

8th Jan, 2025

## 1. India's GDP Growth Slows to 6.4% in FY25 GS 3 (Economy)

### • Why in News:

- India's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is projected to grow at 6.4% in the financial year 2024-25 (FY25), marking a four-year low.
- This slowdown is attributed to weak industrial and investment growth, according to the National Statistics Office (NSO).
- The forecast is below the Reserve Bank of India's (6.6%) and the government's estimate (6.5-7%) for the same period.

### • Some Key Economic Concepts:

- Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** It is defined as the total monetary or market value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period.
  - It measures the value of total output in the economy by tracking the **total demand**.
- GDP = C + I + G + NX**
  - Consumption (C):** The biggest engine (56% of all GDP) is consumption demand from private individuals, technically known as Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE).
  - Investment (I):** The second-biggest engine (32%) is the investment demand generated by private sector businesses, also known as Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF).
  - Government (G):** The third engine (11%) is the demand for goods and services generated by the government and is known as the Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GFCE).
  - Net Exports (NX):** This is calculated by subtracting Indian imports from the Indian exports.
- Nominal vs Real GDP:**
  - Nominal GDP** (GDP calculated using current market prices) is the actual observed variable. However, **Real GDP** (GDP calculated using constant 2011-12 prices, after taking away the effect of inflation) is a derived metric.
  - Real GDP = Nominal GDP - Inflation Rate.** Inflation is the rate at which the value of a currency is falling and consequently the general level of prices for goods and services is rising.
  - From the **Budget-making perspective**, nominal GDP is important. However, from the **perspective of the common people**, real GDP is what matters.
- Gross Value Added (GVA):** It examines the amount of value added (in monetary terms) in various productive areas of the economy. It tracks the total output in the economy by looking at the **total supply**.
- GDP vs GVA:**
  - $GDP = (GVA) + (\text{Taxes earned by the government}) - (\text{Subsidies provided by the government})$ . The difference between these two absolute figures will reveal the government's role in the process.
  - For example,**
    - GDP > GVA**, if the government generated more money from taxes than it spent on subsidies.
    - GVA > GDP**, if the government gave subsidies in excess of its tax collections.
- Fiscal deficit:**
  - A fiscal deficit is a shortfall in a government's income compared with its spending.
  - It is essentially a marker of the **health of government finances** and tracks the amount of money that a government has to **borrow from the market** to meet its expenses.

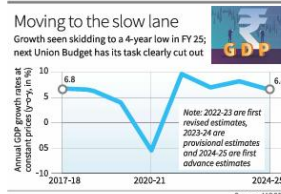
## GDP growth projected to fall to four-year low at 6.4%

Yikraz Hoort  
NEW DELHI

India's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to rise at a four-year low pace of 6.4% in this financial year, down from 8.2% in 2023-24, the National Statistics Office (NSO) said on Tuesday in its first advance estimates of GDP for 2024-25.

This implies that the country's economy, that grew 6% in the first half of this financial year, is expected to rebound with a 6.8% surge in the second half.

The real Gross Value Added (GVA) in the Indian economy is reckoned to rise 6.4% as well, relative to a 7.2% uptick in 2023-24. Just two of eight broad economic sectors are seen to be clocking a higher growth than last year - Agriculture that is expected to rise 3.8% from 1.4% last year, and Public Administration, Defence and



Other Services, seen growing 9.1% from a 7.8% increase recorded in 2023-24. Manufacturing GVA growth is expected to nearly halve from 9.5% in 2023-24 to 5.3% this year, while GVA in Mining and Quarrying is estimated to rise just 2.9% from 7.1% a year ago.

**Investment growth**  
A broader worry is the NSO's projection that gross fixed capital formation (GFCF), an indicator of

fresh investments in the economy, is expected to grow at a pace of just 6.4% compared with a 9% rise in 2023-24. "Real GDP or GDP at Constant Prices is estimated to attain a level of ₹184.88 lakh crore in the financial year 2024-25, against the Provisional Estimate of GDP for the year 2023-24 of ₹173.82 lakh crore," the NSO said.

