.

2. **Optimism and Continued Growth:** Reflecting on achievements, there is optimism for deeper, broader cooperation. The next 25 years promise to enhance bilateral relations, benefiting both nations profoundly.

**Question for practice:**

**Evaluate** how the Indo-German strategic partnership has evolved over the past 25 years and identify the key areas that define their current and future collaboration.

## Experiential learning can transform modern education system

**Source**: The post Experiential learning can transform modern education system has been created, based on the article "**Experiential learning: how students can learn more effectively**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 28th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2- governance-Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education.
**Context**: Modern education faces significant challenges. While technology makes vast information accessible, schools remain outdated, emphasizing rote learning and exam performance. To effectively equip students for real-world challenges, education must evolve beyond memorization to include practical skills, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking, aligning better with varied learning styles and real-world applications.

For detailed information on **Future Ready Workforce- Significance & Challenges** read this article here

**Current Education System Issues**

1. **Infrastructure and Quality Disparities:** Many Indian schools, particularly government-run, lack essential resources such as laboratories, computers, toilets, and clean water. The stark urban-rural divide results in uneven access to quality education, highlighting urgent needs for infrastructure improvement and teacher training.

2. **Limitations of Examination-Centric Education:** Schools predominantly focus on memorization for high-stakes testing, neglecting comprehensive skill development. This approach restricts students to basic cognitive skills, failing to cultivate advanced thinking abilities necessary for practical life and professional success.

3. **Recognizing Diverse Learning Styles:** Students possess varying learning styles, as described by Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. Education systems often overlook individual differences, emphasizing uniformity rather than leveraging unique student strengths and preferences.

**Role of Experiential Learning**

1. **Understanding Experiential Learning:** Experiential learning, formulated by David Kolb, emphasizes "learning by doing." It involves continuous cycles of experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation, fostering deeper understanding and adaptable knowledge.

2. **Stages of the Experiential Learning Cycle:** Kolb's cycle consists of concrete experience (sensory engagement), reflective observation (interpreting experiences), abstract conceptualization (integrating new insights), and active experimentation (applying knowledge). This iterative process supports lifelong learning and cognitive flexibility.

3. **Benefits of Active Learning:** Active participation through practical experiences makes students proactive learners. They develop essential skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-directed learning, preparing them for real-life applications beyond classroom constraints.

**Implementing Experiential Learning**

1. **Pedagogical Methods and Approaches:** Experiential learning encompasses various interactive methods like inquiry-based experiments, collaborative projects, role-playing, field trips, arts and crafts, and simulation-based technology use. These methods actively engage students, enhancing their understanding and retention.

2. **Flipped Classroom Model:** The flipped classroom exemplifies experiential learning by shifting traditional roles. Students first explore topics independently, then collaboratively discuss and solve problems in class, fostering deeper interactions, responsibility, and active learning.

**Challenges in Implementation**

1. **Resource Constraints and Logistical Issues:** Experiential learning demands significant resources, training, and careful management, making widespread implementation challenging, especially in resource-poor contexts like India.

2. **Contextual Limitations and Readiness:** Student readiness for experiential methods varies widely. Practical challenges like language barriers or low baseline skills may hinder the effectiveness of experiential learning, suggesting adaptations rather than complete system overhaul.

**Conclusion**

Experiential learning offers a powerful tool to modernize education, addressing both educational quality and equity issues. By integrating practical experiences and diverse learning approaches, schools can better prepare students to thrive in a complex, evolving world.

**Question for practice:**
Discuss how experiential learning can address the limitations of the current education system.

## India's NEP 2020 Transforms Education for Innovation and Employability

**Source**: The post India's NEP 2020 Transforms Education for Innovation and Employability has been created, based on the article "**A case of practical, pragmatic and innovative education**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 29th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-governance-Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education.

**Context**: The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 addresses long-standing concerns about the practicality, innovation, and global competitiveness of Indian education. It introduces a phased, structural reform focused on enhancing employability, boosting research, and preparing students for a global future.

**Enhancing Employability through Education Reform**

1. **Flexible Academic Structure:** The NEP introduces a four-year flexible degree programme. Students can exit with a credential and rejoin later. This benefits those who might otherwise drop out and allows for varied career paths.

