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Daily News Feed

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Industrial output growth slows to 4% in August

Country's IIP growth gets pulled down by consumer-related sectors; primary goods sector sees a turnaround with seven-month-high of 5.2%; experts say no effect of GST reforms that came in later

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Growth in industrial activity in India slowed to 4% in August from its six-month high growth of 4.3% in July.

Growth was dragged down by the consumer durables and non-durables sectors, as well as slower growth in manufacturing, capital goods, and infrastructure sectors, government data showed.

On the other hand, mining activity, the primary goods sector, and electricity output saw a positive turnaround.

Data on the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on Monday, showed that growth in the index this August was

Slowing growth

The year-on-year change (in %) in the Index of Industrial Production. The index saw 0% growth in August last year



SOURCE: CENTRE FOR MONITORING INDIAN ECONOMY

considerably faster than the 0% seen in August last year.

"This data should be read with caution as it captures neither the tariff nor GST effect which have been in the news and affected sentiment in business," Madan Sabnavis, chief economist at the Bank of Baroda, said. "Tariffs were implemented

from August 27 while GST benefits kicked in late September."

The mining and quarrying sector in particular saw a significant turnaround. It grew 6% in August, a 14-month high, snapping a four-month streak of contractions.

The second sector to see a robust turnaround was the primary goods sector,

which saw growth coming in at a seven-month high of 5.2%. The electricity sector grew at a five-month high of 4.1%.

The manufacturing sector, however, slowed to 3.8% in August, down from 6% in July. This was quicker than the 1.2% growth the sector saw in August last year. Similarly, growth in the capital goods sector slowed in August to 4.4% from 6.7% in July. This was, however, quicker than the 0% seen in August last year.

The growth in the consumer durables sector slowed to 3.5% in August from 7.3% in July and 5.4% in August last year. The consumer non-durables sector saw activity contracting 6.3%, the worst performance in eight months.

Summary (English):

India's IIP (Index of Industrial Production) growth slowed to 4% in August, dragged by consumer durables and non-durables. Manufacturing and capital goods growth also fell, though mining and electricity showed improvement. Experts note GST/tariff effects are not reflected yet.

Summary (Hindi):

भारत का औद्योगिक उत्पादन सूचकांक (IIP) अगस्त में घटकर 4% पर आ गया। उपभोक्ता वस्तुओं और विनिर्माण क्षेत्र में मंदी दिखी, जबकि खनन और बिजली उत्पादन में सुधार हुआ। विशेषज्ञों ने कहा कि जीएसटी और शुल्क प्रभाव इसमें शामिल नहीं हैं।

GS Paper: GS-III (Indian Economy – Growth, Industrial Sector, Inclusive Development).

Ladakh groups reject proposal for talks, Ministry open to dialogue

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), which have been spearheading the movement for constitutional safeguards in Ladakh, has called off the proposed talks on Tuesday with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) officials in Delhi, saying the "talks cannot be held at gunpoint".

Cherring Dorjay Lakruk, co-convenor of the LAB, said the government and a section of media had made baseless allegations calling the Ladakhis "anti-nationals", accusing them of colluding with "foreign elements" and for having "links with Pakistan".

Following LAB's an-

nouncement, the Ministry said in a statement that the government had always been open for dialogues on Ladakh matters with LAB and KDA "at any time".

"We would continue to welcome the discussion with LAB and KDA through the high-powered committee (HPC) on Ladakh or any such platform," the Ministry said.

The LAB members said the lack of commitment from the government to conduct a judicial inquiry into the death of four people in police action during September 24 protests in Leh city was the primary reason behind the decision. Mr. Lakruk said, "Our children were shot in the head. Judicial inquiry should be held. The Central Reserve Police Force



Sajjad Kargili of Kargil Democratic Alliance at a press conference on Monday demanded the release of Sonam Wangchuk. ANI

(CRPF) fired at our people without the permission of the district magistrate. We have proof to support this." He said that 50 people have been detained by the police.

The meeting on Tues-

day was a preliminary meeting before the October 6 high-powered committee (HPC) dialogue.

'Will not tolerate'

"Till the time the tag of anti-nationals on our children

Injured Tibetan refugee recovering at AIIMS

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

A 21-year-old Tibetan refugee is among several injured people who were hit by bullets during police action on September 24 when protests to demand constitutional safeguard in Ladakh's Leh turned vio-

lent, leaving four dead.

Tara* is presently admitted at the Intensive Care Unit in Jai Prakash Narayan Trauma Centre of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi.

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is not removed, we will not participate in the talks with government. Ladakhis will not tolerate this," he said.

Mr. Lakruk also raised the restrictions imposed on people from participating in the cremation of two

of the four deceased persons on Monday. Among those who were cremated on Monday were Tsewang Tharchin (46), a retired soldier who fought during the 1999 Kargil war.

"People were stopped

from joining the cremation procession, this has led to huge resentment and anger among the people... The government is responsible for the youth hitting the streets, we condemn the violence but the delay in initiating the talks acted like a pressure cooker for the youth," Mr. Lakruk added.