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- **GDP Projections for FY25:**
  - **Nominal vs. Real GDP:**
    - **Nominal GDP:** Expected at ₹324 lakh crore (9.7% growth), translating to \$3.8 trillion at an exchange rate of ₹85 per USD.
    - **Real GDP:** Estimated at ₹184.9 lakh crore, 57% of nominal GDP, accounting for inflation effects.
  - **Factors behind the sluggish growth:** (Economic slowdown drivers)
    - **Cyclical slowdown:** Indian economy faces a downturn in growth momentum over the past three quarters.
    - **Key influences:**
      - Strong base effect.
      - Impact of general elections.
      - Weak private sector capital expenditure (capex).
      - Monetary and fiscal tightening measures.
- **Other Economic Indicators for FY25:**
  - **Sectoral performance:**
    - **Primary and secondary sectors:**
      - **Agriculture:** GVA growth rises to 3.8% in FY25 (1.4% in FY24).
      - **Manufacturing:** GVA growth dips to 5.3% from 9.9% in FY24.
      - **Electricity, gas, and utilities:** Growth slows to 6.8% (7.5% in FY24).
      - **Construction:** Grows at 8.6% (9.9% in FY24).
      - **Mining and quarrying:** Grows at 2.9%, down from 7.1% in FY24.
    - **Services:** Estimated growth at 7.2%, led by public administration (9.1%).
      - **Trade, hotels, and transport:** Growth slows to 5.8% (6.4% in FY24).
      - **Financial and professional services:** Grows at 7.3% (8.4% in FY24).
    - **Consumption and investment trends:**
      - **Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE):** Expected to grow at 7.3% (4% in FY24).
      - **Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF):** Growth moderates to 6.4% from 9.0% in FY24.
    - **Government spending and fiscal impact:**
      - **Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GFCE)** growth rises to 4.1% in FY25 from 2.5% in FY24.
      - Lower nominal GDP growth (9.7%) compared to budget estimates may not significantly impact fiscal deficit targets.
- **Challenges for Sustained Growth:** Key engines of GDP showing sluggish growth.
  - **Private consumption:** Slow CAGR of 4.8% since FY20 hinders growth.
  - **Government spending:** Limited fiscal expansion since 2019 (CAGR of 3.1%).
  - **Investments:** Stagnation in private and public sector capex since 2014 (CAGR of 5.3%).
  - **Net exports:** Persistent trade deficit, although narrowing in FY25.
- **Implications and Way Forward:**
  - **Insights for policymakers:**
    - The latest GDP data underscores a deceleration in economic growth.
    - While India has shown high growth rates post-pandemic, much of this was due to statistical base effects.
    - A closer look at long-term trends reveals real economic growth of less than 5% annually since FY20, far below the 7% average required to achieve developed country status by 2047.
  - **Strategic interventions needed:**
    - Boost private consumption to encourage investments.
    - Enhance public sector capex to revitalize economic growth.
    - Leverage rural demand and improve urban wage growth.
- **Conclusion:**
  - India's GDP growth trajectory in FY25 highlights pressing structural challenges.

- While government spending and rural demand offer some support, a holistic approach addressing consumption, investments, and trade is critical to sustaining long-term growth.

## 2. China's 7.1 Magnitude Earthquake: Significance and Implications GS 3 (Disaster Management)

### • Why in News:

- On **January 7, 2025**, a powerful earthquake of magnitude **7.1** struck the Tibetan region of China and parts of Nepal.
- The epicentre was located approximately **10 km below the surface** in **Tingry County, Shigatse region**, around **80 km north of Mount Everest**.
- By evening, reports confirmed at least **95 fatalities, 130 injuries**, and the destruction of hundreds of houses. Tremors were felt as far as **Kathmandu (Nepal), Thimphu (Bhutan), and Kolkata (India)**.

### 126 killed, 188 injured as earthquake hits Tibet

**Agence France-Presse**  
BEIJING

A devastating earthquake in China's remote Tibet region killed at least 126 people on Tuesday, state media reported, with tremors also felt in neighbouring

Nepal's capital Kathmandu and parts of India.

