

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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MOSPI'S FRAMEWORK FOR INDIA'S KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

Context

- The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** is inviting feedback and suggestions on the **Base Paper on Framework for Measuring the Contribution of Knowledge and Knowledge Products** to the Indian Economy.
 - MoSPI constituted a Committee on **Knowledge Systems under the chairmanship of Ratan P. Watal**.

What Is the Knowledge Economy?

- A knowledge economy is one **where human capital** like skills, information, innovation, and intellectual property drives growth, rather than physical inputs or natural resources.
- It operates on **two types of knowledge**:
 - Codified Knowledge**: Documented, transmittable (know-what, know-why) like patents, software, academic research.
 - Tacit Knowledge**: Experience-based, harder to transfer (know-how, know-who) like artisanal skills, traditional medicine.
- In major OECD economies, knowledge-based activities contribute **over 50% of GDP**.
- India's IT sector, start-up ecosystem, pharmaceutical R&D, and traditional knowledge systems** are all part of this, yet remain invisible in standard national accounts.

Why is this Framework Needed?

- Limitations of Traditional Methods**: Traditional GDP estimation methods mainly measure the value of tangible economic activities such as manufacturing, agriculture, construction, and physical infrastructure.
 - Existing statistical systems do not adequately capture the value generated by knowledge-based activities.
- Gross Domestic Knowledge Product (GDKP)**: GDKP is a complementary metric to GDP that measures the economic value of a country's knowledge production and use.
- It captures **four dimensions of knowledge** in an economy.
 - Knowledge Items** like tangible (books, computers, journals) and intangible (online courses, patents, training programmes)
 - Knowledge Producers** means universities, R&D labs, think tanks, innovators

- Knowledge Distributors** like media, digital platforms, publishing houses
- Knowledge Users** are consumers, industries, and governments.

Major Highlights of the Paper

- Modern Knowledge Products**: It identifies software, algorithms, databases, AI systems, and digital content as important modern knowledge products.
 - It includes patents, copyrights, trademarks, and industrial designs under intellectual property products.
 - Scientific publications, technological innovations, and research outputs are also treated as knowledge products.
- Valuable Knowledge Assets**: Traditional knowledge systems, indigenous medicinal practices, and GI-tagged products are recognized as economically valuable knowledge assets.
 - It highlights systems such as Ayurveda, traditional medicine, tribal knowledge, local agricultural techniques, and Geographical Indications (GIs).
- One of the most important proposals in the paper is the concept of **"Effective R&D Capital Stock."**
 - The framework proposes treating expenditure on research and development as a form of capital formation similar to investment in physical infrastructure.
- Valuation Framework**: It attempts to develop a broad valuation framework for integrating knowledge products into national accounting systems.

Why Does This Matter for India?

- India is targeting a **\$10 trillion GDP by 2034 and Viksit Bharat by 2047** and both aspirations are fundamentally knowledge-driven.
- India's demographic dividend**, the largest working-age population in the world, can only be converted into economic value through knowledge and skills, not just numbers.
- Sectors like IT services, pharmaceuticals, space technology, AI, and start-ups** are already major contributors to growth but remain under-measured in national accounts.
- India's vast traditional knowledge heritage** like Ayurveda, indigenous seed varieties, craft traditions, folk technologies has significant economic value that is entirely uncaptured today.

- **Knowing the true size and structure of the knowledge economy** enables better policies on R&D spending, IP protection, education investment, and digital infrastructure.

Challenges Identified by the Framework

- **Absence of Global Standards:** Currently there is no universally accepted international framework for measuring the contribution of knowledge economies.
- **Data Gaps:** The framework identifies major data deficiencies regarding AI adoption, innovation diffusion, digital assets, and informal innovation systems.
 - ♦ Reliable statistical data on knowledge-based economic activities is still limited in many sectors.
- **Difficulty in Valuation:** Intangible assets are difficult to price because they often do not have clear market values.
- **Rapid Obsolescence of Knowledge:** The framework recognizes that technological change can quickly reduce the economic value of existing knowledge products.
- **Challenges in Measuring Spillover Effects:** The paper notes that innovations often indirectly improve productivity in unrelated sectors, making spillover effects difficult to quantify statistically.