Speaking on climate activist Sonam Wangchuk's detention under the National Security Act (NSA), Mr. Lakruk said: "They are levelling all kinds of allegations. Were the government agencies sleeping till now? They started finding irregularities with Wangchuk's institute only after he raised his voice for Ladakh. They want to silence us. How can we hold talks at gunpoint?"

Summary (English):

Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) boycotted talks with MHA, citing repression, police firing (4 deaths), and detention of Sonam Wangchuk under NSA. They demand judicial inquiry into police action.

Summary (Hindi):

लद्दाख की लेह एपेक्स बॉडी (LAB) और कारगिल डेमोक्रेटिक अलायंस (KDA) ने गृह मंत्रालय के साथ वार्ता का बहिष्कार किया। कारण: पुलिस फायरिंग में 4 मौतें, सोनम वांगचुक को NSA के तहत हिरासत, और न्यायिक जांच की मांग।

GS Paper: GS-II (Polity – Centre-State Relations, Federalism, Rights & Protests).

Envoys raise 'Russia question' amid deepening India-EU ties

EU Ambassador says India buying Russian oil and its participation in Zapad military exercise worry Europe; Delphin says it has to 'square' Russia partnership with desire to deepen ties with Europe

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India has to "square" its strategic partnership with Russia with its desire to deepen ties with the European Union (EU), European envoys said here on Wednesday, questioning India's participation in the recent 'Zapad' military exercises and Russian oil purchases and calling for "sensitivity" to European concerns over the conflict in Ukraine.

In a keynote address, the European Union's Ambassador to India, Herve Delphin, hailed improvements in India-EU ties, including trade, technology transfers and the strategic partnership, but called the "Russia question" an issue on which the two sides were not aligned. Other EU-member diplomats from Germany, Lithuania, Estonia, Switzerland, Italy and the Czech Republic also raised concerns that the growing EU-India relationship could be affected by India's engagement with Russia.



Diplomat in Delhi: EU envoy Herve Delphin delivering a keynote address at an event in New Delhi on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"We have to be clear-eyed about those issues on which we are not aligned," Mr. Delphin said, at the launch of an edition of a publication "India's World", co-hosted by German think-tank Heinrich Boll Foundation, focused on the India-EU relationship. "Let's be clear: there is a Russia question, specifically linked to its war of aggression against Ukraine and its hostile attitude towards as seen in past weeks and days and the violation of European airspace by Russian drones," he added, citing discussions in European capitals over India's purchase of

Russian oil, and the participation of an Indian contingent in the Russia-Belarus Zapad-2025 exercise from September 12 to 16.

"India has pronounced itself for peace. Russia is a strategic partner for India. And India wants to deepen its ties with the EU. This will require further consideration in Delhi on how to square those terms," Mr. Delphin said.

The timing of the Zapad exercise was awkward for EU leaders in Brussels, as trade and agricultural negotiators and a delegation from EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC) were in Delhi at the time.

EU Foreign Policy chief Kaja Kallas had later said if India wanted "closer ties with us, then why participate in exercises that are existential threats to us [the EU]?"

MEA rejected criticism

Rejecting the criticism, the Ministry of External Affairs had pointed out that NATO countries, including the U.S., Türkiye, and Hungary, which is an EU member, had participated as observers in Zapad-2025, while many European countries continued to buy Russian energy.

"I think when [India and EU] want to grow closer, [India would] have to understand that this is something that bothers [the EU] and concerns us big time," said German Ambassador Philipp Ackermann in his address.

In his summation, Mr. Delphin said "strategic convergence" between Delhi and Brussels has "never been greater", and hoped that the Free Trade Agreement would be done by the end of 2025.

Summary (English):

EU diplomats urged India to balance ties with Russia and EU, criticizing India's Zapad-2025 exercise participation and Russian oil purchases. MEA defended India's independent stance, citing NATO observers also attended.

Summary (Hindi):

यूरोपीय संघ (EU) के राजनयिकों ने भारत से कहा कि उसे रूस और यूरोप के बीच संतुलन बनाना होगा। रूस से तेल खरीद और "ज़ापाद-2025" सैन्य अभ्यास में भागीदारी पर चिंता जताई। भारत ने स्वतंत्र विदेश नीति का बचाव किया।

GS Paper: GS-II (International Relations – India-EU, India-Russia).

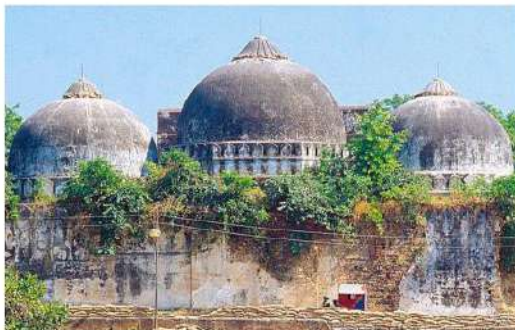
In Ayodhya judgment, SC relied on principles of possession and balance of probabilities

NEWS ANALYSIS

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Former Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud's statement in the media that the very erection of the Babri Masjid was a desecration does not feature as a reasoning anywhere in the 2019 Ramjanmabhoomi judgment of which he is largely believed to be the author.