Around 188 people were injured as the earthquake struck the rural, high-altitude Tingri county, about 80 km north of Mount Everest, near China's border with Nepal.

The China Earthquake Networks Center measured the quake's magnitude as 6.8, while the U.S. Geological Survey reported it as 7.1.

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### • Why Does the Location of the Earthquake Matter?

- **Geographical and Cultural Context:**
  - **Epicentre Location:** Tingry County lies in the Shigatse region of Tibet, a high-altitude area averaging **4-5 km above sea level** and home to about **800,000 residents**.
  - **Cultural Significance:** Shigatse is an important spiritual hub, housing the **Panchen Lama** of Tibetan Buddhism.
  - **Tourism Impact:** Tingry serves as a gateway to Mount Everest. Although tourist numbers are lower in winter, the earthquake led to the suspension of tourist activities in the region.
- **Proximity to Critical Infrastructure:**
  - **Lhasa Terrane:** The earthquake occurred in the **Lhasa terrane**, a tectonic fragment crucial for geophysical studies and development projects.
  - **Mega Dam Project:** The region hosts China's ambitious **Yarlung Tsangpo River dam project**, the world's largest hydroelectric initiative, designed to generate **300 billion kWh annually**.
  - **Concerns for India:** The Yarlung Tsangpo becomes the **Brahmaputra River** in Arunachal Pradesh and **Assam**, raising concerns about potential impacts on water availability and flow.
- **Environmental Sensitivity:**
  - The **Himalayan region**, often called the "**third pole**," holds vast water reserves in its rivers, glaciers, and lakes, supporting millions of people
  - Earthquakes can trigger:
    - **River course changes:** Past earthquakes have altered major river systems, like the Ganga in India.
    - **Glacial instability:** Potential flooding due to destabilized glaciers and lakes.
- **Causes of the Earthquake:**
  - **Tectonic Dynamics:**
    - **Plate Collision:** The Himalayas were formed 50 million years ago when the **Indian plate collided with the Eurasian plate**.
    - **Ongoing Tension:** The Indian plate continues to push northward at a rate of **60 mm/year**, causing stress and periodic seismic activity.
  - **Historical Seismic Activity:**
    - Since 1950, the Lhasa terrane has recorded **21 earthquakes of magnitude 6 or higher**.
    - **Notable Event:** A **6.9 magnitude earthquake** struck near Mainling in 2017, highlighting the region's vulnerability.



- **Predictive Studies:**
  - Geologists monitor fault lines to anticipate potential earthquakes.
  - For example, studies predicted the devastating **2015 Nepal earthquake**, observing that the fault involved experienced significant events roughly **80 years apart**.
- **Implications of the Earthquake:**
  - **Humanitarian Impact:**
    - **Casualties:** Loss of life and injuries underscore the urgent need for disaster preparedness in high-risk areas.
    - **Displacement:** Many residents have lost homes, requiring long-term rehabilitation efforts.
  - **Environmental Risks:**
    - **Hydrological Changes:** Earthquakes can disrupt river systems and increase flood risks.
    - **Climate Sensitivity:** Destabilized glaciers could accelerate regional warming impacts.
  - **Regional Tensions:**
    - **India-China Relations:** The proximity of the earthquake to the Yarlung Tsangpo-Brahmaputra basin raises concerns about water security and cross-border cooperation.
- **Key Takeaways:**
  - **Geological Importance:** Understanding the dynamics of the Indian and Eurasian plates is essential to predicting future seismic activity.
  - **Infrastructure Concerns:** Large-scale projects like the Yarlung Tsangpo dam need rigorous risk assessments to mitigate environmental and geopolitical impacts.
  - **Disaster Preparedness:** Regional governments must enhance early warning systems and preparedness measures to minimize the human and economic toll of such disasters.
- **Conclusion:**
  - The 7.1 magnitude earthquake in Tibetan China highlights the interconnectedness of geological, environmental, and geopolitical factors in the Himalayan region.
  - Beyond immediate relief efforts, a long-term focus on seismic research, sustainable development, and international cooperation is crucial to safeguarding the region and its people.

