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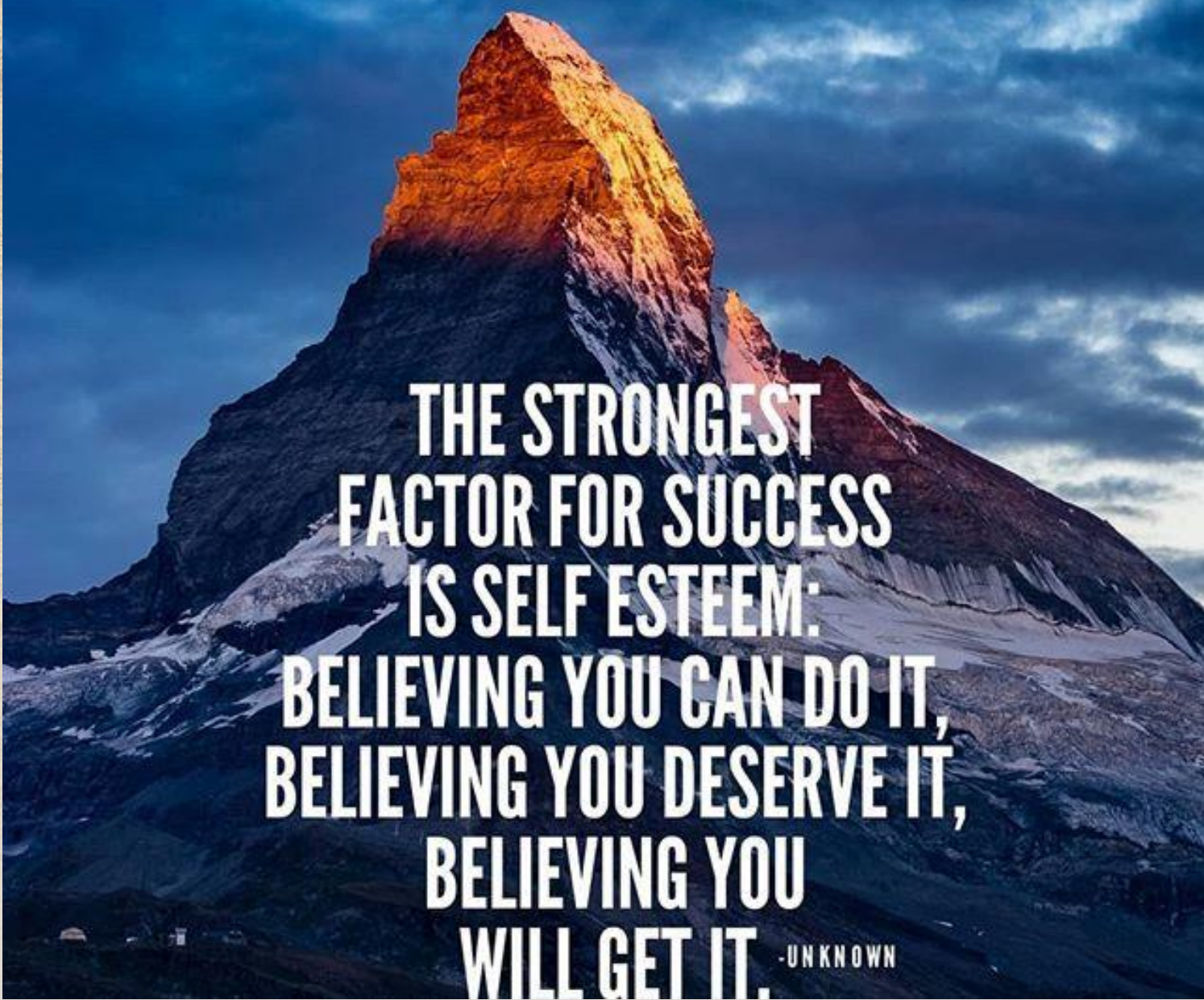
Vibrant Villages Programme – Prelims Fact

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Kannadipaya

- **Kannadippaya, a unique tribal handicraft from Kerala, recently received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, ensuring market protection and a global platform for this traditional product.**

Kannadipaya

- It is a traditional craft from Kerala that uses reed bamboo to weave baskets, mats, and other daily use items.