The 1,045-page judgment on the title battle over the 1,500 square yards in the town of Ayodhya is founded, instead, on the "test of preponderance of probabilities" over who had possession of the outer and inner courtyards of the disputed premises.



Former Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud has said that the very erection of the Babri Masjid was a desecration. FILE PHOTO.

The five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court had taken the "balance of probabilities" to come to a conclusion that Hindus had unimpeded control over the outer courtyard despite a grill-brick wall constructed in 1857.

As regards the inner

courtyard, the court said, there was evidence "on a preponderance of probabilities to establish worship by the Hindus prior to the annexation of Oudh by the British in 1857".

The court had reasoned, while decreeing the disputed title in favour of

the Hindus five years ago, that there was no evidence the Muslims had exclusive possession of the inner structure before 1857.

In fact, the 2019 judgment had termed the Mughal conquest of the territories a "supra-national act between two sovereigns". It had refused to entertain or enforce rights to the disputed property based solely on the existence of an underlying temple dating to the 12th century.

The court had found the Archaeological Survey of India's report on the question whether a temple was demolished to build the Babri Masjid over four centuries ago inconclusive. The court had made it clear that the ASI and its report on the question of

demolition of a temple or construction of a mosque using the walls of a previous temple structure was inane to the question of title [ownership] of the disputed property and structure in a civil trial.

"Determination of title was not obviously within the remit of ASI," the court had said in the 2019 judgment.

"No evidence is available in a case of this antiquity on the cause of destruction of the underlying structure; whether the pre-existing structure was demolished for the construction of the mosque. Title to the land must be decided on settled legal principles and applying evidentiary standards which govern a civil trial," the court had clarified.

Summary (English):

Analysis clarified that the 2019 Ayodhya verdict was based on "balance of probabilities" of possession (Hindus in outer courtyard, pre-1857 worship in inner courtyard). ASI report on demolition was not conclusive.

Summary (Hindi):

2019 अयोध्या निर्णय "संभावनाओं के संतुलन" पर आधारित था। अदालत ने कहा कि हिंदुओं का बाहरी प्रांगण पर नियंत्रण था और 1857 से पहले आंतरिक प्रांगण में पूजा होती थी। एसआई रिपोर्ट निर्णायक नहीं थी।

GS Paper: GS-II (Polity – Judiciary, Secularism, Minority Rights).

X to appeal HC judgment upholding Sahyog portal

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

X, formerly Twitter, said that it would appeal the Karnataka High Court's decision that rejected its challenge to the Union government's Sahyog portal.

The Sahyog portal was set up last year to allow the police and other authorised government agencies to send takedown notices to social media platforms, a move that X has argued is a broad and illegal censorship regime that would leave it with criminal liability if it did not comply.

The company said it was "deeply concerned" by the judgment handed down by the single Bench of judge M. Nagaprasanna, and that it would appeal. It did not indicate whether this appeal would be directed to a



M. Nagaprasanna gave the verdict that rejected X's challenge to Sahyog portal.

larger bench of the Karnataka High Court, or to the Supreme Court.

"The Sahyog [portal] enables officers to order content removal based solely on allegations of 'illegality,' without judicial review or due process for the speakers, and threatens platforms with criminal liability for non-compliance," the platform said.

"X respects and com-

plies with Indian law, but this order... is inconsistent with the Bombay High Court's recent ruling that a similar regime was unconstitutional."

X is referring to the Centre's fact checking unit, which was designed to flag misinformation about the Centre that, once a given post was notified, would strip away the "safe harbour" that a platform would enjoy for continuing to host it; the "intermediary," X, in this case, would be liable for posts made by users as though it were a publisher. The Sahyog portal, X argues, is similar.

Justice Nagaprasanna argued in his ruling that X was not in a position to take umbrage under constitutional guarantees as its parent, X Corp., is a foreign company.

Summary (English):

X (formerly Twitter) will appeal Karnataka HC order upholding Sahyog portal, which allows govt. to directly order content takedowns. X argued it creates censorship without due process.

Summary (Hindi):

एक्स (पूर्व ट्विटर) ने कर्नाटक उच्च न्यायालय के "सहयोग पोर्टल" को सही ठहराने वाले आदेश को चुनौती देने का निर्णय लिया। यह पोर्टल सरकार को सीधे कंटेंट हटाने का आदेश देने की शक्ति देता है, जिसे एक्स ने "बिना न्यायिक प्रक्रिया की सेंसरशिप" कहा।

GS Paper: GS-II (Polity – Fundamental Rights, Free Speech, Digital Governance).

Two railway links to offer easy connectivity to Bhutan

Kokrajhar-Gelephu and Banarhat-Samtse lines will run to a total distance of 89 km; they will be developed at a cost of ₹4,033 crore; Railway Minister says project will boost economy, tourism

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Monday announced two rail links with a total distance of 89 km between India and Bhutan – Kokrajhar-Gelephu (Assam) and Banarhat-Samtse (West Bengal) – at a cost of ₹4,033 crore.