2. **Industry-Academia Integration:** The policy includes internships and vocational training. **167 universities and 59 colleges** have adopted four-year degrees. **224 universities and 101 colleges** now offer multidisciplinary programmes. These steps build real-world skills and improve job readiness.

3. **Research Internships and R&D Focus:** Higher education institutions offer research internships. **242 universities and 113 colleges** have established R&D cells to develop innovation among students and strengthen industry-aligned learning.

4. **Skill Development through Apprenticeships:** Diploma holders and degree dropouts can now enrol as apprentices within five years of graduation. These include **government-supported stipends**. Currently, **3,07,564 undergraduates** and **58,834 postgraduates** are engaged in internships.

**Strengthening Global Competitiveness**

1. **Improved Global Rankings:** Eleven Indian universities are in the QS Top 500. India leads in the QS Asia Rankings 2025 with 163 institutions. Indian universities saw a 25.7% increase in subject-specific entries, with 10 institutions in the global top 50.

2. **Rising Patent Activity:** Patents filed by Indian higher education institutions rose from **7,405 in 2021–22** to **19,155 in 2022–23**—a **158% increase**. This shows stronger research output.

3. **Global Innovation Recognition:** India ranks **39th in the Global Innovation Index**, improving from **76th** a decade ago, reflecting a significant leap in innovation.

4. **International Research Collaborations:** Policies like the **ANRF Act 2023**, **AICTE's IDEA Labs**, and **SPARC** promote global research. SPARC enables partnerships with **28 countries**, including the US, UK, and Germany.

**Promoting Indigenous Knowledge and Innovation**

1. **Indian Knowledge System:** NEP promotes India's traditional wisdom and pedagogy across education levels, encouraging cultural grounding.

2. **Smart India Hackathon:** This platform nurtures innovation. Since 2017, it has supported **13.9 lakh students**, with submissions increasing **sevenfold**.

**Transforming Employment Landscape**

1. **Positive Employment Trends:** From **2018–19**, educated youth employment steadily rose. By **2023–24**, male employment reached **53.4%**, female **22.7%**, and overall **38.6%**, nearing **2004–05 levels**.

2. **Female Workforce Participation:** Women's employment grew post-2017–18, reaching **30.7%** in 2023–24, showing broader inclusion.

3. **Growth of Regular Employment:** The share of regular male workers increased from **17.2% in 2004–05** to **24.88% in 2023–24**, indicating more stable jobs.

4. **Decline in Casual Labour:** Casual employment dropped—from **30.31% to 16.68%** among women and **28.85% to 19.83%** overall—reflecting improved job quality.

**Conclusion**

NEP 2020 is transforming education by aligning it with innovation, employability, and global standards. Its focus on practical training and indigenous thinking is driving India towards a more skilled, competitive, and stable employment future.

**Question for practice:**

Examine how the New Education Policy 2020 aims to improve employability, innovation, and global competitiveness in India's education system.

## India needs deep reforms in financial sector

**Source**: The post India needs deep reforms in financial sector has been created, based on the article "**India's financial sector reforms need a shake-up**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 29th May 2025
**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3- Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilisation, of resources, growth, development and employment.
**Context**: India's financial sector faces deep-rooted inefficiencies that limit inclusive growth. Despite years of reform in banking, financial services, and insurance (BFSI), several structural frictions persist. These now demand urgent and comprehensive correction, especially in nomination processes, bond markets, retirement instruments, and shadow banking regulation.
For detailed information on **India's Economic Challenges and Policy Reform Needs** read this article here
**Inconsistencies in Nomination Rules**

1. **Fragmented Regulations Across BFSI Sectors:** Nomination procedures vary widely across banks, mutual funds, and insurance products. Some accounts permit only one nominee, others allow multiple, each with different entitlements. This fragmented system lacks logical and legal consistency.

2. **Consequences for Investors and Legal Clarity:** These contradictions confuse savers and often result in legal disputes. Such ambiguities are exploited, benefiting those who use them for prolonged litigation.

3. **Urgency of a Unified Framework:** A harmonised nomination regime is essential. It must clearly define the difference between nominee rights and legal heir claims. If variations are justified, the government must share supporting evidence or case studies.