- Kannadipaya, crafted by Urali, Mannan, and Muthuvan tribal communities, is made using Teinostachyum wightii (a species of bamboo), which the tribal people call 'njoonjiletta.

- The mat has a polished surface, which is smooth and reflects light like a mirror. Hence, the name kannadipaya (kannadi meaning mirror and paya meaning mat).

- It takes more than a month for a weaver to complete a kannadipaya.
- It is woven with a specific layer of slivers – the fourth or fifth, which can be made ultra-thin and shiny – split out of a reed bamboo species endemic to the region.
- The bamboo collection is a full-moon ritual, with each expedition to the forest and back extending to a day and night.

Kannadipaya

- A GI tag is a name or sign used on certain products that correspond to a specific geographical location or origin.
- The GI tag ensures that only the authorised users or those residing in the geographical territory are allowed to use the popular product name.
- It also protects the product from being copied or imitated by others.
- A registered GI is valid for 10 years.
- GI registration is overseen by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

- The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 seeks to provide for the registration and better protection of geographical indications relating to goods in India.

Vibrant Villages Programme

- **The Union Cabinet has approved Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II) with a financial outlay of ₹6,839 crore for the period 2024-25 to 2028-29, covering border villages beyond Northern borders to ensure security, development, and national integration.**

What is VVP-II?
- **VVP-II is a Central Sector Scheme (100% Centre-funded) focused on comprehensive development of strategic villages near international land borders (ILBs), other than Northern borders already covered under VVP-I.**

About Vibrant Villages Programme
- **VVP-I launched: February 2023**
- **Ministry in Charge: Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**
- **Vision Aligned with: Viksit Bharat@2047 and 'Safe, Secure & Vibrant Borders'**

Vibrant Villages Programme

Objectives of VVP-II:
- Enhance quality of life in border villages.
- Create livelihood opportunities for border residents.
- Ensure national security by involving locals as eyes and ears of border forces.
- Curb trans-border crimes and promote border integrity.
- Strengthen connectivity and governance in strategic regions

- Key Features of VVP-II:
- Coverage: 17 States/UTs including Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Punjab, Gujarat, J&K, Ladakh, etc.
- Village Action Plans (VAPs): Developed with community participation.
- Basic Services Saturation: Focus on 4 key areas – all-weather roads (via PMGSY-IV), telecom, TV access, and electrification.
- Livelihood Opportunities: Boost rural income through cooperatives, SHGs, tourism, and handicraft promotion.
- Infrastructure Development: Includes SMART classrooms, village facilities, and cluster-based projects.