Conclusion

- The MoSPI framework represents an **important shift in economic thinking** by recognizing knowledge, innovation, and intangible assets as major drivers of economic growth.
- If successfully implemented, the framework could **significantly improve India's ability to measure innovation-led growth** and support its transition toward becoming a global knowledge economy.

Source: AIR

PM MODI VISIT TO NORWAY

Context

- Prime Minister Modi lands for the first bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Norway after 43 years.

Key Highlights of the Meet

- **Green Strategic Partnership:** India and Norway formally declared the upgrade of bilateral ties to a Green Strategic Partnership to ensure increased collaboration in sectors ranging from Clean Energy to Climate Resilience, Blue economy to green shipping.

- **Norway Joins Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI):** Norway formally joined India's IPOI framework (launched 2019), which promotes a free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific.
- **Triangular Cooperation Agreement:** India and Norway will jointly offer India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) (the Aadhaar-UPI-CoWIN stack) to countries of the Global South.
- **Diplomatic Outcomes:** Norway reaffirmed support for India's permanent seat in a reformed UN Security Council.
 - ♦ PM Modi awarded the **Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit by King Harald V**, Norway's highest civilian honour for foreign heads of government.
- **Agreements Signed:** To strengthen cooperation in areas of clean energy, offshore wind, sustainability, geosciences, and academic collaboration.

Norway

- **Norway** is a narrow country in northern Europe. It shares the Scandinavian Peninsula with Sweden and Finland.



- Norway's coastline is famous for its **fjords (fyords)**, which are sea inlets between steep cliffs. The fjords were carved out by glaciers, as were the country's mountains.
- Although not in the EU, **Norway is part of the European Economic Area and a member of NATO.**
- The biggest source of national income is the **extraction and export of offshore oil and gas.**
 - ♦ Other significant industries include fishing, steel, shipping and tourism.

Brief on India - Norway Bilateral Ties

- India and Norway established bilateral relations in **1947**.

- **The India-Nordic Summit** format allowed more **regular and structured interactions at Prime Ministerial levels**.
 - ♦ The first summit was held in **2018 at Stockholm**.
- **The Joint Commission Meeting (JCM)** between the Foreign Ministers is the high level mechanism of coordination between the two countries, covering the entire gamut of relations.
- **Norway has been supporting India's perusal to become a permanent member** of a reformed UN Security Council.
- **Bilateral Trade:** It was US \$ 1.05 billion in 2024-25 and India exported goods worth US\$ 630 million and imported goods worth US\$ 420 million.
 - ♦ Trade in services has been around **USD 1 billion**.
 - ♦ **India and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)** which includes Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein, signed a **Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)** in 2024.
- **Investment:** The Government Pension Fund Global (GPF) of Norway has invested close to US\$ 28 billion (till 2025) in the Indian capital market.
 - ♦ In addition, FDI inflows from Norway during 2000 to 2025 was US\$ 764 million.
- **Arctic/ Polar:** India set up its first permanent research station '**Himadri**' in the **Arctic in 2008 at Svalbard, Norway**.
 - ♦ The National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) carries out multiple scientific expeditions to the Arctic every year.
 - ♦ India has also been an Observer State in the Arctic Council since 2013.
- **Space:** ISRO uses Norway's Svalbard ground station on commercial terms to receive data from IRS satellites.
 - ♦ KSAT is also setting up ISRO's antenna in Svalbard.
- ♦ As India's energy demand rises, Norway can serve as a stable and reliable partner for diversification of energy imports.
- **Economic and Investment Relations:** Norway is an important investor in India through sectors such as renewable energy, logistics, maritime services, and technology.
 - ♦ The Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global is among the world's largest sovereign wealth funds with investments in Indian companies.
- **India-EFTA Trade Agreement:** The Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) signed with India in 2024 is expected to enhance trade, investments, and technology transfer.
- **Arctic Cooperation:** Norway is strategically important for India's Arctic policy. India cooperates with Norway in Arctic research, climate studies, polar science, and sustainable development in the Arctic region.
- **Strategic Importance in Europe:** Norway's location in Northern Europe and the Arctic region gives India strategic access to emerging geopolitical and trade routes in the North Atlantic and Arctic areas.