**Challenges in Corporate Bond Market**

1. **Shallow and Inefficient Market:** Despite repeated policy focus, India's corporate bond market remains small, illiquid, and non-transparent. This raises the cost of capital—the biggest factor in business viability—by 2–3%.

2. **Failure of Regulatory Implementation:** The RBI once directed NSE to create a secondary bond market, but the order was ignored. Equity markets are more profitable due to opaque algorithmic trading, which has even drawn regulatory and journalistic scrutiny.

3. **Transparency in Capital Flow and FATF Norms:** India's bond market reform is tied to capital flow transparency. As an FATF member, India must enforce Know Your Customer (KYC) norms, including Ultimate Beneficial Owner (UBO) identification, as per 2022 guidelines.

4. **Disclosure Loopholes:** Current UBO disclosure thresholds—10% for companies, 15% for partnerships—let investors avoid scrutiny by structuring stakes below these limits. This undermines market integrity and complicates regulatory oversight, especially with entities based in Mauritius.

**Gaps in Retirement Planning Instruments**

1. **High-Cost Annuities:** Retirement options largely rely on annuities, which involve high intermediary fees taken by insurance firms, reducing long-term returns.

2. **Cost-Effective Alternatives Exist:** Zero-coupon long-dated government bonds are a cheaper option. Stripping principal and coupon components eliminates the 2% annual cost, resulting in large gains over time.

3. **Lack of Government Initiative:** Despite available technology, neither the RBI nor the government has promoted these instruments. This delays the creation of a credible, low-cost retirement ecosystem backed by sovereign security.

**Rising Threat of Shadow Banking**

1. **Unregulated Lending Practices:** NBFCs, brokers, and margin lenders offer quasi-bank services without full regulation. Brokers provide loans as margin funding, often charging rates over 20%.

2. **Hidden Risks to Retail Investors:** Brokers lend using the investor's own money as collateral, charging interest on the total sum. Many investors are unaware of these exploitative terms.

3. **Need for Transparency and Data:** India lacks comprehensive data on shadow banking. The EU has already acted. India must prioritise transparency before effective regulation.

**Call for Coherent Structural Reform**

1. **Beyond Cosmetic Changes:** India must stop relying on slogans and surface-level amendments. Core systems require structural reform.

2. **Blueprint for a Stronger Financial System:** The path forward includes unified rules, deep bond markets, efficient retirement tools, and regulation of shadow lending. Only then can the financial sector support sustained growth.

## India's Remittance Landscape Is Rapidly Transforming

**Source**: The post India's Remittance Landscape Is Rapidly Transforming has been created, based on the article "**Examining the RBI's remittances survey**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 29th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3-Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilisation, of resources, growth, development and employment.

**Context**: Remittances significantly contribute to India's external financial stability. Recently released RBI data highlighted record remittances of $118.7 billion in 2023–24, surpassing foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows and financing more than half of India's merchandise trade deficit. This underscores remittances' critical role amid global economic uncertainties.

**Shifts in Remittance Sources**

1. **Emerging Dominance of Advanced Economies:** Advanced economies (AEs) now dominate remittance inflows, with the U.S. alone contributing 27.7%, an increase from 23.4% in 2020–21. Collectively, the U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia, and Singapore account for 51.2%, surpassing Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries at 37.9%.

2. **Changing Migrant Profiles:** The shift reflects India's changing migrant demographic from predominantly low-skilled workers in Gulf nations to high-skilled professionals and students in AEs. Such migrants usually earn higher, more stable incomes and remit less cyclically sensitive amounts.

3. **Long-term Stability and Risks:** While AE migrants provide steady remittance flows, their deeper integration abroad may eventually reduce their remittance frequency. Additionally, remittance inflows might become vulnerable if host-country immigration policies adversely affect high-skilled migration.

**Concentration of Remittance Values**

1. **High-value Transactions Dominate:** In 2023–24, transactions above ₹5 lakh constituted nearly 29% of total remittance value despite representing only 1.4% of transactions. This indicates increasing dominance by high-earning, professional Indian migrants.

2. **Implications for Vulnerability:** While high-value remittances reflect diaspora upward mobility, their concentration creates vulnerabilities. Any negative shift in immigration policies could disproportionately impact overall inflow stability.

