



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

4th September 2026



4th September 2026

Is India's 7.8% GDP growth true ?

CONTEXT: On 31 August 2026, MoSPI released India's GDP estimates for the first quarter of FY 2026-27.

First Principles



Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation

QUARTERLY ESTIMATES OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT FOR THE FIRST QUARTER (APRIL-JUNE) OF 2026-27

Real GDP during Q1 of FY 2026-27 has observed a growth rate of 7.8%

Nominal GDP has registered 10.3% growth during Q1, FY 2026-27

Indian Economy has sustained Growth Momentum despite Global Headwinds

Posted On: 31 AUG 2026 4:00PM by PIB Delhi

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is releasing in this Press Note, the Quarterly Estimates of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the First Quarter (Q1, April-June) of Financial Year (FY) 2026-27 along with its Expenditure components both at Constant (2022-23) and Current prices. The press release is structured as follows,

Outlook Business

India's Growth Engine Roars Back As Real GDP Jumps 7.8%, Beats RBI's 7% Forecast

What exactly is GDP?

Money Value
(Nominal GDP)

=

Quantity (Real GDP)

×

Price

	2025	2026	2027	2028
	PROJECTION			
India	7.6%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%
China	5	4.4	4	4
US	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.1
UK	1.3	0.8	1.3	1.6
Japan	1.2	0.7	0.6	0.6
Germany	0.2	0.8	1.2	1.2

Why did India change the GDP base year?

Revising India's National Accounts Base Year

What's Changing?



- **Structural changes**
- **GST and administrative** data
- **Unincorporated** sector
- **Double deflation** in Agri + Mfg
- Improved **Pvt consumption** estimates
- **Supply and Use Table** framework

GDP 'FUDGED' CLAIMS (in Rs lakh cr)

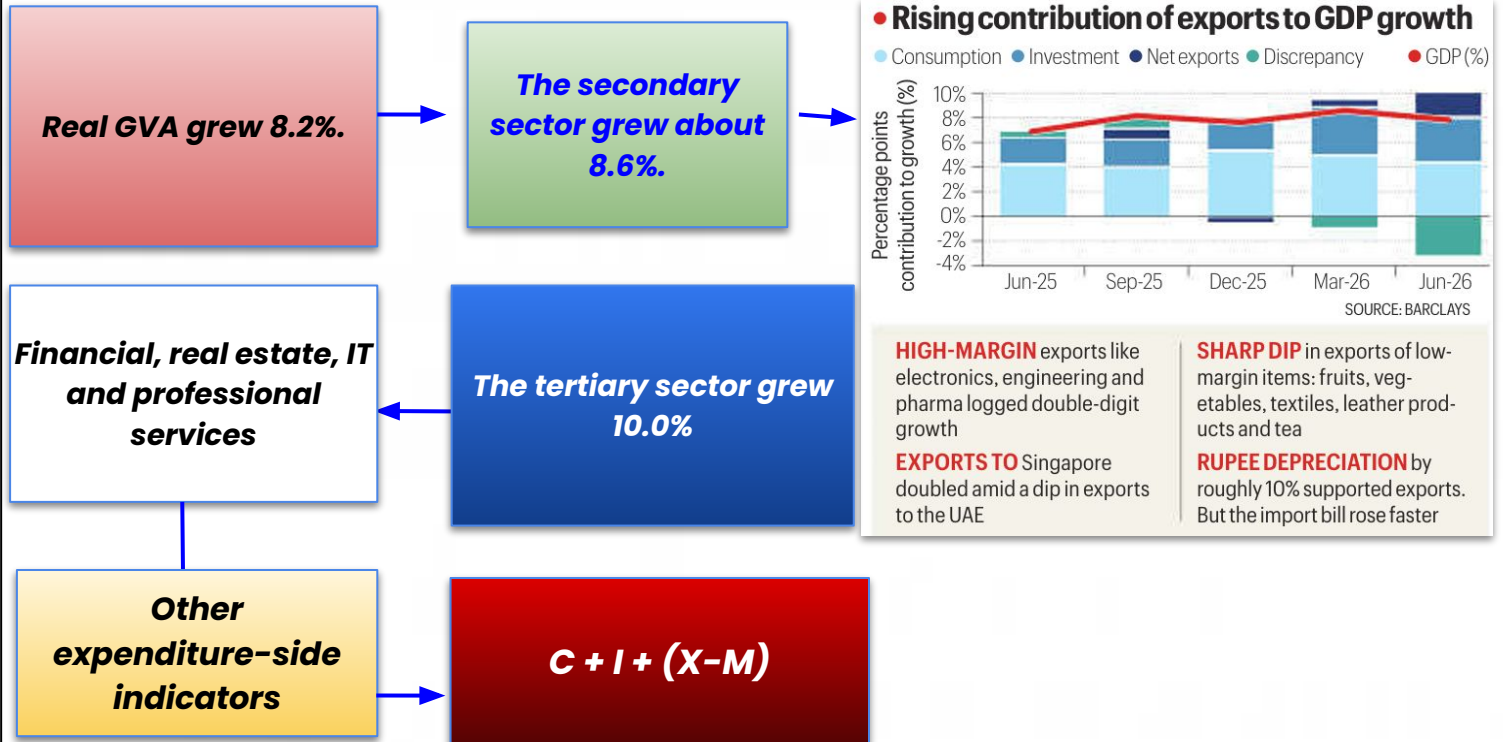
Before revision	Q1 FY26	After revision
86.05	80.32	80.32
	Growth: 2.6%	
Before revision	Q1 FY27	After revision
88.27	88.27	88.27
	Growth: 7.8% (real)	



Is India's 7.8% GDP growth true ?