Conclusion

- Norway is an important partner for India in areas such as maritime cooperation, renewable energy, Arctic research, climate action, trade, and sustainable development.
- Strengthening India-Norway relations can support India's economic growth, green transition, and strategic engagement in the Arctic and European regions.

Source: **TH**

CHANGE IN CITIZENSHIP RULES

Context

- The Centre notified **draft changes to the Citizenship Rules, 2009** that would require certain applicants to declare possession or surrender passports issued by **Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh**.

About

- The new provision **obliges applicants** to state whether they hold a valid or expired passport issued by any of the three neighbouring countries.

Significance of Norway for India

- **Maritime and Blue Economy Cooperation:** Norway is a global leader in shipping, fisheries, offshore energy, and ocean management.
 - ♦ India can benefit from Norwegian expertise in sustainable ocean governance, port modernization, and marine technology.
- **Energy Security:** Norway is one of the world's major exporters of crude oil and natural gas.

- ♦ Those who possess such passports **must provide passport details** and **agree to surrender** the document to the Senior Superintendent of Post concerned **within 15 days of citizenship approval**.
- The new clause has been inserted within **Schedule IC of the Citizenship Rules**. This section pertains to **Afghan, Bangladeshi and Pakistani nationals** belonging to **Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian communities** who are seeking Indian citizenship.
- ♦ **The Citizenship (Amendment) Act of 2019** had paved the way for granting Indian nationality to **undocumented non-Muslim migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan** who came to India before the end of **December 2014**.
- The officials described the amendment as an **administrative clarification** aimed at strengthening verification and record-keeping in citizenship cases.

Citizenship

- Citizenship is listed in the **Union List under the Constitution** and thus is **under the exclusive jurisdiction of Parliament**.
- The Constitution **does not define the term 'citizen'** but **details of various categories** of persons who are entitled to citizenship are given in **Part II (Articles 5 to 11)**.

Acquisition of Indian Citizenship

- The **Citizenship Act of 1955** prescribes five ways of acquiring citizenship:
 - ♦ Citizenship conferred by birth;
 - ♦ Citizenship through descent;
 - ♦ Citizenship through registration;
 - ♦ Naturalization leads to citizenship;
 - ♦ Territorial incorporation (by the Government of India).
- Under The **Indian Citizenship Act, 1955**, **Persons of Indian Origin are not allowed dual citizenship**. If a person has ever held an Indian passport and has obtained the passport of another country, they are required to immediately surrender their Indian passport.

Termination of Indian Citizenship

- ♦ **Renunciation:** Any Indian citizen who is also a national of another country who renounces his Indian citizenship in the prescribed manner through a declaration ceases to be an Indian citizen.

- ♦ **Termination:** An Indian citizen's citizenship can be revoked if he or she knowingly or voluntarily adopts the citizenship of another country.
- ♦ **Deprivation:** In some cases, the Indian government may deprive a person of his citizenship. However, this does not apply to all citizens. Conditions for deprivation are:
 - Obtained the citizenship by fraud.
 - Citizens have shown disloyalty to the Constitution of India.
 - Citizens have unlawfully traded or communicated during the times of war.
 - Within 5 years of naturalization, the said citizen is imprisoned for a term of two years.
 - Citizen has been ordinarily resident out of India for a period of 7 years.

Source: IE

FEDERALISM IN INDIA AND THE NEED FOR DEMOCRATIC SENSIBILITY

Context

- The recently defeated '**Constitution (One Hundred and Thirty First Amendment) Bill, 2026**' and concerns over delimitation, fiscal transfers, Centre-State relations, and political centralisation have revived discussions on **Indian federalism**.

About Federalism and Its Evolution in India

- Federalism refers to the constitutional division of powers between the Union and the States.
- India adopted a federal structure with a strong Centre due to the challenges of Partition, integration of princely states, and the need for national unity.

Evolution of Federalism in India

- **Post-Independence Centralisation:** The Constitution vested greater powers in the Centre under Articles 249, 356, and emergency provisions.
- **Planning Commission Era:** Economic planning led to increased fiscal dependence of states on the Union government.
- **Misuse of Article 356:** Frequent dismissal of state governments weakened federal autonomy.
- **Linguistic Reorganisation (1956):** Recognised regional aspirations and strengthened democratic federalism.

