FINDER
11th December 2025
FORTUNE IAS NEWS DAILY EXPLAINER
FORTUNE IAS ACADEMY
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# The national song debate, a reading between the lines

**Prelims:** General Studies Paper - 1
Indian Polity and Governance-Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.

**Mains:** General Studies - 2
Indian Constitution—historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.

## 1. Context

- Debate on **Vande Mataram** resurfaced in Parliament ahead of the 150th anniversary of the song (November 7, 2025).
- Accusations were raised that the **original lyrics were muted** historically to appease minorities.
- This criticism indirectly targets the **1937 Congress Working Committee (CWC) resolution**, endorsed by leaders such as **Nehru, Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Maulana Azad, Subhas Bose**, and influenced by **Gandhi**.
- The larger question: **Why reopen a settled issue** that the Constituent Assembly had already resolved?

## 2. Historical Background and the 1937 CWC Resolution

- **Composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay,** Vande Mataram was **first published in the literary journal, Bangadarshan**, in 1875 and was **sung at the 1896 session of the Congress by Tagore.**
- By the 1930s, concerns were raised by **Muslim groups** over certain stanzas referencing Hindu goddesses.
- The **CWC resolution of October 30, 1937**:
  - Acknowledged the song's **historic significance** and emotional role in the freedom movement.
  - Recognised the **valid objections** of Muslim colleagues.
  - Decided that **only the first two stanzas** (non-objectionable and widely sung) would be adopted for national occasions.
  - Recommended using **Tagore's musical version**.
  - The decision was **unanimous**, moved by **Rajendra Prasad** and seconded by **Sardar Patel**.
- The aim was **pragmatic accommodation** to promote **inter-communal unity** during a period when Congress was also entering provincial governance (post-1935 Act).

## 3. Constituent Assembly Debates and Legal-constitutional Position

- After Partition, the Constituent Assembly (dominated by Hindus) **debated possible national songs and anthems.**
- Three candidates: **Vande Mataram**, **Sare Jahan Se Achha**, **Jana Gana Mana**.
- **Jana Gana Mana** chosen as the **National Anthem**; **Vande Mataram** accepted as the **National Song** in its edited form.
- The Constitution **makes no reference to a national song**.
- **Article 51A, added through the 42nd Amendment in 1976**, introduced a duty that every citizen must uphold the Constitution and respect its ideals, as well as the National Flag and the National Anthem.
- Legal framework:
  - **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971** criminalises disrespect to the **National Anthem**.
- **Past judicial interventions:**
  - **Madras High Court (2017)** directed periodic singing of Vande Mataram in schools and offices.
  - **Delhi High Court** sought parity of respect between the National Song and the National Anthem.

➥ The **Modi government** argued in court that both deserve respect but **cannot have equal legal status**, as the law distinguishes them.

## 4. Contemporary Political Issue and Implications

- The ruling party's renewed push to add a **new fundamental duty under Article 51A** to treat Vande Mataram on par with the National Anthem raises political questions.
- The sudden **revival of the controversy** 75 years after the Constituent Assembly resolved it creates doubt about the government's intentions.
- Concern: Is there an **agenda to replace the National Song by a simple resolution of Parliament** akin to the similar exercise done to cancel the special status of Jammu and Kashmir?

# A verdict that is an abdication of judicial function

**Prelims:** General Studies Paper - 1
Indian Polity and Governance-Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.

**Mains:** General Studies - 2
Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary—Ministries

## 1. Context

- The Supreme Court's ruling in the **16th Presidential Reference** has generated both criticism and support.
- Central issue: whether courts can prescribe **timelines for high constitutional authorities** such as Governors, Speakers, and the President.
- The judgment shows **judicial restraint**, sticking closely to the Constitution's text, but critics argue it reflects a failure to **adapt constitutional interpretation to present realities**.
- Concern: excessive hesitation may weaken the Court's role as the guardian of **judicial review**.

## 2. Constitutional Silence and Resulting Anomalies

- The Constitution does **not prescribe timelines** for duties of Governors, Speakers, or the President.
- Example: **Speakers** have quasi-judicial powers under the Tenth Schedule to decide **defection cases**, but no deadline exists.
- This leads to a major anomaly: a member's entire **five-year term** may end without their defection case being decided.
- Such delays have recently undermined the **anti-defection law** in several States.
- Similarly, **Governors withholding Bills indefinitely** creates legislative deadlock, effectively blocking laws passed by elected Assemblies.
- **Only constitutional courts have been granted the power** to strike down legislative and executive actions if they are found to be ultra vires.

