



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 31-05-2025

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Modernisation vs Westernisation

Syllabus: GS-1: Indian Society – Modernization.

Context:

Modernisation key to progress, but Indian society must resist westernisation: Gadkari.

Modernisation vs Westernisation: Preserving Identity Amidst Progress

The Union Minister's statement rightly underscores the nuanced difference between *modernisation* and *westernisation*. While modernisation is pivotal for national advancement, blind westernisation risks eroding India's rich cultural heritage. The need of the hour is a judicious blend of scientific progress and civilisational wisdom.

Modernisation: A Catalyst for Progress

Modernisation is a **transformative process** marked by:

- **Technological advancements:** Digitisation, AI, and biotechnology enhancing governance and public services.
- **Institutional reforms:** Promoting efficiency, transparency, and democratic participation.
- **Value shift:** Encouraging scientific temper, rationality, and meritocracy.
- **Education and Human Development:** Mass education enabling inclusive growth.

Example: India's rise in digital payment adoption and the global recognition of ISRO's achievements reflect the benefits of modernisation.

Westernisation: Cultural Imitation with Mixed Outcomes

Westernisation refers to the **uncritical adoption of Western lifestyles and values**, often leading to:

- **Cultural erosion:** Decline in joint families, traditional festivals, and rituals.
- **Value conflict:** Individualism clashing with India's collectivist traditions.
- **Social divide:** Urban elite embracing Western norms, alienating rural and traditional communities.

Yet, not all impacts are negative. Progressive reforms such as **abolition of Sati, promotion of human rights, and legal equality** were catalysed by Western ideals.

India's Way Forward: A Balanced Synthesis

India can modernise **without westernising blindly** by:

- **Infusing tradition with innovation:** Promoting Ayurveda and Yoga with scientific rigour.
- **Preserving cultural ethos:** While embracing digital and scientific progress.
- **Promoting inclusive development:** That bridges rural-urban divides while upholding indigenous identities.

Conclusion

India's journey to becoming a *Vishwaguru* hinges on its ability to **modernise with cultural rootedness**. The challenge lies in progressing technologically and institutionally without compromising the essence of its civilisational values. True national development is not mimicry of the West, but a conscious cultivation of a path that is **inclusive, indigenous, and intentional**.

Three-Year Judicial Practice Mandate

Syllabus: GS-2: Judiciary.

Context:

The **Supreme Court**, in *All India Judges Association v. Union of India*, reinstated the requirement of **three years of legal practice** for eligibility to the **Civil Judge (Junior Division)** posts. This condition, removed in 2002, is now revived.

Why the Mandate Was Reinstated

- **Judicial Preparedness:** Practical exposure develops decision-making skills and legal maturity. *E.g.* Bar Council of India (2021): Fresh graduates often “inept and incapable”.
- **High Court Feedback:** 23 out of 25 High Courts found fresh recruits underprepared.
- **Training Gaps in Academies:** Academies cannot replicate real litigation or offer personalized mentorship.
- **Fosters Professional Maturity:** Practicing advocates build emotional intelligence and legal intuition over time.

Challenges and Concerns

- **Exclusion of Marginalized Aspirants:**
 - Women and first-gen lawyers may lack financial or familial support to litigate for three years.
 - *E.g.* NFHS: Average female marriage age is 19.2 – early-career conflict.
- **Unequal Playing Field:**
 - Women face harassment, poor mentorship, and bias in litigation spaces.
- **Tokenism Risk:** Without rigorous checks, candidates may fulfill the rule in letter, not spirit.
- **Reduced Judicial Diversity:** The mandate may deter many from marginalized communities.
- **Judicial Overreach:** Article 234: Appointment conditions should be set by State governments with High Court consultation—not unilaterally by the Supreme Court.

Significance of the Mandate

- **Improves Judicial Quality:** Experienced judges handle procedure and courtroom dynamics better.
- **Bridges Theory-Practice Divide:** Enhances the professional competence of the judiciary.
- **Global Best Practice:** Prior legal experience is standard in most developed legal systems.

Conclusion

While the mandate aims to enhance judicial competence through experiential learning, **systemic inequities and socio-economic barriers must be addressed**. Judicial reforms must balance **quality with accessibility**, ensuring that **rigour does not come at the cost of representation**.

GDP Growth Rate

Syllabus: GS-3: Indian Economy – Growth and Development.