- **Coalition Era (1990s):** Regional parties enhanced cooperative federalism.
- **GST Regime:** The GST Council emerged as an example of collaborative decision-making between the Centre and States.
 - ♦ Indian federalism has therefore remained a 'work in progress' rather than a fixed arrangement.
- **Increasing Fiscal Imbalance:** Fiscal transfers from economically stronger states to poorer states are necessary for balanced development. However, excessive redistribution has created resentment.
 - ♦ Southern states, which successfully controlled population growth, fear losing parliamentary representation.
 - ♦ Northern states with higher fertility rates stand to gain more seats after delimitation.
 - ♦ Southern and Western states contribute significantly more to tax revenues.
 - ♦ Hindi heartland states receive disproportionately larger Finance Commission transfers.
- **Divergent Development Performance:** States have witnessed uneven economic and demographic growth.
 - ♦ Southern and Western states achieved higher per capita GDP growth and lower fertility rates.
 - ♦ Several Hindi heartland states continue to lag in human development indicators.
- **Erosion of Democratic Sensibility:** A major concern is the growing trend of unilateral decision-making. Issues such as demonetisation, farm laws, Citizenship Amendment Act, changes in criminal laws, and Governor-State conflicts have often lacked broad consultation with states and opposition parties.
 - ♦ It weakens the spirit of **cooperative federalism** and transforms it into confrontational federalism.

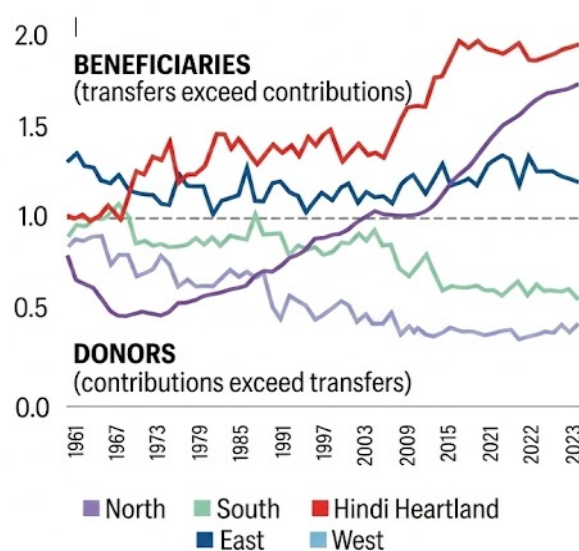
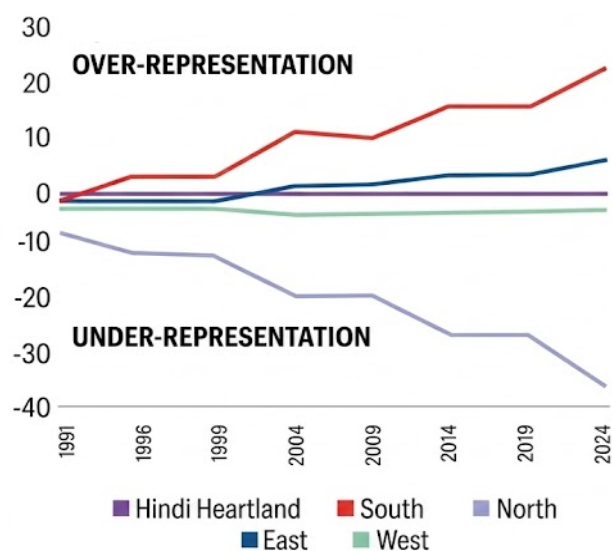
Constitutional and Legal Setup

- The Constitution establishes India as a 'Union of States' under **Article 1**.
- **Division of Powers: Union List, State List, Concurrent List** under the Seventh Schedule. Residuary powers rest with the Centre.
- **Fiscal Federalism: Finance Commission (Article 280)** recommends tax devolution.
 - ♦ **GST Council (Article 279A)** promotes cooperative fiscal governance.
- **Inter-State Coordination: Inter-State Council (Article 263)** facilitates Centre-State dialogue.
- **Emergency Provisions: Articles 352, 356, and 360** enable central intervention during crises.
 - ♦ Although constitutionally federal, India has often displayed unitary tendencies in practice.