CONTEXT: On 31 August 2026, MoSPI released India's GDP estimates for the first quarter of FY 2026-27.

So why did GDP growth look so strong in Q1?



GDP growth can be real and still feel weak

More than two-thirds of Indian non-farm jobs are informal

Non-agricultural employment by type of enterprise (2024)

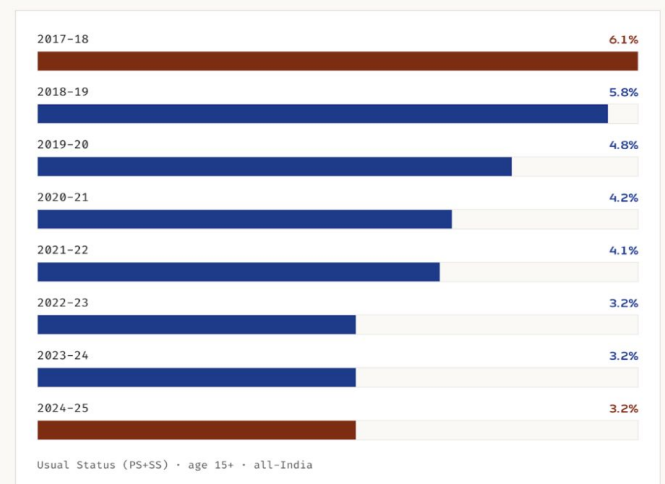


Government includes public sector undertakings (PSUs) and autonomous bodies funded by government. The category "Other" includes trusts, cooperative societies, and households employing servants.

Source: Periodic Labour Force Survey 2023-2024, NSO
DataForIndia.com/work-employment-in-india/ | CC BY

Unemployment Rate PLFS 2017 > 2024-25

Usual Status, persons aged 15 and above. Covid spike, then a steady decline.



4th September 2026

Is India's 7.8% GDP growth true ?

CONTEXT: On 31 August 2026, MoSPI released India's GDP estimates for the first quarter of FY 2026-27.

What should the government do now?

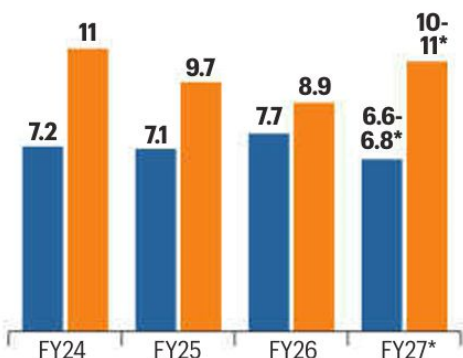
Real vs nominal GDP

● Thanks to higher inflation, the nominal GDP growth rate will likely improve this year.

● However, most estimates expect a deceleration in the real GDP growth — which is essentially the growth rate after taking away the effect of inflation.

● Diverging variables

● Real GDP growth ● Nominal GDP growth (in %)



SOURCE: CEIC, BANK OF BARODA RESEARCH; *ESTIMATES

Way forward

1. Publish a detailed revision bridge
2. Accelerate the back series
3. Strengthen statistical independence and credibility
4. Increase methodological transparency
5. Cross-check GDP with other indicators

Mains Practise Question

GDP is an estimate of economic activity, not a perfect photograph of the economy.” Explain in the context of India's recent GDP base-year revision.

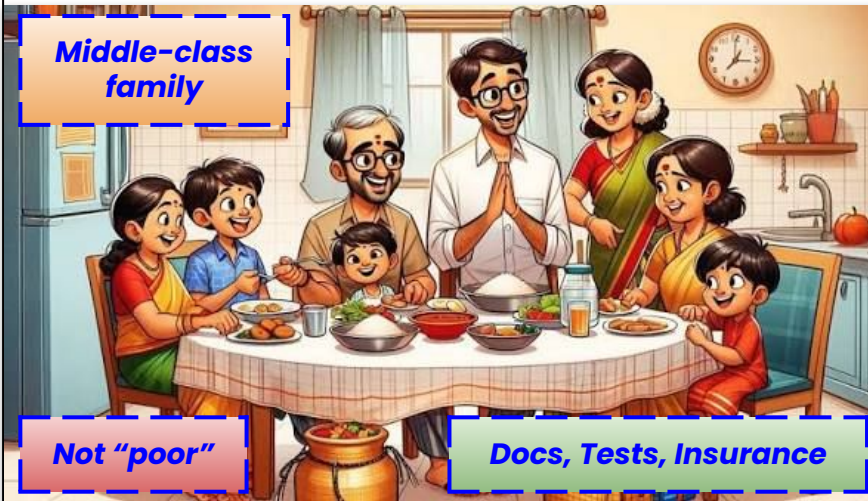
(15 Marks, 250 words)