## 3. Court's Reasoning and Its Limitations

- The judgment held that Article 200 does **not envisage timelines**, so courts should not impose them.
- The Court failed to apply the doctrine of **constitutional morality**, which past landmark cases (such as **Sabarimala** and **LGBTQIA+ rights**) used to interpret the Constitution in tune with evolving values.
- The Constitution's silence should have been read in a way that **protects its foundational ideals**.

## 4. Ambedkar's Warning, Constitutional Morality, and Future Implications

- Dr. **B.R. Ambedkar** stressed the need for **constitutional morality**, warning that the Constitution can be **perverted** if the administration manipulates its gaps.
- Practices such as Speakers delaying defection rulings and Governors withholding Bills are direct examples of this **constitutional perversion**.
- Ambedkar trusted future courts to uphold principles rather than allow procedural gaps to undermine democracy.
- By refusing to develop or mandate **reasonable timelines**, the Court risks enabling outcomes that undermine the **founding ideals of the Constitution**.

# Is India's 8.2% growth rate sustainable?

**Prelims:** General Studies Paper - 1
Current events of national and international importance

**Mains:** General Studies - 3
Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

## 1.Context

- **Latest GDP data shows India's economy is operating at a much higher output level than last year**, signalling strong growth momentum.
- **Quarterly GDP is projected at ₹48.63 lakh crore,** reflecting a significant rise in overall economic activity.

## 2. India's Growth Trajectory: Core Indicators

- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 8.2% shows sustained momentum,** driven by strong manufacturing and services.
- **Rising Gross Value Added (GVA) reflects genuine value addition across agriculture,** industry, and services.
- **Low inflation, 8.8% nominal GDP growth, and higher Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE)** indicate strong household demand.
- **Banks show robust credit growth and fiscal consolidation is supported by strong Goods and Services Tax (GST)** and direct tax collections.
- **Stable external sector with low Current Account Deficit (CAD) and strong forex reserves positions** India well amid global slowdown.

## 3. IMF's Grade C and India's Data Gaps

- The **IMF's Grade C rating flags** weaknesses in India's national income statistics:
  - **outdated base year,**
  - **reliance on wholesale price indices,**
  - **single deflation,**
  - **weak expenditure data,**
  - **no seasonal adjustment**
  - **missing State–local data.**
- **This exposes a disconnect between India's 8.2% GDP growth and the credibility of its statistical framework,** as also noted in the RBI's Annual Report.
- **Sectoral growth is uneven, with mining (0.04%) and electricity (4.4%)** dragged down by unusual weather patterns.
- **The strong quarter masks underlying imbalance recovery is not broad-based** across core sectors.
- **India's output structure (services-led) does not match its employment structure, with too many workers in low-productivity** agriculture and services.

## 4. Underlying Weaknesses in India's Economic Framework

- India's **exports face pressure from global protectionism, tariff uncertainty, and geopolitical tensions**, exposing a weak goods-export base.
- **Rupee stability masks underlying stress from a strong U.S. dollar** and volatile foreign capital flows.
- **The IMF's Grade C highlights structural gaps:** low productivity, weak State-level capacity, and an export profile mismatched with global demand.
- **Key sectors like agriculture (3.5%), utilities (4.4%), and mining (near zero) show limited value creation**, revealing shallow long-term economic strength.

## 5. Way Forward

- Update and **improve statistical systems for accurate GDP measurement.**
- **Boost productivity and diversify exports** to strengthen core sectors.
- **Enhance governance and institutional capacity** at State and national levels

# Satellites, science, and the new fight for spectrum in space

**Prelims:** General Studies Paper - 1
Current events of national and international importance

**Mains:** General Studies - 3
Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.

## 1.What is the Issue?

- Companies are racing to deploy megaconstellations for global Internet and orbital claims.
- **Electromagnetic spectrum, allocated by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), is essential for satellite communication,** with high-demand bands like Ku-band (12–18 GHz), Ka-band (26–40 GHz), and L-band (1–2 GHz).
- Satellites must coordinate spectrum and orbital slots to prevent interference.