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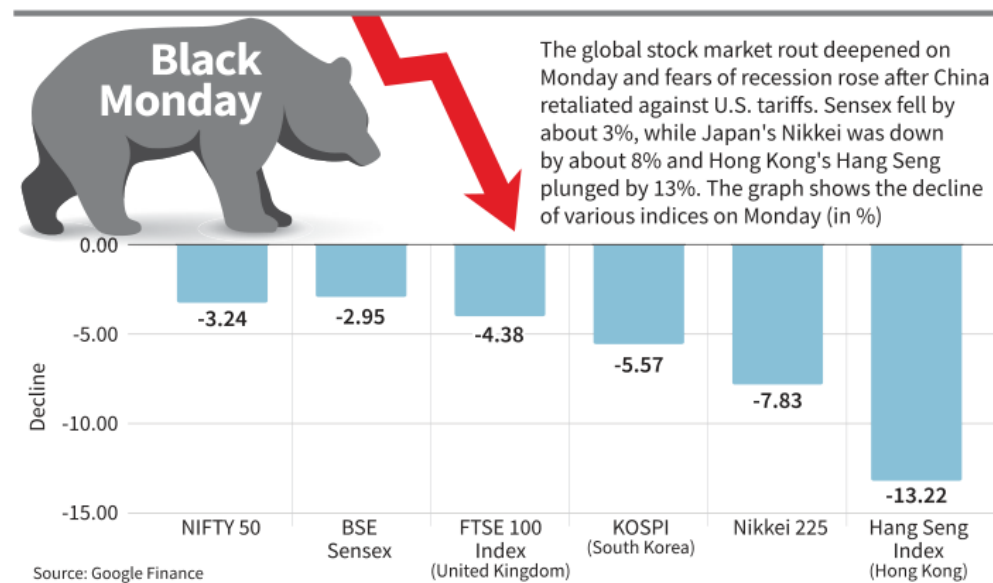# Indian indices plunge as trade war fears grip global markets

Market opens on Monday over 5% down from close on Friday amid concerns over looming recession, recovers gradually to close at 3% loss; Trump threatens China with more tariffs over its retaliation plans, welcomes countries wishing to negotiate

Lalatendu Mishra

MUMBAI

Not since the historic lows of the COVID-19 crashes have global markets witnessed such drastic falls. Indian stock markets plunged on Monday anticipating uncertainties that could emerge from the trade war between the U.S. and China, two of the world's largest economies, and the fear of a looming recession.

Influenced by global cues, the markets which opened over 5% down from the previous close on Friday gradually recovered during the day with frontline indices closing with a loss of 3% led by falls across the board.

Small and midcap stocks witnessed more losses compared with blue-chip stocks. The S&P BSE Sensex closed with a loss of 2,227 points, or 2.95%, at 73,138 points, led by Tata Steel which fell 7.73%, and L&T 5.78%. Tata Motors fell 5.54% after news came in that its subsidiary Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) has halted exports to the U.S.

Kotak Mahindra Bank was down 4.33% and M&M fell 4.11%, while Infosys was down 3.75%.

The NSE Nifty-50 index (Nifty), which recovered during the day, closed at 22,162, down 743 points or 3.24%.

Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump threatened additional tariffs on imports from China if Beijing did not withdraw its retaliation plans, adding Washington would begin negotiations with other countries if they wish to.

"If China does not withdraw its 34% increase above their already long term trading abuses by tomorrow, April 8th, 2025, the United States will impose ADDITIONAL Tariffs on China of 50%, effective April 9th," Mr. Trump said in a Truth Social post, intensifying what appears to be the beginning of an unprecedented trade war.

The sombre mood on Dalal Street was also reflected among its peers in Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and China.

Black Monday

The global stock market rout deepened on Monday and fears of recession rose after China retaliated against U.S. tariffs. Sensex fell by about 3%, while Japan's Nikkei was down by about 8% and Hong Kong's Hang Seng plunged by 13%. The graph shows the decline of various indices on Monday (in %)

Index	Decline
NIFTY 50	-3.24
BSE Sensex	-2.95
FTSE 100 Index (United Kingdom)	-4.38
KOSPI (South Korea)	-5.57
Nikkei 225	-7.83
Hang Seng Index (Hong Kong)	-13.22

Source: Google Finance

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Fact

- A trade war occurs when nations impose tariffs or trade barriers against each other in retaliation for perceived economic harm or unfair trade practices.
- It disrupts global supply chains, increases production costs, and impacts economic growth worldwide.

- The US-China trade war began in 2018 when the US, under President Donald Trump, accused China of unfair trade practices.

- The US imposed tariffs on Chinese goods, leading to countermeasures from China. This escalation affected trade worth over $450 billion.

- India also got caught in the US-China trade war, facing tariffs on steel and aluminum exports and losing its Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) status in 2019.

