

DAILY NEWS

ANALYSIS



16th April

Explained

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Decoded

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DNA Quiz

Playlist Link:

What to Read: <https://bit.ly/3FYdutC>

Daily News Analysis: <https://bit.ly/4ge9BgF>

EXPLAINED

1. CPI & WPI

Backdrop: Retail inflation eases to 3.34%, lowest since 2019.

Relevance: GS 3/Indian Economy

About the news:

Recent Trends in Inflation:

- Retail inflation eased to a five and a half year low of 3.34% in March from 3.61% in February mostly due to lower food prices.
 - However, Fuel and light inflation increased moderately to 1.48%, with prices rising for the first time since September 2023.
- The CPI data moved in the same direction as the wholesale price inflation data. Wholesale prices eased 2.05% in March from 2.38% in February.
- Economists agree that inflation is likely to stay under 4% in the coming months.

of inflation in March, 2025 is primarily due to increase in prices of manufacture of food products, other manufacturing, food articles, electricity and manufacture of textiles etc. The index numbers and inflation rate for the last three months of all commodities and WPI components are given below:

Index Numbers and Annual Rate of Inflation (Y-o-Y in %)*

All Commodities/Major Groups	Weight (%)	January-25 (F)		February-25 (P)		March-25 (P)	
		Index	Inflation	Index	Inflation	Index	Inflation
All Commodities	100.00	155.0	2.51	154.8	2.38	154.5	2.05
I. Primary Articles	22.62	189.7	4.58	186.6	2.81	184.6	0.76
II. Fuel & Power	13.15	152.0	-1.87	153.8	-0.71	152.4	0.20
III. Manufactured Products	64.23	143.4	2.65	143.8	2.86	144.4	3.07
Food Index	24.38	191.5	7.52	189.0	5.94	188.8	4.66

Note: F: Final, P: Provisional, *Annual rate of WPI inflation calculated over the corresponding month of previous year

The month over month change in WPI for the month of March, 2025 stood at (-) 0.19% as compared to February, 2025. The monthly change in WPI for last six-month is summarized below:

Month Over Month (M-o-M in %) change in WPI Index#

The month over month change in WPI for the month of March, 2025 stood at (-) 0.19% as compared to February, 2025. The monthly change in WPI for last six-month is summarized below:

Month Over Month (M-o-M in %) change in WPI Index#							
All Commodities/Major Groups	Weight	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25 (F)	Feb-25 (P)	Mar-25 (P)
All Commodities	100.00	1.29	-0.19	-0.45	-0.45	-0.13	-0.19
I. Primary Articles	22.62	2.61	-1.35	-2.07	-2.12	-1.63	-1.07
II. Fuel & Power	13.15	1.09	0.74	1.27	0.13	1.18	-0.91
III. Manufactured Products	64.23	0.70	0.14	-0.07	0.28	0.28	0.42
Food Index	24.38	3.22	-0.99	-2.10	-2.30	-1.31	-0.11

Note: F: Final, P: Provisional, #Monthly rate of change, based on month over month (M-o-M) WPI calculated over the preceding month

Month-over-Month Change in Major Groups of WPI:

- i. **Primary Articles (Weight 22.62%):** - The index for this major group decreased by 1.07% to 184.6 (provisional) in March, 2025 from 186.6 (provisional) for the month of February, 2025. Price of crude petroleum & natural gas (-2.42%), non-food articles (-2.40%) and food articles (-0.72%) decreased in March, 2025 as compared to February, 2025. The price of minerals (0.31%) increased in March, 2025 as compared to February, 2025.
- ii. **Fuel & Power (Weight 13.15%):** - The index for this major group decreased by 0.91% to 152.4 (provisional) in March, 2025 from 153.8 (provisional) for the month of February, 2025. Price of electricity (-2.31%) and mineral oils (-0.70%) decreased in March, 2025 as compared to February, 2025. The price of coal remained same

Consumer Price Index (CPI): Also known as **Retail inflation**, it refers to the rate at which the prices of goods and services that consumers purchase for personal use increase over time.

