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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

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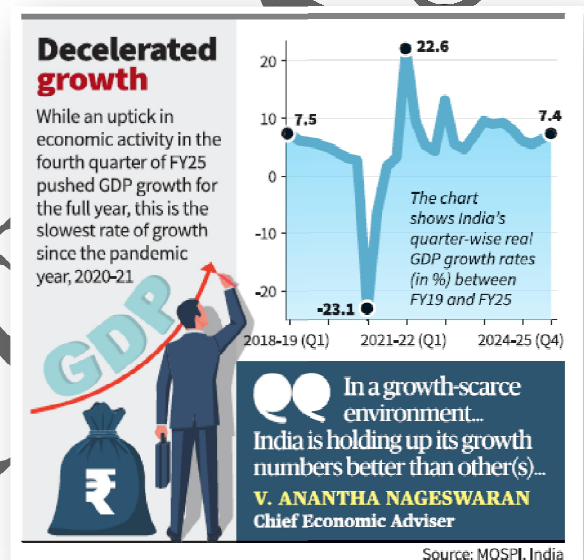
1. India's GDP Growth at 6.5% in 2024–25 – Slowest Since the Pandemic

1. GDP Growth Trends

- India's real GDP growth for the financial year 2024–25 is estimated at 6.5%, the slowest since the pandemic year 2020–21.
- Q4 of 2024–25 recorded a growth of 7.4%, the highest quarterly growth of the year, but lower than 8.4% in Q4 of the previous year.

2. Sectoral Performance

- Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry & Fishing grew by 5.4% in Q4, with a full-year growth of 4.6% (up from 2.7% in 2023–24).
- Manufacturing grew by 4.8% in Q4 and 4.5% for the full year, significantly lower than 12.3% in 2023–24.
- Construction sector achieved 10.8% growth in Q4 and 9.4% for the full year (slightly lower than 10.4% in 2023–24).
- Tertiary sector (services) recorded 7.2% growth in FY25, down from 9% in FY24.



3. Private Consumption Growth

- Household consumption, represented by Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE), grew by 7.2% in FY25, up from 5.6% in the previous year, indicating improving domestic demand.

4. Government's Assessment

- Chief Economic Adviser stated that India has maintained a strong position in a growth-scarce global environment.
- India's post-COVID growth differential with advanced economies is higher than during the pre-2010 boom years, suggesting relative global outperformance.

5. Relevant Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- Article 112: Involves the annual financial statement (Union Budget), which includes GDP estimates.
- Article 280: Finance Commission's recommendations impact fiscal policy and resource allocation.
- Collection of Statistics Act, 2008: Legal framework for data collection used in GDP calculation.
- MoSPI (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation) is responsible for releasing GDP estimates.



6. Important Definitions for UPSC

- Real GDP: GDP adjusted for inflation, reflecting the true volume of production.
- Tertiary Sector: The service sector comprising trade, communication, finance, health, education, etc.
- Growth Differential: The difference in growth rates between two economies, e.g., India vs advanced economies.

Conclusion

The 6.5% GDP growth in 2024–25, while modest compared to previous years, highlights India's relative economic stability amid global uncertainties. With strong agricultural performance and rising household consumption, India's economy shows resilience. However, sustained growth will require bolstering industrial performance and leveraging structural reforms to address global and domestic challenges effectively.

2. Boost in Indigenous Defence Manufacturing: Production of LCA Tejas to be Increased

1. Expansion of Indigenous Aircraft Production

- Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) will **increase production** of the **Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas Mk1A** by setting up a **fourth production line** in **Hyderabad** through a partnership with **VEM Technologies**.
- This is aimed at **timely delivery to the Indian Air Force (IAF)** and to strengthen India's indigenous defence manufacturing.

2. Strategic Importance of LCA-Tejas Mk1A

- LCA Tejas is a **4.5-generation, single-engine, multi-role light fighter aircraft**, designed and developed under India's **Make in India** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat** initiatives.
- The Tejas Mk1A variant includes advanced avionics, AESA radar, electronic warfare capabilities, and is crucial to replace the ageing MiG-21 fleet.



3. Private Sector Collaboration in Defence Manufacturing

- VEM Technologies handed over its **first Central Fuselage Assembly** to HAL, marking a milestone in public-private partnership.
- The 478-kg fuselage comprises **1,595 components**, largely **manufactured in-house**, showing increasing **self-reliance in aerospace technology**.

