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The future of India's nuclear power

The new SHANTI law adopted, where is India's civil nuclear power headed?

SUDHEER PAL SINGH
New Delhi, 28 December

With the new nuclear energy law, Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI), finally coming into force, India has taken the first step to join the modern age of nuclear power generation and commerce. In this, it will be helped by provisions that seek to strike a balance between a stable and predictable investment environment and a strong regulatory regime cementing safety and security of critical infrastructure and their operations.

That basic framework in place, what would the country's nuclear power sector look like in the years to come? How soon before nuclear technology starts playing the hoped-for decisive role in boosting nuclear power generation capacity from a meagre 8.7 Gigawatts (GW) at present to 100 GW by 2047?

Experts say the enactment of the SHANTI law is a landmark development for nuclear energy in India. It gives the country a single harmonised law for nuclear power in place of the Atomic Energy Act, 1962, and Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (CLNDA), 2010.

Opening up

This essentially means nuclear power will now be open to participants beyond the central government and its entities through the introduction of a transparent licensing framework, supported by an independent regulatory architecture to enable efficient governance and competitive determination of tariffs.

"Involving the private sector in nuclear power generation will be instrumental in achieving the goal of 100 GW installed nuclear capacity by 2047 as envisaged under the Nuclear Energy Mission for Viksit Bharat, while also strengthening India's transition away from fossil fuels. The new law will address the issue of suppliers' exposure to civil liabilities introduced under CLNDA, 2010, and align India's civil nuclear liability regime more closely with international standards. This move will alleviate the concerns of global technology providers and private investors, paving the way for leveraging their capabilities and intellectual property for future projects in India," said Anujesh Dwivedi, partner at accounting and consultancy firm Deloitte.

Another significant and progressive aspect of this reform is the opening up of research, development, design, and innovation in nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, including advanced technologies such as small modular reactors, which can be undertaken without the requirement of any licence, while enabling the creation of intellectual property.

"Taken together, these reforms will have an enduring impact on the country's ability to achieve its 2070 Net Zero ambition," Dwivedi told Business Standard.

The law also removes ambiguities that existed in the past laws regarding potential multifarious jurisdiction over the claims and liability regime.

This has been done by giving statutory recognition to the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), with nuclear damage claims adjudication vested with the

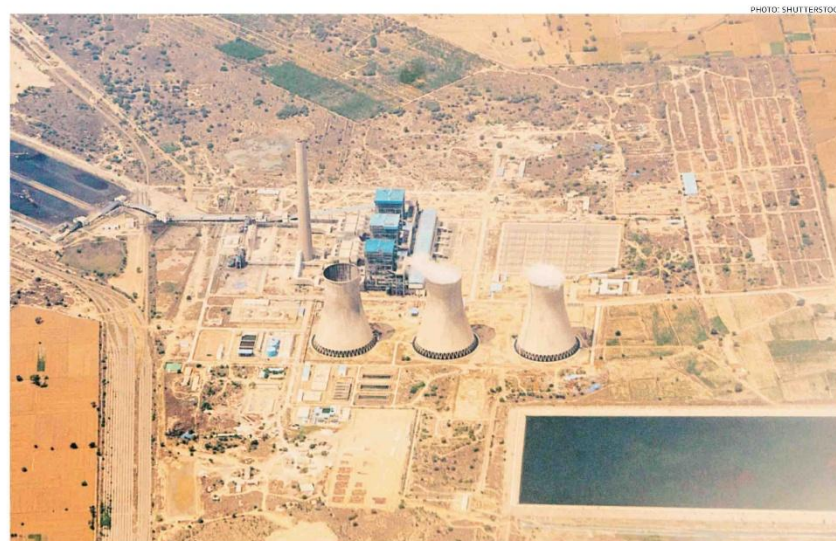


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

Claims Commissioner and the Nuclear Damages Claims Commission, whose appeals shall lie before the Appellate Tribunal for Electricity. It excludes jurisdiction of civil courts over such matters and gives an overriding effect to the Act over all other laws and instruments.

"Interestingly, the ambit of the new legislation extends beyond power generation to include the application of nuclear technology in healthcare, food, water and agriculture, with the objective of providing a clearer and more predictable regulatory environment. The law permits foreign direct investment of up to 49 per cent in specified nuclear activities under the automatic route, thereby unshackling the public sector monopoly over this domain," said Amit Kapur, partner at law firm J Sagar Associates (JSA).