### 3. Sonobuoys

#### GS 2 (International Relations)

- **Why in News:** India and the U.S. have announced a significant collaboration aimed at enhancing **Undersea Domain Awareness (UDA)** for the **Indian Navy** through the co-production of **U.S. sonobuoys**. This collaboration is the latest in a series of defense technology partnerships between the two countries, responding to growing concerns over **China's expanding naval presence** in the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**.
- **Key Highlights:**
  - **Partnership Development:** The **Ultra Maritime (UM)**, a U.S.-based leader in **undersea warfare capabilities**, and **Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)**, an Indian state-owned defense company, will co-produce sonobuoys for the Indian Navy.
  - The project is aligned with the **S.-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (ICET)**, launched in May 2022, and will adhere to **"Make in India"** principles by manufacturing these sonobuoys both in the U.S. and India.
  - **Technology Focus:** The collaboration will focus on developing **sonobuoy technologies** tailored for the unique acoustic environment of the **Indian Ocean**. This will include solutions for **wide-area search** and **multi-static active solutions**, enhancing the ability to detect submarines and underwater threats.

### India, U.S. to jointly manufacture interoperable sonobuoys for Navy

These undersea instruments are niche equipment effective in detecting submarines lurking deep in the oceans, both countries are cooperating on high-end technology amid rapid expansion of Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean

**Dinakar Patel**  
New Delhi

In a significant development, India and the United States announced cooperation on co-production of U.S. sonobuoys for undersea domain awareness (UDA) for the Indian Navy, a high-end technology that allows tracking submarines in the deep sea and coasts. This is the latest in a series of cooperation measures between the two countries as both grow wary of the rapid expansion of Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean Region.

"Welcome the advancement of discussions between Ultra Maritime (UM) and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) to enhance undersea domain awareness through a first-of-its-kind partnership on co-production of U.S. sonobuoys in support of the U.S. and Indian defence industrial bases," said a fact sheet titled "The U.S. and India committed to strengthening strategic technology partnership" issued on Tuesday at the end of U.S.



State of the art: Discussions are on between Ultra Maritime and Bharat Dynamics Ltd. on a partnership for the co-production of sonobuoys, sensitive listening.

tra Maritime, a U.S.-based world leader in the design and production of undersea warfare capabilities, said in a statement. They will jointly manufacture and supply sonobuoys for the Indian Navy as per U.S. Navy standards, with production split across the U.S. and India, in accordance with "Make in India" principles, it stated.

"The announcement today by NSA Jake Sullivan reflects Ultra Maritime's commitment to the Indian Navy in partnering with BDL for production and delivery of world-class sonobuoys, and our resolute commitment to continue to develop forward looking

solutions to unique undersea challenges," said Ultra Maritime CEO Carlo Zaffina in the statement.

BDL Chairman Commander A. Mahalingam (ret.) said BDL was completely aligned with the Indian Navy to meet the operational demand for "Make in India" sonobuoys and committed to joint production with Ultra Maritime in Visakhapatnam.

Highlighting the aspect of interoperability, a key focus area, Rear Admiral Mark Kemp (ret.), senior vice-president at Ultra Maritime for strategy and business development, said: "The UM sonobuoys co-produced in India are interchangeable and interoperable between U.S. Navy, Indian Navy and allied P-8, MH-60R and the MQ-48 Sea Guardian aircraft."

enable between U.S. Navy, Indian Navy and allied P-8, MH-60R and the MQ-48 Sea Guardian aircraft."

Significant move: This is particularly significant as India has over the years acquired a series of military platforms from the U.S. that are also operated by other countries in the region, especially Australia and Japan, all four of which comprise the Quad grouping and also hold the Malabar naval exercise.

The Indian Navy operates the P-8 long range maritime patrol aircraft, is inducting the MH-60R multi-role helicopters and has two MQ-48 armed High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems on lease and signed a \$3.5 billion contract in October 2024 for 31 MQ-48 - B Sea Guardians for the Indian Navy and 16 Sky Guardians, eight each for the Army and Air Force, with deliveries to begin from January 2025. After Maritime Domain Awareness, UDA has emerged as a key focus area for India and among the Quad.