Consumer Price Index (CPI)

- CPI- Retail inflation** refers to the rate at which the prices of goods and services that consumers purchase for personal use increase over time.



Wholesale Price Index (WPI): Measures price changes at the wholesale level.

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WPI response rate: This refers to the percentage of data points that are collected for the WPI calculation. A higher response rate generally indicates a more reliable and comprehensive WPI, as it's based on a larger and more representative sample of wholesale prices.

- The WPI for March 2025 has been compiled at a weighted response rate of 82.7 per cent.

GDP Deflator: Ratio of nominal GDP to real GDP.

- Broad measure of inflation as it includes all goods and services.
- The **National Statistical Office (MoSPI)** compiles and releases GDP deflator data.

Headline Inflation: A Measure of total inflation in an economy, including food and energy prices.

Core Inflation: Calculated after deducting the prices of food and fuel. Provides a stable measure of underlying inflation trends.

2. TRADE DATA

Backdrop: Flat exports, high imports widen trade deficit to \$21.54 bn.

Relevance: GS 3/Indian Economy

About the news:**Recent trends in Trade:****About the News**

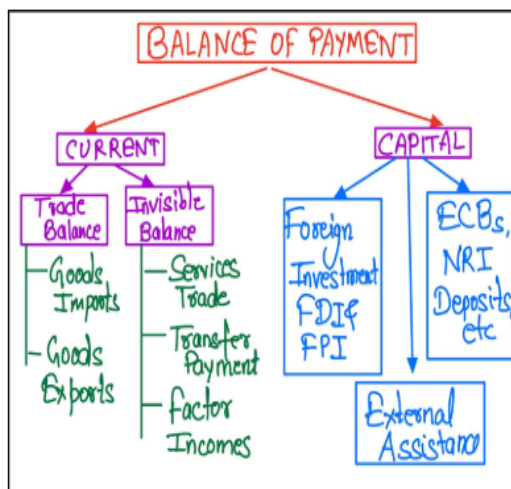
Recent trends in Trade:

Parameter	March 2025	March 2024
1. Exports	\$ 41.97b (+0.7%)	\$41.67b
2. Imports	\$63.51b (+11.4%)	\$57.01b
3. Trade deficit	\$21.54b	\$15.34b

About the News

Recent trends in Trade:

Parameter	2024-25	2023-24
1. Exports	\$437.42b	\$437.07b
2. Imports	\$720.24b (+6.2%)	\$678.19b
3. Trade Deficit	\$282.82b	\$241.14b

Terms related to External Sector**TERMS RELATED to External Sector****Balance of Payments (BOP):**

- Records of all economic transactions between a country and the rest of the world over a specific period.
 - The compilation and dissemination of BoP data is the prime responsibility of RBI.
- (a) **Current account:** Measures transfer of real resources (E.g. Goods, services, income and transfers) between an economy and the rest of the world.
- Merchandise account:** It includes transactions relating to exports and imports of goods.
 - Invisible account:** It includes,
 - Non-factor services such as travel, transportation, insurance and miscellaneous services, etc.

- Transfers that do not involve any value in exchange.
- Income, which includes compensation of employees and investment income.

(b) **Capital and financial account:** Reflects net changes in financial claims on the rest of the world.

- Non-debt flows:** Direct and portfolio investments.
- Debt flows:** External assistance, commercial borrowings, non-resident deposits, etc.

Deficits:

- Current Account Deficit (CAD):** Exports - Imports + Net Transfers + Net Income from Abroad.
- Trade Deficit vs. CAD:** A trade deficit occurs when a country's imports exceed its exports, while a CAD is a broader measure that includes the trade deficit plus other transactions like net income from investments and remittances.
- Twin Deficit:** Simultaneous occurrence of Fiscal deficit and CAD.