These two projects are part of the first set of rail connectivity projects between India and Bhutan, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri announced at a press conference.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) for these projects was signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bhutan in March 2024 and a formal agreement was signed here on the occasion of the Bhutanese Foreign Secretary's visit to New Delhi.

"India is the largest trading partner of Bhutan. Most of the EXIM trade of Bhutan is through Indian ports, therefore, it becomes very important to have seamless rail connectivity for the Bhutanese economy to grow, and for the Bhutanese people to have better access to the



Strategic link: Railway Board CEO Satish Kumar, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishaw, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, and MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal announcing the Bhutan rail link on Monday. ANI

global network," Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said.

For Vande Bharat trains

The Minister said the two rail links would provide Bhutan access to 1,50,000 km of the Indian railway network. While the Kokrajhar-Gelephu rail link would be developed over the next four years, the Banarhat-Samtse line would be constructed over a period of three years. The railway lines would be designed for running Vande Bharat trains. The former will have six stations, two

viaducts, 29 major bridges, 65 minor bridges, two good sheds, one flyover and 39 underpasses. The latter will include two stations, one major flyover, 24 minor flyovers, and 37 underpasses. It will be developed at a cost of ₹577 crore.

"This will provide a lot of economic benefits to the people, in terms of tourism, industrial growth, people-to-people movement, and goods movement. Practically, every benefit that railway brings will happen with this," Mr. Vaishnav added.

The Government of India has pledged ₹10,000 crore in development assistance to Bhutan for its 13th Five-Year Plan running from 2024 to 2029. This funding doubles the support provided during the 12th Plan.

Bhutan is also set to benefit from the Jogighopha Inland Waterways Transport Terminal, opened in February. The two nations have also collaborated on five major hydropower projects – Chukha, Tala, Mangdechhu, Kurichhu, and the recently completed Punatsangchhu II.

Two railway links to offer easy connectivity to Bhutan

English Summary:

- The Centre announced two new rail links between India and Bhutan:
 1. Kokrajhar-Gelephu (Assam to Bhutan)

2. Banarhat-Samtse (West Bengal to Bhutan)

- Combined length: 89 km, cost: ₹4,033 crore.
- MoU signed during PM Modi's Bhutan visit (March 2024). Final agreement signed in Sept 2025.
- These links will connect Bhutan to 1,50,000 km of Indian Railways network, facilitating EXIM trade, tourism, industrial growth, and people-to-people ties.
- Banarhat-Samtse line (₹577 crore) will include viaducts, bridges, underpasses, stations, and Vande Bharat facilities.
- India pledged ₹10,000 crore development aid to Bhutan (2024-2029), doubling 12th Plan support.
- Bhutan also benefits from Inland Waterways Terminal at Jogighopa and major hydropower projects (Chukha, Tala, Mangdechhu, Kurichhu, Punatsangchhu).

Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

- भारत सरकार ने भूटान के साथ दो नई रेल परियोजनाओं की घोषणा की:
 1. कोकराझार-गैलेफू (असम-भूटान)
 2. बनरहाट-सामत्से (पश्चिम बंगाल-भूटान)
- कुल लंबाई: 89 किमी, लागत: ₹4,033 करोड़।
- समझौता ज्ञापन मार्च 2024 में पीएम मोदी की भूटान यात्रा के दौरान हुआ, अंतिम समझौता सितंबर 2025 में।
- इन रेल लाइनों से भूटान को 1,50,000 किमी भारतीय रेलवे नेटवर्क तक पहुंच मिलेगी।
- व्यापार, पर्यटन, उद्योग और लोगों के बीच संपर्क को बढ़ावा मिलेगा।
- बनरहाट-सामत्से लाइन (₹577 करोड़) में पुल, अंडरपास, स्टेशन और वंदे भारत सुविधाएँ होंगी।
- भारत ने ₹10,000 करोड़ विकास सहायता (2024-2029) देने का वादा किया है।
- भूटान को जोगीघोपा अंतर्देशीय जलमार्ग टर्मिनल और प्रमुख जलविद्युत परियोजनाओं (चुखा, ताला, मंगदेचू, कुरिचू, पुनात्सांगचू) से भी लाभ होगा।

GS Paper Mapping:

- GS-II: International Relations – India & Neighbourhood (India-Bhutan relations, regional connectivity).
- GS-III: Economy – Infrastructure, EXIM trade, Energy (hydropower cooperation).
- GS-I (BPSC focus): Regional integration & cultural ties with neighbours (Bihar-Bhutan connection via Eastern corridor).

E-waste collection faces gaps as informal sector plays huge role

Aroon Deep

NEW DELHI

Even as the Centre nudges local electronics manufacturing via the push for semiconductor fabrication and the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme – gaps have emerged in a critical sector that may assume more importance in the years to come: e-waste recycling.

With millions of tonnes of consumer electronics and appliances disposed of in recent years, policymakers see extracting expensive and scarce metals and elements as key as electronics use is set to boom in the coming years.