India's Federalism Challenges

- **Rising Democratic Deficit:** Delimitation has been frozen since the 1971 Census through constitutional amendments in 1976 and 2002.
 - ♦ Consequently, representation in Parliament no longer reflects current population realities.

• Changing populations, changing representation



Way Forward: Building Consensus in Indian Federalism

- **Strengthen Cooperative Federalism:** Institutions like the GST Council and Inter-State Council must function through dialogue and consensus rather than majoritarianism.
- **Balanced Delimitation Approach:** Future delimitation should protect both democratic equality and states that achieved demographic success.
- **Reform Fiscal Transfers:** Finance Commission criteria should reward governance quality, fiscal discipline, and human development alongside equity considerations.
- **Respect State Autonomy:** The Centre should avoid excessive use of Governors and Article 356 for political purposes.
- **Promote Democratic Sensibility:** Federalism ultimately depends not only on constitutional provisions but also on political culture.
 - ♦ Consultation, accommodation, and mutual trust are essential for national integration.

[Source: IE](#)

INDIA-SOUTH KOREA TIES

In News

- The Indian Defence Minister's visit to Seoul after the South Korean President's visit to India highlights the growing strength and **strategic importance of India–South Korea relations**.

Background

- **India's Role in Korean War:** India played a key diplomatic and humanitarian role in Korea after 1945 and during the Korean War. During the war, India sent the 60th Parachute Field Ambulance (627 medical staff) treating about 220,000 patients.
 - ♦ India also sponsored a UN ceasefire resolution that led to the 1953 armistice.
- **Beginning for diplomatic relations:** India and South Korea established consular relations in 1962 and formal diplomatic relations in 1973.
 - ♦ Their ties deepened over time, with both countries upgrading the relationship to a Strategic Partnership in 2010 and further elevating it to a Special Strategic Partnership in 2015 during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Seoul.

Areas of Cooperation

- **Trade and Economic Relations:** The India–ROK Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), in force since 2010, has strengthened bilateral economic engagement.
 - ♦ Bilateral trade has grown from USD 14.2 billion at the time of its implementation to USD 26.89 billion in 2024–25, an increase of nearly 90%.
 - India's key exports to the ROK include light oils and related preparations, aluminium (not alloyed), ferro-chromium, refined lead, mineral fuel distillates (primarily naphtha), cereals, and iron and steel products.
 - Major imports from the ROK comprise automobile parts, telecommunication equipment, hot-rolled iron products, refined petroleum products, base lubricating oils, mechanical appliances, electrical machinery and parts, and iron and steel products.
 - ♦ ROK is India's **13th largest FDI investor**, with cumulative investments of USD 6.91 billion since 2000.
- **Defence Relations:** India–South Korea defence cooperation is guided by MoUs signed in 2005, 2010, and 2020 covering industry, logistics, R&D, and defence industrial roadmaps.
 - ♦ Recent collaboration includes a 2025 DRDO–Seoul National University agreement on developing high-power microwave systems and expanded participation in defence exhibitions like KADEX 2024.
 - ♦ **The K9 Vajra-T programme**, developed under the 'Make in India' initiative, has become the flagship project of India–South Korea defence cooperation.
 - ♦ **Submarine collaboration** has emerged as a key focus area, driven by South Korea's expertise in conventional submarines, lithium-ion battery systems, and air-independent propulsion technologies through companies such as Hanwha Ocean.
- **Cultural ties:** India and South Korea share ancient cultural ties.
 - ♦ The **Korean text Samguk Yusa** mentions Princess Suriratna from Ayodhya, who came to Korea in 48 AD, married King Kim Suro

of Gaya, and became Queen Heo Hwang-ok, with many Koreans tracing ancestry to her. Some scholars also link the spread of Buddhism to Korea with her family.