3. BIRTH, DEATH REGISTRATION

Relevance: GS2/ Population Related Issue

Backdrop: The office of the Registrar General of India (RGI) cautioned private and government hospitals to report incidents of birth and death within 21 days.

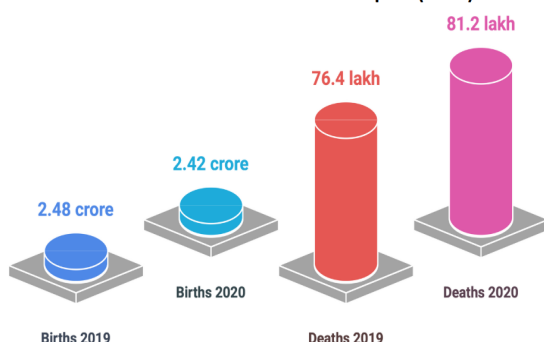
In the News**About Registration of Births and Deaths****Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969 (Amended 2023)**

- Compulsory Registration:** Mandates that **all births and deaths** in India must be registered.
- Amendment in 2023** (effective from **October 1, 2023**) brought major changes:

- ♦ Digital registration through a **centralised portal**.
- ♦ Birth certificate becomes the **single official document** for establishing date and place of birth.
- ♦ States must **share data with the Centre** for national-level integration.
- **Section 23(2): Penalizes negligence by registrars** in performing their duties with a fine of ₹1,000, increased from ₹50 in the earlier version.

Registration Status in India

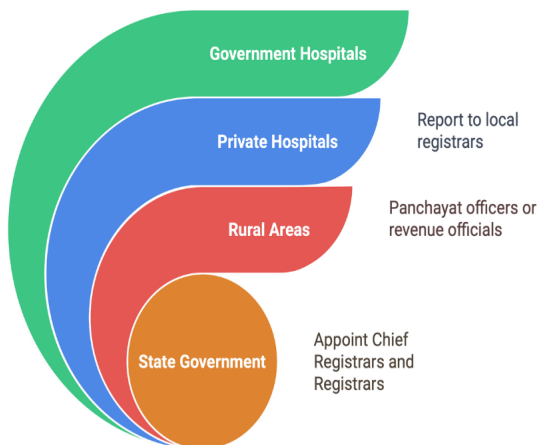
- Last available national Vital Statistics Report (2020):



- Decrease in birth registrations observed in most states.

Who Can Register Births and Deaths?

- Under the Civil Registration System (CRS):



Digital Shift: Civil Registration System (CRS) Portal Effective from October 1, 2023:

- All registrations to be done through the **centralised digital CRS portal**: crsorgi.gov.in
- **Digital birth certificate** becomes **Sole official document** for: **Admission to schools, Government employment, Voter ID, driving license, passport, Aadhaar, Marriage registration**
- **Interlinking with other databases:**

- ♦ **National Population Register (NPR)**
- ♦ **Electoral rolls**
- ♦ **Property registration**
- ♦ **Ration card systems**

Challenges Identified by the Registrar General of India (RGI)



Vital Statistics of India Report

- This report is a **key government publication that compiles:**
 - ♦ **Infant mortality, stillbirths, and general death rates.**
 - ♦ **Based on aggregated data submitted by all States and Union Territories.**

Current Status of Reporting:

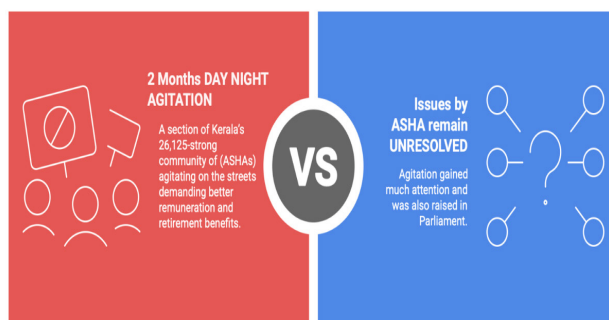
- **Last national-level report** published in **2020**.
- **State-wise publication (as of April 2025):**
 - ♦ **Mizoram** is the **only state** to have published its report for **2023**.
 - ♦ **Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Delhi, Chandigarh, Goa, Arunachal Pradesh:** Published reports till **2022**.
 - ♦ **Kerala's last report** was published in **2021**.