- The **sonobuoys** produced under this partnership will be designed for **interoperability**, allowing them to be used seamlessly by the **S. Navy**, the **Indian Navy**, and other allied countries' naval assets, including **P-8, MH-60R, and MQ-9B Sea Guardian** aircraft.
- While India already operates the **American sonobuoys from the P-8I maritime surveillance and anti-submarine warfare aircraft**, the fresh deal is for the **MH-60 Romeo helicopters**, also procured from the US.
- The sonobuoys are a mix of active and passive capabilities, and are expendable, meaning they are meant for use only once.
- Use of sonobuoys would make these aircraft more potent in carrying out anti-submarine warfare as they raise the probability of detection of enemy submarines.
- There are three types of sonobuoys the Indian Navy is procuring:
  - AN/SSQ-53G high-altitude anti-submarine warfare (HAASW) sonobuoys
  - AN/SSQ-62F HAASW
  - AN/SSQ-36
- **About Sonobuoys**
  - Sonobuoys are **advanced devices** that play a critical role in **tracking submarines and monitoring underwater activity**, particularly in deep seas and oceans.
  - Sonobuoys are **expendable, electro-mechanical acoustic sensors** that **relay underwater sounds** emitted from ships and submarines.
  - They remain active for **about 24 hours** and help in detection, classification and prosecution of adversarial ships and submarines.
  - A **naval helicopter or fixed-wing aircraft** generally drops sonobuoys in a pattern.
  - They are dropped in canisters and are deployed automatically upon impact with water.
  - An **inflatable system** with a **radio transmitter** remains on the surface for communication with the ship or aircraft tracking it while sensors descend below the surface to predetermined depth.
  - It then relays acoustic information back to those monitoring them. A group of sonobuoys deployed in a pattern can find out the exact location of the submarine which then can be tracked by other systems.

#### 4. **BHARATPOL portal launched** **GS 2 (Governance)**

- **Why in News:**
  - Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the 'Bharatpol' portal on January 7, developed by the CBI to enhance international police cooperation.
  - The portal serves as a broadcast hub for real-time action against transnational crimes, enabling central and state law enforcement agencies to connect efficiently with Interpol and expedite investigations.
- **What is Interpol?**
  - **About**
    - Full Name - International Criminal Police Organisation.
    - Interpol is the radio-telegraph code for the organisation.
    - Interpol is an international police organisation made up of 196 member countries.
    - **It does not work under UN.**
    - It has enjoyed a special role – that of Permanent Observer at the United Nations - since 1996.
    - It was founded in 1923 and is **headquartered at Lyon France.**
  - **Functions of Interpol**

#### **Bharatpol to aid in nabbing fugitive criminals 'wherever they hide': Home Minister**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday inaugurated the Bharatpol portal, which aims to provide police and security agencies in India with a seamless connect to Interpol, the international police organisation.

He said criminals committing crimes in India and fleeing to other countries had evaded the reach of Indian laws for years. However, with the implementation of modern systems such as Bharatpol, such criminals could now be brought within the ambit of justice.

Mr. Shah said the new criminal law enabled the prosecution of fugitive criminals through trials in absentia and, with the capabilities of Bharatpol, fugitives could be brought to justice "wherever they hide".

He said the new law



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with CBI Director Praveen Sood at the launch of the 'Bharatpol' portal in New Delhi on Tuesday. PTI

would simplify the process of extraditing convicted criminals to India.

He urged the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to take the lead in implementing Bharatpol and ensuring widespread training in its use at the grass-roots level. The portal has been developed by the CBI.

The five key modules of Bharatpol – Connect, Interpol notices, References, Broadcast, and Resources – provide a technological platform to support all In-

dian law enforcement agencies, the Home Minister said.

He said that through Connect, all Indian law enforcement agencies would essentially function as an extension of Interpol's National Central Bureau (NCB-New Delhi). The system would ensure quick and structured transmission of requests for Interpol notices, enabling a scientific mechanism to swiftly locate criminals from India and across the globe.