Healthcare gap for 40 cr+ Indians

CONTEXT: PSC: 176th Report on "Affordability and Accessibility of Healthcare Facilities in Public and Private Sector"

INDIA'S "MISSING MIDDLE"



Crucial data

- **Panel:** 40 cr + people
- **0.79 public-sector hospital beds** per 1,000 population
- **Private sector**
 - 60% of inpatient care
 - 70% of outpatient care
- **Meds:** 30% of health exp
- **OPE:** 39.4% in 2021-22 to **43.4% in 2022-23**

Govt/ Private?

Cumulative healthcare impoverishment.

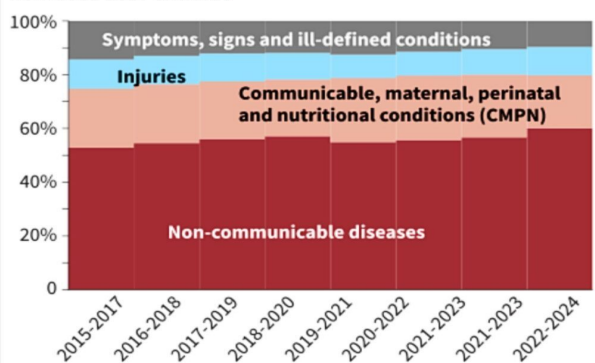
NCDs make "missing middle" more vulnerable

BURDEN OF NCDs IN INDIA

Disease	No of people affected (mn)
Diabetes	65.0
COPD	55.0
Cardiovascular Diseases	54.5
Asthma	38.0
Ischemic heart diseases	23.8
Stroke	6.5

Source: MoHFW

CHART 1: Major causes for deaths in India over reporting periods from 2015-2017 onwards



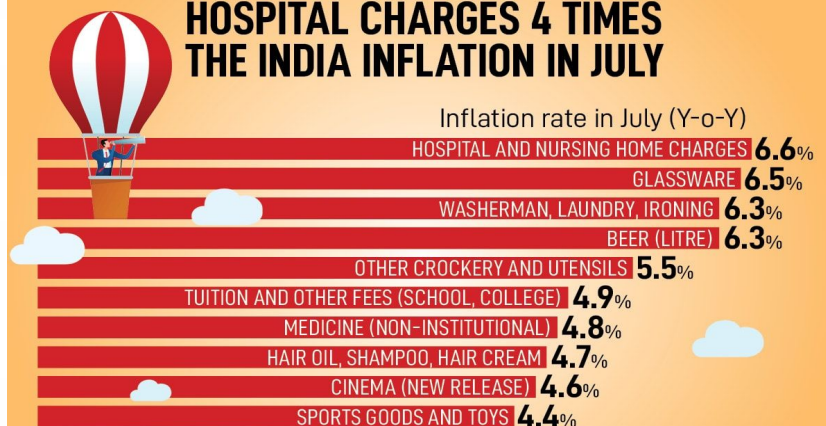
The Times of India

Kerala survey flags 41% of those screened at risk of lifestyle diseases

Kerala's Shylli digital survey finds 41% of adults screened at NCD risk; 13% have hypertension and 7.8% diabetes, prompting calls for new...