4. ASHA SCHEME

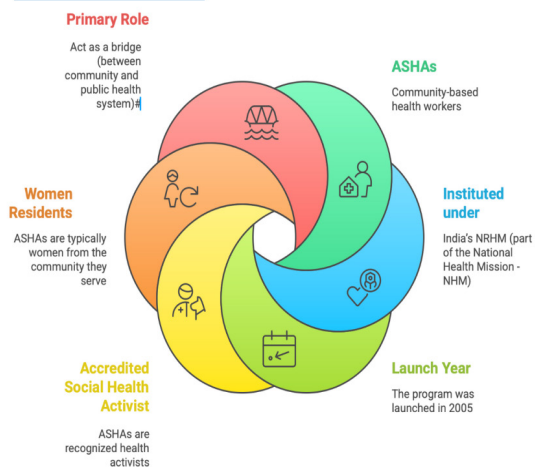
Relevance: GS 2/ Welfare Scheme/ Health Related Issues

Backdrop: Why are ASHA workers protesting in Kerala?

In the News



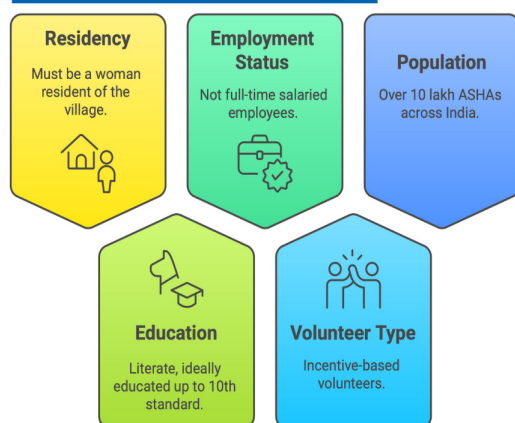
ASHA Scheme



Objectives of the ASHA Program

- To improve health outcomes by ensuring access to basic healthcare services in rural and underserved areas.
- Promote universal immunization, institutional deliveries, and maternal and child health.
- Facilitate health awareness, sanitation, family planning, and nutrition education.
- Note:** ASHAs are not full-time salaried employees but incentive-based volunteers. Over 10 lakh ASHAs across India (as per latest available data)

Selection Criteria and Training



Role of ASHA

- Maternal and child care (e.g., escorting pregnant women to hospitals, encouraging institutional delivery)
- Counsel women on **safe motherhood, infant care, nutrition, contraception, and infection prevention** (including RTIs/STIs).
- Immunization drives
- Referral services to PHCs and CHCs

- Monitoring and reporting births, deaths, and disease outbreaks
- Home visits for newborn care and health promotion
- Act as **health activists**, raising awareness on hygiene, sanitation, nutrition, and utilization of government health services.
- Provide **first-contact care** with basic supplies like ORS, IFA tablets, chloroquine, contraceptives, and disposable delivery kits.
- Considered the backbone of grassroots health delivery, especially during:
 - COVID-19 pandemic (contact tracing, awareness, monitoring)
 - National immunization drives
 - Maternal and child health campaigns

Challenges Faced by ASHAs

Challenges Faced by ASHAs



Note: In 2022, ASHAs were awarded the **Global Health Leaders Award** by the **World Health Organization (WHO)** for their critical role in public health service delivery, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