4. Roadmap for Defence Indigenisation

- HAL CMD D.K. Sunil announced plans to **scale up production** of not only LCA Mk1A but also the **Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA)** and indigenous **helicopters**.



- This reflects India's **long-term commitment** to reducing dependence on foreign military imports and becoming a **defence export hub**.

5. Relevant Constitutional & Legal Provisions

- **Article 73 & 246**: Empower the Union Government to legislate and execute defence matters.
- **Defence Production Policy (DPP)** and the **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020**: Provide frameworks for indigenous defence procurement and technology development.
- Governed under the **Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951** and enhanced by **Strategic Partnership Model** guidelines.

6. Definition of Key Terms

- **LCA (Light Combat Aircraft)**: A lightweight, supersonic, multi-role jet for air-to-air, air-to-ground, and reconnaissance missions.
- **Fuselage**: The central body structure of an aircraft that holds the cockpit, payload, and other vital systems.

Conclusion

The scaling up of LCA Tejas production marks a **turning point in India's defence self-reliance journey**, highlighting the success of indigenous R&D and public-private partnerships. With a clear roadmap for production of advanced aircraft and helicopters, India is steadily moving toward becoming a **global player in the defence aerospace sector**, aligned with the vision of **Atmanirbhar Bharat** and national security imperatives.

3. India-Pakistan Conflict: Strategic Implications for India's National Security & Technological Preparedness

1. Persistent Hostility from Pakistan

- Pakistan continues its strategy of “**bleeding India by a thousand cuts**”, relying on **proxy warfare and cross-border skirmishes** despite being militarily inferior.
- India's **secular, democratic identity** poses a **threat to Pakistan's theocratic military establishment**, which sees India's rise as antithetical to its own ideological foundations.

2. Pakistan's Political and Military Dynamics



- Pakistan is increasingly governed by its **military leadership**, with a **civilian government acting as a façade**.

- General Asim Munir's rhetoric framed Pakistan as a **religious entity**, distinct from India in all respects, with **Kashmir** described as the “**jugular vein**” — indicating a continued focus on confrontation.

3. Technological Warfare and Escalation Dominance



- The recent limited conflict highlighted the importance of **air superiority, drone warfare, and multi-layered air defence systems**.
- India demonstrated effective use of systems like **Aakash QRSAM, S-400, and Barak**, while **BrahMos** remained unused but available, showcasing **escalation control and strategic depth**.

4. Geo-Political Influences and the Role of Critical Minerals

- Western mediation in the conflict is influenced not just by peace interests but also by **geostrategic and resource-based calculations**, such as the **U.S. interest in Pakistan's rare earth minerals**.
- This reflects a **new trend in global diplomacy**—peace efforts intertwined with **resource politics and strategic leverage**.

5. Emerging Domains of Warfare: Space and Cyber

- The article underscores India's **lack of a dedicated satellite-based surveillance system**, a critical gap in the face of a **two-front war scenario** (China & Pakistan).
- **Space is the new war domain**, and India must prioritize investments in **real-time satellite reconnaissance, communication systems, and cyber-defence** to retain strategic parity.

6. Global Hypocrisy and Erosion of International Norms

- The **differential global response** to conflicts (e.g., Ukraine vs. Gaza) illustrates that **international order is fragmenting**, and **"might is becoming right"** again.
- Smaller states are now bargaining resources (like **Ukraine's rare minerals**) for **military or diplomatic support**—a pattern likely to shape future Indo-Pak dynamics as well.

Important Constitutional and Legal Provisions

- **Article 51**: Promotes international peace and security but allows for self-defence and military preparedness.
- **Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA)**: Operational in border regions and conflict zones for internal and cross-border security.
- **National Security Act (NSA), 1980**: Enables preventive detention to maintain public order and security of India.

Key Definitions for UPSC Mains

- **Escalation Dominance**: The ability to **outmatch adversary's military capabilities at every level of conflict escalation**, thus deterring further aggression.
- **Proxy War**: A conflict instigated by major powers using **third-party actors**, often through non-state militant groups or smaller states.
- **Kill Chain**: The sequence of events from **target detection to destruction**, crucial in modern, tech-driven warfare.