While hundreds of millions of mobile phones are in use in India, with TRAI pegging the number of mobile broadband connections in excess of 93.9 crore, India constitutes only about 4%, of global electronics consumption.

As global electronics' supply chains stay fragile, the Centre has pushed to boost local manufacturing capacity as well as a ₹1,500 crore mineral recycling scheme announced in early September.

Recycling elements such as copper, aluminum, nickel, cobalt and lithium, has shown growing importance, with the Centre introducing an "extended producer responsibility" (EPR) framework for appliances and electronics to be collected by the original manufacturers, for harvesting materials expensive to procure from the open market, or suffer from geopolitical risks such as China's decision to curb the exports of rare earth elements (REEs).



Major irritant: Informal set-ups have frustrated policymakers, as they focus on repairing products by harvesting components.

A 2023 report by the Indian Cellular and Electronics Association pointed to a key hurdle in creating a "circular economy" for such products – where metals and elements from so-called end-of-life products can be reintroduced into supply chain – viz. domination of informal sector".

Policymakers' dilemma

These set-ups have frustrated policymakers, as they focus on repairing products by harvesting parts from used goods and operate outside any formal framework that can eventually lead to recycling being a viable source of key raw materials for manufacturing firms. Even within the government's EPR framework, accusations of "paper trading" abound, with recyclers allegedly overstating the goods they are recycling to win incentive payments.

"Some players are indulging in malpractices to earn financial benefits without having either the capability or the capacity for metal extraction, which needs to be exposed," Sandip Chatterjee, an adviser to think tank Sustainable Electronics Recycling In-

ternational (SERI), who worked on e-waste issues for decades at the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, told *The Hindu*. These copper, steel, gold and aluminium extracting operations need "third-party auditing to ensure best practices on environmental safeguarding, [and] due diligence of downstream vendors for the fate of those materials till disposal," he added.

Material traceability

Dr. Chatterjee also said "material traceability" was a huge problem, since irregularities (or impossibility) in inventorying products floating around in informal markets and even registered recyclers were hampering visibility into what materials can actually be recycled and used in products. He also pushed for repairing products more and prolonging their life as a measure in e-waste management. But even there it was important for visibility in the life cycle of individual products.

Inventorying is critical as western countries count a product sold as potential e-waste soon after sale unlike in India, where gadgets

may go through multiple owners before wearing out beyond repair. "Presently, inventory has been entrusted to State Pollution Control Boards," he said. "They never use a uniform method suited to India and international figures of e-waste generation are always different."

But the statistics, as they are, still represent major volumes. Dr. Chatterjee cited an estimate of 4.17 million metric tonne of e-waste generated in 2022 alone in India, and said that only a third of this waste is processed through "proper channels"

Nitin Gupta, founder, Attero, an electronics recycling firm, said the Central Pollution Control Board, which operates the portal recyclers use, "has started carrying out audits of various recyclers in the last five months," and over 50 firms were audited, with those showing discrepancies being acted against.

Mandi-style unit

Attero has set up a large metals recycling operation, aggregating even informal set-ups into a "mandi"-style stream. While the current proportion of recycled precious metals and rare-earths in domestic supply chains is "negligible," as per Mr. Gupta, he asserted with the right policy push, "India can meet 70% of its rare earth materials requirements in the next 18 months."

The "percentage of how much impact recycling has had, has been improving year on year," Mr. Gupta added. "In India, gold, copper, aluminium and steel are majorly recovered," Dr. Chatterjee said.

English Summary:

- **Background:** India is pushing for electronics manufacturing (semiconductors, components), but e-waste recycling gaps are emerging.
 - **Scale of the problem:**
 - India generated 4.17 million metric tonnes of e-waste in 2022.
 - Only one-third is processed through proper channels, rest handled informally.
 - **Informal Sector Dominance:**
 - Informal workers harvest parts from discarded goods for reuse, without formal standards.
 - Leads to “paper trading” (inflated recycling claims) and lack of accountability.
 - Policymakers frustrated as informal setups lack traceability, safety, and compliance.
 - **Critical elements:** Copper, aluminum, nickel, cobalt, lithium, gold, rare earths are key to supply chains.
 - **Government efforts:**
 - Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) framework → producers must ensure collection and safe disposal.
 - Announced ₹1,500 crore mineral recycling scheme.
 - **Challenges:**
 - Lack of material traceability, irregular audits, malpractices.
 - Environmental risks due to unsafe practices.
 - **Emerging solutions:**
 - Formal recyclers like Attero expanding operations with third-party auditing.
 - Potential for India to meet 70% of raw material needs domestically in 18 months if proper recycling is adopted.
 - **Policy gap:** Need for stricter regulation, better monitoring, visibility in life cycle of products, and incentives for formal recyclers.
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Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