In order to achieve India's target of 100 GW of nuclear power capacity by 2047, the new law allows eligible private companies and incorporated joint ventures to apply for licences to construct, own, operate and decommission nuclear power plants and reactors. Experts point out that at the same time, it preserves sovereign control over strategic and safety-sensitive activities, including uranium enrichment, spent fuel management, heavy water production, radioactive substances and radiation-generating equipment.

Who can participate?

The law governing entry into the nuclear power sector undergoes a shift.

Under the existing laws, nuclear

power generation was effectively restricted to the Union government and government-controlled entities. "In contrast, Clause 3 of the SHANTI Bill introduces a comprehensive licensing regime for nuclear facilities and activities," Kapur said.

The new legislation permits a wide category of persons including government departments and institutions, government companies, any other company, joint ventures, and any other person specifically permitted by the Union government by notification, to apply for licences to build, own, operate or decommission nuclear power plants or reactors.

They can also undertake related activities such as fabrication of nuclear fuel, transportation and storage of nuclear fuel or spent fuel, and the import and export of nuclear fuel or spent fuel, prescribed equipment, and nuclear-related technology or software. Where licensed activities involve potential radiation exposure, a separate safety authorisation is also required.

However, JSA's Kapur pointed to an important exclusion: "Private companies incorporated outside India are not permitted to operate under the SHANTI Bill. Clause 3(b) of the SHANTI Bill defines 'company' by reference to Section 2(20) of the Companies Act, 2013, and expressly excludes companies incorporated outside India. It would appear that foreign investors will have to route their investments through a company incorporated under Indian laws," he said.

Significantly, the new law also

ensures sovereign control over critical nuclear materials. Clause 3 draws a clear line around strategic nuclear functions, reserving certain activities exclusively for the government or its wholly-owned entities. These include uranium enrichment or isotopic separation, spent fuel management including reprocessing and waste handling, and the production and upgrading of heavy water. However, it permits licensed private entities to engage in the fabrication of nuclear fuel, including conversion, refining and enrichment of uranium-235, but only up to a threshold value notified by the government.

Clause 5 retains sovereign ownership and control over uranium and thorium at the upstream stage. It mandates that exploration, mining and decommissioning of mines containing uranium or thorium may be carried out only by the government or its controlled entities, and that all uranium and thorium mined or extracted vest in the government and cannot be sold, transferred or disposed of without prior approval.

"Read together, Clauses 3 and 5 reflect a calibrated allocation of rights and responsibilities under the SHANTI Act, designed to facilitate participation while maintaining robust oversight and safeguards," Kapur said.

Liability

Another essential change introduced by the new legislation is regarding the liability of the operator and the supplier.

Previously the CLND Act 2010 set out

a two-tier liability framework. Firstly, it capped the maximum liability for each nuclear incident at the rupee equivalent of 300 million Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), with the government empowered to take additional measures where the compensation payable exceeds this amount. Secondly, it fixed operator-specific liability limits in the statute, based on broad categories of installations.

"Even though Clause 13 of the SHANTI Bill retains the same overall incident cap of 300 million SDRs, it restructures the manner in which the operator liability limits are determined. The Second Schedule of the SHANTI Bill sets out differentiated operator liability amounts linked to the thermal capacity of nuclear installations. This approach enables a closer alignment between operator liability exposure and the scale and risk profile of the installation," Kapur said.

The law states that the operator's liability in the case of an incident is limited to ₹3,000 crore for reactors with thermal power above 3,600 Megawatt; ₹1,500 crore for reactors with thermal power of 1,500-3,600 Mw; ₹750 crore for reactors with thermal power of 750 Mw-1,500 Mw; ₹300 crore for reactors with thermal power of 150 Mw-750 Mw; and ₹100 crore for reactors having thermal power up to 150 Mw, fuel cycle facilities other than spent fuel reprocessing plants and transportation of nuclear materials.