- It is not a police force in the traditional sense—its agents are not able to arrest criminals.
- It is more of an information-sharing network, providing a way for national police forces to co-operate effectively and tackle international crime ranging from human trafficking and terrorism to money laundering and illegal art dealing.
- Sharing of information is done by issuing colour-coded notices in four languages - English, Spanish, French, and Arabic.
- The organization operates centralised criminal databases that contain fingerprint records, DNA samples and stolen documents

• **What is Bharatpol?**

○ **Background - CBI as Interpol Liaison for India**

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), functioning as the National Central Bureau (NCB-New Delhi) for Interpol in India facilitates connections between Indian law enforcement agencies and those in 195 countries.
- Currently, coordination happens through letters, emails, and faxes, often causing delays in investigations.

○ **About Bharatpol**

- Bharatpol, developed to streamline international cooperation, addresses delays by making police collaboration more seamless.
- It enables **real-time assistance for criminal investigations**.
- The portal was introduced in response to the rise in transnational crimes such as cybercrime, financial crimes, online radicalisation, organised crimes, drug trafficking, and human trafficking.
- These crimes demand instant international coordination.

○ **Key features of Bharatpol portal**

▪ **Unified Platform for Law Enforcement**

- Bharatpol connects the CBI (NCB-New Delhi) with all law enforcement authorities in India, including SPs and CPs, ensuring seamless integration.

▪ **Simplified Request Mechanism**

- Frontline police officers can easily request international assistance from 195 Interpol member countries using standardised templates

▪ **Rapid Information Dissemination**

- The portal enables the CBI to quickly share criminal intelligence and inputs from Interpol member countries with law enforcement agencies across India.



▪ **Enhanced Utilisation of Interpol Notices**

- Bharatpol simplifies drafting requests for Red Corner Notices and other Interpol notices, aiding in global tracking of crimes, criminals, and illicit assets.

▪ **Capacity Building and Training**

- The portal offers access to documents, templates, and training resources, improving the skills of frontline officers in conducting international investigations.

○ **Key modules of Bharatpol**

- **Connect:** Enables Indian law enforcement agencies to function as an extension of Interpol's NCB-New Delhi.
- It ensures quick, secure, and structured transmission of requests for Interpol Notices and aiding in the swift location of criminals globally.

- **INTERPOL Notices:** Facilitates streamlined requests for Interpol Notices to enhance international crime tracking
- **Broadcast:** Provides real-time access to requests for assistance from Interpol's member countries.
- **References:** Organises and manages references for international investigations.
- **Resources:** Simplifies the exchange and management of documents and training materials for efficient international collaboration.

## 5. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)

### GS 1 (Art and Culture)

- **Why in News:** Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is celebrated annually on **January 9th** to honor the significant contribution of the **Overseas Indian community** in the development of India.
- **About the day**
  - The day marks the return of **Mahatma Gandhi** to India from **South Africa on January 9, 1915**, which was a pivotal moment in India's freedom struggle.
  - Gandhi's return is seen as the **beginning of the movement that transformed India**, and celebrating this day recognizes the role of the Indian diaspora in shaping the country's present and future.
  - **Role of the Diaspora:** The date also highlights the role of the **Indian diaspora** in India's freedom struggle and their ongoing contribution to the nation's development in the post-independence era. The diaspora has played an integral part in sectors such as business, technology, and policy-making, contributing to India's global stature.
  - To mark this day, the tradition of celebrating **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)** started in 2003. 1st PBD Convention was organised on 9 January 2003 to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community to the development of India.
  - Since 2015, under a revised format, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated once in every two years.
  - **18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention – 2025:**
    - **Dates:** 08-10 January 2025
    - **Location:** Bhubaneswar, Odisha
    - **Theme:** "The Diaspora's Contribution to a Viksit Bharat" (A Developed India). The theme emphasizes the critical role of the Indian diaspora in shaping a prosperous and developed India, highlighting their contributions in various domains like technology, economy, and culture.

## Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to begin today in Odisha

Over 3000 delegates from 70 nations have arrived in the State event will be inaugurated by Modi. Trinidad and Tobago President Christine Carla Kangoolo will be the chief guest of the 18th edition

Satyajit Mohanty

Over 3,000 delegates from 70 countries have arrived in Odisha ahead of the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD), which will get under way here on Wednesday.

The three-day event, based on the theme "Diaspora's contribution to a Viksit Bharat", will be formally inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the second day of the convention. The previous edition was held in Indore in January 2023, in partnership with the Madhya Pradesh government.

Christine Carla Kangoolo, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, will be the chief guest of the 18th PBD, and she would be virtually addressing this vision with our esteemed diaspora, but have also urged them to partner our journey towards this cherished goal," he said.

"The Indian diaspora has an important role to play in the vision of Viksit Bharat. It acts as a living bridge between their



5. Jashankar and his wife Pyko Jashankar during their visit to Bhubaneswar on Tuesday 19

"We will have ministerial-level delegations from Mauritius, Malaysia and South Africa. There will be big delegation of diaspora from several other countries, including from Malaysia, Mauritius, Oman, Qatar, the UAE, the U.K. and the U.S."

"Mr. Modi has given us the vision of a Viksit Bharat by 2047. We have taken the initiative of not only sharing this vision with our esteemed diaspora, but have also urged them to partner our journey towards this cherished goal," he said.

"The Indian diaspora has an important role to play in the vision of Viksit Bharat. It acts as a living bridge between their motherland and their adopted homeland. That is why the Government of India has chosen the diaspora's contribution to a Viksit Bharat as the overarching theme of the 18th PBD."

He said Union Ministers would chair plenary sessions while eminent Indians from various fields would moderate the sessions.

**Tourist train**  
The PM will remotely flag off the inaugural journey of the Pravasi Bharatiya Express, a special tourist train for the Indian diaspora which will depart from Delhi and travel to multiple destinations of tourist and religious importance for

three weeks.

The PBD will feature the spread and evolution of the Indian diaspora in the world with special focus on Mandvi to Muscat. This will showcase the rare documents of people who had migrated from Mandvi in Gujarat to Muscat in Oman.

President Droupadi Murmu will chair the valedictory session and confer the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman on 27 distinguished members of the Indian diaspora to recognize their outstanding contribution and achievements in diverse fields both in their countries of residence as well as in India.

Awards will be given to Indian diaspora members from 24 countries. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said the event is an opportunity for Odisha to showcase its rich cultural heritage and tradition before the world.

Odisha Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja said, "We have been working to make this event comfortable and pleasurable. We have identified about 21 tourist sites."

## 6. V Narayanan Appointed as the New Head of ISRO

### GS 3 (Science and Tech)

- **Why in News:** V Narayanan has been appointed as the **new head of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**. He will take over from **S Somanath**, who served as the ISRO chairman from 2022.
- **Important Contributions**
  - **Joined ISRO in 1984:** With nearly four decades of experience in space technology, Narayanan began his career at ISRO in 1984.
  - His early contributions were in the **Solid Propulsion area**, specifically with **Sounding Rockets, Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicles (ASLV), and Polar Satellite Launch Vehicles (PSLV)** at the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC).



- **Shift to Cryogenic Propulsion:** In 1989, Narayanan transitioned to the **Cryogenic Propulsion area** at the **Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC)**. This was a pivotal shift in his career, leading to crucial advancements in the propulsion systems used in space launches.
- **Leadership at LPSC:**
  - **Director of LPSC (2018):** Under his leadership, LPSC developed **164 liquid propulsion systems** for **41 launch vehicles** and supported **31 spacecraft missions**
  - **GSLV Mk III & C25 Cryogenic Project:** Narayanan was the Project Director for the **C25 Cryogenic Project**, which developed the **C25 Stage** — a critical component for the **GSLV Mk III** vehicle, a significant achievement for ISRO's rocket capabilities.
- **Expertise:** Narayanan is widely recognized for his expertise in **rocket propulsion** and **spacecraft propulsion systems**, both of which are critical for ISRO's mission success.