- **पृष्ठभूमि:** भारत इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स निर्माण (सेमीकंडक्टर, कॉम्पोनेंट्स) को बढ़ावा दे रहा है, लेकिन ई-वेस्ट रीसाइक्लिंग में गंभीर कमी है।
- **समस्या का पैमाना:**
 - भारत ने 2022 में 4.17 मिलियन मीट्रिक टन ई-वेस्ट उत्पन्न किया।
 - केवल एक-तिहाई ही औपचारिक चैनलों से प्रोसेस हुआ, शेष अनौपचारिक क्षेत्र में।
- **अनौपचारिक क्षेत्र की भूमिका:**
 - कबाड़ी वर्कर पुराने इलेक्ट्रॉनिक सामान से पुर्जे निकालते हैं।
 - न तो मानक हैं और न ही सुरक्षा उपाय, जिससे पर्यावरण व स्वास्थ्य जोखिम।
 - “पेपर ट्रेडिंग” यानी फर्जी रीसाइक्लिंग दावे और जवाबदेही की कमी।
- **महत्वपूर्ण धातुएँ:** तांबा, एल्युमिनियम, निकल, कोबाल्ट, लिथियम, सोना व रेयर अर्थ एलिमेंट्स।
- **सरकारी प्रयास:**
 - Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) नीति - उत्पादक को संग्रहण व सुरक्षित निस्तारण सुनिश्चित करना होगा।
 - ₹1,500 करोड़ मिनरल रीसाइक्लिंग योजना।
- **चुनौतियाँ:**
 - मटेरियल ट्रेसबिलिटी की कमी, अनियमित ऑडिट, धांधली।
 - असुरक्षित तरीकों से पर्यावरण को नुकसान।
- **उभरते समाधान:**

- औपचारिक रीसाइक्लर (Attero) द्वारा थर्ड-पार्टी ऑडिटिंग और बड़े स्तर पर प्लांट।
- उचित रीसाइक्लिंग से भारत अपनी 70% कच्चे माल की जरूरतें 18 महीने में पूरी कर सकता है।
- नीतिगत कमी: सख्त नियम, निगरानी, उत्पाद जीवनचक्र की पारदर्शिता और औपचारिक रीसाइक्लिंग को प्रोत्साहन आवश्यक।

GS Paper Mapping:

- GS-III (Environment & Economy): Waste management, Pollution control, Sustainable development.
- GS-II (Governance): Policy framework, EPR compliance, regulation of informal sector.
- BPSC/JPSC relevance: Bihar & Jharkhand → e-waste dumping & recycling hubs (Patna, Ranchi) linked with informal labour.

More women employed in agriculture, but half of them are unpaid

Global trade trends, technology, and land and labour reforms can help bridge the gap

DATA POINT

Shravani Prakash
Anjhana Ramesh

Women-led development has been recognised as a structural game-changer for advancing India's economic ambitions, yet its full potential remains under-leveraged. Nowhere is harnessing this potential more urgently than in the agriculture sector, the backbone of India's economy and the largest employer of its women.

Despite their growing presence on farms, women's contributions remain systematically unremunerative. By leveraging recent shifts in trade and technology, India has an unprecedented opportunity to unlock pathways that recognise women as equal partners in agricultural transformation.

In the past decade, structural shifts in the Indian workforce have drawn rural men into higher-paying non-farm jobs, leaving women to replace them to do the agricultural work. As a result, women's employment in agriculture surged by 135%, and they now account for over 42% of the sector's workforce. Two out of every three working women are now in agriculture.

Yet, this rise has come with diminishing returns. Nearly half of the women in agriculture are unpaid family workers, with their numbers jumping 2.5 times from 23.6 million to 59.1 million in just eight years (Chart 1). As a result, today, one in three working women in India is unpaid. In States such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, more than 80% of women workers are in agriculture, and over half of them receive no wages (Map 2).

Much of this invisibility stems from systemic inequities. Women are not officially recognised as farmers, own only 13-14% of land holdings, and earn 20-30% less than men for equivalent work. Asset ownership, decision-making power, and access to credit and go-

vernment support remain male-dominated, trapping women in low-value activities.

As a result, women's greater participation has not translated into higher income for the economy, as agriculture's share of the national GVA fell from 15.3% in 2017-18 to 14.4% in 2024-25. Therefore, the 'feminisation of agriculture'; has, in a way, reinforced inequities rather than enabling women's economic empowerment.

Global trade trends are opening new windows for women's economic inclusion in agriculture. The India-U.K. Free Trade Agreement (FTA), for example, is projected to boost Indian agricultural exports by 20% within three years, granting duty-free access to over 95% of agricultural and processed food products. From rice, spices, and dairy to ready-to-eat meals, Indian producers will benefit from premium market access, with safeguards in place for sensitive sectors. Many of these export-oriented value chains employ a significant share of women (Chart 3). If FTA-embedded provisions for women, such as training, credit access, and market linkages, are catalysed, it could enable women's transition from farm labourers to income-generating entrepreneurs.

The greatest opportunity lies in enabling women to move from unpaid, low-value tasks into higher-margin segments such as processing, packaging, branding, and exporting. With global demand rising for organic products and superfoods, India's value chains for tea, spices, millets and certified organic produce are poised for expansion – sectors where women are already strongly represented. Geographical Indications, branding initiatives, and support for meeting export standards can help women producers shift from subsistence farming toward premium, value-added product markets.