On the key issue of supplier's liability,

Nuclear laws

- Atomic Energy Act 1962/CLND 2010
- SHANTI Act 2025

Participants

- Only the central government can produce, develop, use and dispose of atomic energy
- Any central govt department, public sector company, any other company, or a joint venture among any of these, or any other person permitted can apply for licence to build, own and operate nuclear plants; undertake uranium enrichment; transport and store nuclear fuel; and import and export equipment and technology

Liability

- Any compensation liable to be paid by an operator for nuclear damage shall not have the effect of reducing the amount of liability in respect of any other claim for damage under any other law
- Provision scrapped

Nuclear incident

- The operator shall have a right of recourse where (a) such right is expressly provided for in a contract in writing; (b) the nuclear incident has resulted as a consequence of an act of supplier or his employee, which includes supply of equipment or material with defects or sub-standard services; (c) the nuclear incident has resulted from the act of commission or omission of an individual done with the intent to cause nuclear damage
- The operator shall have a right of recourse where (a) such right is expressly provided for in a contract in writing; or (b) the nuclear incident has occurred as a result of commission or omission of an individual with an intention to cause nuclear damage

ity, the new law addresses concerns relating to ambiguity by restricting the operator's right of recourse to two limited circumstances — in cases where it is expressly provided for in a written contract, and where the nuclear incident results from an individual's intentional act to cause damage.

"In practical terms, this shifts supplier liability back into the contractual domain, where risk is typically managed through negotiated provisions such as liquidated damages clause under which liability for defects or delay is capped at a specified percentage of the contract value, as also nuclear liability insurance. By aligning statutory recourse with contractual risk allocation, SHANTI brings greater predictability to supplier exposure and aligns India's nuclear liability framework with international best practice," JSA's Kapur said.

Clearly, India's new nuclear law definitely opens a new era for India in the context of providing the essential legal and regulatory framework for the development of nuclear power capacity.

However, the success of these reform measures will lie in the timely commissioning of projects — nuclear plants typically take more than 12 years for commissioning as against 3-4 years for coal-based projects and around 2 years for solar power plants.

Safety is another factor future generations will use to judge this transformation.

Expect our state's share in tax devolution to rise to 20%: UP finance minister

Q&A Uttar Pradesh has maintained a steady track record in managing its finances. Over the past eight years, the state has largely adhered to fiscal consolidation, despite having the country's largest population. In an interview with Virendra Singh Rawat and Sanjeeb Mukherjee in Lucknow, the state's Finance Minister **Suresh Khanna** outlined the measures taken to ensure a revenue surplus and control unnecessary expenditure. Edited excerpts:

How have you kept the finances of such a large state under control?

■ Uttar Pradesh has taken several steps to maintain fiscal discipline, including strict adherence to the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act and cutting unnecessary expenditures. We also ensure that operational expenses are met from revenue receipts, avoiding borrowings for day-to-day expenses. These measures have consistently resulted in a revenue surplus, except in the Covid-affected year of 2020-21. This surplus has helped us manage our fiscal deficit within the limits set by the FRBM Act.

GST collection for UP in the first half of FY26 had been lower than in the corresponding period of FY25. What explains this?

■ GST collection depends on the consumption of goods and services. Sometimes consumption is higher than the tax collected. Also, when consumption is low, we receive less tax. This is tempo-

rary. The most important objective of tax policy is to raise revenue by minimising tax rates. Lower taxes stimulate demand, which strengthens the economic condition. While reduced GST rates may temporarily affect revenue, higher demand for goods and services should offset this in the long run.

UP's fiscal deficit in FY26 is projected at 3 per cent of gross state domestic product (GSDP), down from 3.4 per cent in FY25. Yet it remains higher than many states. Will capital expenditure be curtailed to meet fiscal targets?

■ The FY25 fiscal deficit was estimated at 3.46 per cent of GSDP, within the FRBM limit for 2024-25 (3 per cent plus 0.5 per cent additional loan limit for energy-sector performance). Preliminary accounts show we remain well within the FRBM limit. For FY26, the fiscal deficit is estimated at 2.97 per cent of GSDP, again within the statutory limit. As far as capex is concerned,



“WE HAVE NOT COMPRESSED OR DISSUADED EXPENDITURE. INSTEAD, WE HAVE SET OUR PRIORITIES AND AVOIDED UNNECESSARY EXPENDITURE. THE QUALITY OF EXPENDITURE HAS IMPROVED, WITH CAPEX EXCEEDING ₹1 TRILLION. REVENUE SURPLUSES HAVE BEEN PLOUGHED BACK INTO CAPEX”

Suresh Khanna, UP finance minister

It has increased from ₹154,747 crore in 2024-25 to ₹165,243 crore in 2025-26.

Several Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-ruled states have launched direct benefit transfer (DBT) schemes for women, such as Ladli Behna Yojna in Madhya Pradesh and Ladki Bahin in Maharashtra. Does UP have plans for a similar programme?