**Digital Transformation of Remittances**

1. **Growing Digital Remittance Channels:** Digital channels now handle 73.5% of remittance transactions, significantly reducing transaction costs. Sending $200 to India costs an average of 4.9%, below the global average (6.65%) but still above the Sustainable Development Goal target of 3%.

2. **Uneven Adoption Across Countries:** Digital adoption varies significantly: UAE (76.1%) and Saudi Arabia (92.7%) lead, while Canada (40%), Germany (55.1%), and Italy (35%) lag. These differences highlight infrastructural and regulatory constraints needing policy intervention.

3. **Policy Focus on Digital Payments:** India must strengthen cross-border digital payment systems to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and maintain remittance flows within formal channels.

**Regional Disparities in Remittance Distribution**

1. **Persistent Geographic Inequality:** States like Maharashtra, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu received approximately 51% of total remittances. In contrast, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan combined received less than 6%.

2. **Need for State-specific Skill Initiatives:** Disparities result from uneven migration-enabling resources such as language training and credential pathways. National skilling missions should address state-specific needs to prevent perpetuating inequality.

**Data Gaps and Policy Implications**

1. **Missing Household-level Insights:** Current data lacks insights into household usage of remittances, hindering assessment of their developmental impact beyond macroeconomic stability.

2. **Enhancing Developmental Impact:** Evaluating whether remittances fund consumption or investment is essential. Policies promoting savings-linked remittance products, targeted financial literacy, and investment incentives could significantly enhance remittances' long-term developmental impact.

**Question for practice:**

**Examine** how recent shifts in remittance sources and patterns are influencing India's external financial stability and developmental priorities.

## Early childhood care builds strong future foundations

**Source**: The post Early childhood care builds strong future foundations has been created, based on the article "**Rewriting the script of early childhood education**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 30th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-governance-Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education

**Context**: India's employment crisis partly stems from unequal childhood opportunities. Many children are born into poverty, affecting their future. However, targeted early childhood care and education (ECE) can reverse this. Inspired by Nobel Laureate James Heckman's work, Indian states are adopting ECE reforms to improve life outcomes from an early age.

For detailed information on **National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education 2024** read this article here

**Importance of Early Childhood Education (ECE)**

1. ***Heckman's Economic Model*** **Heckman's curve** shows high returns on early childhood investments, generating $7 to $12 per dollar invested. Early educational interventions profoundly impact lifelong earnings, home ownership, and overall life quality.

2. ***Critical Learning Gaps*** By age five, foundational disparities emerge, affecting lifelong outcomes. Skills such as basic object matching and number recognition, crucial for primary education, are underdeveloped if early instruction is insufficient.

**Challenges in India's ECE System**

1. ***Limited Instructional Time:*** About 5.5 crore children aged three to six attend Anganwadis and pre-primary schools, yet instruction is minimal. Anganwadi workers dedicate only 38 minutes daily to preschool education instead of the recommended two hours, severely limiting learning outcomes.

**2.** ***Resource Allocation Issues:*** India spends just ₹1,263 annually per child on ECE versus ₹37,000 per student in primary education. Resources often remain underutilized due to teacher shortages and inadequate oversight, with one supervisor managing 282 Anganwadis.

**3. *Parental Engagement Gap:*** While parents value education, many lack the resources or guidance to effectively support early learning. Greater parental involvement through accessible methods such as EdTech apps or direct engagement programs can significantly enhance children's educational outcomes.

**State-led Innovations**

1.***Uttar Pradesh Initiatives:*** Uttar Pradesh is recruiting 11,000 ECE educators for its Balavatikas across all districts. It also initiated intensive training programs for master trainers, focusing on early childhood pedagogy.

2. ***Odisha's Approach*** Odisha introduced Shishu Vatikas in government schools for five-to-six-year-olds, using innovative tools like the Jaduipedi Kits to enhance early learning and ensure school readiness.

3. ***Madhya Pradesh's Parental Engagement:*** The state's monthly Bal Choupal program educates parents about play-based learning benefits. Additionally, using smartphones, initiatives like WhatsApp and EdTech apps can further strengthen parental participation in early childhood development.

**Future Implications and Vision**

1. ***Economic and Social Potential:*** With targeted ECE funding and effective parental engagement, India could empower 200 million citizens to overcome birth disadvantages, significantly boosting future workforce productivity and global economic influence.