## 2. Rise of Satellite Megaconstellations

- The megaconstellation boom involves massive satellite deployments by companies like SpaceX, OneWeb, Amazon, and China's GuoWang.
- The **market is set to grow rapidly from $4.27 billion in 2024 to $27.31 billion by 2032 driven by high-speed Internet demand** and strategic space ambitions.

## 3. Global Satellite Management by ITU

- The **International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a UN agency with 194 members,**coordinates global satellite spectrum and orbital slots.
- Its **first-come, first-served system favours well-capitalized spacefaring nations, giving them an advantage in filing and coordinating** satellite applications.
- **Resolution 8 of the 2023 World Radiocommunication Conference mandates operators to notify deviations between planned and actual orbital deployments and sets phased deployment timelines** for megaconstellations (10% in 2 years, 50% in 5 years, full in 7 years).
- **Traditional ITU mechanisms struggle with thousands of annual launches,** making satellite coordination a top priority.

## 4. Challenges

- **High cost of access:** User terminals like Starlink's (~$600) and subscription fees make satellite Internet unaffordable for rural populations.
- **Investment gap:** Closing the global digital divide by 2030 requires $2.6–2.8 trillion, highlighting the scale of funding challenges.
- **Limited reach vs affordability:** Even with satellites covering remote regions, connectivity may remain premium without subsidies or universal service mandates.
- **Regulatory challenges:** Spectrum allocation and coordination must balance rapid deployment with affordability; mismanagement risks favouring urban and wealthy users over marginalised populations.

## 4. Way Forward for Sustainable Space Use

- **Strengthen compliance with ITU-R 74** by ensuring all satellites are deorbited within 25 years.
- **Develop binding international standards for spectrum allocation and orbital usage** to prevent congestion.
- **Balance commercial and scientific interests while promoting equitable access** to orbital resources.
- **Enable emerging space nations like India to actively shape governance frameworks** rather than follow rules set by others.

## KEYWORDS

**Diwali / Deepavali**

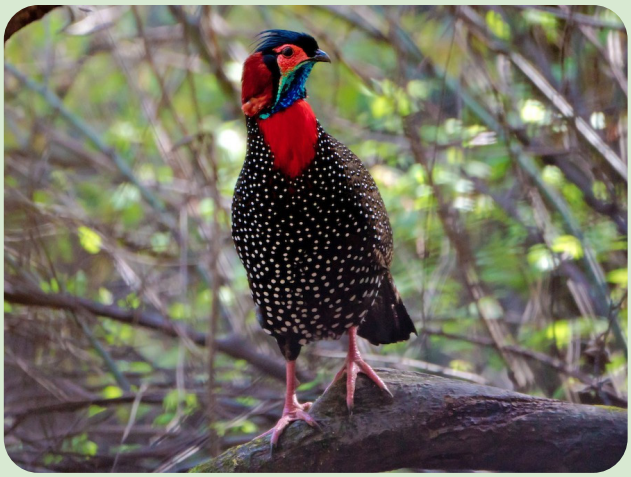
- **Deepavali, or Diwali, symbolises the victory of light over darkness and good over evil and is celebrated with lamps (diyas),** prayers, sweets, fireworks, and family gatherings.
- **In North India, it marks Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya and includes Lakshmi Puja**, lighting diyas, fireworks, sweets, traditional games, and is celebrated as a five-day festival.
- **In South India, it commemorates Lord Krishna's victory over Narakasura, with oil baths, early morning fireworks, kolam**

**(rangoli)** decorations, and preparation of traditional meals.

- The **festival is widely observed across India, with regional variations in rituals, customs**, and foods reflecting local cultural traditions.
- Recently, **Deepavali was inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list to recognise its role in fostering cultural unity,** spiritual renewal, and the preservation of traditional practices.
- As of now, India has 16 elements inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list, including Deepavali.

## Species In News

### Western Tragopan



- The **Western Tragopan, also known as the Western Horned Tragopan or locally 'jujurana', is the state bird of Himachal Pradesh** and one of the rarest pheasants.
- It is **endemic to the northwest Himalaya, ranging from Hazara in Pakistan through Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh** to western Garhwal, with the largest population in **Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP).**
- The bird prefers dense forest habitats with ringal (dwarf) bamboo.
- Its diet consists of leaves, shoots, seeds, insects, and other invertebrates.
- The **species is threatened by habitat loss, hunting, and human disturbances and is classified as Vulnerable by the IUCN.**