Global impact of Trade War

- **Stock Market Volatility:** Trade wars create uncertainty, leading to fluctuating stock prices. Investors react sharply to tariff announcements, impacting market stability worldwide.
- **Supply Chain Disruptions:** Tariffs increase production costs, forcing companies to rethink supply chains. Businesses look for alternative suppliers, leading to relocation of manufacturing hubs.
- **Currency Fluctuations:** As investors seek safer assets, emerging market currencies often depreciate, increasing import costs and inflationary pressures in developing economies.
- **Commodity Price Swings:** Trade wars can disrupt global demand for raw materials like oil, metals, and agricultural products, leading to price instability.
- **Shifts in Trade Alliances:** Countries seek new trading partners to mitigate tariff impacts. Regional trade agreements and economic blocs often gain prominence during such periods.

Negative Impact on India

- **Electronics and Gadgets: Indian manufacturers depend on Chinese components for smartphones, laptops, and appliances. Disruptions in supply chains may lead to higher prices and shortages.**

- **Pharmaceuticals: Around 70% of India's raw materials (APIs) for medicines come from China. Any delay or price hike in these imports will raise the cost of essential medicines.**

- **Automobile Industry: India's auto sector relies on Chinese spare parts. Trade disruptions could slow production, increase costs, and extend delivery timelines.**

- **Stock Market and Currency: During the last trade war, foreign investors withdrew ₹33,000 crore from Indian markets, and the rupee depreciated by 9.5%, making imports costlier.**

Positive Impact on India

- **Rise in Exports:** Indian exporters gained from the trade diversion as US buyers looked for alternatives to Chinese goods. Sectors like textiles, chemicals, and electronics saw increased demand.

- **Boost to Indian IT Sector:** US companies, reducing reliance on Chinese tech, outsourced more work to Indian firms, benefiting the IT industry.

- **Agricultural Exports:** India took advantage of China reducing US agricultural imports in 2018 by increasing soybean and other crop exports.

Clean voter lists or the choice of Aadhaar linkage

Praveen Chakravarty

is Chairman, All India Professionals' Congress and Data Analytics for the Congress party

In its March 20, 2025 issue, *The Economist* lamented how "India is obsessed with giving its people unique IDs". It mocked how various arms of the Indian state announce new unique IDs nearly 'every month' for everyone from doctors, teachers, athletes, judges, gig workers to even cows and buffaloes'.

The Economist got it half wrong. India is obsessed with IDs but not "unique" IDs. There is a profound and fundamental difference between the two. An ID can identify a person's eligibility for a certain role or function or a group, such as an ID to drive or to vote or to perform surgery. A unique ID identifies the individual, regardless of their role or function. It certifies that the person is who he or she claims to be. India's governance establishment often conflates and confuses between an "ID" and a "Unique ID", with some disastrous consequences – as the Election Commission of India (ECI) did recently.

In March this year, the ECI announced that it was going to embark on an exercise to 'link Voter ID with Aadhaar'. Voter ID (Electoral Photo Identity Card or EPIC) is an ID for the purposes of voting. Aadhaar is a Unique ID with no specific functional purpose. In simple terms, the ECI wants to convert its ID to a Unique ID.

The Maharashtra election as turning point

On September 18, 2008, under the leadership of then Chief Election Commissioner N. Gopalaswami, the ECI, in a letter to all the State Chief Electoral Officers, said that it was issuing an EPIC 'for the purposes of correct identification of voters' and that 'every EPIC is unique'. Seventeen years later, in announcing a mission to link EPIC with Aadhaar, the ECI has implicitly admitted that its EPIC was only an ID and not unique, as it had previously claimed.

Evidently, the ECI has not understood the difference between an ID and a Unique ID or has misled Indians for nearly two decades. The Maharashtra State election, in November 2024, was a wake-up call for the ECI.