2. ***Pathway to India's Global Leadership:*** Strategically investing in early education is crucial to achieving India's ambition of becoming a global leader—Vishwa Guru—by preparing today's children to become tomorrow's innovators and leaders.

**Question for practice:**

Examine how targeted investment in early childhood education and parental engagement can help overcome the disadvantages associated with the lottery of birth in India.

## Supreme Court restores three years practice requirement for judges

**Source**: The post Supreme Court restores three years practice requirement for judges has been created, based on the article "**Is the three-year practice mandate for judicial service welcome?**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 30th May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-Structure, organisation and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary.

**Context**: On May 20, the Supreme Court reinstated a rule requiring a minimum of **three years of legal practice** to apply for entry-level judicial services. This reverses its 2002 ruling and has sparked debate on judicial competence, systemic reform, inclusivity, and constitutional propriety.

For detailed information on **Supreme Court revives rule affecting judicial exam entry** read this article here

**Arguments Supporting the Practice Requirement**

1. **Empirical Backing from High Courts and Bar Council:** Out of 25 High Courts, **23 reported unsatisfactory outcomes** from directly recruiting fresh graduates. The **Bar Council of India** stated that judges without Bar experience were often incapable of handling cases effectively.

2. **Need for Real-World Exposure:** Judicial roles demand skills that are hard to teach in classrooms. Practical experience helps develop **legal reasoning, procedural understanding**, and **emotional maturity**, which improve with age and exposure to real cases.

3. **Limitations of Judicial Training Academies:** Training institutions often lack adequate resources. They are unable to provide **individual feedback or mentorship** needed for effective skill-building. Real-world experience is considered more valuable than theoretical learning.

**Criticisms of the Practice Requirement**

1. **Minimal Value from Short-Term Experience:** The initial years of legal practice often involve minor tasks like **seeking adjournments**, not substantial case handling. This limited exposure may not translate into better judicial decision-making.

2. **Lack of Clear Assessment and Verification:** There are no specific guidelines on what constitutes valid practice. Without clear parameters, the rule may become a **symbolic formality**, especially affecting those without access to strong mentorship. Suggestions like a **digital diary** with verifiable records were proposed for better monitoring.

3. **Exclusion of Marginalised and Poorer Candidates:** Earlier, fresh graduates could directly enter the judiciary. The new rule imposes **financial and time burdens**, discouraging candidates from non-elite law schools or weaker economic backgrounds. Many lack support systems in early legal practice.

4. **Reduced Appeal and Shrinking Talent Pool:** Delaying judicial entry to one's late 20s, while offering the same pay and conditions, **lowers the career's attractiveness**. Some may prefer direct entry into senior roles.

5. **Gender-Based Disadvantages:** Women often face **family and social barriers** in litigation. The added requirement may deter them, though **reservations in most states** help maintain their presence in the judiciary. Lack of women in litigation affects representation in the judiciary.

**Concerns About Procedural and Constitutional Validity**

1. **Absence of Public Consultation:** The decision lacked **stakeholder engagement**. Broader consultation could have addressed practical challenges and improved implementation.

2. **Breach of Constitutional Role Division:** Under **Article 234**, eligibility norms are set by state governments and High Courts. The Supreme Court's action **raises concerns of overreach**.

3. **Need for Broader Institutional Reform:** Eligibility alone cannot solve deeper issues. Improving **recruitment, training**, and **service conditions** is essential for judicial reform.

**Question for practice:**

**Evaluate** the impact of the Supreme Court's decision to mandate three years of legal practice on the inclusivity, effectiveness, and structure of the judicial recruitment system.

## Agriculture can drive India's growth as developed nation 2047

**Source**: The post Agriculture can drive India's growth as developed nation 2047 has been created, based on the article "**Agriculture's road to 2047**" published in "**Business Standard** " on 30th May 2025
**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3- Agriculture
**Context**: At NITI Aayog's 10th Governing Council meeting, the Prime Minister stressed making India a developed nation by 2047. Agriculture, having immense growth potential through innovation and sustainability, is crucial in achieving this national goal.

For detailed information on **Pillars for development of Indian Agriculture** read this article here

**India's Agricultural Journey and Emerging Potential**

1. **From Deficit to Surplus:** India transformed **from food scarcity to surplus**, increasing food grain production from **50.82 million tonnes (1950-51)**to **353.96 million tonnes (2024-25)**. This remarkable growth made India food-secure.

2. **Global Agricultural Leader:** India became a major exporter, with agricultural exports reaching **₹4.08 trillion in 2023-24**. Predictions of widespread famine were proven incorrect by Indian agriculture's consistent growth.

3. **Agriculture's Role in Development:** Agricultural research, education, and extension can significantly contribute to India's goal of becoming a developed nation. The sector can drive innovation, employment, and environmental sustainability.

**Challenges and Opportunities in Agriculture**

1. **Current Agricultural Challenges:** Indian agriculture faces problems such as shrinking farm sizes, climate change, depleted natural resources, shifting consumer preferences, and tough global competition.

2. **Technological Opportunities:** Advancements in biotechnology, precision agriculture, digital farming, and sustainable practices provide opportunities to overcome these challenges and improve productivity.

3. **Expert Recommendations:** The National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS), comprising over 800 experts, has published a roadmap titled **"Indian Agriculture by 2047"**. It focuses on innovative solutions, visionary leadership, and sustainable agriculture.

**Research for Innovation and Resilience**

1. **Priority Research Areas:** Research should target genomics, biotechnology, climate-resilient agriculture, digital farming, and resource sustainability. Diversification into horticulture, livestock, and fisheries sectors is also essential.

2. **Technology Adoption in Research:** Scientists must adopt modern technologies such as **CRISPR gene editing**, **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, Geographic Information Systems (**GIS**), **big data analytics**, **smart sensors**, **IoT devices**, and field robotics. Achieving this requires increased funding and stronger public-private collaborations.

3. **Connecting Research to Markets:** Research should guide policy reforms, enhance agricultural infrastructure, promote farm mechanisation, improve agro-processing, and reduce post-harvest losses.

**Reforming Agricultural Education**

1. **Updating Educational Content:** Courses must include new topics such as AI in agriculture, agri-business, climate-smart practices, sustainable farming, and export strategies to better prepare students.

2. **Experiential and Practical Learning:** Hands-on experiences, internships, village adoption programs, startup incubators, and hackathons should be emphasised to foster entrepreneurial skills in students.

3. **Global Partnerships and Faculty Skills:** Agricultural universities must collaborate with global institutions to keep curricula current. Faculty training should also align with emerging agricultural trends.

**Strengthening Agricultural Support Systems**

1. **Modernising Extension Mechanisms:** The agricultural extension system must be transformed using digital tools such as mobile apps, helplines, WhatsApp groups, YouTube tutorials, and online platforms to ensure timely and effective outreach to farmers.

2. **Upgrading Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs):** KVKs should be integrated with advanced agri-tech tools and function as innovation hubs for training and advisory services. This will improve agricultural productivity and help farmers adopt sustainable practices.

3. **Scaling Proven Models and Partnerships:** Successful initiatives like **e-Choupal**, **Mahindra Samriddhi Centres**, and **Digital Green** should be expanded. Strengthening farmer-producer organisations and engaging NGOs, startups, and private players can boost knowledge dissemination and market access.

4. **Boosting R&D Investment for Innovation:** India invests only **0.65% of its GDP** in agri-research and extension—much below global standards. Raising it to **1% of GDP** is essential for making agriculture more competitive, climate-resilient, and technology-intensive.

**Question for practice:**

**Discuss** how strengthening agricultural research, education, and extension can help India achieve the goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

## India becomes fourth largest global economy

**Source**: The post India becomes fourth largest global economy has been created, based on the article "**India may soon become the third-largest economy in the world. But there is more to it**" published in "**Indian Express**" on 31st May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3- growth and development

**Context**: India is expected to overtake Japan as the world's fourth-largest economy, based on nominal GDP, according to IMF projections. This marks a significant moment in India's economic journey and global positioning, triggering comparisons with past power shifts and varied international responses.

**India's Economic Rise**

1. **Historical Perspective:** The sustained growth of India's economy since 1991 has steadily increased its global prominence. Former finance minister Manmohan Singh predicted India's emergence as a major economic power, citing Victor Hugo's notion of an unstoppable idea whose time had come.