■ The schemes mentioned are unconditional cash transfers. In UP, we already run women-centric schemes like Kanya Sumangala, which provides

₹25,000 to a girl child in stages, from birth to graduation.

UP has sharply compressed expenditure. How has this been achieved?

■ We have not compressed or dissuaded expenditure. Instead, we have set our priorities and avoided unnecessary expenditure. Social sector expenditure remains the highest among all sectors, and development spending exceeds 60 per cent. The quality of expenditure has improved, with capex exceeding ₹1 trillion. Revenue surpluses

have been ploughed back into capex. This has enabled the construction of a number of expressways and airports, including Jewar, the largest airport in Asia which is set to open in December 2025. Expressways have provided better connectivity to various important tourist places of the state. We are also developing airstrips and heliports to improve regional connectivity. Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, we have made about 77,000 km of roads.

UP's tax-to-GSDP ratio for FY26 is an estimated 9.6 per cent, higher than the national average of 6.8 per cent. How has the state achieved this?

■ We have improved our own tax revenue (OTR) by minimising revenue leakages and implementing policies that facilitate ease of doing business.

The Centre lowered GST on several items in September. What will be UP's revenue loss, and will higher consumption offset it?

■ UP is a large consumer state. Lower GST rates have boosted demand. In October 2025, GST collections reached ₹6,830.96 crore, surpassing October 2024's ₹6,799.27 crore.

UP's capital expenditure target for

FY26 is over ₹1.6 trillion. Will this target be met despite revenue losses?

■ Our focus on capex continues. With a revenue surplus, we expect to meet the FY26 target.

The Eighth Central Pay Commission's recommendations will create additional fiscal pressure on central finances. Will UP face similar strain in revising wages for state employees accordingly?

■ Let the recommendations come. We will study and assess the impact on our resources before deciding on a strategy.

Non-tax revenue currently forms a small part of the state's receipts. Is there scope to increase it and reduce dependence on tax revenue?

■ UP is not mineral-rich, so non-tax revenue is low. However, we are exploring ways to boost it in the coming years.

What are your expectations from the 16th Finance Commission?

■ Our fiscal discipline should be taken into consideration while devising the tax devolution formula. The 15th Finance Commission reduced UP's share in central taxes from 19 per cent to 17.94 per cent. We hope our share will increase to 20 per cent.

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Wind's strong return

Revival faces conservation and regulatory constraints

Wind energy in India this year achieved a landmark recovery. According to the latest BloombergNEF (BNEF) report, India is expected to add an estimated 6.2 gigawatts (Gw) of wind capacity this year, the highest annual addition from the previous record of 4.2 Gw set in 2017, with 5.8 Gw of new capacity already added through November. This has helped India rise to third position, after China and the United States (US), in wind capacity addition, ahead of countries such as Brazil and Germany. Another factor behind this is the spillover of projects that were originally expected to be commissioned last year but were held back due to the lack of grid connectivity. Grid access has historically been a bottleneck for developers of renewable energy because transmission infrastructure typically takes far longer to plan and build than a solar or wind project itself. This bottleneck began to ease towards the end of last year, when key projects in grid expansion in wind-rich states such as Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Karnataka were commissioned, with more capacity added early this year.

Wind's rebound is part of broader acceleration in renewable energy. According to the data from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), India added a combined 21.9 Gw of solar and wind capacity in the first half of this year, a 56 per cent increase over the same period last year. Solar installations increased by 51.6 per cent year-on-year, while wind capacity grew by a sharper 82 per cent. India's renewable capacity now stands at around 234 Gw (including 54 Gw of wind power), with non-fossil sources accounting for over half the installed power capacity, reinforcing the country's clean-energy transition.

One of the ongoing issues is the slow signing of power-purchase agreements (PPAs). Many states struggle to finalise long-term contracts with developers, creating uncertainty around offtake and revenue streams. Alongside this, land acquisition and project clearances remain difficult in many regions, often leading to execution delays and cost overruns. While such issues affect most renewable-energy projects, they tend to be more acute for wind energy, which requires large, contiguous land parcels and multiple statutory approvals. Beyond sectoral constraints, the wind industry is adjusting to recent directives of the Supreme Court to protect the critically endangered Great Indian Bustard (GIB). In a key judgment this month, the court held that conserving GIB habitat was "non-negotiable" and redrew priority zones in Rajasthan and Gujarat, where new wind turbines and major transmission lines are barred and expanding existing projects is restricted. The court also identified "no-go" areas where high-risk overhead lines are prohibited to prevent bird collisions. While these measures bring regulatory clarity, they add to operational complexities and costs.