- ♦ **Rabindranath Tagore's poem "Lamp of the East" (1929)** highlights Korea's cultural spirit and remains popular in South Korea, even included in school education.
- ♦ Cultural cooperation is supported by agreements like the Cultural Exchange Programme (2018) and audio-visual co-production pact (2015), along with active engagement through institutions such as the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre in Seoul.
- **People to people exchange:** The Indian community in South Korea is about 18,000 strong, mainly consisting of students, researchers, and professionals.
 - ♦ A large number of students are enrolled in Korean universities, especially in STEM fields at postgraduate and doctoral levels. Indian diaspora groups are also active in supporting community welfare and promoting cultural engagement.

Latest Developments

- India and South Korea agreed to deepen trade, technology, and strategic cooperation during President Lee Jae Myung's visit to Delhi, marking a renewed push in ties after several years.
- Both sides set a target of \$50 billion in bilateral trade by the end of the decade and launched a vision for a Special Strategic Partnership, along with frameworks on shipbuilding, maritime logistics, energy security, and sustainability.
- They also signed 15 MoUs and emphasized cooperation in emerging technologies like quantum computing and critical minerals, combining Korea's technological expertise with India's scale.

Importance of the Partnership

- **Balance in Indo-Pacific:** India-South Korea relations are important for maintaining a balanced Indo-Pacific region amid China's growing influence.
 - ♦ Their cooperation supports a stable, rules-based regional order and strengthens shared security and strategic interests in the region.
- **Economic interdependence** :India and South Korea complement each other:
 - ♦ India provides market size, IT services, and skilled labour

- ♦ South Korea offers advanced manufacturing, technology, and capital, creating mutual growth and industrial cooperation.
- **Defence Diversification:** India-South Korea defence ties are shifting to innovation-led cooperation involving startups, research institutions, and joint platforms.
 - ♦ India reduces reliance on traditional suppliers, South Korea expands exports and co-production opportunities.
 - ♦ Military exchanges and exercises are also deepening trust, making the partnership a growing defence-industrial collaboration in Asia.

Challenges

- **Trade Imbalance:** India has a significant trade deficit with South Korea, and Indian exports face non-tariff barriers, especially in sectors like pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and IT services.
- **Slow CEPA Upgradation:** Negotiations to upgrade and modernize CEPA have faced systemic delays, slowing down immediate tariff rationalization and investment protections
- **Geopolitical Pressures** : Geopolitical considerations, especially balancing ties with China and the US, can limit how deeply India and South Korea align strategically.

Conclusion and Way Forward

- India-South Korea relations are evolving from a trade-focused partnership into a comprehensive strategic and technological alliance, driven by shared interests in the Indo-Pacific, advanced manufacturing, and defence cooperation.
- India-South Korea ties should move beyond defence-industrial cooperation to a broader strategic partnership focused on Indo-Pacific stability. Rising regional threats and South Korea's internal challenges make deeper coordination important.
- The future relationship should emphasize shared security, better market access, investment, high-tech and defence cooperation, and stronger people-to-people ties, evolving into a "futuristic partnership" in Asia.

Source :[TH](#)

EMERGING AGRICULTURAL REALIGNMENT TOWARDS MILLETS

Context

- The Iran-West Asia conflict, possible weak monsoon, and fertiliser supply uncertainties are driving Indian farmers towards low-input, climate-resilient crops such as millets.

Current Factors Affecting Indian Agriculture

- **Fertiliser Supply:** India is heavily dependent on imports for phosphatic and potassic fertilisers.
 - ♦ **Geopolitical tensions** in West Asia and disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz may **affect fertiliser availability** and prices.
 - ♦ **Petroleum-based chemical inputs** used in **pesticide** formulations may also become costlier.
- **Weak monsoon:** Fears of a below-normal monsoon may adversely affect **kharif sowing and crop productivity**.
 - ♦ Weak rainfall conditions can increase irrigation stress and groundwater extraction.
- **Chain Uncertainty:** Ongoing geopolitical tensions have disrupted global commodity and shipping markets.
 - ♦ Higher freight and logistics costs may affect agricultural input imports.

Existing issues in Indian Agriculture

- **Risks in Cotton Cultivation:**
 - ♦ Cotton farmers in Haryana, Punjab, and Rajasthan are facing severe damage from **pink bollworm (Gulabi sundi)**.
 - ♦ Cotton cultivation requires **multiple pesticide sprays and high fertiliser use**, increasing production costs.
 - ♦ **Rising labour costs** for cotton picking have further reduced profitability.
- **Concern over water intensive crops:** Weak monsoon conditions increase the cultivation risks associated with water-intensive crops such as **rice, sugarcane** thereby encouraging a shift towards drought-resilient millets.