Conclusion

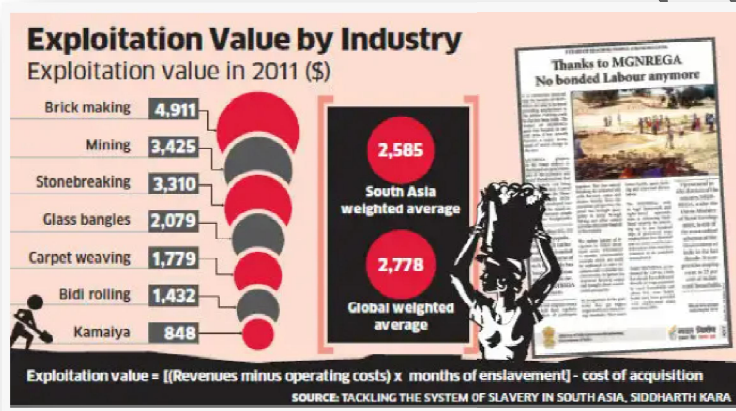
India must **remain in a perpetual state of strategic preparedness** given Pakistan's military posturing and ideological hostility. The **recent conflict reaffirms that modern warfare is no longer linear**, involving **multi-domain operations** — from drones to satellites. For India to retain escalation dominance and deter future aggression, it must **bridge gaps in space surveillance, reinforce air defence, and harden cyber capabilities**. The path to regional peace lies not just in diplomacy but in **credible military deterrence backed by technological superiority**.

4. Bonded Labour in India

Key Highlights for UPSC Preparation:

1. Definition and Legal Prohibition of Bonded Labour

- **Bonded Labour** refers to the practice where people are forced to work to repay debts, often under exploitative conditions.
- **Legal Provisions:**
 - *Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976*: Prohibits all forms of bonded labour.



- *Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986* and *JJ Act, 2016*: Prohibit employment of children in hazardous conditions.

- *SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989*: Provides additional safeguards in case of caste-based discrimination.

- *Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (Section 103(1))*: Added for murder in this specific case.

2. Case Summary: A Modern Tragedy

- A tribal woman from Andhra Pradesh, Ankamma, pledged her nine-year-old son Venkatesh as 'collateral' for a ₹15,000 loan to a duck farmer.
- The farmer refused to accept repayment, falsely claimed the child absconded, and later confessed to the boy's death due to **blunt force injuries**.
- Despite legal protections, the incident revealed caste discrimination, poverty, and gaps in enforcement.

3. Socio-economic Marginalization of the Yanadi Tribe

- Yanadis are a **Denotified and Nomadic Tribe (DNT)**, with only **35.35% literacy** and extreme poverty.



- Most do not own land or assets and live in informal settlements, making them vulnerable to **exploitation and debt bondage**.

4. Systemic Loopholes in Enforcement and Rehabilitation

- **No Action Plans** or regular bonded labour surveys have been undertaken post-Supreme Court directions.
- **'Release Certificates'** are issued only to the rescued bonded labourers, making the family of the deceased ineligible.
- **Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourers (2021)** promises ₹30,000 immediately and up to ₹3 lakh post-conviction—but delays are routine.

5. Persistent Gaps in Implementation

- Despite being outlawed, over **402 bonded labourers were rescued in Andhra Pradesh alone (2023)**.
- **Duck-rearing and Subabul logging** industries are hotspots for such exploitation due to high informality and child labour reliance.
- Victims often face **threats and re-bondage** post-rescue due to lack of sustainable livelihood options.

6. Need for Stronger Governance and Awareness

- Awareness among marginalised communities about **legal safeguards is minimal**.
- Tribal communities like Yanadis fear reprisals and lack the legal literacy to demand justice.
- NGOs and civil society play a **crucial role in rescue, rehabilitation, and legal aid**, but systemic support remains weak.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions Relevant for UPSC:

- **Article 23:** Prohibits human trafficking and forced labour.
- **Article 24:** Prohibits employment of children below 14 in hazardous jobs.
- **Directive Principles (Article 39(e) & (f)):** Directs State to ensure children are not abused and citizens are not forced by economic necessity to work in unsuitable vocations.
- **Labour Codes (Post-2020):** Aim to consolidate and simplify various labour laws but implementation remains weak.

Conclusion:

This tragic case underscores the **failure of implementation despite a strong legal framework**. It highlights how **poverty, caste, and illiteracy intersect to perpetuate bonded labour**, particularly among tribal groups like the Yanadis. For aspirants of civil services, it's essential to view such cases as indicators of **governance failure, social injustice**, and the **urgent need for inclusive policy reform** with a human rights lens.



5. New Zealand–India Defence and Security Cooperation: Key Points

1. Enhanced Defence Cooperation

- New Zealand and India have recently signed a **Defence Cooperation Arrangement**, aimed at strengthening bilateral military engagement.
- This includes improved interoperability, joint military exercises, and sharing of strategic defence information.

