

# Daily Current Affairs

## 28 December 2024

### PM Modi Chairs 45th Meeting of PRAGATI

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the **45th meeting of PRAGATI**, which leverages technology to **enhance governance and project implementation**.
- PRAGATI stands for **Pro-Active Governance And Timely Implementation**, which integrates information and communication technology to streamline project execution. The platform encourages **collaboration between central and state governments to ensure accountability and efficiency**.



- Projects reviewed in this meeting span sectors such as urban transport, road connectivity, thermal power, and renewable energy, with a combined cost **exceeding Rs 1 lakh crore**.
- During the meeting, **eight major projects were reviewed**. Six of these projects are metro systems aimed at improving urban transport. The remaining two projects focus on **enhancing road connectivity and expanding thermal power generation**.
- These initiatives are crucial **for regional development and infrastructure growth**. Mr. Modi proposed conducting workshops for cities with metro projects. These workshops would facilitate the sharing of best practices and

lessons learned. The aim is to optimise project execution and enhance urban transport systems across the country.



## PRAGATI प्लेटफॉर्म से देश को मिली विकास की गतिशक्ति

- The **Prime Minister** stressed the need for **swift rehabilitation and resettlement** of families impacted by these projects. He brought into light the necessity of providing adequate facilities at new locations. Ensuring the well-being of affected families is paramount in project planning.
- Mr. Modi cautioned officials about the consequences of project delays. He noted that delays not only escalate costs but also hinder public benefits. Timely completion

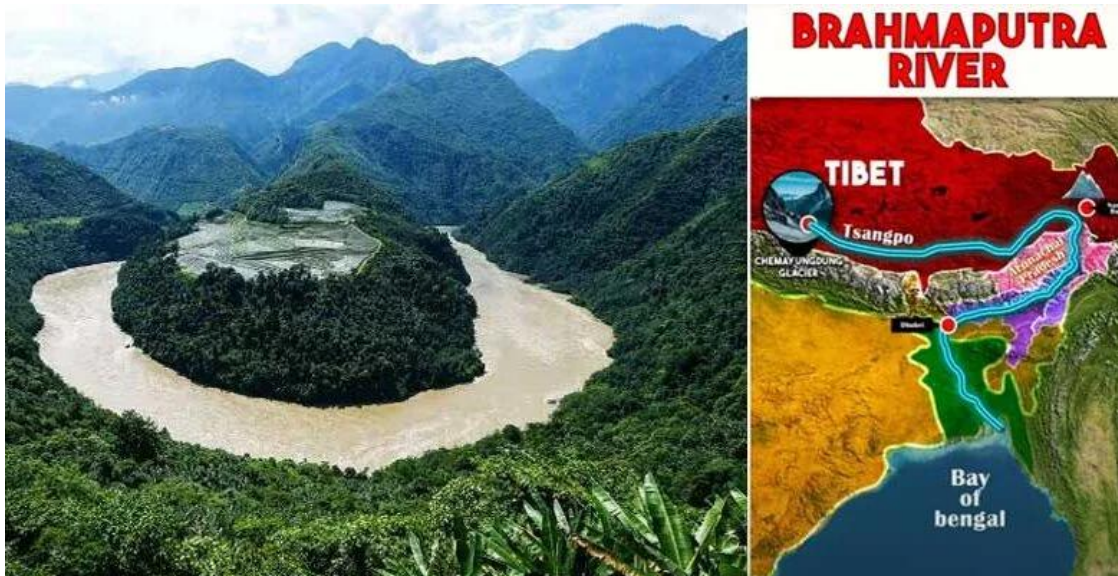
<b>PRAGATI Cumulative Reviews</b>	363 projects worth Rs 19.12 lakh crore
<b>PRAGATI Overview</b>	<p><b>Launched:</b> March 25, 2015.</p> <p><b>Developed By:</b> PMO team with the National Informatics Center (NIC).</p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Addresses public grievances and monitors key government projects.</p> <p><b>Technologies Used:</b> Digital data management, video conferencing, and geospatial technology.</p>

## China To Build World's Largest Dam On Brahmaputra

- China has recently approved the **construction of the world's largest dam** on the **Brahmaputra River**, located in Tibet near the Indian border, which is poised to **cost approximately \$137 billion**. The dam has sparked concerns among neighboring countries, **particularly India and Bangladesh**, regarding potential impacts on water flow and regional stability.
- The dam will be built on the lower section of the **Yarlung Zangbo River**, the Tibetan name for the Brahmaputra. This initiative is expected to exceed **one trillion yuan** in total investment, surpassing the **Three Gorges Dam** as the largest infrastructure project globally.