Why Are Farmers Shifting Towards Millets?

- **Millets Require Lower Inputs:** Millets are less dependent on costly imported fertilisers such as **DAP and potash**, making them more economical during periods of global supply disruptions.
- **Climate Resilience:** Millets are drought-resistant and can withstand high temperatures and erratic rainfall conditions.

- **Flexible Cropping Pattern:** Bajra has a shorter crop duration of nearly 90–95 days and farmers can cultivate additional crops such as mustard and summer moong after harvesting bajra.
 - ♦ Millets improve land-use efficiency and help increase annual farm income.

What are Millets?

- Millets are a group of small grained cereal food crops popularly known as Nutri-cereals.
- **Varieties:** Multiple varieties of millets are produced such as **Pearl Millets, Sorghum, Finger Millet, Foxtail, Kodo, Barnyard, Proso, Little Millet** and **Pseudo Millets** like Buckwheat and Amaranths.

Millet Production in India

- India is the largest producer of millets in the world. It produced a total of **180.15 lakh tonnes of millets in 2024–25**.
- The major millet producing states in India are **Rajasthan, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh** and Uttarakhand.

Condition for Millets Cultivation

- **Climate:** The Millets are grown in **tropical as well as subtropical** up to an altitude of 2,100 m.
 - ♦ A mean temperature range of **26-29°C** during the growth is best for proper development and good crop yield.
- **Soil:** Millet has wide adaptability to different soil from very poor to very fertile and can tolerate a certain degree of alkalinity.
 - ♦ The best soils are alluvial, loamy and sandy soil with good drainage.

Challenges in Millet Expansion

- **Weak Procurement and Market Infrastructure:** Procurement systems for millets remain weaker than those for rice and wheat with underdeveloped storage, processing, and value-chain infrastructure.
- **Consumer Preference:** Public consumption patterns favouring rice and wheat, Limited awareness and inadequate branding constrain millet demand.
- **Policy Bias:** Existing subsidy structures and procurement systems favour paddy and wheat cultivation, as farmers often receive stronger institutional support for conventional cereals.

Steps taken by India to promote millet production

- **International Year of Millets:** India spearheaded the UN General Assembly Resolution for declaring the year **2023** as the 'International Year of Millets'.
- **Higher Minimum Support Prices (MSP):** To encourage farmers to take up millet cultivation, higher MSP to Jowar, Bajra and Ragi has been announced.
- **National Food Security Mission – Nutri Cereals:** The Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is running a Sub-Mission on Nutri-Cereals comprising various millets under the **National Food Security Mission**.
- **Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Millet-Based Products (PLISMBP)** was introduced to encourage-
 - ♦ The use of millets in branded **Ready-to-Eat (RTE) and Ready-to-Cook (RTC)** products.
 - ♦ To encourage **value addition in millet-based food items**.
 - ♦ To connect **millet growers with food processors** by boosting production demand for the grain.

Concluding remarks

- The convergence of geopolitical uncertainty and monsoon risks is pushing Indian agriculture towards more sustainable cropping patterns.
- The momentum created by the **International Year of Millets** may now translate into large-scale adoption of millets as economically viable and climate-resilient crops.
- With effective procurement support and policy backing, **2026 could become a defining year for millet-based agricultural transformation** in India.

Source: [IE](#)

NEWS IN SHORT

RTI ACT DOES NOT APPLY TO CRICKET BOARD: CIC

Syllabus: GS2/Polity & Governance

Context

- The **Central Information Commission (CIC)** held that the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** does not fall within the ambit of a "public authority" under the **Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005**.

About

- It observes that the **cricket board continues to function as an autonomous private body** and is **neither "directly nor indirectly"** financed by the government.
- BCCI is registered under the **Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975**, and was **neither established by the Constitution, nor created by any legislation or government order**.
- Since the Board of Control for Cricket in India is neither materially dependent upon nor sustained by government funds, **it cannot be regarded as a 'Public Authority'**.