2. **Recognition by Angus Maddison:** Angus Maddison's influential study underscored India's potential resurgence. He noted that in 1700, China and India together generated half of global income. Colonialism and Europe's Industrial Revolution caused their subsequent economic decline, but recent growth rekindles hope for their global economic revival.

**Comparing India and Japan**

1. **Nominal vs. Per Capita GDP:** India's nominal GDP ($4.187 trillion) narrowly surpasses Japan's ($4.186 trillion), but significant disparities remain. India's per capita GDP is only $2,880 compared to Japan's $33,900, highlighting India's ongoing developmental status versus Japan's mature economy.

2. **Demographic and Economic Factors:** India's youthful demographics support sustained growth, contrasting Japan's ageing population. However, Japan remains an advanced industrialized economy, whereas India continues as a developing, lower-middle-income nation.

**Japan's Economic Struggles**

1. **Impact of China's Rise:** China overtook Japan in 2010 during the global financial crisis, marking a pivotal geopolitical shift. Unlike India's current overtaking, China's rise prompted significant alarm in Japan, intensifying economic anxiety and influencing domestic politics.

2. **Abenomics and Economic Revival Attempts:** Japan responded to its economic challenges through Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's "Abenomics"—monetary easing, fiscal stimulus, and structural reforms aimed at boosting growth. While initially hopeful, Japan's momentum slowed post-Abe due to weak leadership and external pressures, notably from the U.S.

3. **Germany's Competitive Pressure:** Germany recently overtook Japan, pushing it to fourth place. Fluctuations between these two slowing economies illustrate persistent volatility in global economic rankings.

**Japan's Reaction to India's Rise**

1. **Minimal Impact and Reporting:** India's overtaking of Japan elicited minimal concern in Japan. Unlike China, India is viewed positively as an economic opportunity rather than a competitive threat, partly due to strong bilateral diplomatic and economic relations.

2. **India as Opportunity, Not Threat:** Japan perceives India neither as a trading competitor nor geopolitical rival. This contrasts starkly with Japan's reaction to China's rise, reflecting the differing international roles of these Asian economies.

**Future Economic Dynamics**

1. **Ranking Volatility:** Exchange rate fluctuations, global trade dynamics, and seasonal performance mean India, Japan, and Germany might continue shifting rankings temporarily. The small economic differences keep the competition alive.

2. **Long-term Positioning and Strategy:** India's trajectory towards becoming a stable third-largest economy is promising, provided it crosses the $5 trillion mark decisively. India's long-term strategy should emphasize inclusive and competitive growth, improving domestic living standards rather than merely chasing rankings.

**Question for practice:**

**Question** Examine how India's economic ascent and demographic advantage differ from Japan's developed economy and ageing population, and what this implies for future global economic rankings.

## Language choice can transform engineering education in India

**Source**: The post Language choice can transform engineering education in India has been created, based on the article "**We should teach engineering in Indian languages**" published in "**businessline** " on 31st May 2025
**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper2-governance-Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health.
**Context**: India's technical education is heavily English-dependent, creating barriers for students unfamiliar with the language. With over 1,369 mother tongues, this issue raises concerns about inclusivity, national progress, and how language shapes engineering education outcomes.

**The Language Challenge in Engineering Education**

1. **English as a Barrier and a Gateway:** English is the standard in higher education, seen as a passport to global opportunities. But for students from rural and semi-urban areas, it becomes a barrier due to low proficiency, limiting career growth.

2. **Loss of Potential Due to Language:** Many talented students fail to perform well, not due to lack of ability, but because the instructional language alienates them. Their grasp of technical content is hindered by unfamiliar vocabulary and delivery.

3. **NEP 2020's Inclusive Vision:** The **National Education Policy 2020** addresses this problem by promoting education in mother tongues. It highlights that students understand complex ideas better in their native language, ensuring equal opportunities for all.

**Technology as an Ally**

1. **Real-Time AI Translation:** Technology now enables real-time translation of lectures, making technical content more accessible in multiple languages. This bridges the language gap without excluding English.

2. **Multilingual Digital Tools:** Learning platforms are evolving to support multilingual content, helping students learn in the language they understand best. This approach turns diversity into an advantage.

3. **Peer Learning and Bilingual Resources:** Institutes are promoting bilingual learning resources and forming peer support groups. This helps students gradually become comfortable with both native and English content.