26 Jun 2026

HOSPITAL CHARGES 4 TIMES THE INDIA INFLATION IN JULY

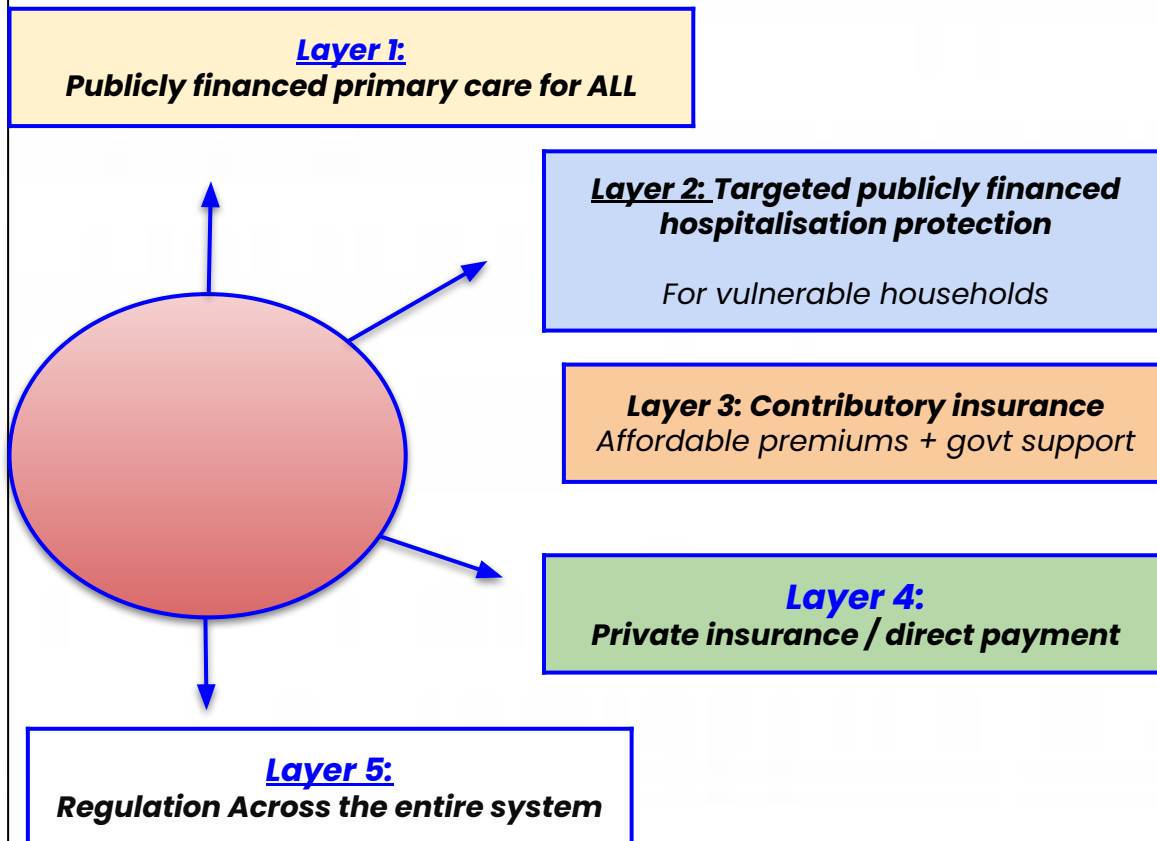


Note: Non-food items, and those apart from gold/silver/ornaments, with higher inflation than the average India figure of 1.55% for July 2025
SOURCE: MOSPI, Forbes India calculation

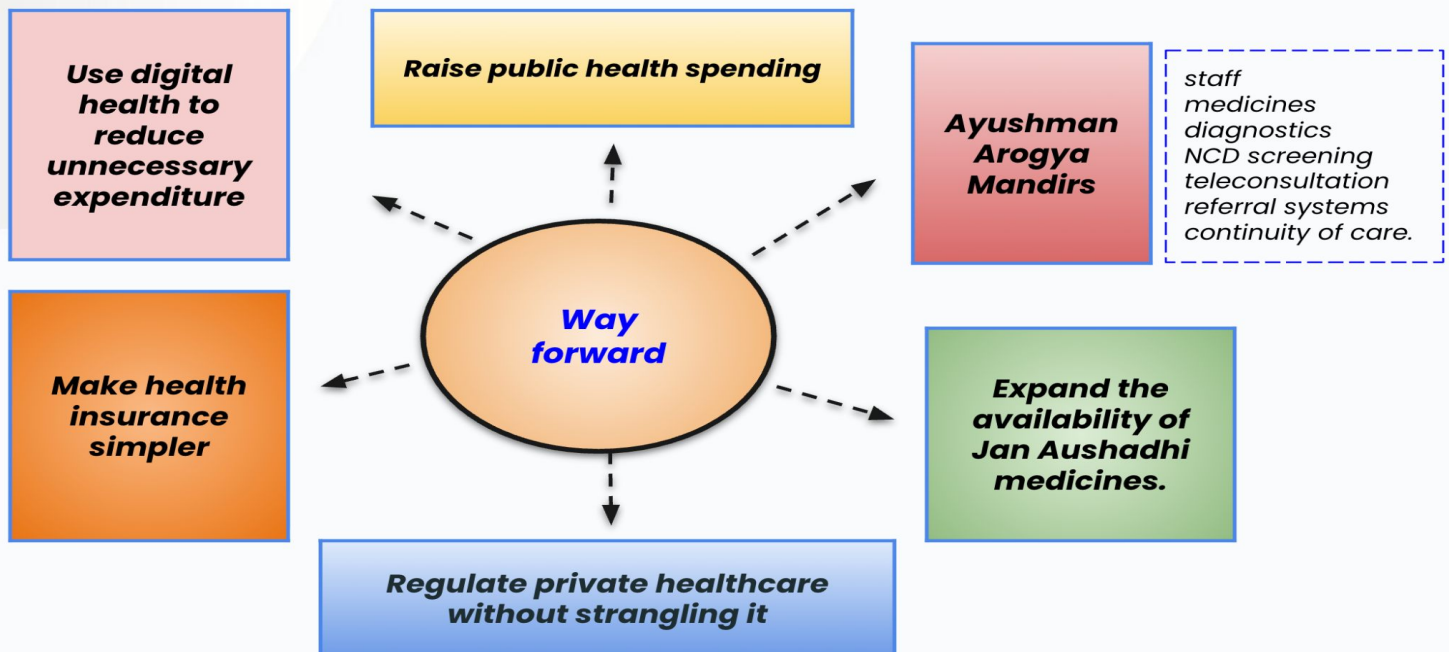
Healthcare gap for 40 cr+ Indians

CONTEXT: PSC: 176th Report on "Affordability and Accessibility of Healthcare Facilities in Public and Private Sector"

India therefore needs a "layered" health-financing model



What should India do now?