- Situated in a deep gorge of the Himalayas, the dam faces engineering challenges due to its location on a tectonic plate boundary. The area is prone to earthquakes, and the **Brahmaputra creates the world's deepest canyon** with a **vertical drop exceeding 25,000 feet**.
- Heavy rainfall in the region contributes to a robust water flow. Despite the seismic risks, **officials have committed to implementing** safety and environmental protection measures. Comprehensive geological studies and advanced technology have been employed to support the project's development, ensuring the minimisation of ecological impact. The hydropower facility is **estimated to generate over 300 billion kWh of electricity annually**.



- This output could supply energy to approximately 300 million people for a year. The **lower section of the river is believed to hold nearly 70 million kilowatts of power**, exceeding the capacity of the Three Gorges Dam.
- Project also involves drilling multiple tunnels through the Namcha Barwa mountain to **redirect part of the river's flow**. It is viewed as a critical step for China's national security and environmental protection, while also encouraging cooperation with **neighbouring countries**. The dam is expected to generate substantial revenue for the Tibet Autonomous Region.

## UK Universities Set To Establish Campuses At GIFT City

- Two UK universities, **Queen's University Belfast and Coventry University**, have filed applications to set up international campuses at Gujarat's GIFT City, continuing the **trend initiated by Australian institutions**.
- This marks a significant step as India opens its doors to foreign educational institutions through relaxed regulations. The **International Financial Services Authority (IFSCA)** granted approval to Queen's University, which plans to start with postgraduate programs, followed by potential research and undergraduate courses.



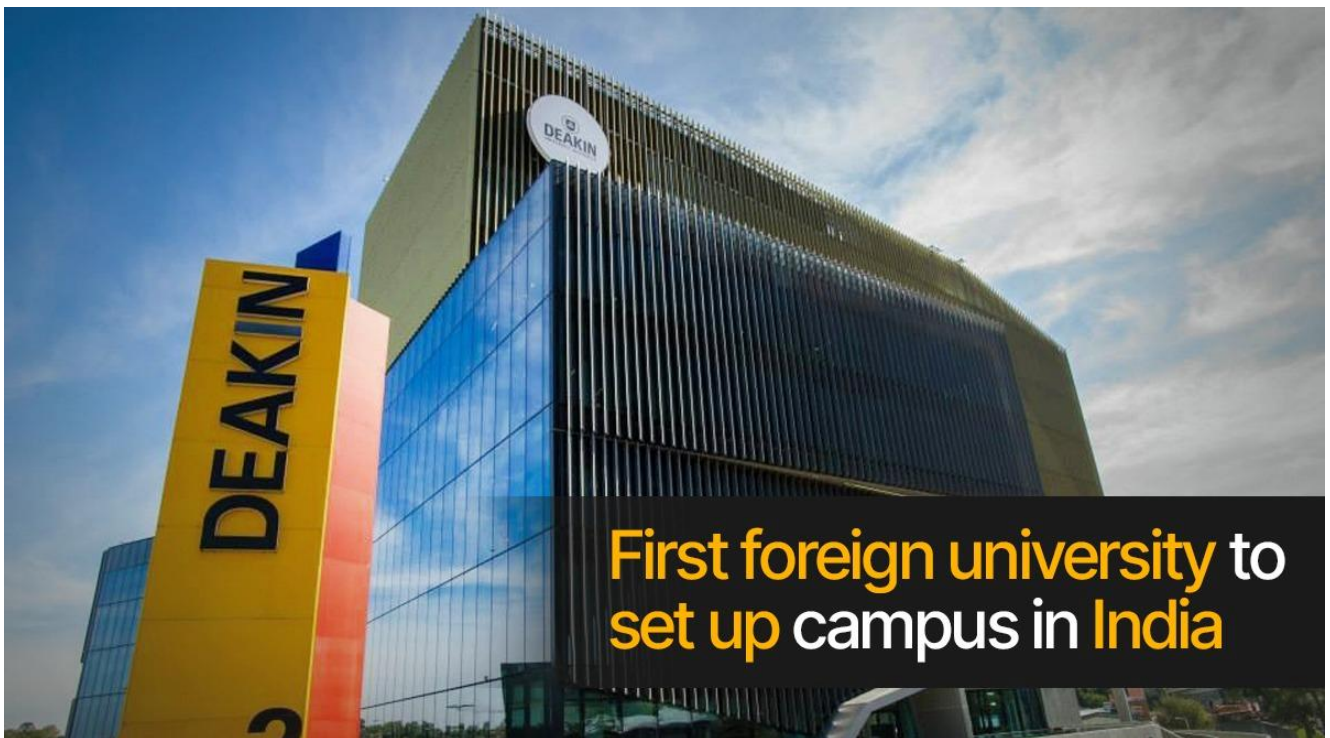
- **Coventry University, with global campuses** already in Egypt, Poland, Morocco, and Kazakhstan, will further expand its presence in India. Queen's University Belfast, a top-ranked UK institution, is the third foreign university to be approved for GIFT City.
- With a history of nearly **200 years and a reputation in sustainability** and impact, Queen's plans to offer postgraduate programs with a future focus on research and undergraduate courses.