There were roughly 40 lakh new voters registered in Maharashtra in just five months between the 2024 general election in April and the Assembly election in November. But in the previous full five-year period between the 2019 Assembly election and the 2024 general election in Maharashtra, only 32 lakh new voters were added. Did Maharashtra experience a sudden population explosion in five months? Obviously, this is illogical and mysterious.

Contrary to what many, including this daily, claimed, it is not the absolute number of 40 lakh new voters by itself that is mysteriously large, but the fact that it defies common sense that more new voters can be added in five months than in the previous five years. As one would expect, never before in India's seven-decade electoral history have more new voters been added in a few months than in previous five-year election cycles.

Expectedly, in similar past election cycles in all States, the number of new voters added in a few months was only a fraction of the total added in five-year periods.

It does not take Sherlock Holmes to deduce that the new voters enrolled in such large numbers in Maharashtra were either fake or duplicate. That is, the same person had many Voter IDs. This was seen in several constituencies, where thousands of voters with valid Voter IDs from another State were registered as new voters in Maharashtra.

Subsequently, in Bengal, it was pointed out that there were many voters with the same Voter ID number in multiple constituencies in Bengal as well as in other States. That is, one Voter ID number assigned to many people. So, neither was a Voter ID number unique to every voter nor was a voter unique to a Voter ID number. The ECI's claim in 2008, that every Voter ID number is unique has been a plain lie, wittingly or otherwise.

There is a catch

Now jolted, the ECI seemingly wishes to fix this by linking the Voter ID with the Aadhaar. With its biometric process, the Aadhaar can ensure that one person cannot have multiple Voter IDs. This is a step in the right direction. But it is more complex than what the ECI makes it out to be.

To ensure that the same person is not duplicated, the Aadhaar numbers of all one billion registered voters have to be linked to their Voter ID. Having only some voters linked to Aadhaar will make the entire exercise futile, since then there is no guarantee of uniqueness and non-duplicacy. So, cleaning and de-duplicating voter lists with Aadhaar is an all or none exercise and cannot be half done. It implies that to be an Indian voter, an Aadhaar is a must. That is, Aadhaar will be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for voting in India. But by law, Aadhaar cannot be mandatory for anyone and is only optional. In short, India needs clean, de-duplicated voter lists. But de-duplication is only possible with 100% Aadhaar linkage. And Aadhaar is not mandatory. This is the conundrum that the ECI faces.

I venture to posit that Babasaheb Ambedkar would have taken a utilitarian approach to this dilemma and argued that the benefits of de-duplicated Voter IDs outweigh the costs of 100% Aadhaar linkage. He had warned in the Constituent Assembly in 1949 that the 'sanctity of voter lists are the foundation of India's democracy'.

Ensure a guarantee under oath

Further, Aadhaar can not only solve the 'one person with many Voter IDs' problem but also eliminate the issue of 'one voter voting many times'. It is no secret that the archaic practice of inking a voter's finger using an indelible ink after voting is bypassed using chemicals that can remove the ink. The benefits of Aadhaar linking to Voter IDs are significant and obvious.

But, as the saying goes, in a liberal society, it is fine for a hundred guilty people to go unpunished even if it means punishing even one innocent person. All of this can work out only under the absolute guarantee that no single eligible Indian citizen will ever be denied the right to vote. And this guarantee from the ECI has to be under oath – not like its 'guarantee', in 2008, of Unique IDs.