To sustain momentum and achieve its long-term goals of clean-energy transition, including ambitious targets of roughly 100 Gw of wind capacity by 2030, India must address these challenges urgently. Accelerating transmission upgrades, streamlining clearances, expanding battery storage and hybrid renewable auctions, and ensuring bankable long-term offtake agreements will be critical. Balancing environmental conservation with energy expansion will also require clear, consistent regulatory frameworks that give developers certainty while protecting vital ecosystems.

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Claude Arpi



Planet in trouble: Climate risks are ignored amid push for 'development'

On January 7, 2025, an earthquake measuring 7.1 on the Richter scale struck Tingri County, in Shigatse prefecture of Tibet. Reports said between 126 and 400 people lost their lives and 338 were injured. It was also felt in Nepal, where 13 people died.

On December 8, Japan's Meteorological Agency announced that a powerful 7.5-magnitude earthquake shook northeastern Japan, injuring 20 people and triggering tsunami warnings. It first warned a 10-foot tsunami could hit Japan's coast; but later downgraded its warnings.

A few days later, *India Today* asked: "Should India brace for the Great Himalayan Earthquake?" This is "a hypothetical, massive seismic event that could occur along the Main Himalayan Thrust, a major fault line running beneath the Himalayas. It's a fact that the Indian tectonic plate is slowly, relentlessly pushing under the Eurasian plate, building up immense stress over centuries. The article cited the 1934 Bihar-Nepal earthquake (8.0) and the 2015 Nepal earthquake (7.8), saying: "When this stress is finally released, it could trigger a quake of magnitude 9.0 or higher — which could devastate large parts of northern India, Nepal and neighbouring regions." Dr Om Prakash Mishra, director of National Centre for Seismology, says this "aseismic creep" stress release via minor tremors may act as a natural safety valve.

A study published in *Down to Earth* mentioned glacial quakes caused by massive icebergs capsizing,

as they break off from main glaciers. It identifies over 560 such seismic events in Antarctica between 2010 and 2023, which could send sea levels rising rapidly, as these icequakes, not following seasonal temperature patterns, trigger huge chunks of ice to fall from glaciers into the sea. When these icebergs capsize, it generates "strong mechanical ground vibrations, or seismic waves".

The world is undoubtedly in turmoil today: Some events are "natural", but most are man-made (like the pollution in Delhi). In 2023, China's President Xi Jinping told 2,300 delegates at Beijing's Great Hall of the People: "We must be prepared for worst-case scenarios, and be ready to withstand high winds, choppy waters and even dangerous storms." Though he was speaking of politics, it's true for the environment as well. Besides the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, the environment has been the first big planetary casualty. There are hundreds of examples: Greenland's ice sheet is melting faster and faster. The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says the ice sheet continued to lose mass despite above-average winter snow accumulation between August 2022 and September 2023, it lost roughly 350 trillion pounds of mass. Let's not forget the Greenland ice sheet melting is the second largest contributor to sea-level rise. A report by the International Cryosphere Climate Initiative, a network of senior policy experts working with governments, agrees that mountainous regions like the Himalayas are facing the most

severe effects from the climate change. Beyond a two-degree Celsius rise, Earth will experience "catastrophic loss" of mountain glaciers and snow, sea ice and permafrost.

It's not that world leaders haven't been warned with hard facts and scientific reports. Every year, Northern Sikkim experiences severe Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF); in 2023, South Lhonak Lake, located at an altitude of 17,000 feet, suffered a rupture because of continuous rainfall. Consequently, water gushed into the downstream regions, causing flooding in the Teesta River. It caused the breach of Chungthang hydro-dam on the Teesta in northern Sikkim, leading to many casualties.

A scientific report by *Nature* in January 2023 explained: "Since 1990, globally, the number and size of glacial lakes have grown rapidly along with downstream population, while socio-economic vulnerability has decreased."

American TV's Weather Channel argues that India faces the gravest challenge, posing climate change-induced health vulnerability: "Prolonged summers, unpredictable rains, floods, droughts and rising sea levels are the harsh realities of climate change. These factors increase the frequency and severity of illnesses, pushing people into poverty and forcing migration." Prof. Shakkil Ahmad Ramshoo, eminent earth scientist and vice-chancellor of the Islamic University of Science and Technology, in J&K's Awantipora, noted: "The Kolahot Glacier (in Kash-

mir) has been retreating rapidly over the past several decades." Scientific observations show it has lost nearly 30 per cent of its area between 1992 and 2025, with the highest recession in the last decade. This is without even mentioning the high atmospheric pollution in the big cities, which will lead to millions of casualties. For this too, politicians are quick to shift the blame on the neighbouring states or individuals.