Context:

GDP growth at 6.5% in 2024-25, slowest since the pandemic.

GDP Growth (FY 2024–25) – Key Highlights

- **Full-Year Real GDP Growth: 6.5%**
 - Lowest since **pandemic year 2020–21**.
- **Q4 GDP Growth: 7.4%**
 - Highest quarterly growth in FY25.
 - Lower than **8.4% in Q4 FY24**.

What is GDP?

- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** is the **total monetary value of all final goods and services** produced **within the geographical boundaries of a country** in a given period (usually one year).
- It reflects the **size and health of an economy**.

Types of GDP

Type of GDP	Description
Nominal GDP	Measured at current market prices (includes inflation).
Real GDP	Adjusted for inflation; shows true growth.
GDP at Factor Cost	Excludes taxes and includes subsidies.
GDP at Market Price	Includes taxes and excludes subsidies.

India currently reports GDP at Market Prices (base year 2011-12).

GDP Growth Rate

- **GDP Growth Rate** is the **percentage increase in GDP** over a period (quarter/year).
- Formula:

$$\text{GDP Growth Rate} = \frac{\text{GDP}_{\text{current}} - \text{GDP}_{\text{previous}}}{\text{GDP}_{\text{previous}}} \times 100$$

Significance of GDP Growth Rate

- Indicator of **economic health & performance**.
- Helps in **fiscal planning, investment decisions, and policy formulation**.
- Impacts:
 - Employment generation
 - Tax revenues
 - Poverty reduction
 - Social sector investments

Measurement of GDP in India

- Measured by **Central Statistics Office (CSO)** under **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**.
- Two Approaches:
 1. **Production/Value Added Approach** – GVA by all sectors.
 2. **Expenditure Approach** – $C + I + G + (X - M)$
 - **C** – Private consumption
 - **I** – Investment
 - **G** – Government spending
 - **X – M** – Net exports

Fiscal Deficit

Syllabus: GS-3: Indian Economy – Fiscal Policy.

Context:

The Government of India has met its fiscal deficit target of 4.8% of GDP in 2024-25 though its total receipts came in slightly lower than what it had expected, according to data released by the Controller General of Accounts recently.

Definition of Fiscal Deficit

- **Fiscal Deficit** is the difference between a government's total expenditure and its total revenue (excluding borrowings).
- It indicates the total borrowing requirements of the government.
- **Formula:**

$\text{Fiscal Deficit} = \text{Total Expenditure} - \text{Total Revenue (excluding borrowings)}$

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Components of Fiscal Deficit

Revenue Deficit

- Difference between revenue expenditure and revenue receipts.
- **Formula:**

$\text{Revenue Deficit} = \text{Revenue Expenditure} - \text{Revenue Receipts}$

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- **Implications:**
 - Indicates government is borrowing to meet routine expenses (not for asset creation).
 - Leads to inflationary pressure if financed by printing money.

Primary Deficit

- Fiscal deficit minus interest payments on past borrowings.
- **Formula:**

$\text{Primary Deficit} = \text{Fiscal Deficit} - \text{Interest Payments}$

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➤ **Significance:**

- Shows borrowing excluding interest burden.
- A high primary deficit indicates worsening fiscal health.

Causes of Fiscal Deficit

➤ **High Expenditure:**

- Populist schemes, subsidies, defense spending.
- Salary & pension obligations (7th Pay Commission impact).

➤ **Low Revenue Generation:**

- Tax evasion, narrow tax base.
- Slow economic growth reducing tax collections.

➤ **Inefficient Subsidies:**

- Leakages in schemes (e.g., fertilizer, fuel subsidies).

➤ **Economic Slowdowns:**

- Reduced GDP growth → lower tax revenue → higher deficit.

➤ **COVID-19 & External Shocks:**

- Increased welfare spending during crises.

Implications of High Fiscal Deficit

Negative Effects

➤ **Inflation:**

- If financed by RBI printing money (monetization), it increases money supply → demand-pull inflation.

➤ **Crowding Out Effect:**

- High government borrowing raises interest rates → private investment declines.

➤ **Debt Trap:**

- Rising interest obligations → higher future deficits (vicious cycle).

➤ **Credit Rating Downgrades:**

- Agencies like Moody's, S&P may lower ratings → higher borrowing costs.
- **Exchange Rate Pressure:**
 - High deficits can weaken the rupee if foreign investors lose confidence.