Healthcare gap for 40 cr+ Indians



CONTEXT: PSC: 176th Report on "Affordability and Accessibility of Healthcare Facilities in Public and Private Sector"

Mains Practise Question

**Universal Health Coverage
requires protection against the
quiet accumulation of healthcare
costs. Comment.**

(15 Marks, 250 words)



Why top scientist wants India to move early to thorium fuels

HISTORIC MILESTONE FOR INDIA!
Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam Achieves First Criticality
"Today, India takes a defining step in its civil nuclear journey"
- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi

India's 3-Stage Nuclear Programme



Stage 1
Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs)
Uses natural uranium → Produces energy & Plutonium-239

Stage 2
Fast Breeder Reactors (NOW ACTIVATED)
PFBR uses Pu-239 + U-238 → Breeds more fuel than it consumes + starts thorium to U-233

Stage 3
Thorium-Based Reactors
Unlocks India's vast thorium reserves for centuries of clean energy

PFBR Key Facts



Capacity: 500 MWe
Type: Sodium-Cooled Fast Breeder Reactor
Coolant: Liquid Sodium – Excellent heat transfer
Fuel: Mixed Oxide (MOX) – Plutonium + Uranium from reprocessed spent fuel
Special Feature: Breeding Ratio > 1 → Produces more fissile fuel than consumed
Design Life: 40 years

Why It Matters?

- Unlocks India's vast Thorium potential
- Moves India closer to energy self-reliance
- Enables closed fuel cycle
- Boosts clean energy goals (Net Zero 2070)

motilal oswal
Wealth Management

India has the world's largest share of thorium

Using thorium for **nuclear power**, India can meet domestic demand & leverage its vast reserves to become the **world's energy capital**.

● THORIUM RESERVES (IN THOUSAND TONNES)



Country	Thorium Reserves (in thousand tonnes)	Percentage of World Reserves
India	846	13.3%
Brazil	632	9.9%
USA	595	9.4%
Australia	595	9.4%
Egypt	380	6.0%

Source: World Nuclear Association
Investments in securities market are subject to market risks, read all the related documents carefully before investing.
Read the full disclaimer here: <http://ow.ly/63n550lqple>



The big strategic problem

- Thorium is abundant, but abundance ≠ immediate energy availability.

India still needs:

FBRs → U-233 production → advanced reactor/fuel-cycle capability → commercial scale-up.

"Now PHWRs are going up to 50, 60 gigawatts. So I think there is an opportunity to introduce thorium right here," Kakodkar added. Kakodkar also addressed the question of cost involved in introducing thorium into PHWRs as thorium is a stronger neutron absorber than uranium. "The question is, if we incur a cost, there must be a pay-back," he said, adding that thorium should be irradiated in a way that does not increase the cost of electricity from PHWRs or raise their uranium needs.

FULL REPORT ON

WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number : 14

Rajnath releases new framework for defence diplomacy



'RAKSHA' defence diplomacy document outlining India's strategic roadmap & vision for global partnerships over next 10 years.

Key pillars highlighted in the strategic blueprint include:

- **Strategic Partnerships**: bilateral + multilateral security
- **Capacity Building**: joint military exercises, training, best practices
- **Indigenous Exports**
- **Maritime security**: India as Net Security Provider + First Responder



Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number :** 12

Govt. to spend ₹24,000 crore to modernise police force

Police modernisation

Primarily concerns the **capacity to police better:**

CCTV → vehicles → communications → weapons → cyber tools → forensics → CCTNS → training infrastructure → technology

WHY POLICE REFORM IS SO DIFFICULT?

- "Police" is Entry 2 of the State List (List II).
- Police Act, 1861

Paramvir Singh Saini v. Baljit Singh

in Udaipur. The court had subsequently sought compliance reports from the Centre, States, and Union Territories while reviewing the implementation of its 2021 judgment in *Paramvir Singh Saini vs Baljit Singh* case, which mandated the installation of CCTV cameras at key locations in stations, including lock-ups and the rooms of inspectors and sub-inspectors.

