

NEWS TODAY

World Trade Report 2025 emphasizes impact of AI on Trade and Inclusive Growth

The report released by the **World Trade Organization (WTO)** recognizes the **transformative potential of AI** as a **general-purpose technology** that can **reshape wealth distribution and income across economies**.

How AI can act as catalysts for Trade and Inclusive Growth?

- **Reducing Trade cost and improving productivity:** By optimizing logistics, streamlining regulatory compliance, overcoming language barriers, and improving contract enforcement, AI could lead to 34-37% rise in global trade by 2040.
- **Reducing 'Skill Premium':** AI is expected to substitute tasks performed by medium- and high-skilled workers more than those of low-skilled workers, thereby reducing the relative demand for higher-skilled labor.
 - ⊕ **Skill Premium** is the wage ratio of high-skilled to low-skilled workers which is projected to decline by 3-4% globally.
- **Knowledge Diffusion:** Economies more open to trade experience stronger innovation spillovers - a 10% increase in digitally deliverable services trade is associated with a 2.6% rise in cross-border AI patent citations.
- **New Development Pathways:** Economies rich in critical minerals or renewable energy can become hubs for upstream inputs like hardware manufacturing or data hosting and other labor-intensive activities like data collection and annotation.

What are the concerns demanding urgent Policy action?

- **Concentration of AI:** AI development is highly concentrated in a few firms and economies, which poses risks to equitable access.
- **Labor Market Disruption:** Displacement of some workers by automating tasks, requiring investment in education and active labor market policies to help workers adapt.

Conclusion

To realize the inclusive potential of AI and trade, there is a need for proactive and coordinated policies, including investing in digital infrastructure and skills, promoting regulatory coherence, ensuring competition, and leveraging international cooperation through organizations like the WTO.

"Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2025" released by UN Women

The document jointly released by the UN Women and UN DESA (Department of Economic and Social Affairs) offers a comprehensive **overview of the global state of gender equality** across all **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

Key Highlights of the Gender Snapshot 2025

- **Poverty & Food Security:** **376M women** in extreme poverty (9.2%); anaemia projected to rise to **33% by 2030**.
- **Health:** Maternal mortality **decreased by 39% (2000–23)**, but women spend **3 more years in poor health than men**.
- **Education:** Girls surpass **boys in enrolment, yet lag in secondary completion** in Africa & Asia; women rarely head schools.
- **Leadership & Work:** Women hold **27% of parliamentary seats, 30% of management roles**.
- **Violence:** **12.5% women face** intimate partner violence; **19% of young women married before 18**.
- **Digital Divide:** **65% women online vs 70% men**; women's jobs more exposed to **AI automation**.
- **Climate & Resources:** Climate change could push **158M more women into poverty**; **896M lack clean cooking fuels**.
- **Peace & Security:** **676M women lived near deadly conflict** in 2024.
- **Intersectionality:** Women with disabilities **face limited reproductive rights**, Internet access, and **political participation**.

Priority Actions under Beijing+30 Action Agenda

- **Digital Revolution:** Close the gender **digital divide**.
- **Freedom from Poverty:** Invest in **social protection, health, education, care economy**.
- **Zero Violence:** **Eliminate gender-based violence** with strong laws & services.
- **Equal Decision-Making Power:** Ensure women's leadership in **politics & governance**.
- **Peace & Security:** Fully fund Women, **Peace & Security agenda, ensure participation**.
- **Climate Justice:** **Integrate gender** into climate action & resource rights.

Extreme Climate events highlights increased Disaster vulnerability of Indian Himalayan Region

Monsoon 2025 has affected Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Uttarakhand highlighting the importance of disaster management in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR).

Reasons for higher vulnerability of IHR to disasters

- **Geology and Tectonics:** Himalayas are young, fold mountains with ongoing tectonic activity; this makes them highly susceptible to earthquakes (**Seismic Zones IV and V**), landslides.
- **Climatic Impacts:** It includes changes and variability in temperature and rainfall trends creating intense rainfall, cloudbursts, and avalanches. (**Uttarakhand 2013, 2025 floods**)
- **Anthropogenic:** Road construction, tunneling, hydroelectric projects, encroachment on riverbanks and floodplains, etc.
- **Land-use Change:** Due to human influence accelerates soil erosion, slope instability due to various projects (like Tehri Dam).
- **Others:** Low adaptive capacity, accelerated glacial retreat and permafrost melting, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), etc.

Existing disaster response mechanism

- **Multi-agency Coordination and Regional Implementation:** Collaboration among NDMA, NDRF, state disaster authorities, Central Water Commission, IMD as seen in recent Punjab floods.
 - ⊕ The Army, IAF, ITBP operations in treacherous terrain for relief and evacuation.
- **Use of Technology:** The use of drones, satellite communication, OneWeb links, Doppler radars for prevention, detection and response.
- **Community-based Preparedness:** The NDMA's Aapda Mitra (Friends in Disaster) programme.
- **Risk Indexing:** CWC has also finalized the Criteria for Risk Indexing of Glacial Lakes.