Central Information Commission

- The Central Information Commission is a **statutory body** established under the **Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005**.
- It acts as the **highest appellate authority** for matters related to access to information under the RTI framework in India.
- **The Commission consists of:**
 - ♦ Chief Information Commissioner (CIC).
 - ♦ Information Commissioners (ICs).
- They are appointed by the **President of India**.

About BCCI

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) was formed in **1928**.
- India made its Test debut in 1932, after which a national competition followed in 1934, named the **Ranji Trophy after KS Ranjitsinhji**.

Source: [TH](#)

GOVERNMENT IMPOSES CURBS ON IMPORT OF SILVER

Context

- The government has shifted silver imports to the **"restricted" category** and imposed a **15% import duty to curb rising imports** and protect domestic interests.

About Silver

- It is a **relatively soft, lustrous precious metal**.
- It has **highest electrical and thermal conductivity** among all metals, critical for electronics, circuit boards, connectors, batteries, and automotive systems.

- It is mainly found in ores like **argentite** and **chlorargyrite (horn silver)**.
- Mexico is the **largest silver producer in the world** and India imports silver mainly from the United Arab Emirates, Britain and China.

Source: [TH](#)

THE WARNING SIGNS IN INDIA'S IMPORT BILL

Context

- The recent appeal of PM Modi on spending reduction reflects growing concern over India's rising import dependence, widening trade deficit, and mounting pressure on foreign exchange reserves and the rupee.

About

- **Widening Merchandise Trade Deficit:** India's merchandise trade deficit reached a record **\$333 billion in 2025-26**, increasing by over **17%** compared to the previous year.
 - ♦ Imports rose by **7%** to an all-time high of **\$775 billion**, while exports remained largely **stagnant at \$442 billion**.
- **Pressure on Foreign Exchange Reserves and Rupee:** Rising imports require higher foreign currency payments. India's foreign exchange reserves have witnessed pressure due to:
 - ♦ RBI intervention to stabilize the rupee,
 - ♦ Higher import payments,
 - ♦ Global financial uncertainty.

Major Contributors to India's Import Bill

- **Electronics Component Imports:** Expansion of electric mobility and digital infrastructure has increased demand for imported semiconductors, accumulators, and advanced components.
- **Gold and Silver Imports:** Imports of precious metals exceeded \$90 billion, making them the third-largest import category after crude oil and electronics.
- **Edible Oil Imports:** Weak domestic oilseed production and inadequate productivity growth continue to increase dependence on imports.
- **Fertilizer Imports:** India imports a substantial share of fertilizers, particularly urea and phosphatic fertilizers.
 - ♦ Rising fertilizer imports increase subsidy burdens on the government, and worsen fiscal stress.

Source: [TH](#)

GENETIC "MAP" HELPS TRACE PANGOLIN TRAFFICKING

In News

- A new study has developed a breakthrough "**genetic map**" to trace **pangolin trafficking routes** using advanced DNA sequencing.

Pangolins

- They are solitary, **nocturnal mammals** covered in protective scales that curl into a ball when threatened.
- They are also known as scaly anteaters and they feed mainly on ants and termites.
- They are the world's most trafficked mammals due to demand for their meat, scales, and leather products, especially in Asia and parts of Africa, with some demand also in the US.
- There are currently eight species of pangolin recognized by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

- **Distribution** : They are found across Africa and Asia

♦ Species live in Africa: IUCN Status

- Black-bellied pangolin (*Phataginus tetradactyla*), Vulnerable
- White-bellied pangolin (*Phataginus tricuspis*), Endangered
- Giant Ground pangolin (*Smutsia gigantea*), Endangered
- Temminck's Ground pangolin (*Smutsia temminckii*)- Vulnerable

♦ Species are found in Asia: IUCN Status

- Indian pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*) Endangered
- Philippine pangolin (*Manis culionensis*) Critically Endangered
- Sunda pangolin (*Manis javanica*) Critically Endangered
- the Chinese pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*) Critically Endangered

Importance

- The "genetic map" provides a powerful new tool to trace illegal wildlife trade back to its source and could significantly strengthen global efforts to combat pangolin poaching and trafficking.

Source: [TH](#)