**IIT Jodhpur's Innovative Initiative**

1. **Bilingual Course Option: IIT Jodhpur** allowed first-year students to choose between Hindi and English for their courses. Over 80% of students at the institute come from Hindi-speaking backgrounds, making this a student-focused move.

2. **Positive Student Feedback:** The response was overwhelmingly positive. Students felt more confident and engaged. Many said it removed a long-standing burden, allowing better learning and participation.

3. **Improved Results:** Pilot results from **AY 2024–25 Semester I** showed that students from vernacular backgrounds were now competing for top grades—once out of reach due to language limitations.

**Reframing Global Competitiveness**

1. **Dismissing False Fears:** Fears that multilingual education could weaken global competitiveness are unfounded. On the contrary, learning in a familiar language enhances conceptual clarity and confidence.

2. **Empowering Global-Ready Engineers:** Multilingual engineers are not only technically skilled but also culturally aware and adaptive—traits valued globally. This diversity strengthens India's global standing.

**Language as a Tool for Inclusion**

1. **Rethinking Linguistic Diversity:** Language is not a hurdle—it is a resource. Ignoring 94% of Indians not fluent in English limits national progress and innovation.

2. **Role of IITs and Policy: Institutes of National Importance** must lead reforms to make classrooms inclusive. Education must empower every student, regardless of language.

3. **Vision for Inclusive Innovation:** Multilingual learning nurtures broader participation. It helps unlock creativity, ensures representation, and builds a future where all voices contribute to India's growth.

**Question for practice:**

**Examine** how language of instruction influences inclusivity and learning outcomes in India's engineering education system.

# Climate change is reshaping India's monsoon clouds and rainfall

**Source**: The post Climate change is reshaping India's monsoon clouds and rainfall has been created, based on the article "**Climate change reshaping India's monsoon clouds**" published in "**businessline** " on 31st May 2025

**UPSC Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper3- Environment

**Context**: India's monsoon clouds are changing due to global warming. A recent study using 20 years of data highlights shifts in cloud structure, with serious effects on agriculture, rainfall, and climate resilience. These changes signal that climate change is already impacting daily life.

## Changing Cloud Dynamics Over India

1. **Increase in Cloudy Days, Decline in Rain Clouds:** Cloudy days during monsoon have risen by 13% per decade. However, this increase is not due to rain-heavy, low-level clouds. These have actually declined by 8%, while high-level clouds have increased by 11% per decade.

2. **Significance of Cloud Type Changes:** Low-level clouds are thicker and reflect sunlight, helping cool the surface and bring stable rain. Their decline is worrying. High clouds trap heat, and often don't bring rain, or are linked to extreme weather.

3. **Rising Cloud Heights:** As the atmosphere warms, clouds form at higher altitudes. This vertical shift points to deeper changes in the structure of monsoon clouds, with high clouds becoming more frequent and elevated.

## The Role of Global Warming

1. **Warming Atmosphere and Moisture Shift:** The study shows strong warming in the upper troposphere. Heat and moisture are rising, leading to more high cloud formation and fewer rain-bearing low clouds.

2. **Tropopause Rising Rapidly:** The tropopause has risen by 480 metres per decade. This is a clear signal that the troposphere is expanding, driven by increased warming.

3. **Impact on Atmospheric Stability:** The rise in equivalent potential temperature at higher levels shows that the upper atmosphere is holding more heat and moisture. This promotes high cloud formation and alters rainfall behaviour.

## Influence of Global Climate Systems

1. **Global Indicators Linked to Cloud Changes:** The study found strong links between rising global temperatures (GWI) and high cloud growth. Other systems like ENSO and NAO also influence monsoon patterns.

2. **Monsoon Not Just a Local Process:** Cloud changes over India are connected to broader global systems. This makes forecasting harder and strengthens the case for deeper climate research.

## Urgent Need for Adaptation

1. **Threat to Food and Water Security:** Changing cloud types affect when and how rain falls, impacting crops and groundwater. This threatens food and water availability.

2. **Action on Resilience and Forecasting:** India must invest in better forecasting tools and climate-resilient farming. The evidence is clear: monsoon patterns are shifting, and adaptation is urgent.

## Question for practice:

**Examine** how global warming is altering monsoon cloud patterns in India and its implications for agriculture and climate resilience.