Way Forward for better preparedness

- **Monitoring:** National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) to monitor glacial lakes and debris flows on a 24x7 basis.
- **Mapping:** Geological Survey of India (GSI) to expand landslide mapping based on soil soaking and slope gradient.
- **Technology:** Artificial intelligence, with localised hydro-met data, can forecast flash floods (Gorakhpur Model of urban flood control).
- **Other:** Sachet app for early warning, slope stabilisation for roads and river embankments, etc.

EU Proposed 'New Strategic EU-India Agenda' To Enhance Bilateral Relations

Outlined in a Joint Communication adopted by the European Commission and the High Representative the new strategy is based on **five key strategic pillars** as goals for European Union (EU)-India partnership.

Five Strategic Pillars

- **Prosperity and Sustainability:** Drives economic growth, job creation, industrial development, and decarbonization.
 - ⊕ **Boosting Trade and Investment:** Finalize Free Trade Agreement (FTA) by 2025; Conclude Investment Protection Agreement (IPA), etc.
 - ⊕ **Strengthening Supply Chains and Economic Security:** Utilize Trade and Technology Council (TTC); Implement EU-India Semiconductor Agreement, etc.
 - ⊕ **Advancing Clean Transition and Resilience:** E.g. Decarbonize heavy industries like steel and cement, etc.
- **Technology and Innovation:** Focuses on emerging technologies for open, secure, human-centric innovation.
 - ⊕ **Supporting Critical Emerging Technologies:** E.g. Establish EU-India Innovation Hubs.
 - ⊕ **Advancing a Conducive Digital Environment:** E.g. Collaborate on Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for service delivery.
 - ⊕ **Promoting Research Cooperation:** E.g. Collaborate on nuclear energy and ITER.
- **Security and Defence:** Addresses global security threats, geopolitical tensions, and technological change. **E.g.** Coordinate on Indo-Pacific and promote rules-based maritime order.
- **Connectivity and Global Issues:** Strengthens regional connectivity, cooperation in third countries (such as Africa), and global governance. **E.g.** Collaborate via **EU's Global Gateway** and **India's MAHASAGAR**.
- **Enablers Across Pillars:** Enhances skills mobility, knowledge exchanges, business engagement, and institutional cooperation.



However, India's **military exercises with Russia** and **purchase of Russian oil** have also been highlighted by the EU as potential obstacles to the deepening of the relationship between EU and India.

Prime Minister Launched Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan From Madhya Pradesh

What is Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan?

- **About:** It is a national movement to build a **decentralized tribal leadership** and governance ecosystem.
- **Ministry:** Flagship initiative of the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**.
- **Aim and Objectives:**
 - ⊕ It seeks to **empower 11 crore tribal citizens** across **1 lakh villages** by creating the **world's largest tribal grassroots leadership mission**.
 - ⊕ It aims at equipping **20 lakh District, Block, and Village-level officials; SHG women, and tribal youth** to serve as **Adi Karmayogis** (grassroots leaders) to ensure **responsive governance** and **last-mile service saturation**.
- **Features:**
 - ⊕ **Three Pillars of Leadership:**
 - ◆ **Adi Karmayogi** (Government Officers): Key drivers of governance at State, District, Block, and Panchayat levels. They ensure convergence of schemes, institutional support, and responsive delivery.
 - ◆ **Adi Sahyogi** (Youth, Teachers, Doctors): Motivated service providers and educated tribal youth who bridge access to education, health, awareness, and innovation.
 - ◆ **Adi Saathi** (SHG Members, Villagers, Tribal Elders): Grassroots change-makers and community anchors who mobilize people, preserve traditions, and uphold local wisdom.
 - ⊕ **Tribal Village Action Plan:** Villagers and officers will co-create the **Tribal Village Vision 2030**, aligned with national and international commitments towards sustainable development goals and inclusive development.
 - ⊕ **Convergence:** Brings together schemes like **PM JANMAN** and **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA 2.0)**.

Initiatives Launched

- **Adi Vaani App:** An **AI-based language bridge** will be used to connect government officers with tribal communities in their **native languages**.
- **Adi Karmayogi Portal:**
 - ⊕ For real-time registration & dashboard;
 - ⊕ Role-wise and region-wise tracking of Karmayogis, Sahyogis, and Saathis;
 - ⊕ **Adi Sewa Kendras** as single window grievance redressal, etc.

Also In News



Eurasian Economic Union

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry and his European Economic Commission's counterpart decided to start discussion on FTA from November and fast-track effort for an early-harvest FTA with **Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)**.