The Election Commission of India must pay heed to B.R Ambedkar's note of caution – that the 'sanctity of voter lists is the foundation of India's democracy'

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- **That is, Aadhaar will be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for voting in India. But by law, Aadhaar cannot be mandatory for anyone and is only optional. In short, India needs clean, de-duplicated voter lists.**

- **But de-duplication is only possible with 100% Aadhaar linkage. And Aadhaar is not mandatory.**

Inconclusive chapter

Tamil Nadu should help prepare its students for clearing NEET

With President Droupadi Murmu withholding assent for the Tamil Nadu Admission to Undergraduate Medical Degree Courses Bill 2021, the State is bracing for another battle against National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET)-based admissions. State Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has convened a meeting of legislature party leaders on April 9 to strategise the next move. With the admission season approaching, the development is bound to cause uncertainty and make medical aspirants anxious. Exemption from NEET now remains an inconclusive chapter in the State's decade-old policy discourse. No other State effort to legislate against a central mandate has been so protracted and unpredictable. In September 2017, two anti-NEET Bills met with a similar fate in Rashtrapati Bhavan. Four years later, the ruling DMK – having made NEET exemption a central electoral promise – passed the Bill in the Assembly based on the recommendations of the Justice A.K. Rajan Committee. Instead of forwarding it for presidential assent, Governor R.N. Ravi returned it to the House after five months. In a historic first, the Assembly unanimously re-adopted the Bill and sent it back to him; the Governor subsequently forwarded it to the President. Last week, Mr. Stalin informed the Assembly that assent had been denied, without specifying when Rashtrapati Bhavan had communicated the decision.

This delay in the matter attaining finality is concerning as students have been left facing a state of perpetual uncertainty. The State remains firm in its policy of conducting admission for government quota medical seats based on the Class 12 Board examination scores. Early on, the Ministry of Home Affairs had asked "whether the Bill endangered the sovereignty, unity and integrity of the nation" to which the AYUSH Ministry responded affirmatively. The framers of the Constitution had incorporated Article 254 (2) empowering the President to grant assent to Bills repugnant to central laws on Concurrent List matters. NEET has been consistently upheld by the Supreme Court of India too. The President is under no obligation to give assent, although the Bill reflects the collective will of Tamil Nadu's legislature: it was passed unanimously. True, NEET is neither foolproof nor an absolute measure of academic competency, but Tamil Nadu's legal options are limited. The judiciary is unlikely to settle the issue with any urgency. The State must prepare for a legal struggle, and in the interim, coach students to face NEET with confidence.

- President has withheld assent to Tamil Nadu's Bill seeking exemption from the mandate of NEET-based admissions for undergraduate medical courses in government medical colleges.

- This legislation seeks to exempt the state from the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) for medical admissions, advocating for the selection process to be based on Class 12 examination marks.

- It was introduced following concerns that NEET disproportionately affects students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

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- Article 200 & 201: State bills require the President's assent to become law.
- Governor's Role: The state Governor reviews the bill and sends it to the President.

- Presidential Assent: The President can:
- Grant assent (bill becomes law).
- Withhold assent (bill may be reconsidered).
- Reserve the bill for further consideration.

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- **Bills Needing Presidential Assent:**
- **Bills affecting national policies or conflicting with Union laws.**
- **Bills on Concurrent List topics, like medical education (e.g., Anti-NEET Bill in Tamil Nadu).**

- **Repugnancy is an inconsistency or contradiction between two or more parts of a Statute.**
- **The Doctrine of Repugnancy deals with conflict between two pieces of legislation which when applied to the same facts produce different results.**

- **Article 254 of the COI deals with the inconsistency between laws made by Parliament and laws made by the Legislatures of States.**

Shaping a future-ready workforce

The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025 and QS's World Future Skills Index contain critical insights into the state of India's workforce and its preparedness for the future. They offer a roadmap for the government and universities to address the pressing challenges and opportunities in shaping a future-ready workforce. Their findings accentuate the urgency of aligning educational strategies with the rapidly evolving demands of the global economy.

P. John J. Kennedy

Former Professor and Dean, Christ University, Bengaluru

The findings

The Future of Jobs Report highlights the significant forces driving global labour market changes by 2030. Among these, technological advancements, demographic shifts, geo-economic fragmentation, economic uncertainties, and the green transition stand out. Technological change and digital access are anticipated to play a crucial role, with 60% of employers identifying them as major drivers. At the same time, 50% of employers expect economic factors, such as job displacement, to reshape industries. Climate change mitigation is seen as a dual force, both creating jobs in renewable energy and environmental fields and requiring adaptations to business models due to geopolitical tensions. These trends point to a dynamic labour market characterised by job creation (170 million new jobs are projected) and job displacement (92 million roles could become obsolete).

In response to these shifts, employers have prioritised workforce training, wage increases, and employee well-being. Notably, 59 out of every 100 workers will require training in crucial skills such as analytical thinking, resilience, and technological literacy. Emerging roles such as Big Data specialists and AI engineers are expected to see substantial growth, highlighting the need for a workforce equipped with advanced technical and cognitive skills. The emphasis on upskilling indicates that educational institutions must proactively prepare students for a competitive job market. Equally important is the integration of soft skills, such as emotional intelligence, adaptability, and leadership, into professional development programmes. Employers are increasingly valuing these attributes as critical for navigating dynamic work environments.

The QS World Future Skills Index complements these findings. Ranking second globally in terms of preparedness for AI and green skills, India demonstrates considerable potential. However, the report reveals stark gaps in workforce skills, particularly on supply-side indicators. While India excels in its ability to identify and recruit for future-focused skills, as evidenced by its 99.1 score in the 'Future of Work' parameter, its performance in 'Skills Fit' – the ability of the workforce to meet these demands – lags significantly, with the country scoring just 59.1. The report also identifies deficiencies in fostering entrepreneurial and innovative mindsets, with India's overall ranking in 'Academic Readiness' placing it at a modest 26th position. Further, India's performance in future-oriented innovation and sustainability is alarmingly low, a mere 15.6 out of 100. Additionally, India's limited investment in research and development further worsens the issue, hindering its ability to compete globally in areas such as renewable energy technologies and climate-friendly innovations.

An opportunity

The findings emphasise a transformative opportunity for India to align its education system with global trends and workforce demands. To bridge the skill gaps identified, educational institutions and governments must adopt a multi-pronged approach that addresses curriculum innovation, faculty capacity, infrastructure, and equitable access while fostering robust collaboration among academia, industry, and policymakers. The emphasis on creativity, critical thinking, resilience, problem-solving, and entrepreneurial skills must become central to higher education. Universities must embed these competencies into the curriculum through interdisciplinary courses, experiential learning modules, and problem-based learning approaches. Initiatives such as hackathons, startup incubators, and design-thinking workshops should become integral to the academic framework to nurture innovation and adaptability.

A green curriculum is imperative. Institutions could establish specialised centres for sustainability research, offer courses on green technologies and practices, and encourage student-led community initiatives that address local environmental issues. Collaboration with the private sector is critical for bridging the education-industry gap. Higher education institutions need to form robust partnerships with industries to co-create curricula, offer internships, and ensure that students graduate with job-ready skills. Industry players can contribute by funding skill development centres, mentoring students, and providing real-time insights into market needs.

Faculty development is another area for reform. Universities must implement comprehensive training programmes that include workshops, certifications, and global exchange opportunities.

The government must spearhead systemic reforms by increasing skill development, research, and innovation investments. A specific focus on building digital infrastructure in rural and semi-urban areas will reduce the urban-rural divide.

India's higher education system must undergo a paradigm shift to remain agile and future-focused, while the government must foster an enabling policy environment.

The findings of the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025 and the QS's World Future Skills Index underline the urgency of aligning educational strategies with the evolving demands of the global economy

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- At the same time, 50% of employers expect economic factors, such as job displacement, to reshape industries.

Content.

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2. NCERT Playlist:-
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3. PIB Weekly:- https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpuxPG4TUOR59OtRNhFu
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Prashant tiwari
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मात्र मैं हूँ
इस ज्ञेय-अज्ञेय के मध्य स्थित
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