- The university **currently has over 1,000 Indian students**. Coventry University, which has over 13,000 international students from 160 countries, is poised to join the **GIFT City educational ecosystem**. The university, known for its global

campuses, launched an “India Hub” in Delhi in 2024 to address key global challenges, including climate change and economic development.

- **Coventry brings extensive international experience**, especially from its campuses in Egypt, Poland, Morocco, and Kazakhstan. The establishment of foreign university campuses in GIFT City is facilitated by the IFSCA’s 2022 regulations, which allow universities to repatriate funds in foreign currency and operate without typical Indian infrastructure requirements.
- **Universities from Australia, such as Deakin University and the University of Wollongong**, have already set up campuses in GIFT City, offering courses in business analytics, cybercrime, and financial technology.
- **The IFSCA has also set conditions for foreign universities**, such as a top-500 global ranking or reputation in their home country, to qualify for establishing campuses in GIFT City. These developments are part of a broader strategy to make India a hub for global education and innovation.

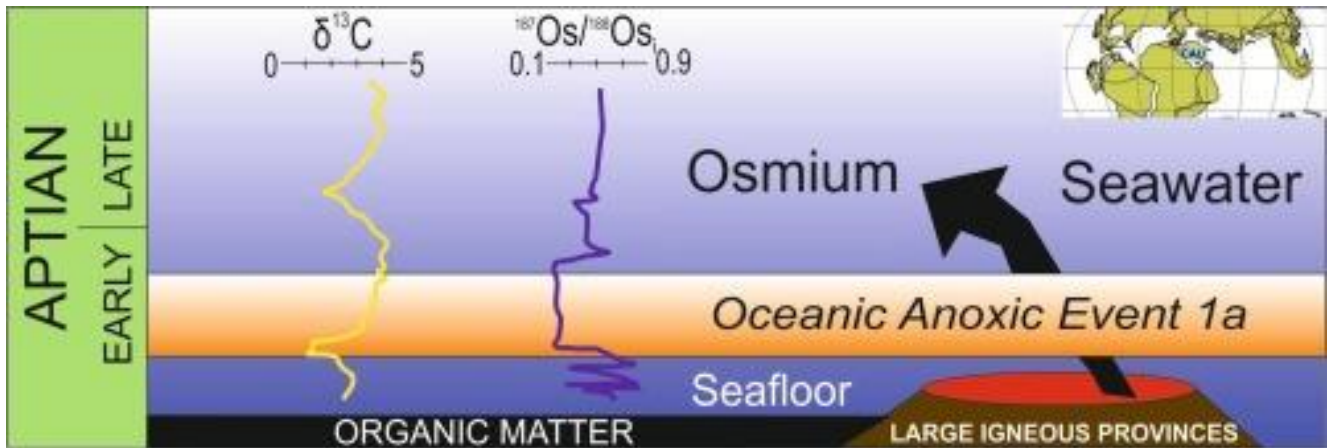


## Ocean Anoxic Event 1a (OAE 1a)

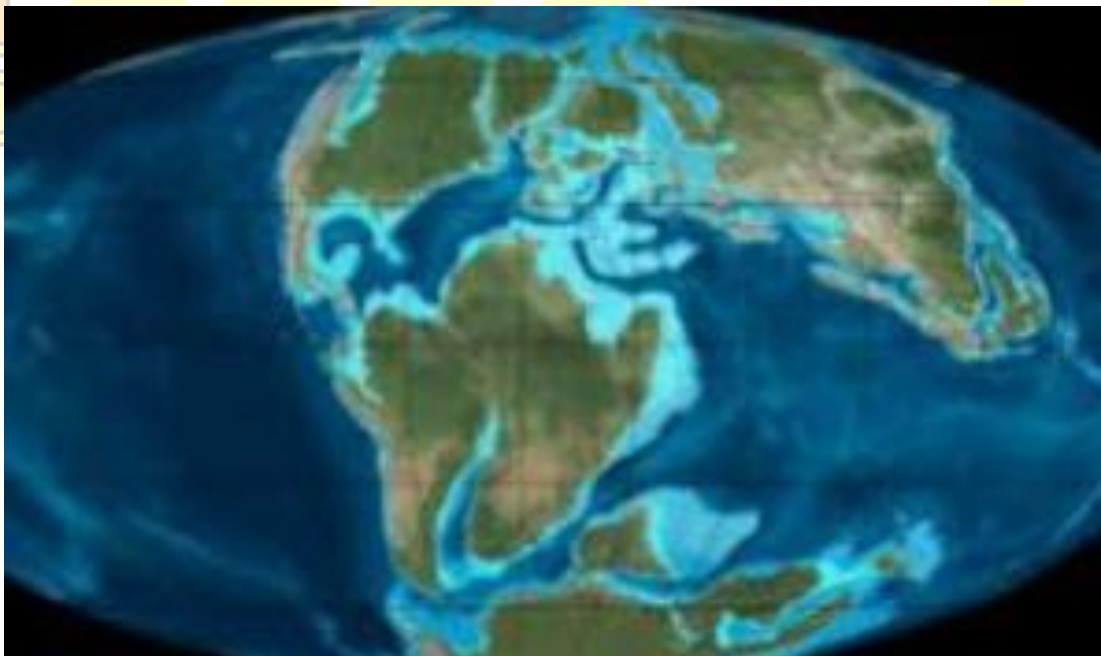
- Scientists have recently studied ancient rocks and fossils from **Mount Ashibetsu in Japan and uncovered details about Ocean Anoxic Event 1a (OAE 1a)**, which occurred approximately **119.5 million years ago**.
- This event caused a critical lack of oxygen in the oceans and led to **extensive extinctions, particularly among plankton. OAE 1a was likely triggered by massive undersea volcanic eruptions**.



- These eruptions released **vast amounts of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)**, which warmed the planet and disrupted ocean oxygen levels. The **combination of high CO<sub>2</sub> and low oxygen** created a hostile environment for marine life. The event lasted just **over 1.1 million years**.
- It is one of the **largest ocean anoxic events recorded** during the Cretaceous Period. Such events can lead to biodiversity loss, as seen in the drastic reduction of plankton populations.
- The concept of ocean anoxic events emerged in the 1970s. Geologists discovered **black, carbon-rich shale deposits formed** under low oxygen conditions.