2. Freedom of Navigation in Indo-Pacific

- New Zealand emphasized the **importance of freedom of navigation** in the Indo-Pacific for trade and regional security.
- India is seen as a vital partner in ensuring stability and rule-based order in the region.

3. New Zealand's Role in Maritime Security

- The **New Zealand Navy leads Combined Task Force 150**, which operates in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden, targeting threats like terrorism, piracy, and smuggling.
- This highlights New Zealand's active role in maintaining maritime security and protecting global trade routes.

4. Foreign Policy Reset and South Asia Focus

- New Zealand is “resetting” its foreign policy by increasing diplomatic and strategic focus on **South and Southeast Asia**, including India.
- This shift reflects growing recognition of India's strategic and economic significance.



5. Recognition of India as a Geopolitical Giant

- India is described as an “**indispensable security actor**” in both regional and global arenas.
- India's rising global stature is acknowledged by New Zealand, particularly in light of recent global instability.

6. Diplomacy as a Strategic Tool

- New Zealand advocates **diplomacy and multilateral dialogue** in addressing global crises, including security challenges.
- Emphasis on talking “with” rather than “at” each other reflects a commitment to inclusive and respectful diplomacy, especially by small states like New Zealand.

Key Definitions & Legal/Constitutional References

• **Defence Cooperation Arrangement (DCA):**

A formal bilateral agreement to enhance defence engagement through mechanisms such as joint exercises, officer exchanges, and shared strategic frameworks.



- **Indo-Pacific Region:**

A geopolitical and strategic term that includes the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean regions; vital for trade routes, energy security, and strategic alliances.

- **Freedom of Navigation:**

A principle of international law under the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)** that allows ships of all countries to pass through international waters without interference.

- **Combined Task Force 150 (CTF-150):**

A multinational naval task force under the **Combined Maritime Forces**, which aims to counter terrorism and maritime crime in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Indian Ocean.

Conclusion

The growing India–New Zealand defence partnership marks a significant shift in New Zealand's strategic outlook in response to a volatile global order. Recognizing India's emergence as a key player in Indo-Pacific security, New Zealand is proactively engaging with India on shared concerns such as maritime security, regional stability, and diplomatic multilateralism. For UPSC aspirants, this highlights the increasing geopolitical relevance of India and the need for strategic bilateralism in contemporary global affairs.

6. Protests Against Hydropower Projects in Arunachal Pradesh: Key Points

1. Widespread Opposition to Dam Projects

- Protests have erupted in **multiple districts of Arunachal Pradesh** against hydropower projects on the **Siang, Dri, and Lohit rivers**.
- Key opposition includes the **400 MW Mihundo (Mihumdon) Project** on the Dri River and the **1200 MW Kalai-II Project** on the Lohit River.

2. Lack of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)

- Local communities, such as the **EkhomeyMowo Welfare Society** and **Nukung Welfare Society**, allege violations of FPIC norms.
- **Gram Sabha approval**, mandatory under the Forest Rights Act (2006) and other constitutional safeguards, was reportedly not taken.

3. Violation of Indigenous Rights and Cultural Heritage

- Indigenous **Mishmi tribal communities** fear submergence of **sacred cultural and spiritual sites**, violating Article 29 of the Constitution (protection of cultural rights of minorities).
- The projects risk disrupting traditional livelihoods, spiritual life, and demographic balance in ecologically fragile zones.





4. Environmental and Social Impact Concerns

- The dams are proposed in **biodiversity-rich and seismically sensitive zones**, raising concerns over ecological sustainability.
- **Social Impact Assessments (SIAs)** have flagged displacement risks and loss of agricultural and forest land.

5. Legal and Constitutional Provisions Involved

- **Article 244 and Schedule VI** (protection of tribal areas) and **PESA Act, 1996** (empowers Gram Sabhas in Scheduled Areas) are relevant.
- **Forest Rights Act, 2006** mandates consent of forest-dwelling communities before diversion of forest land.

6. Run-of-the-River Projects – Definition and Challenges

- These are hydroelectric projects that **divert water from a river**, without creating large reservoirs.
- Though considered environmentally safer, they still **alter river ecosystems** and affect riparian communities.

Key Definitions for UPSC

- **Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC):**
A principle under international law (UNDRIP) and Indian legal frameworks, requiring communities' consent before initiating projects that affect them.
- **Social Impact Assessment (SIA):**
A study mandated under the **Land Acquisition Act, 2013** to assess how a proposed project would impact people socially and economically.
- **Run-of-the-River Project:**
A type of hydropower plant that generates electricity without creating large reservoirs, relying on the natural flow and elevation of a river.