V. Narayanan, spacecraft and rocket propulsion expert, appointed ISRO Chairman

The Hindu Bureau  
BENGALURU

V. Narayanan has been appointed the new Space Secretary. Dr. Narayanan, who is currently the Director of Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC), will be the new Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), and he will take over from S. Somnath on January 14.



V. Narayanan

Dr. Narayanan, who is a rocket and spacecraft propulsion expert, joined the ISRO in 1984 and functioned in various capacities in various capacities before becoming Director of the LPSC. During the initial phase of his career he worked in the solid propulsion area of sounding rockets and Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle (ASLV) and Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV). He has also contributed significantly for the ISRO's geosynchronous launch vehicles

He will take over from Somnath, who oversaw landmark missions such as Chandrayaan-3

namely GSLV Mk-II & GSLV Mk-III. As the Chairman of the National Expert Committee constituted to study the reasons for hardlanding of Chandrayaan-2, he contributed in pinpointing the reasons and corrective actions required to overcome the observations. Realised and delivered all the Propulsion Systems for Chandrayaan-3. Dr. Narayanan's profile says: Mr. Somnath, who oversaw landmark missions such as Chandrayaan-3, Aditya L1 and the first developmental flight of the Gaganyaan mission.

## 7. Draft Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025 GS 2 (Governance)

- **Why in News:** The draft **Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025**, have been introduced to enforce the **Digital Personal Data Protection Act** passed over a year ago. This marks a significant step towards enforcing the fundamental right to informational privacy, affirmed by the Supreme Court in the **landmark 2017 case of Justice K.S. Puttaswamy vs. Union of India**. However, concerns persist about the secrecy surrounding the rule-making process.
- **Enabling Data Privacy Protections**
  - **Data Collection Transparency:** The proposed rules mandate online services to clearly communicate the purpose of data collection to users, ensuring transparency in digital interactions.
  - **Child Data Safeguarding:** Special provisions are included to safeguard children's personal data, addressing growing concerns about privacy in the digital realm.
  - **Data Fiduciary Obligations:** The rules outline procedures to follow in case of personal data breaches, holding data fiduciaries accountable for securing user information.
- **Institutional Design and Government Exemptions**
  - **Data Protection Board of India (DPBI):** The draft rules propose the establishment of the DPBI, which will play a crucial role in addressing disputes and ensuring compliance with data protection laws.
  - **Government Exemptions:** Guidelines are provided for government agencies to be exempt from some provisions of the Act, raising concerns over potential oversight issues.
  - **Institutional Challenges:** Despite proposals for the DPBI, concerns about the institutional design remain unresolved, and it may not be realistic to address these through subordinate legislation alone.
- **Concerns Over Secrecy and the Consultation Process**
  - **Lack of Transparency:** The government's continued secrecy in the rule-making process raises concerns, as it limits public participation and stakeholder involvement.
  - **Need for Open Deliberation:** An open and transparent consultation process is crucial for balancing the interests of both industry and the general public, promoting better outcomes.
  - **Public Confidence at Risk:** If the government does not improve transparency and act promptly, it risks losing the public's trust in its commitment to safeguarding privacy and user data.

**Data protection rules may be refined further to protect children: Vaishnaw**

New Delhi: The Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules will be refined further to connect children with technology while saving them from harms in the digital space, IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Tuesday.

While speaking to reporters, the minister said the rules will evolve based on the learning from their implementation.

"We will refine it (DPDP Rules) further to take the power of technology to children while saving them from many harm," Vaishnaw said.

The government issued draft DPDP Rules 2025 on January 3 and these are open for public consultation till February 18, 2024.

According to the draft rules, digital platforms can process data of a child only after taking consent from verifiable guardian or parents.

The verification can be done using voluntarily provided details of identity and age, or through a virtual token issued by an entity entrusted by law or by the Centre or state governments to maintain details of a person.

Vaishnaw said the token system has been successful in various cases such as verification in case of Aadhaar-based transactions. "The tokens will be temporary and limited to one transaction after which it will be destroyed automatically," he said.

PTI