DECODED

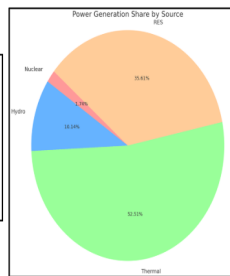
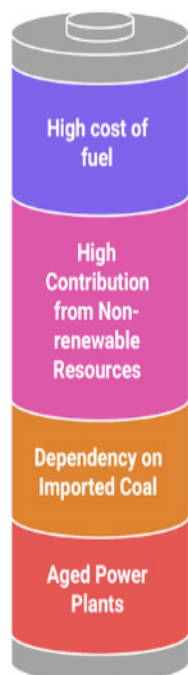
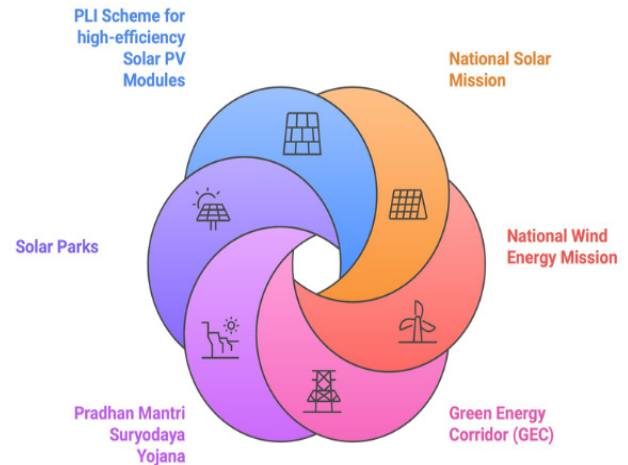
5. INDIA, RISING POWER DEMAND, AND THE 'HYDROGEN FACTOR'

Relevance: GS 3/Science and Technology-developments and their applications and effects in everyday life.

Backdrop: India's rising power demand and the role of hydrogen in it.

About the news:**Current Status of Power Generation**

All India Installed Capacity (MW)(April 2025)	
Energy source	Installed Capacity (MW)
Thermal	247285.47
Renewable	167709.52
Hydro	47728.16
Nuclear	8180
Total	470903.15

**Challenges in Power Generation in India:****Challenges in Power Generation in India****Steps taken by Government:****Renewable Sector:****Steps taken by Government**

- **National Green Hydrogen Mission:** Development of green hydrogen technology for sustainable energy solutions.

- Development of green hydrogen production capacity of at least 5 MMT (Million Metric Tonne) per annum with an associated renewable energy capacity addition of about 125 GW in the country by 2030.

- **Steps for Nuclear Energy:** There is the possibility of a steep increase in electricity demand to meet the goal of economy-wide net-zero emissions for a developed India.

- Target to reach 100 GW of installed capacity based on nuclear power by 2047.
- Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) has announced an ambitious programme to set up several 700 MW Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs).
- Many PSUs and departments, such as the Indian Railways, are looking to deploy nuclear power plants.
- Solar and wind are intermittent sources, and nuclear is best operated as base load. At present, to balance supply and demand during solar hours, coal-fired power plants are flexed.
- Flexing coal-fired plants and letting solar and wind continue to operate lower carbon emissions from electricity generation. Suggestions to explore the possibility of flexing nuclear power plants have been made.
- Flexing nuclear power plants is technically challenging. Though adopted to a limited extent in some countries for certain reactor designs, it is also not cost-competitive for

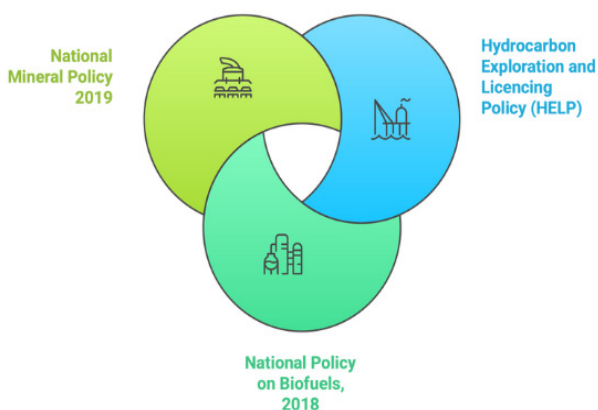
two reasons: when operated at low power, the variable cost might remain the same as for operating at full power or only marginally come down.