- These deposits accumulated organic matter instead of decomposing, indicating the environmental stress of past eras. Researchers examined volcanic ash layers on Hokkaido Island.
- These layers solidified over **time from ancient volcanic activity**. By studying the crystals in the ash, scientists could date eruptions and correlate them with OAE 1a. They also analysed carbon and osmium isotopes to understand changes in the carbon cycle.



## India's Global Economic Rankings in 2024

- India continues to establish itself as one of the **leading global economies** in 2024, with impressive performance across various economic sectors. Despite facing challenges **such as inflation and global uncertainties**, the country has shown remarkable resilience, driven by strong GDP growth, increasing foreign



direct investment (FDI), and significant developments in infrastructure and military power.

- **Economic Size:** India's rank as the **fifth-largest economy** by nominal GDP reflects its growing significance in the global economic landscape. This growth is driven by robust industrial output, services sector performance, and substantial domestic consumption.

Global Index 2024	India's Global Rank	Data	Source
Largest Global Economy	5	GDP: \$3.94 trillion	IMF
Global (Military) Power Ranking	4	Power Score: 0.1023; Military Spending: \$74.0 billion	Global Firepower Military Strength
Largest Gold Reserves	8	Gold Reserves (in tonnes): 840.76	World Gold Council
Global Wealth Report: Countries with Growing Millionaire Population	11	Growth percentage: 22%	UBS
Sustainable Trade Index	23	Sustainability Score: 24	IMD and Hinrich Foundation
Global Competitiveness Index	39	Competitiveness Score: 57.17	IMD
Global Innovation Index	39	–	WIPO
World Talent Ranking	58	Talent Score: 40.47	IMD
Largest Stock Exchange (Market Cap)	5	Market Cap: \$5.05 trillion	WFE

- **Military Power:** India's military ranking of 4th highlights its rising influence as a global military power. With a military spending of \$74 billion, India continues to focus on strengthening its defense capabilities, ensuring both national security and strategic influence.
- **Gold Reserves:** Holding 840.76 tonnes of gold, India ranks 8th globally in terms of gold reserves, solidifying its position as a key player in the global precious metals market.
- **Wealth Growth:** India has witnessed a surge in wealth creation, with an impressive 22% growth in its millionaire population, ranking it 11th globally. The

country is also home to a growing number of billionaires, with Mumbai recently surpassing Beijing as the 'Billionaire Capital' of the world.

- **Competitiveness and Innovation:** India's ranking of **39th on the Global Competitiveness Index** and Global Innovation Index suggests room for improvement in terms of business environment, infrastructure, and research and development. However, the country remains a major hub for innovation and startup growth, with significant advancements in sectors like technology, agriculture, and healthcare.
- **Stock Market Strength:** With a market capitalization of \$5.05 trillion, India ranks 5th globally in terms of stock market size, demonstrating the robustness of its financial markets and their growing role in global trade and investment.

## Monthly Per Capita Expenditure Increases

- **Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE)** has increased **by nine percent in rural areas** and around **eight percent in urban areas in 2023-24** from the level of 2022-23.
- According to the **Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2023-24** released by the Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation, the average MPCE in rural India has been estimated to be **4 thousand 122 rupees**.
- The average MPCE in urban India has been estimated to be **six thousand 996 rupees**.



- The survey covered **over 2.6 lakh households nationwide**. Data showed that rural consumption is growing faster than urban consumption, with the urban-

rural consumption gap narrowing significantly. The urban-rural gap in MPCE has declined **to 71 percent in 2022-23 from 84 percent in 2011-12.**

- The survey indicates that non-food items remain the major contributor to the household's average monthly expenditure, with about 53 percent in the MPCE of **rural areas and 60 percent in the MPCE of urban areas.** It also said that beverages, refreshments, and processed food also continue to have the major expenditure **share in 2023-24 in the food items** basket of the rural and urban households.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

### 1. Which Position Did Manmohan Singh Hold Before Becoming The Finance Minister Of India

- A. Economic Advisor in the Ministry of Finance
- B. Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs
- C. Minister of Defence
- D. Chief Minister of Punjab