Conclusion for UPSC Use

The protests against dam projects in Arunachal Pradesh highlight the tension between developmental goals and indigenous rights. While hydropower is essential for India's clean energy future, the lack of compliance with **constitutional safeguards**, **tribal rights**, and **environmental norms** could erode trust in state institutions. For UPSC aspirants, this case exemplifies the importance of balancing infrastructure development with **ecological integrity and social justice**, particularly in sensitive tribal areas.

7. India's Internet Expansion and Telecom Transformation

1. India Nearing 1 Billion Internet Users

- India currently has **974 million internet subscribers**, up from 250 million a decade ago.



○ The country is expected to reach **1 billion users by the end of FY2024-25**, becoming a global digital superpower.

○ This expansion is driven by low data tariffs (₹9/GB), making India the **cheapest data market globally**.

2. BharatNet: World's Largest Rural Connectivity Mission

- **BharatNet Phase I** connected **2.14 lakh Gram Panchayats** through ~7 lakh km of optical fiber.
- **Phase II** targets **2.64 lakh more Gram Panchayats**, aiming to cover all ~6.5 lakh villages.
- Budget: **\$16.9 billion** (₹1.39 lakh crore) – **largest public sector digital connectivity project** globally.
- Innovations include: MPLS routers, better network resilience, 10-year maintenance mandates, and central NOC for monitoring.

3. Policy Push: Telecom & Indigenous Manufacturing

- Under **PLI Scheme**, telecom equipment production received ₹4,000 crore in investments and created 25,000 jobs.
- India has become a **net exporter** of mobile phones worth ₹1.75 lakh crore, moving from 80% imports to self-sufficiency.
- Technologies like **OpenRAN**, **5Gi**, and **Bharat 6G Alliance** aim for global telecom leadership (10% of 6G patents).

4. Modernisation of India Post & Legal Reforms

- The **Post Office Act, 2023** has modernized India Post, enabling it to deliver **postal, financial, and digital services** (e.g., India Post Payments Bank, postal life insurance).
- Plans include introducing a **Digital Access Code** for every geographical location.

5. Telecom Market Structure & Government Intervention

- India has **three private** telecom players and one public (BSNL). The government converted ₹37,000 crore debt of Vodafone Idea Ltd. (VIL) into **49% equity**, ensuring sector stability.
- However, the government asserts **no intention to exceed 49% stake**, upholding free market principles.

6. Satellite Communication & Remote Access

- In addition to Starlink and other satellite initiatives, BharatNet aims to provide **terrestrial connectivity** even in the most remote regions, including the Northeast.

Key Definitions and Constitutional Provisions



- **BharatNet Project:** A government initiative to provide **broadband connectivity to all 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats** under the Digital India programme.
- **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme:** A government scheme to boost **domestic manufacturing and exports** by providing financial incentives on incremental sales.
- **Post Office Act, 2023:** Modernizes the functioning of India Post to allow **non-postal services** like banking, insurance, and digital identity verification.
- **Digital India Initiative:** A flagship programme to transform India into a **digitally empowered society and knowledge economy** (launched in 2015).
- **Right to Internet:** Although not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution, the **Supreme Court in Anuradha Bhasin v. Union of India (2020)** ruled that **access to internet is part of freedom of speech under Article 19(1)(a)**.

Conclusion for UPSC Use

India's journey towards becoming a **digitally empowered society** is supported by massive public investments (like BharatNet), **policy frameworks (PLI Scheme)**, and **technological innovations (5Gi, 6G patents)**. This transformation not only ensures digital inclusion but also strengthens rural governance, e-governance, and economic participation. For UPSC aspirants, this case represents a model of **state-led infrastructure development, federal digital outreach, and legal modernisation**, which are crucial for achieving **inclusive growth and digital sovereignty** in a globalised world.