- **Early Harvest FTAs** are precursor to FTA between two trading partners which liberalizes tariffs on certain goods preceding the conclusion of a FTA.

About EAEU

- It is an **international organization** for regional economic integration established by the **Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union**.
- **Member States:** Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Russia.
- **Objective:** To comprehensively upgrade, raise the competitiveness of and cooperation between the national economies, and to promote stable development in order to raise the living standards of the nations of the Member-States.



Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

Report of the UN-mandated Independent International Commission of Inquiry provided a **legal analysis of Israel's conduct in Gaza** concerning the **Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention)**.

About Genocide Convention

- **Defines Genocide** as acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.
 - ⊕ Genocide is a crime that **can take place both in time of war as well as in time of peace**.
- **Membership:** Signatories – 41, Parties - **153 States**.
 - ⊕ India has signed the treaty in 1949 and ratified in 1959.
- **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** adjudicates cases related to the interpretation and application of the convention.



Multidisciplinary Partnership

Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs has invited public comments on the establishment of **Indian Multidisciplinary Partnership (MDP) firms**.

About MDP

- It is a **form of partnership that renders multiple services like maintenance of cost records, accounting, auditing, assurance, management, etc. under one umbrella.**
- Current regulations restrict** Indian professionals from different fields **working together under one firm.**
- Significance:** If approved, MDP firms could tap into the **\$240 billion global market, and strengthen self-reliance** in areas like **Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) advisory and tech services.**



Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961

The Election Commission of India (ECI) revised Rule 49B of the **Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961**, to enhance EVM Ballot Paper readability.

- It includes featuring of **colour photographs of candidate on EVMs** starting with the Bihar State Elections.

About Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961

- It is a comprehensive legal framework under **Representation of the People Act, 1951**, governing the conduct of elections in India.
- These rules provide:
 - Procedures** for polling, voting, and counting processes.
 - Responsibilities** of election officers, candidates, etc.



Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM)

NHAI tightened contractor qualification norms to address the unauthorized engagement of contractors in hybrid annuity model (HAM).

Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM)

- About:** Introduced in 2016, HAM is a **public-private partnership (PPP) model** used in infrastructure projects, primarily for road construction.
- Key Features:**
 - Funding:** **Government funds 40%** during construction in 5 milestone-linked installments and **private developer finances 60%** via debt and equity.
 - Risk Sharing:** Balances risks, with **government handling revenue risk** and **private developer managing financing risk.**



Payment Aggregators

RBI has issued revised **guidelines for Payment Aggregators** to bolster consumer protection and combat fraud.

About Payment Aggregators (PAs)

- It is an entity that **facilitates aggregation of payments made by customers** to merchants through payment channels through merchant's interface (physical / virtual) for purchase of goods, services or investment products. E.g., Paytm, Google Pay, PayPal, etc.
- It is incorporated as a company under the **Companies Act, 2013.**
- New framework mandates non-bank PAs to obtain RBI authorisation under the **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.**

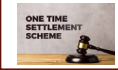


Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan

Recently, Prime Minister launched 'Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar' Abhiyan.

About Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan

- The Abhiyan will organize over one lakh health camps to **screen women for anaemia, hypertension, diabetes, and cancer**, while supporting **immunization and nutrition** to reduce maternal and child mortality.
- Ministries:** Joint effort of **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare** and **Ministry of Women & Child Development.**
- Technology:** **SASHAKT** portal will track progress and ensures accountability in real time.
- Community Role:** Anganwadis, Nikshay Mitras, private hospitals, etc. will also participate.



One Time Settlement (OTS) Scheme

The Supreme Court has ruled that a defaulter can claim benefits of **One-Time Settlement (OTS) Scheme** only if all bank conditions are fulfilled.

About OTS Scheme

- Launched:** Guidelines issued in 2005 by the **RBI**; Implementation left to banks.
- Purpose:** Standardized guidelines for **settling chronic NPAs in SME (Small & Medium Enterprise) sector** across all public sector banks.
- Mechanism:** Lump-sum repayment allowed with **minimum 25% upfront** and rest in instalments within one year.
- Significance:**
 - Helps **banks recover dues quickly** and clean balance sheets.
 - Offers **borrower relief** from legal proceedings.

Place in News



Mozambique (Capital: Maputo)

The First Training Squadron of the Indian Navy reached Mozambique to mark the 50 years of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

Political Features

- Location:** South-east Africa.
- Territorial Boundary:** It is bordered by **Tanzania (north), South Africa and Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) (south and southwest), Zimbabwe (west), and Zambia, Malawi (northwest).**
- Surrounding Water Bodies:** **Mozambique Channel** (Eastward in Indian Ocean); **Lake Nyasa** (northwest).

Geographical Features

- Weather:** Tropical and humid.
- Major Rivers:** Zambezi, Limpopo, Save, Ruvuma, etc.
- Monte Binga** is the highest mountain.



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI