

● POLITY

● ECONOMICS

● TECHNOLOGY

● ECOLOGY

## INDIA, SPAIN SLAM ATTACKS ON UN TROOPS IN LEBANON

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**CONTEXT:** India and Spain condemned attacks on UNIFIL, stressing the critical need to ensure peacekeepers' safety, as both nations are key contributors to the mission in Lebanon.

**BACKGROUND:** In a joint statement following discussions, Prime Minister Modi and Spanish counterpart Pedro Sanchez emphasized respect for UN premises and mission sanctity amid recent attacks on UNIFIL by Israel's Défense Forces. India and Spain contribute 903 and 676 troops, respectively, to UNIFIL.



India and Spain advanced their defence partnership with the inauguration of the C-295 aircraft assembly line in Vadodra by Tata and Airbus, marking a ₹21,935-crore deal for 56 planes to replace India's Avro fleet. Highlighting India's expanding defence exports, PM Modi emphasized future global exports from the facility. The leaders jointly condemned the recent violence in Israel and Gaza, urging humanitarian aid and supporting a two-state solution for lasting peace.

## FINANCE MINISTRY FLAGS SOFTER URBAN DEMAND, FACTORY OUTPUT

### ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT

**CONTEXT:** The Ministry's economic review reveals a contrast between strong rural demand, boosted by a favourable monsoon, and a slowdown in urban demand based on indicators from the financial year's first half.

**BACKGROUND:** The Finance Ministry highlighted concerns over waning consumer sentiment, weakened urban demand, and a slowdown in industrial momentum. Despite these challenges, it projects a GDP growth of 6.5% to 7% for 2024-25.

### Highlights India's Growth Concerns and Cautious Optimism

- **Manufacturing Growth Slows:** Manufacturing grew only 1% in August, with momentum weakening in September due to factors like oil prices and automobile growth.
- **Economic Pain Points:** The Ministry's review highlights challenges amid a weak Q2 for corporates and slack in GST collections, bank credit, and exports.
- **Consumer Optimism:** RBI surveys indicate a sequential rise in consumer confidence, reflecting

optimism in consumer and manufacturing sectors.

- **Growth Risks Identified:** Risks stem from geopolitical conflicts, geo-economic fragmentation, and high market valuations in advanced economies.
- **Spillover Effects:** Potential negative wealth effects could impact household sentiment and alter spending on durable goods, cautions the review.

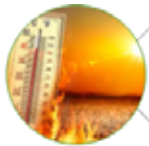
## T.N. GOVT. DECLARES HEATWAVE A STATE-SPECIFIC DISASTER

### DISASTER MANAGEMENT

**CONTEXT:** The declaration allows the government to offer swift relief to those impacted by extreme temperatures, especially amid the intense heat experienced in April and May 2024.

**BACKGROUND:** The Tamil Nadu government has classified heatwaves as a State-specific disaster and committed to providing ₹4 lakh in ex-gratia payments to families of individuals who die from heat-related causes, including relief workers.

With temperatures surpassing 40°C in Tamil Nadu, the State government has acknowledged significant public health impacts, especially on vulnerable groups. To combat the heat, relief measures will include medical care, oral rehydration salts (ORS), and accessible drinking water kiosks in affected areas, particularly in urban centres like Chennai and Madurai.



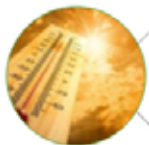
**Heat Waves:** Defined as periods of unusually **high temperatures**.



**Regional Variability:** Thresholds differ based on **historical temperatures** of regions.



**Supporting Factors:** Influenced by **humidity, wind speed, and duration** of events.



**Temperature Criteria:** **40°C** for Plains and **30°C** for Hilly regions.



**Global Definitions:** Vary by temperature thresholds or **heat index calculations**.



*“If you invest more in your education, then you are likely to get more interest in it.”*

*–Benjamin Franklin*

# PROMOTING STABILITY THROUGH STRATEGIC RESTRAINT IN THE REGION

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**CONTEXT:** Israeli air strikes on Iran mark a new phase in the escalating regional conflict between these two significant players in West Asia.

**BACKGROUND:** Israel conducted an airstrike on an air defence system in Isfahan in April and was involved in the killing of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in July, yet it has not officially claimed responsibility for these attacks.

### Israel Strikes Iran Amid Military Imbalances

Israel has conducted strikes on Iran's air defence and missile facilities, leading to heightened tensions. Despite initial Iranian claims of thwarting the attack, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei warned of a decisive response. With Israel's advanced military capabilities, both nations face risks of escalating violence, underscoring the need for strategic restraint to avoid a wider conflict in the region.

# THE UNDER-REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

## INDIAN SOCIETY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

**CONTEXT:** The Supreme Court of India's "State of the Judiciary" report (2023) reveals that women comprise 36.3% of the district judiciary, indicating positive progress in gender representation.

**BACKGROUND:** The underrepresentation of women in the judiciary is often addressed through entry-level measures for lawyers and judges. However, these initiatives alone are insufficient; ongoing support and retention strategies are essential for women to thrive in the judicial system.

### Barriers to Entry and Advancement

The under-representation of women in the judiciary perpetuates a cycle of exclusion and stagnation. While some states have improved entry for women, challenges persist, including stringent recruitment rules and a lack of supportive environments. Moreover, inadequate infrastructure, such as insufficient facilities for women and family-friendly amenities, hinders their retention and career growth in the legal system.

### Gender Representation in the Indian Judiciary



**Women Judges:** 36.3% of district judiciary judges are women, a positive sign.



**Civil Judge Recruitment:** Over 50% of civil judge recruits in 14 states are women.



**High Court Representation:** Only 13.4% of High Court judges are women as of January 2024.



**Supreme Court Statistics:** Women make up just 9.3% of Supreme Court judges.



**Bar Representation:** Approximately 15.31% of enrolled advocates are women, indicating a bleak situation.

## Gender Inequality in the Judiciary through a Female Gaze

- **Entry and Retention:** Equal representation of women in the judiciary remains a persistent issue due to insufficient amenities.
- **Public-Private Divide:** Carole Pateman’s theory highlights the lag in laws as women transition from private to public spheres.
- **Need for Inclusive Policies:** A feminist lens is essential to recognize women's specific needs in male-dominated court environments.
- **Breaking Male Standards:** Employing a female gaze counters the all-male administrative perspective, promoting inclusive decision-making.
- **Gendered Impact Assessment:** Understanding the gendered implications of policies can enhance women's access and retention in the judiciary.

To enhance women's participation in the judiciary, it's essential to adopt women-centric perspectives that address barriers to career growth. Justice Hima Kohli emphasized the unconscious gender bias that sidelines women in administrative roles, resulting in inadequate infrastructure and representation. Prioritizing women's needs in policy-making, recruitment, and training is crucial for fostering a more inclusive and supportive judicial environment.

# SOLAR, A GAME CHANGER IN WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

### SOCIAL JUSTICE

**CONTEXT:** Solar energy empowers individuals and communities socially, economically, and developmentally, dismantling barriers that have historically excluded them from participating in the energy economy.

**BACKGROUND:** Since Charles Fritts installed the first rooftop solar array in 1884, solar energy has evolved from a natural force to a democratizing electricity source. Unlike traditional energy methods, it can now be harnessed directly in homes, transforming energy access.

					
<p><b>Poor Energy Access:</b> Women face significant health and economic challenges due to inadequate energy.</p>	<p><b>Income Boost:</b> Solar pumps increased Gujarat salt farmers' income by 94%.</p>	<p><b>CO2 Reduction:</b> Transitioning to solar reduced CO2 emissions by 1,15,000 metric tons annually.</p>	<p><b>Solar Initiatives:</b> Programs empower women as solar engineers, enhancing community health.</p>	<p><b>Job Opportunities:</b> Solar photovoltaic industry employed 4.9 million, with 40% women.</p>	<p><b>Future Potential:</b> India's renewable goals could create three million new jobs by 2030.</p>

Decentralisation of power generation through solar energy enhances environmental sustainability and empowers communities, particularly women. It promotes economic development and climate resilience, especially in marginalized areas. Effective community engagement is vital for project success, while challenges like geographical and sectoral imbalances, along with waste management, necessitate government support and circular practices to ensure the solar sector's sustainability.

## JUSTICE K.S. PUTTASWAMY, A CHAMPION OF PRIVACY WHO CHALLENGED AADHAAR, DEAD

INDIAN POLITY

**CONTEXT:** A former Karnataka High Court judge, featured in a vintage photograph, emerged as a key petitioner in the Supreme Court years after his retirement in 1986.

**BACKGROUND:** Justice K.S. Puttaswamy, a former Karnataka High Court judge and pivotal petitioner for privacy rights in India, passed away at 98 in Bengaluru. He challenged the perception that privacy is a privilege of the affluent, shaping legal discourse.



### Justice Puttaswamy: A Champion of Privacy Rights in India

- **Early Life:** Justice Puttaswamy was born on February 8, 1926, and pursued law at Maharaja's College, Mysore.
- **Judicial Appointment:** He became a judge of the Karnataka High Court in November 1977 after enrolling as an advocate in 1952.
- **Aadhaar Challenge:** Puttaswamy challenged the Aadhaar scheme, arguing it violated citizens' right to privacy.
- **Landmark Verdict:** In August 2017, the

Supreme Court unanimously affirmed that privacy is a fundamental right.

- **Wider Impact:** His litigation on privacy influenced various societal issues, including the decriminalization of adultery in India.



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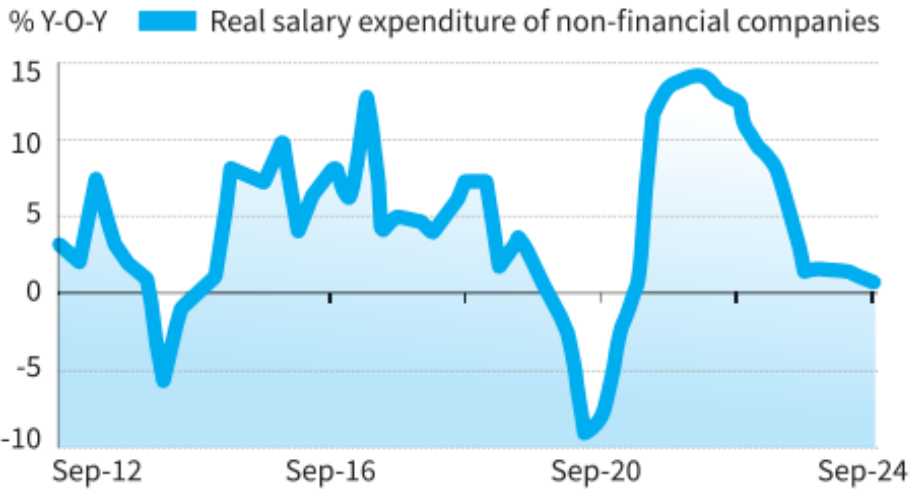
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# NOMURA WARNS OF CONTINUED WEAKNESS IN INDIA'S GROWTH

ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT

## Dampening demand

Nomura links weak urban demand signals, like slowing growth in non-durables' sales and air passenger traffic, to lower salary growth



Source: CMIE, CEIC and Nomura Global Economics

Note: Sep-24 reading is provisional. Nominal readings deflated by CPI-Urban for conversion to real data.

**CONTEXT:** Nomura economists predict a continued decline in urban consumption, citing lower real salary hikes, diminishing pent-up demand, and tight credit conditions as contributing factors.

**BACKGROUND:** Nomura economists indicate that India's economy may be experiencing a cyclical growth slowdown, with projected growth slipping below 6.7%. Weak urban demand, high interest rates, and moderating wage growth contribute to these emerging economic risks.

Nomura analysts predict a cyclical slowdown in India's economy, projecting GDP growth of 6.7% for the current year and 6.8% for 2025-26, which they believe may be overly optimistic. Real salary growth for listed corporates has decreased significantly, reflecting tighter monetary policy and waning post-pandemic demand,

resulting in reduced personal loan growth and workforce adjustments.

# INDIAN AMERICANS' DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT DECLINES, SURVEY REVEALS

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



**CONTEXT:** The Indian American Attitude Survey reveals a decline in Democratic Party affiliation among Indian Americans, with only 47% identifying as Democrats, down from 56% in 2020.

**BACKGROUND:** The proportion of Independents has risen to 26%, while Republican identifiers remain steady at 21%. Although support for the Democratic Party has declined, the overall number identifying with the ideological left has increased since 2020.

A report reveals that Indian Americans view prominent Republican figures, including Nikki

Haley and Vivek Ramaswamy, unfavourably, citing a disconnect between GOP policies and their values, particularly on issues like minority rights and abortion. In contrast, 72% plan to vote for Kamala Harris, primarily for her progressive stance, with economic concerns like inflation and job security topping voter priorities.

### Survey Reveals Voting Trends Among Indian American Voters

- **Survey Details:** The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace conducted an online survey of 714 Indian Americans from September 18 to October 15, 2024.
- **Vote Preference:** Sixty percent of registered Indian American voters plan to vote for Democratic candidate Kamala Harris.
- **Republican Support:** Just under one-third (32%) of Indian American respondents intend to vote for Republican candidate Donald Trump.
- **Gender Gap:** The survey highlights a gender gap, with women favouring Harris and men favouring Trump, especially among younger voters.
- **Voting Intentions:** Sixty-seven percent of Indian American women support Harris, while 39% of men favour Trump over 22% of women.

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