Year 2026 will probably see more natural disasters, calamities, tragedies. Remember two years ago, when the Silkyara Bend-Barkot tunnel in Uttarakashi district of Uttarakhand caved in, simply because proper environmental studies had not been conducted. This will continue as long as we worship only one god — development — and forget to bow to another goddess — Mother Nature. If the former continues to be privileged, there will be a backlash by the latter, with dire consequences for the human race.

A small light at the end of the tunnel: a few months ago, a group of senior citizens, including Dr. Murlu Mahabhar Joshi and Dr. Karan Singh, wrote to then Chief Justice of India D.R. Gavai seeking a review of the 2021 Supreme Court order allowing the 825-km Char Dham road expansion project in Uttarakhand. But will their voices be heard? Probably not.

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CERC for fee cut to ease power prices

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, December 28

POWER REGULATOR CENTRAL Electricity Regulatory Commission is considering rationalising transaction fees on power trading exchanges, which aims to potentially lower electricity prices as the power sector gears up for market coupling. The development came as the power regulator moves ahead with market coupling.

The move could lead to a reduction in the overall cost of power for buyers over a period of time.

Under the mechanism, buy and sell bids across all power exchanges will be aggregated to discover a single market-clearing price, replacing the current system of multiple prices across platforms.

Explainer

● Restructuring India's nuclear energy framework

THE SUSTAINABLE HARNESSING and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act, 2025, represents a structural overhaul of India's nuclear legal framework, pivoting from state monopoly to liberalisation. The Act explicitly permits non-government companies and joint ventures to build and operate nuclear reactors under a licensing regime, ending decades of exclusivity for state enterprises. Crucially, it has a tiered regulatory approach: high-risk activities require a "License" while lower-risk applications like medical and industrial radiation operate under a "safety authorisation" reducing the compliance burden. To foster innovation, Section 9 exempts research, design, and development activities from licensing requirements, provided they are for peaceful purposes and do not involve sensitive fuel-cycle activities reserved for the State. The Act reverses the historical ban on nuclear patents, amending the Patents Act, 1970 to allow intellectual property rights for inventions in peaceful nuclear applications, thereby incentivising private R&D investment.

SHANTI
ACT



Pressing the pedal on India's nuclear energy ambitions

The SHANTI Act's primary goal is to modernise India's nuclear energy framework. It shifts the sector from a government monopoly to a collaborative model where private players can build and operate reactors, while the government retains control over sensitive fuel cycle activities, explains *Somesh Kumar*

● Key stakeholders & their roles in this new ecosystem

THE ACT REDEFINES responsibilities to create a balanced, collaborative ecosystem. The government shifts from a monolithic operator to a strategic guardian, retaining exclusive control over "sensitive" areas such as uranium enrichment, spent fuel reprocessing, and heavy water production to ensure non-proliferation. Private

operators (licensees) assume the role of execution and operation; they must demonstrate financial and technical capability for the facility's entire lifecycle, including decommissioning and waste management. The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) is elevated to a statutory body with independent powers

to frame safety codes, conduct inspections and impose penalties, ensuring rigorous oversight of new private entrants. The research community is now a driver of innovation, with specific provisions allowing them to access small quantities of nuclear material for experimental purposes without onerous licensing.

THE ACT
EXPLICITLY AMENDS
THE PATENTS
ACT TO ALLOW
NUCLEAR PATENTS,
UNLOCKING
COMMERCIAL VALUE
FOR INNOVATORS

₹3,000 cr

CAP ON OPERATOR
LIABILITY, WITH THE
CENTRAL GOVT LIABLE
FOR DAMAGES
BEYOND THIS

● Aligned to energy transition goals

THE ACT IS a legislative catalyst for India's climate goals, specifically 100 GW of nuclear power by 2047 and Net Zero by 2070. By opening the door to private capital, it aims to bridge the funding gap. The tiered liability structure is significant for the energy transition; the reduced liability cap of ₹300 crore for reactors between 150 MW and 750 MW makes Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) financially viable for industrial captive power and hydrogen production. This supports the decarbonisation of hard-to-abate sectors such as steel and cement. The Act emphasises "non-power uses" in healthcare and agriculture, broadening the definition of nuclear energy's contribution to national development beyond just electricity grid supply.