Without targeted measures, women risk being excluded from the export-led opportunities emerging in Indian agriculture. Digital inno-

ventions can play a decisive role in bridging this gap. Platforms such as e-NAM, mobile-based advisory services, voice-assisted applications, and precision agriculture tools are already connecting women to markets, knowledge systems, and financial services. These solutions help formalise women's labour while expanding access to schemes, credit, and fair pricing.

However, these benefits are contingent on overcoming structural barriers such as low digital literacy, language gaps, and limited access to affordable devices. Tackling these challenges requires collective action by all ecosystem actors – government, private sector, NGOs, self-help groups, and Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs).

Encouragingly, promising models are emerging. AI-enabled solutions such as the government's BHASHINI platform and Microsoft-AI4Bharat's Jugalbandi are extending multilingual, voice-first access to government services. L&T Finance's Digital Sakhi programme has trained rural women in digital and financial literacy across seven States.

At the State level, Odisha's Swayam Sampurna FPOs showcase how technology can position women farmers at the forefront of export competitiveness. The Jhalawari Mahila Kisan Producer Company in Rajasthan leverages digital tools for direct sales and branding. Multi-stakeholder training programs for women farmers in Assam's tea sector focus on diverse areas. It is important to scale up and emulate these platforms.

To transform women's role in agriculture, land and labour reforms are equally vital. Policies must recognise women as independent farmers by promoting joint or individual land ownership, which in turn strengthens their eligibility for credit, insurance, and institutional support.

Shravani Prakash and Anjhana Ramesh are with ICRJER's EPWD (Economic Policies for Women Led Development) Programme

All work, no pay

The data for the charts were sourced from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), 2023-24



Chart 1: The number of women in the agriculture sector who are unpaid family workers

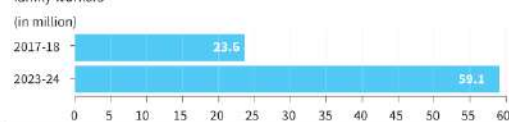


Chart 2: Proportion of women (in %) in agriculture who received no wages according to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), 2023-24

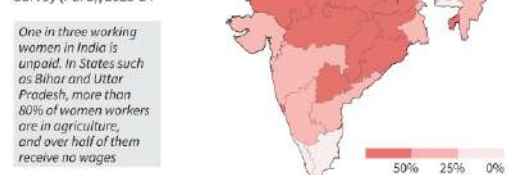
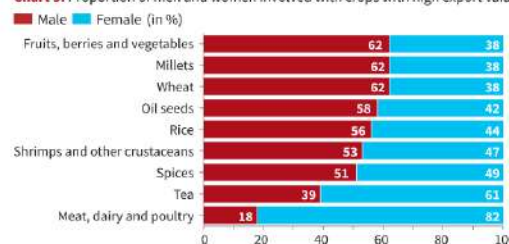


Chart 3: Proportion of men and women involved with crops with high export value



More women employed in agriculture, but half of them are unpaid

English Summary:

- Women-led development is now recognized as central to India's growth story.
- Agriculture is India's largest employer of women (42% of workforce), but over 50% of them are unpaid family workers (PLFS 2023-24).
- Women's participation in agriculture has increased by 135% in the past decade due to male migration to higher-paying non-farm jobs.
- Issue: This participation hasn't translated into higher incomes; "feminisation of agriculture" often means low-paid, low-value work.
- Global trade agreements (FTAs) can provide opportunities for women by expanding market access.
- Structural barriers: lack of digital literacy, limited access to finance, land rights, and technology.
- Solutions:
 - Digital tools like e-NAM, precision agriculture, mobile apps are connecting women farmers to markets.
 - Government initiatives: BHASHINI, Jal Jeevan Mission women FPOs, AI-enabled solutions.
 - Corporate efforts: L&T Finance Digital Sakhi, Odisha's Women FPOs.
- Data:
 - Rajasthan (69%), U.P. (52%), Bihar (50%) have highest share of women in agriculture without pay.
 - Women more engaged in crops with high export value (fruits, vegetables, oilseeds).

Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

- महिला-प्रधान विकास अब भारत की आर्थिक महत्वाकांक्षा में मुख्यधारा बन चुका है।
- कृषि भारत में महिलाओं का सबसे बड़ा नियोक्ता है (42% कार्यबल), लेकिन 50% से अधिक महिलाएँ बिना मजदूरी के पारिवारिक श्रमिक के रूप में कार्य करती हैं (PLFS 2023-24)।
- पिछले एक दशक में कृषि में महिलाओं की भागीदारी 135% बढ़ी, कारण: पुरुषों का उच्च वेतन वाली गैर-कृषि नौकरियों में जाना।
- समस्या: कृषि में महिलाओं की भागीदारी से उनकी आय नहीं बढ़ी; इसे "कृषि का स्त्रीकरण" कहा जाता है, जहाँ महिलाएँ कम मूल्य व कम मजदूरी वाले कार्य करती हैं।
- अवसर: मुक्त व्यापार समझौते (FTA) महिलाओं के लिए नए बाजार खोल सकते हैं।
- चुनौतियाँ: डिजिटल साक्षरता की कमी, वित्त तक सीमित पहुँच, भूमि अधिकार, प्रौद्योगिकी की उपलब्धता।
- समाधान:
 - डिजिटल टूल्स (ई-एनएएम, मोबाइल ऐप्स, प्रिसिजन एग्रीकल्चर) से महिलाओं को बाजार से जोड़ना।
 - सरकारी पहल: भाषिणी, महिला एफपीओ (FPOs), जल जीवन मिशन।
 - निजी पहल: L&T डिजिटल सखी, ओडिशा महिला FPOs।
- आँकड़े:
 - राजस्थान (69%), उत्तर प्रदेश (52%), बिहार (50%) में महिलाएँ सबसे अधिक बिना मजदूरी कृषि कार्य में लगी हैं।