8. Centre Urges States to Boost Enrolment in Government Schools

Key Highlights:

- **Alarming Shift to Private Schools:**
The **Union Ministry of Education** flagged a **disturbing trend** of students increasingly enrolling in private (unaided) schools over government schools in at least **11 States/UTs**, notably **Uttarakhand, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh**.
- **Disproportion in Enrolment vs. Infrastructure:**
Despite **government schools being in the majority** (e.g., 70% in Telangana, 71.8% in Uttarakhand), **their enrolment rates remain low** (e.g., only 36.6% in Uttarakhand and 38.1% in Telangana), while private schools, with lesser presence, attract more students.
 - **Official Concern & Response:**
School Education Secretary Sanjay Kumar emphasized that even with **significant public expenditure**, the enrolment is shifting toward private institutions. States were **advised to diagnose the root causes and build a strong “government school brand”** to reverse the trend.
- **Samagra Shiksha Framework:**
These issues were discussed in the **Project Approval Board (PAB)** meetings under the **Samagra**





Shiksha Scheme for 2025–26, aimed at improving holistic school education from pre-primary to Class XII.

- **Data Source – UDISE+ 2023-24:**

The enrolment data cited is sourced from the **Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+)**, a critical database used for educational planning and monitoring at the national level.

Additional Important Points:

- **Constitutional Provision (Article 21A):**

Provides **free and compulsory education to all children aged 6–14 years** as a Fundamental Right, implemented via the **Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act)**.

- **Legal Framework:**

Under **Section 12(1)(c) of RTE Act**, private unaided schools must admit at least **25% children from weaker sections**, indicating that government schools should ideally not suffer from lack of demand if quality is ensured.

- **Challenges Identified:**

Common reasons for low government school enrolment may include **poor infrastructure, inadequate teaching quality, perception of better discipline or outcomes in private schools, and lack of innovation or accountability in public education delivery**.

Definitions:

- **Enrolment Rate:** Percentage of eligible children registered in school relative to the total eligible age group population.
- **Unaided Schools:** Schools that are **privately managed and funded without financial assistance** from the government.
- **Samagra Shiksha:** An integrated scheme for school education focusing on **access, equity, and quality** from pre-school to senior secondary levels.

Conclusion:

The **decline in enrolment in government schools**, despite massive financial and infrastructural inputs, reflects a **crisis of confidence** in public education. **Reversing this trend is crucial for inclusive and equitable education**, as private schooling remains unaffordable for many. The **Centre’s advisory to States underlines the urgency** to address systemic gaps, enhance public school quality, and **restore trust in government institutions** to ensure the **Right to Education** is truly meaningful.

9. IMA Opposes Integrated MBBS-BAMS Course Proposal

Key Highlights:

- **IMA’s Strong Opposition:**

The **Indian Medical Association (IMA)** has **condemned the Union Government’s proposal** to introduce an **integrated MBBS-BAMS course** at JIPMER, Puducherry, calling it “**unscientific**” and “**harmful**” for both patients and doctors.





- **Nature of the Proposed Integration:**
The plan involves **merging MBBS (modern allopathic medicine) and BAMS (Ayurvedic system)** into a **single academic curriculum**. Currently, both are **separate 5.5-year programs** in their respective disciplines.
- **IMA's Concerns – "Mixopathy":**
IMA warns that "**mixopathy**"—the **merging of fundamentally different medical systems**—is an "**irreversible catastrophe**", may produce "**hybrid doctors**", and risks **undermining scientific credibility and patient rights** to choose their preferred medical system.
- **Global Context – Citing China's Failure:**
The IMA referenced the **failure of China's experiment** in integrating traditional and modern medicine, claiming it **led to the decline of traditional Chinese medicine** and warns of similar repercussions for Ayurveda in India.
- **Rise in Life Expectancy Attributed to Modern Medicine:**
The IMA emphasized that India's **life expectancy increased from 32 years (1947) to 70.8 years (2025)** primarily due to **modern medical advances**, including vaccination and public healthcare systems.

Additional Important Points:

- **Definition – Mixopathy:**
The practice of combining different systems of medicine (e.g., allopathy with Ayurveda) in diagnosis and treatment without scientific validation or clinical trials.
- **Legal & Policy Provisions:**
 - **National Medical Commission Act, 2019** governs medical education and ethical practice for MBBS.
 - **Indian Medicine Central Council Act, 1970** regulates Ayurvedic and other traditional medicine education.
 - The **Ministry of AYUSH** oversees Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy systems, **distinct** from allopathic practice.
 - **Article 47 (DPSP):** The State shall raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and improve public health.
- **Ethical and Scientific Concerns (GS Paper IV):**
Mixing systems without evidence-based validation raises **ethical issues of patient safety, informed consent**, and the **scientific rigor of medical education**.

Conclusion:

The proposal to launch an **integrated MBBS-BAMS course** marks a significant shift in India's medical education policy. While **interdisciplinary collaboration** is welcome, **forcible and unscientific merging** of systems risks creating **half-trained professionals**, undermines the **purity of traditional knowledge systems**, and **erodes the credibility of modern medicine**. A **careful, evidence-based, and consensual approach** involving stakeholders from both systems is essential before implementing such reforms.