Prakash Singh v. Union of India (2006)

State Security Commission

Merit-based DGP selection + 2-year tenure

2-year minimum tenure for operational officers

Separation of investigation from law & order

Police Establishment Board

Police Complaints Authority

National Security Commission

Reform objective

Reduce illegitimate political interference

Professional police leadership

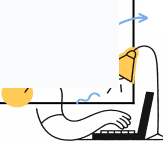
End arbitrary transfers

Improve investigation quality

Professionalise postings/transfers

Independent accountability

Professional management of Central police organisations



Why is India talking to Belgium about defence ?

SYLLABUS :GS 2 : India–Belgium relations **Prelims:** Belgium's geography
Newspaper: The Indian Express / The Hindu **Page Number :**13/6

PRELIMS POINTER — BELGIUM



France → southwest

Luxembourg → southeast

Germany → east

Netherlands → north

- India and Belgium signed a Letter of Intent to institutionalise defence cooperation.
- The framework covers military exchanges, staff talks, training, research and defence-industrial partnerships.
- Both sides expanded cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, maritime security and emerging technologies.

Why is India suddenly talking to Belgium about defence?

Niche high-technology capabilities

European industrial access

Semiconductor R&D

Strategic maritime location

EU/NATO connectivity

Concrete steps

1. **India – Belgium *defence Lol***
2. **Europe's growing security interdependence with the Indo-Pacific**
 - **North Sea:** maritime security
 - **Mine Countermeasures** (Exail + L&T)
3. **Kalyani Strategic Systems**
(Joint production centre + 70-mm rockets, early 2027)
4. ** Counter-drone warfare**
5. **Zorawar**



1. **Military** training;
2. **Officer** exchanges;
3. **Seminars**;
4. **R&D**;
5. Joint **exercises**;
6. **Maritime** security;
7. **Defence-industrial** cooperation.



Why is India talking to Belgium about defence ?

4th September 2026

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Other areas of cooperation



@Leuven, Belgium

- Advanced semiconductor **R&D**
- **Process technology**
- **Nanoelectronics**
- Next-generation **chip research**
- **Pilot-line development**

Highlights

- **EU–India Trade & Technology Council**
- **Belgium gives India a NATO connection**
- **Modern supply chain**
- **Subsea cables**
- **Critical minerals**

Belgium is an important economic partner for India in Europe. **Bilateral trade reached \$13.01 billion in 2025-26.** **Diamond trade**, with Antwerp as a major global hub, remains a significant component of bilateral

commerce. Belgium is also an important source of investment in India. **FDI inflows** from Belgium amounted to approximately **\$4.2 billion between April 2000 and December 2025.**

This is PM De Wever's first visit to India since taking office in February 2025. This is also the **first visit by a Belgian Prime Minister to India in two decades** — marking a significant new phase in India-Belgium relations.



Is India's IPO market back to life ?

SYLLABUS :GS 3 : Capital Market **Prelims: IPOs**
Newspaper: The Indian Express Page Number : 15

PRELIMS POINTER — Initial Public Offering

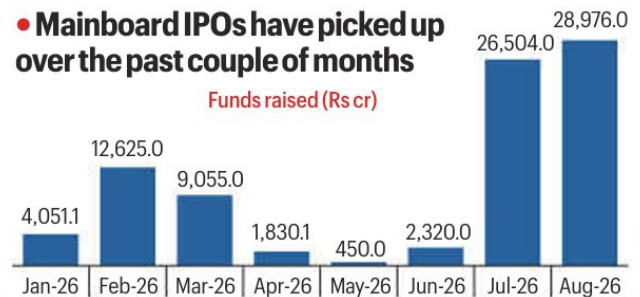
WHAT IS AN IPO?



Why the IPO market slowed first?

- Geopolitical tensions in West Asia;
- Higher crude oil prices;
- FPI outflows;
- Rupee weakness;
- Broader risk aversion.

Mainboard IPOs have picked up over the past couple of months



SEBI (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2018

What is the process for an IPO?



Public issue may generally be opened **within 12 months** from the date of issuance of SEBI observations

On 7 April 2026, SEBI announced a **one-time relaxation** extending the validity of observation letters expiring between 1 April and 30 September 2026 **up to 30 September 2026**

In fact, with the increased momentum over the last couple of months, funds raised through mainboard IPOs so far this year have crossed the Rs 59,360 crore raised by Indian corporates till the same time last year. Notably, 2025 saw record fundraising through IPOs in the Indian market, with most of the momentum coming in the final few months of the year.

While mainboard IPOs have gained pace, IPOs in the small and medium enterprise (SME) segment have remained sluggish as SEBI has consistently tightened the fundraising mechanism for smaller companies for increased investor protection.



Is India's IPO market back to life ?