**ANSWER: A**

### 2. Which Year Did Manmohan Singh Become The Finance Minister Of India

- A. 1991
- B. 1995
- C. 1985
- D. 2000

**ANSWER: A**

### 3. In Which Year Was Manmohan Singh Awarded The Padma Vibhushan

- A. 1990
- B. 1987
- C. 2000
- D. 2010

**ANSWER: B**

**4. Which Honor Did Manmohan Singh Receive From Japan In 2014?**

- A. Order of the Rising Sun
- B. Grand Cordon of the Order of the Paulownia Flowers
- C. Gold Medal of Merit
- D. Samurai Award

**ANSWER: B**

**5. Which Country Plans To Acquire The US Typhon Missile System, Drawing Criticism From China**

- A. Peru
- B. Philippines
- C. China
- D. Russia

**ANSWER: B**

**6. On Which Date Is National Farmers' Day Celebrated In India**

- A. December 23
- B. January 26
- C. October 2
- D. August 15

**ANSWER: A**

**7. On Which National Highway (NH) Was India's First Bio-bitumen-based Highway Stretch Inaugurated**

- A. NH-48
- B. NH-27
- C. NH-16
- D. NH-44

**ANSWER: D**

**8. International Day Of Epidemic Preparedness Observed Annually On Which Day**

- A. 25th December
- B. 26th December
- C. 27th December
- D. 28th December

**ANSWER: C**

**9. In Which Year Indian Government Announced To Celebrate Veer Bal Divas On December 26 Annually**

- A. 2020
- B. 2022
- C. 2023
- D. 2017

**ANSWER: B**

**10. What Does Ladakhi Losar Mark In The Tibetan Calendar**

- A. The start of spring
- B. The harvest season
- C. The winter solstice
- D. The New Year

**ANSWER: D**

**11. Primary Goal Of The Ken-Betwa River-linking Project**

- A. To Promote Tourism In Bundelkhand
- B. To Improve Water Access And Irrigation In Bundelkhand
- C. To Generate Hydropower In The Region
- D. To Reduce Flood Risks In The Region

**ANSWER: B**

**12. Who Has Been Elected As New Prime Minister Of Tonga**

- A. Aisake Valu Eke
- B. Siaso Sovaleni
- C. Tupou VI
- D. Akilisi Pohiva

**ANSWER: A**

**13. Name Of Indigo's CSR Initiative That Launched The Zero Waste Airport Project**

- A. IndiGoCare
- B. IndiGoSustain
- C. IndiGoGreen
- D. IndiGoReach

**ANSWER: D**

**14. Who Has Been Appointed As The New Revenue Secretary In The Ministry Of Finance**

- A. Ajay Seth
- B. Arunish Chawla
- C. Sanjay Malhotra
- D. Rajesh Kumar Singh

**ANSWER: B**

**15. Which Ministry Introduced The 'Rashtraparv' Website To Provide Convenient Access To Information About National Festivals**

- A. Ministry of Defence
- B. Ministry of Culture
- C. Ministry of Tourism
- D. Ministry of Home Affairs

**ANSWER: A**

**16. Maia Sandu Was Sworn In As The President Of Which Country**

- A. Finland
- B. Moldova
- C. Sweden
- D. Norway

**ANSWER: B**

**17. Ocean Anoxic Event 1a (OAE 1a), occurred during which period**

- A. Jurassic
- B. Triassic
- C. Permian
- D. Cretaceous

**ANSWER: D**

**18. Viksit Panchayat Karmayogi Initiative Is Part Of Which Campaign**

- A. Digital India cultural tours
- B. Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore
- C. Bharat Nirman
- D. Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

**ANSWER: B**

**19. Who Has Been Appointed As The Chairperson Of The United Nations Internal Justice Council**

- A. Justice Madan B Lokur
- B. Justice Dipak Misra
- C. Justice Ranjan Gogoi
- D. Justice Kurian Joseph

**ANSWER: A**

**20. Which Among The Following Was The Most Important Reason For Social And Religious Reforms In Nineteenth Century**

- A. Scientific inventions
- B. Industrial revolution
- C. Western education and awakening
- D. Influence of Newspapers

**ANSWER: C**