- Many advanced reactors are being designed to be load-following, but this is a technology for the future.
- Solar, wind, and hydro cannot provide all the electricity that India needs, and nuclear has to be part of the energy mix in India.

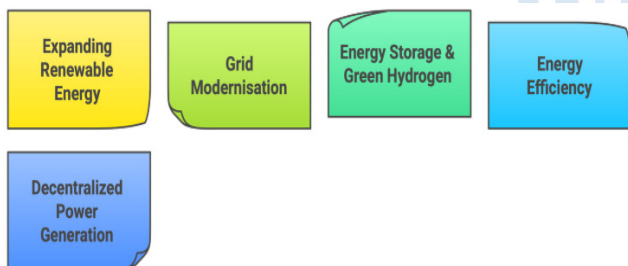
Non renewable sector:

Steps taken by Government

Non renewable sector:



Way forward:



Hydrogen as an Option:

- Producing hydrogen by electrolyzers when there is surplus electricity in the system is a

solution based on mature technologies.

- One can connect electrolyzers and electricity storage devices to the grid and operate them to shape demand so that there is no need to fix nuclear power plants or curtail solar and wind.
- Electrolyzers are low-cost equipment and can be operated at different power levels.
- The scheme proposed for hydrogen production using surplus electricity in the system is not for the reconversion of hydrogen to electricity but for its use in the industry.
- The government has defined hydrogen produced by electrolyzers using electricity from

solar and wind as green and has provided incentives.

- A certification scheme has also been drafted for green hydrogen, where electrolytic and biomass-based hydrogen with CO₂ emissions not exceeding 2 kg CO₂/kg H₂ on average is called green.

Way forward:

- It is suggested that the taxonomy be changed from green hydrogen to low-carbon hydrogen based on a threshold for carbon emissions. This will enable nuclear to be included in the definition of low-carbon hydrogen.
- Hydrogen generation and electricity storage need to be synergised to improve economics.

MAINS PYQ

- Q. With growing energy needs should India keep on expanding its nuclear energy programme? Discuss the facts and fears associated with nuclear energy. (2018, 15 marks)

PRACTICE QUESTION

- Q. The goal of achieving a net-zero economy can be realised only by massive electrification of end uses of energy. Critically Discuss in the light of the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

DNA QUIZ

- Q1. Consider the following statements:

- The weightage of food in Consumer Price Index (CPI) is higher than that in Wholesale Price Index (WPI).
- The WPI does not capture changes in the prices of services, which CPI does.
- Reserve Bank of India has now adopted WPI as its key measure of inflation and to decide on changing the key policy rates.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 only
- 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

Q2. Which of the following brings out the 'Consumer Price Index Number for Industrial Workers'?

- (a) The Reserve Bank of India
- (b) The Department of Economic Affairs
- (c) The Labour Bureau
- (d) The Department of Personnel and Training

Q3. With reference to the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Act, 2023 consider the following statements:

- 1. Under the Act, all registrations to be done through the centralised digital CRS portal.
- 2. **Private hospitals** are obligated to **report** events to local registrars.
- 3. Birth certificate becomes the single official document for establishing date and place of birth.

Which of the following is/are correct ?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two

(c) Only three

(d) None

Q4. With reference to the National Health Mission, which of the following are the jobs of 'ASHA', a trained community health worker?

- 1. Accompanying women to the health facility for antenatal care checkup
- 2. Using pregnancy test kits for early detection of pregnancy
- 3. Providing information on nutrition and immunisation.
- 4. Conducting the delivery of baby

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 4 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer

1 (a)

2 (c)

3 (c)

4 (a)

**NEXT
IAS**