SYLLABUS :GS 3 : Capital Market **Prelims:** IPOs
Newspaper: The Indian Express **Page Number :** 15

So SEBI has been tightening the SME framework

2025 SME segment

267 issues

raising around

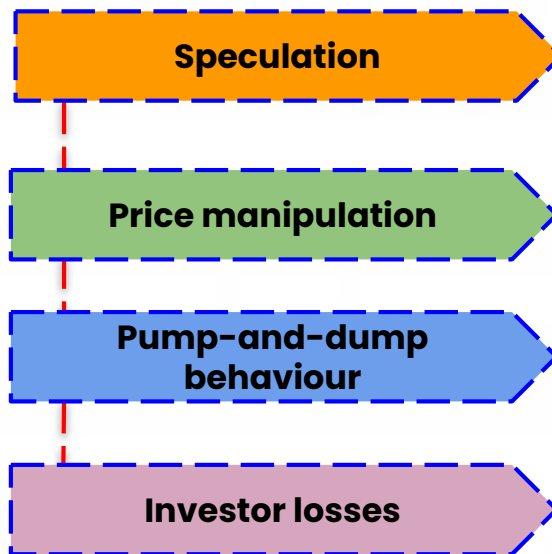
₹11,600 crore

2026

122 issues

raising around

₹5,600 crore



How A Pump & Dump Scheme Works?



CAQM taps ISRO to track stubble burning

SYLLABUS :GS 3 : Crop-residue management **Prelims:** CAQM, STUBBLE BURNING
Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number :** 01

🌾 Why does paddy stubble get burnt?

📍 Why does Delhi become worried around October–November?



when monsoon withdrawal stalls westerly winds that flush out particulate matter pollution from vehicles, industry, agriculture waste, and firecrackers.

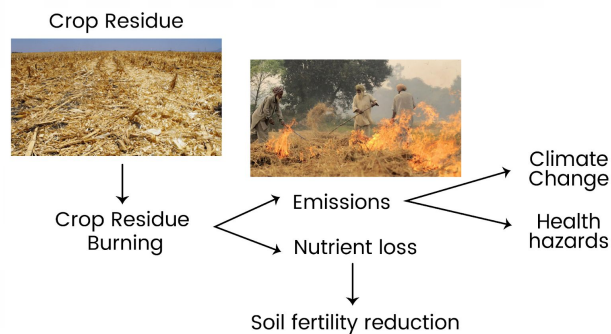
In this period, paddy stubble left over after harvesting is frequently burnt to make way for sowing wheat. Over a whole winter, farm fires contribute no more than 15% of the particulate matter pollu-

Rice–wheat cropping cycle

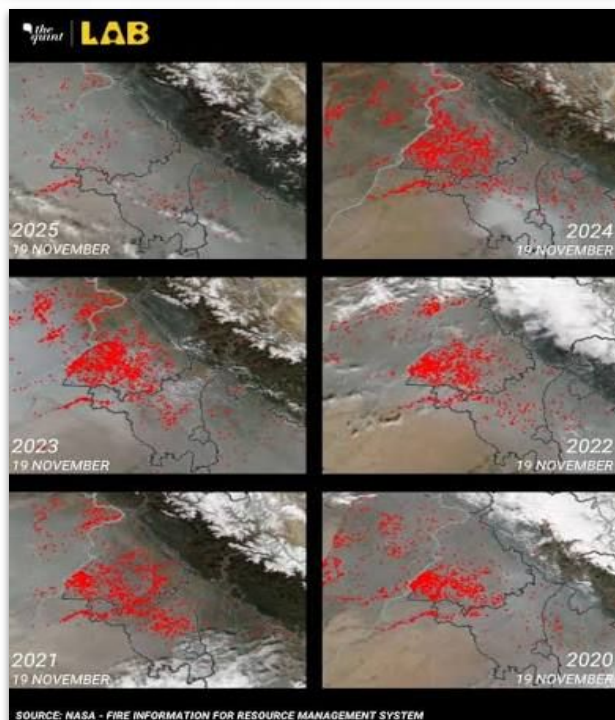
Farmers **harvest paddy**

Need to **prepare the field quickly** for the next wheat crop

📌 **PRELIMS POINTER — Externality**



🔥 First, picture the problem



What the report found

BLIND SPOTS

90%

of large fires in Punjab (2024–25) happened after 3pm — past observation time of MODIS/VIRS satellites

IN HARYANA, most large fires have occurred post-3pm since 2019; **implying years of undercounting.**

RESULT: Official fire counts show >90% decline, but this is due to timing mismatch, not an actual collapse in burning.

BURNT-AREA

37%

reduction in Punjab: Burnt area down from 31,447 sq km (2022) to 20,000 sq km (2025)

25%

reduction in Haryana: Down from 11,633 sq km (2019) to 8,812 sq km (2025)

Despite progress, approx 30,000 km² of paddy fields still burnt across both states in 2025.

FINDINGS

Official systems miss most fires
Undervalued pollution impact on Delhi–NCR

CAQM taps ISRO to track stubble burning

4th September 2026

SYLLABUS :GS 3 : Crop-residue management **Prelims:** CAQM, STUBBLE BURNING
Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number :** 01



Why is this in the news?

“While fire counts reported from satellite passes may not be the most accurate picture of the extent of farm fires, we are in talks with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Punjab to have better ‘ground truthing’ protocols,” Rajesh Varma, Chairman, CAQM, said at a press briefing on Thursday.

Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas

Nature: Statutory body

Ministry: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

Headquarters: New Delhi

Established: 2021

Area: NCR and adjoining areas

Purpose: Coordinated management of air-quality problems across jurisdictions.

Goodhart's Law

📌 **PRELIMS POINTER** — Environmental Compensation

Under the CAQM framework, the compensation applicable to farmers was revised based on landholding size.

- <2 acres → ₹5,000
- 2–5 acres → ₹10,000
- >5 acres → ₹30,000 per incident.



4th September 2026

What is Bharat NCAP 2.0 ?

SYLLABUS :GS 2 and 3 : Road safety measures **Prelims:** BHARAT NCAP 2.0 details
Newspaper: The Indian Express **Page Number :** 15

BHARAT New Car Assessment Programme

BHARAT NCAP (BNCAP)



-  India's official New Car Assessment Programme
-  Launched by Government of India August 2023 (Operational from 1st Oct 2023)
-  Operates under Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
-  Voluntary programme (above minimum regulatory requirements)
-  Applicable to eligible M1 vehicles up to 3,500 kg GVW

GLOBAL NCAP (GNCAP)



-  Independent international vehicle safety organisation
-  A programme of the Towards Zero Foundation
-  Active globally, including India
-  Tests vehicles sold in emerging markets
-  Driven by safety advocacy and consumer awareness

**Main scope
(8+1)**

**M1 category
vehicles, GVW up
to 3,500 kg**

**Broad
purpose**

Consumer-orient
ed vehicle safety
assessment

**Main rating
areas**

**32 AOP + 49 COP
+ SAT**

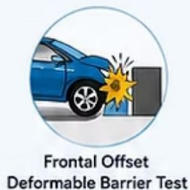
Rating

**1 to 5 stars
BASE VARIANT**

**First phase
valid till**

**30 September
2027**

HOW THEY TEST



Frontal Offset
Deformable Barrier Test



Side Movable
Deformable Barrier Test



Side Pole
Impact Test
(Where applicable)



Child Occupant
Protection Test

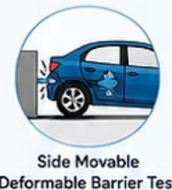
Also evaluates Safety Assist Technologies
(Example: ESC, seatbelt reminders, etc.)



Both assess
protection for
Adult Occupants
and Child
Occupants



Frontal Offset
Deformable Barrier Test



Side Movable
Deformable Barrier Test



Side Pole
Impact Test
(Where applicable)



Child Occupant
Protection Test

Also assesses Safety Assist Technologies
(Depending on protocol year)



What is Bharat NCAP 2.0 ?

SYLLABUS :GS 2 and 3 : Road safety measures **Prelims:** BHARAT NCAP 2.0 details
Newspaper: The Indian Express **Page Number :** 15



Bharat NCAP 2.0: Five safety pillars

100-point framework

Weight



Crash Protection

55%



Vulnerable Road User Protection

20%



Safe Driving

10%



Accident Avoidance

10%



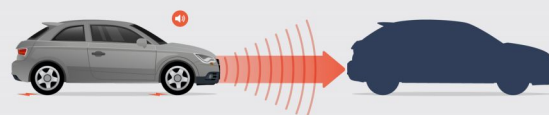
Post-Crash Safety

5%

Warning and Brake Assist



Warning and Automatic Brake (1st Stage)



Warning and Strong Automatic Brake (2nd Stage)



Q1. With reference to Belgium, consider the following statements:

1. Belgium shares its eastern border with Germany and its southeastern border with Luxembourg.
2. Belgium is simultaneously a member of the European Union, NATO, the Eurozone and the Schengen Area.
3. Among Belgium's neighbouring countries, France lies to its north while the Netherlands lies to its southwest.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: c

Q2. With reference to an Initial Public Offering (IPO), consider the following statements:

1. Through an IPO, a private company offers its shares to the public, thereby becoming a public company.
2. In the IPO process, determination of the IPO price takes place before obtaining approval from SEBI.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: a

Q3. With reference to the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), consider the following statements:

1. It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
2. Its jurisdiction extends to the National Capital Region and adjoining areas.
3. Under its compensation framework, Farmers holding over 5 acres are liable to pay ₹10,000 per incident.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

Answer: b

Q4. With reference to the Bharat New Car Assessment Programme (Bharat NCAP), consider the following statements:

1. It is a voluntary vehicle-safety programme under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
2. Its vehicle safety ratings range from 1 to 10 stars.
3. It covers all motor vehicles with Gross Vehicle Weight up to 3,500 kg.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

Answer: a

Q5. With reference to India's three-stage nuclear power programme, consider the following statements:

1. Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) constitute Stage I and use natural uranium.
2. The Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) is a 500 MWe, sodium-cooled reactor with a breeding ratio greater than one.
3. Thorium-based reactors precede Fast Breeder Reactors in India's three-stage nuclear programme.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

Answer: b





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