● Clean break from the old laws

THE ACT REPEALS and replaces the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010. A critical differentiator is intellectual property: where the 1962 Act (read with the Patents Act) prohibited nuclear patents, the new Act explicitly amends the Patents Act to allow them, unlocking commercial value for innovators. The regulatory landscape also evolves significantly; previously, the AERB was a subordinate office; now, it is a statutory authority with the power to recruit its own staff and manage its own budget. This separation of "regulation" from "promotion" aligns India with global best practices, addressing a long-standing critique of the old regime.

● Liability management

THE ACT UPHOLDS the principle of strict liability, where the operator is solely liable for damages, regardless of fault. Unlike the 2010 Act which created ambiguity for suppliers, the SHANTI Act limits the operator's "right of recourse" (the ability to sue suppliers) to cases where it is expressly contractually agreed or where intent to cause damage is proven. Financial risk is structured via tiered caps: ₹3,000 crore for large reactors (>3,600 MW) down to ₹100 crore for small facilities, with the central government liable to cover claims above these limits. To expedite justice, the Act bars civil courts from jurisdiction and establishes specialised Claims Commissioners and a Nuclear Damage Claims Commission to adjudicate disputes and award compensation.

● Tech & material support essential

SMRs AND ADVANCED manufacturing are the primary technological drivers for scaling nuclear energy, alongside critical innovations in safety, fuel and materials. Nuclear-grade supply chain, particularly for high-temperature resistant corrosion-free materials, is vital. Russia, France, USA, Japan, South Korea, Canada, Kazakhstan, Australia could be key partners in realising India's ambitions. To advance fuel security via thorium, domestic policies must accelerate the Three-Stage Nuclear Programme, specifically the deployment of the Advanced Heavy Water Reactor (AHWR).

The writer is partner and leader, Power & Utilities, EY India

Skilled hands from India fill Russia's growing labour gap

Devina Sengupta &
Abhishek Law

MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

Russia is the new Gulf for India's blue-collar workforce, as the Eurasian country taps its vast pool of skilled welders, tailors and steel fixers. Companies handling recruiting for overseas jobs noted increased hiring from Russia in the last few years, as the country navigates a grinding war and a shrinking workforce.

Hiring of Indian workers is up 60% in the last four years, recruitment firms specializing in overseas jobs said, adding it is expected to grow after the two long-time partners recently agreed to enhance labour mobility. To be sure, the high growth comes on a low base.

"We used to send 300 welders a year from India for the oil and gas industry between 2018 and 2020-21. Since then, we



Hiring of Indian workers is up 60% in the last four years, recruitment firms said. MINT

send 500 every year, and the demand will increase in the future. Russian companies now need tailors, carpenters, steel fixers, welders, steel reinforcement workers, tin smiths, and insulators in large numbers," said Siddhartha Mallick, co-founder and managing director of Globeskills International Pvt. Ltd, an overseas recruitment company.

Russia's population is ageing

and declining, like in most developed nations. In July, its labour minister said the country will need to add 11 million workers by the end of the decade.

Meanwhile, the US sanctions on Russia over the Ukraine war and the punitive tariffs on India have brought the two countries closer, with New Delhi and Moscow signing a labour mobility agreement. During Russian president Vladimir Putin's India visit on 5 December, Indian foreign secretary Vikram Misra termed the agreement as the "centrepiece" of the understandings reached during the visit. "Indian skilled workers, especially in IT, construction, and engineering, will help meet Russia's labour needs and deepen our bilateral cooperation," he said.

Among the beneficiaries of the bonhomie are manpower firms like Mallick's Globeskills,

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Russia's population is falling, sparking labour demand, [ANI](#)

Skilled hands from India fill Russia's labour gap

FROM PAGE 1

which has a network of agents scouting for candidates with suitable skills. "We are now seeing demand for unskilled workers who can work in the fish processing industry as well," Mallick added.

The hiring frenzy echoes a similar boom during the Gulf boom in the last century, when millions of Indian workers flocked to countries such as Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait.

Recruitment firms said that hiring for these skill sets requires tapping into well-connected networks, where many in a cluster of villages may practise the same trade. Workers moving to Russia earn a minimum of ₹50,000 a month, in comparison to much more meagre payouts back home, multiple recruiters said. In addition, Russian employers also provide food and accommodation for these workers.