Positive Effects (if managed well)

- **Growth Stimulus:**
 - Deficit spending during recessions (Keynesian economics) can boost demand.
- **Infrastructure Development:**
 - Borrowing for capital expenditure (roads, ports) can enhance productivity.

Measures to Control Fiscal Deficit

Increasing Revenue

- **Tax Reforms:**
 - GST expansion, reducing exemptions, improving compliance.
- **Disinvestment:**
 - Selling PSU stakes (e.g., LIC IPO, Air India privatization).
- **Asset Monetization:**
 - National Monetization Pipeline (NMP) to lease assets (roads, railways).

Reducing Expenditure

- **Subsidy Rationalization:**
 - Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for better targeting (e.g., PM-KISAN).
- **Pension Reforms:**
 - Shift from defined benefit to defined contribution (NPS).
- **Austerity Measures:**
 - Cutting non-essential expenses (e.g., travel, advertisements).

Institutional Mechanisms

- **FRBM Act (Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2003):**
 - Mandates fiscal deficit $\leq 3\%$ of GDP (relaxed during crises like COVID-19).

➤ **NK Singh Committee (2016) Recommendations:**

- Debt-to-GDP target of 40% for central govt. by 2024-25.
- Escape clauses for emergencies (pandemics, wars).

Related Concepts

Twin Deficit Problem

- When a country has both **fiscal deficit** and **current account deficit** (CAD).
- Example: India in 2012-13 (high fiscal deficit → inflation → rupee depreciation → higher CAD).

Monetized Deficit

- When RBI prints money to finance government borrowing (now restricted by FRBM).

Deficit Financing

- Methods:
 1. Borrowing from domestic market (bonds, small savings).
 2. External borrowing (sovereign bonds).
 3. Printing money (avoided now).

Conclusion

- Fiscal deficit is a necessary tool for growth but must be managed prudently.
- Balancing between stimulus spending and fiscal consolidation is key.
- Reforms like GST, DBT, and FRBM are critical for long-term stability.

What are TR1 Cells?

Syllabus: GS-3: Science and Technology – Human Biology.

Context:

A recent study published in **April 2025** has uncovered the critical role of a lesser-known immune cell subtype—**TR1 cells**—in the fight against **malaria**.

This research not only sheds light on how the immune system responds to repeated malaria infections but also opens new avenues for **vaccine development** and treatment of other infectious diseases.

About the Immune System

- **Innate Immunity:** First line of defense; non-specific and immediate.
- **Adaptive Immunity:** Specific and memory-based; improves response upon repeated infections.
- Both systems work together to eliminate pathogens and remember past infections.

CD4+ T-Cells and TR1 Subset

- **CD4+ T-cells:** A core component of adaptive immunity; orchestrate immune responses by activating B-cells and other immune cells.
- **TR1 (Type 1 Regulatory) cells:** A subset of CD4+ T-cells.
 - Previously underappreciated in malaria immunity.
 - Found to contribute significantly to the immune response against *Plasmodium falciparum*.

Research Context

- **Location:** Uganda – a malaria-endemic region.
- **Subjects:** Children with repeated malaria exposure.
- **Focus:** How TR1 cells behave over time during and after malaria infection.

Innovative Research Techniques

- **Single-cell RNA sequencing:** Enabled the identification and tracking of individual T-cells via genetic barcoding.
- **Longitudinal analysis:** Provided insight into TR1 cell proliferation, memory potential, and behavior during reinfections.

Key Findings

- **Dominant Role:** TR1 cells are a major player in the immune response to malaria.
- **Memory Retention:** These cells retain memory and remain effective through multiple infections.

- **Expansion upon Reinfection:** Unlike other T-cell subsets, TR1 cells proliferate significantly when exposed again to the parasite—demonstrating specificity and adaptability.

Implications for Vaccine Development

- Targeting TR1 cells in future **malaria vaccines** could significantly improve efficacy.
- New **immunotherapeutic strategies** might focus on enhancing TR1 cell responses instead of only attacking the parasite.

Broader Impact

- Findings may influence how other **infectious diseases** are studied and treated.
- Could lead to therapies that **modulate the immune system**, offering broader protection against a range of pathogens.

Conclusion

The discovery of the pivotal role of TR1 cells in malaria immunity marks a significant advancement in immunology. It enhances our understanding of the adaptive immune system and sets the stage for **next-generation vaccines and therapies** that could revolutionize global health responses to infectious diseases.