10. Government Meets Fiscal Deficit Target of 4.8% in FY25

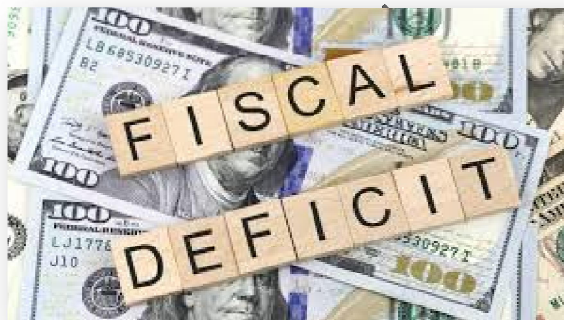
Key Highlights:

- **Fiscal Deficit at 4.8% of GDP in FY25:**

The Government of India successfully met its revised fiscal deficit target of ₹15.77 lakh crore, or 4.8% of GDP for the financial year 2024-25, despite shortfalls in some revenue streams. This aligns with the government's commitment to fiscal consolidation.

- **Shortfall in Receipts:**

Total revenue receipts (tax + non-tax + capital) stood at ₹30.78 lakh crore—97.8% of the revised estimate. The shortfall was mainly due to lower disinvestment receipts and a 6% drop in income tax collections, although corporate tax revenue exceeded expectations.



- **Expenditure Also in Line:**

Total government expenditure was ₹46.55 lakh crore, again 97.8% of the revised estimate, indicating efficient fiscal management despite economic uncertainties.

- **Glide Path for Fiscal Consolidation:**

As per the Union Budget 2024, the target for fiscal deficit in FY26 is 4.4% of GDP, consistent with the Centre's medium-term fiscal consolidation roadmap, which aims to reduce fiscal deficit below 4.5% by FY26, as earlier announced in 2021.

- **Disinvestment Targets Missed:**

The government achieved only 52.1% of its disinvestment target (₹17,202 crore raised vs. estimates), reflecting persistent challenges in privatization and asset monetization.

Key Definitions & Constitutional Provisions:

- **Fiscal Deficit:**

It is the excess of total government expenditure over total non-borrowed receipts. It reflects the government's borrowing requirement from the market.

- **Article 112 (Constitution of India):**

Mandates the Annual Financial Statement (Union Budget) which includes details on revenue, expenditure, and fiscal deficit.

- **FRBM Act, 2003 (Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management):**

Aims to ensure fiscal discipline, reduce deficits, and improve macroeconomic stability. It provides targets for fiscal and revenue deficit.

Additional Key Points for UPSC:

- **Importance of Disinvestment:**

Disinvestment is crucial for resource mobilization and reducing fiscal burden. Failure to meet targets impacts fiscal planning.



- **Revenue Shortfall Implications:**

Lower-than-expected **income tax collections** may signal **economic stress or compliance issues**, and may impact allocations to welfare schemes.

- **Corporate Tax Outperformance:**

Slight increase in **corporate tax** signals **stronger-than-expected corporate earnings**, possibly reflecting resilience in organized sectors.

Conclusion:

While India's fiscal deficit target for FY25 has been met, **revenue mobilization remains a concern**, especially with continued underperformance in **disinvestment** and **direct taxes**. Meeting the **future glide path (4.4% in FY26)** will require **structural reforms**, improved **tax compliance**, and **efficient expenditure management**, ensuring fiscal prudence alongside inclusive development.

11. President of India Presents National Florence Nightingale Awards 2025

Key Highlights:

- **National Florence Nightingale Awards 2025 Presented:**

President **Droupadi Murmu** conferred the **National Florence Nightingale Awards** to outstanding **nurses across India** at a formal ceremony held at **Rashtrapati Bhavan** on **May 30, 2025**.

- **Purpose of the Award:**

Instituted by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, Government of India, the award recognizes **exceptional and meritorious service** by **nursing professionals**, especially in **public health, patient care, and disaster response**.

- **Background of the Award:**

The award is named after **Florence Nightingale**, the founder of modern nursing, who is globally acknowledged for her **compassion, dedication, and pioneering healthcare work** during the Crimean War.

- **Scope and Recognition:**

Awardees are chosen from across **urban and rural health services**, including **military nursing**, and are selected for **commitment, innovation, leadership, and compassionate care**.

- **Constitutional and Policy Relevance:**

- Reflects the principles of **Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV)**, especially **Article 47**, which mandates the State to raise the level of nutrition and improve public health.
- Aligns with **National Health Policy 2017**, which emphasizes **human resources for health**, including better recognition and incentives for nursing staff.

Important Definitions:

- **Nursing Officer/Nurse:**

A **registered healthcare professional** trained to provide **clinical, preventive, rehabilitative, and**





palliative care, playing a key role in India's healthcare delivery system.

- **Public Health System:**

The network of institutions, personnel, and policies aimed at ensuring **healthcare access** and **health security** to the population, especially vulnerable groups.

Additional Key Points for UPSC:

- **Women Empowerment & Healthcare Sector:**

As the majority of nursing professionals are **women**, the award **reinforces gender empowerment** and enhances the **social status of nursing professions**.

- **Significance in Disaster and Pandemic Response:**

Nurses played a **crucial role during the COVID-19 pandemic**, and such awards serve to **institutionalize appreciation** and boost **morale and retention** in the health workforce.

- **Health Sector Reforms:**

Recognizing and rewarding frontline healthcare workers is integral to **achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** and **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 3)** – Good Health and Well-being.

Conclusion:

The National Florence Nightingale Awards are not just ceremonial honours but are a **testament to the critical role nurses play in the healthcare system**. Institutional recognition like this helps **elevate the profile of nursing as a profession**, inspire future healthcare workers, and contributes to the realization of a **resilient and inclusive public health system in India**.

12. Ayush Suraksha Portal Launched to Tackle Misleading Advertisements and Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs)

Key Highlights:

- **Launch of Ayush Suraksha Portal:**

On 30 May 2025, Union Minister Prataprao Jadhav launched the **Ayush Suraksha Portal** at Ayush Bhawan, New Delhi. The portal aims to tackle **misleading advertisements** and monitor **adverse drug reactions (ADRs)** within the **Ayush (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa, and Homoeopathy)** systems.

- **Objective and Scope:**

The portal enables **citizens, healthcare professionals, and regulators** to report misleading claims and ADRs. It promotes **transparency, pharmacovigilance, and inter-agency coordination** by integrating data from **State Licensing Authorities, CCPA, CDSCO, NCISM, NCH, PCI, FSSAI, and others**.

- **Supreme Court Directive Compliance:**

The portal was created as per **Supreme Court's order (Writ Petition Civil No.**

645/2022) dated **30 July 2024**, directing the **Union Government** to create a centralized monitoring dashboard before **June 2025**. The Ministry of Ayush complied ahead of schedule.





- **Pharmacovigilance and Regulatory Mechanism:**
Developed with support from **Central Council for Research in Siddha (CCRS)**, the portal is aligned with the **National Pharmacovigilance Program**, facilitating **real-time tracking, data analysis, and regulatory enforcement**.
- **Empowerment and Public Participation:**
The portal empowers the public by offering **direct access** to report false advertisements and harmful drug effects, fostering a culture of **accountability, safety, and ethical practice** in traditional medicine.

Definitions and Constitutional Linkages:

- **Pharmacovigilance:**
It is the science and activities related to the **detection, assessment, understanding, and prevention** of adverse effects or any other drug-related problems.
- **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP):**
Under **Article 47**, it is the **duty of the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health**, supporting the regulation of health-related misinformation.
- **Consumer Protection:**
Under **Consumer Protection Act, 2019**, misleading advertisements are punishable, and platforms like Ayush Suraksha Portal strengthen **citizen redressal mechanisms**.

Additional Points for UPSC:

- **Convergence of Regulatory Agencies:**
The portal represents **digital governance** and **federal coordination** among agencies like **CDSCO (Central Drugs Standard Control Organization)**, **FSSAI**, **Press Council of India**, and state health departments.
- **E-Governance Initiative:**
Promotes **Digital India** goals by offering a **centralized, accessible, and transparent digital interface** for citizens and authorities alike.
- **Health Security and Evidence-Based Medicine:**
Reinforces the push toward **evidence-based practices** in traditional systems of medicine and aligns with the **WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine** hosted in India.

Conclusion:

The **Ayush Suraksha Portal** is a **landmark reform** in India's traditional medicine ecosystem, ensuring **regulatory compliance, public safety, and ethical advertising**. By fostering **transparency and participatory governance**, the portal upholds both **citizen rights and professional integrity** in the Ayush sector, making it a vital tool for **public health governance and consumer protection**.