- महिलाएँ उच्च निर्यात क्षमता वाली फसलों (फल, सब्जियाँ, तिलहन) में अधिक संलग्न हैं।

GS Paper Mapping:

- GS-I (Society): Role of women, rural livelihoods.
- GS-II (Governance): Gender empowerment policies, labour rights, social justice.
- GS-III (Economy): Agriculture, inclusive growth, digital reforms, trade & labour reforms.
- BPSC/JPSC: Bihar-specific data on women in unpaid agriculture (50%+) is directly exam-relevant.

Govt. norms for EV charging infra subsidy

Jagriti Chandra

NEW DELHI

The Centre has issued norms offering up to 100% subsidies for setting up vehicle charging stations, battery swapping and charging stations, targeting high-density cities, satellite towns, and key national and state highways.

The guidelines were issued under the ₹10,000-crore PM E-drive scheme for promotion of EVs within which ₹2,000 crores has been apportioned for charging infrastructure.

The government is aiming at installing 72,300 EV chargers for cars, two-wheelers, buses and trucks, said Additional Secretary, Ministry of Heavy Industries, Dr. Hanif

Qureshi in a LinkedIn post.

The post mentioned the government was aiming at a charging grid coverage of at least one charging station in every 3km × 3km grid; on highways, one every 25 km, plus long-range EV chargers every 100 km.

The ₹2000 crore subsidy offers support for chargers in government buildings like offices and hospitals, private establishments, including malls and metro stations and other locations as determined by State/ UT governments.

“India is ensuring infrastructure leads the way – breaking the adoption bottleneck, boosting consumer confidence, and building a strong public-private ecosystem for clean mobility,” Dr. Qureshi added.

English Summary:

- The Centre issued guidelines offering up to 100% subsidy for:
 - EV charging stations,
 - Battery swapping facilities,
 - Charging hubs in high-density cities, satellite towns, and major highways.
 - Issued under the ₹10,000 crore PM E-Drive scheme, with ₹2,000 crore earmarked for charging infra.
 - Target:
 - 72,300 EV chargers across India.
 - At least one charging station in every 3×3 km grid in cities.
 - On highways: one station every 25 km, plus long-range EV chargers every 100 km.
 - ₹2000 crore subsidy supports charging infra in:
 - Government offices, hospitals, metro stations, malls, private establishments.
 - Aim: break adoption bottlenecks, build consumer confidence, and create a public-private ecosystem for clean mobility.
-

Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

- केंद्र सरकार ने 100% सब्सिडी देने के दिशा-निर्देश जारी किए हैं, जिनके अंतर्गत:
 - ईवी चार्जिंग स्टेशन,
 - बैटरी स्वैपिंग सुविधाएँ,
 - घनी आबादी वाले शहरों, सैटेलाइट टाउन और प्रमुख राष्ट्रीय/राज्य राजमार्गों पर चार्जिंग हब बनाए जाएंगे।
 - यह योजना ₹10,000 करोड़ की पीएम ई-ड्राइव स्कीम के तहत है, जिसमें ₹2,000 करोड़ चार्जिंग इन्फ्रा के लिए निर्धारित।
 - लक्ष्य:
 - देशभर में 72,300 ईवी चार्जर।
 - शहरों में हर 3×3 किमी ग्रिड में एक चार्जिंग स्टेशन।
 - राजमार्गों पर हर 25 किमी पर एक स्टेशन और हर 100 किमी पर लंबी दूरी का चार्जर।
 - ₹2000 करोड़ सब्सिडी सरकारी कार्यालयों, अस्पतालों, मेट्रो स्टेशन, मॉल और निजी प्रतिष्ठानों में चार्जर लगाने के लिए।
 - उद्देश्य: ईवी अपनाने में बाधाएँ दूर करना, उपभोक्ता विश्वास बढ़ाना और स्वच्छ गतिशीलता के लिए पब्लिक-प्राइवेट इकोसिस्टम बनाना।
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GS Paper Mapping:

- GS-III (Environment, Economy): Sustainable transport, Renewable energy, Infrastructure.
- GS-II (Governance): Government schemes, Public-private partnership.
- BPSC/JPSC relevance: Bihar/Jharkhand urban mobility plans, renewable energy adoption, subsidies for green economy.