Anil Bhandari, senior fellow tracking energy, investment, and connectivity at foreign policy think tank Gateway House, explained why hiring from abroad is easier than making large investments, given current global political dynamics.

"There is availability of skilled and unskilled workers willing to head to Russia. Large firms must weigh the pros and cons before investing, as they may face sanction-related challenges from Western countries. Manpower, on the other hand, is a different issue, and one expects greater ease of travel for those heading to Russia for work," Bhandari said.

Many recruiters, though, are treading a fine line when it comes to hiring for Russia, as they do not want to be on the wrong side of their US clients.

An aviation expert highlighted increased flight traffic to Russia as an indicator of growing movement. "Flight demand between India and Russia has been quite strong—whether due to tourism or the demand for blue-collar workers," said Mark D. Martin, founder and chief executive of aviation consulting firm Martin Consulting. Currently, Aeroflot is the only airline operating direct flights between India and Russia. However, Martin said alternative routes commonly used include Uzbekistan Airways and Aerobizjet Airlines.

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Experts' View



Sailesh Mehta, Chairman & Managing Director
Deepak Fertilisers And Petrochemicals Corporation Limited



**DEEPAK FERTILISERS
AND PETROCHEMICALS
CORPORATION LIMITED**

ammonium nitrate, DFPCL has created a strong domestic backbone for mining inputs. This forward integration into advanced mining solutions supports India's infrastructure, energy and minerals development, positioning Deepak Mining as a critical enabler of the country's growth ambitions and placing it in a uniquely strong competitive position.

- **Industrial Chemicals:** Our specialty product portfolio is evolving toward high-purity solutions for sunrise sectors like semiconductors and high growth segments such as pharmaceuticals; directly aligning with India's advanced manufacturing agenda.

Q1 How will the ₹4,500 Cr capex reshape DFPCL's industry position, and what is the timeline for its full impact?

The ₹4,500 crore investment is now in its final phase. Two landmark projects will redefine industry leadership:

- **Gopalpur TAN Plant** - 87% complete; adds 376 KTPA, taking total TAN capacity to ~1.0 MMTPA. Domestic market share will rise from 40% to 55%, positioning the company as the **third-largest pure-play TAN producer globally**.
- **Dahej Nitric Acid Expansion** - 70% complete; adds 300 KTPA WNA and 150 KTPA CNA, lifting WNA capacity to ~1.2 MMTPA. Market share will jump from 34% to 60%, making the company **Asia's largest Nitric Acid manufacturer**.

Q2 How is the company aligned with India's growth story?

India's structural drivers rising mid income population, urbanization, and infrastructure build-out are shaping demand across agriculture, mining, and industrial sectors.

- **Crop Nutrition:** Specialty fertilisers for high-value crops already contribute 8% of segment revenue, with a target of 20% in three years.
- **Mining Chemicals:** By building a fully integrated, technology-led value chain from LNG to ammonia, nitric acid and onward to technical

Q3 How is the transformation from commodity to specialty shaping the future?

The pivot from commodity supply to technology-enabled, application driven solutions is delivering premium margins and deeper customer engagement. Specialty fertilisers command 20%+ price premium over commodity products. Industrial chemicals now include solar-grade nitric acid and bundled offerings for pharma intermediates, while mining solutions integrate safety and efficiency technologies. This evolution positions the company for **global competitiveness and sustainable financial outcomes**.

For more information on Dun & Bradstreet India's Top 500 Value Creators 2025
Contact: 022 4941 6666 | Email: india@dnb.com

India's Data Centre Capacity Set to Touch 14 GW by 2035: Report

India's data centre capacity stands at 1.5 GW currently, projected to reach 14 GW by 2035 with a 20% CAGR, driven by AI, cloud and 5G demands, said a recent PwC India report titled

Transforming India into a Trusted Global Data Hub: A Future-Ready Tax Policy for Data Centres. The digital economy contributes 11.74% to GDP (₹0.402 trillion in FY23), expected to

hit 20% by FY29. This growth positions India as a global data hub, supported by the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act 2023, and draft Data Centre Policy.

MARKET LANDSCAPE:

- Data centres split into hyperscalers (AI/cloud), co-location (secure space), and edge facilities (low-latency in tier-II cities)
- Over 90% capacity concentrated in Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi-NCR, Bengaluru, Pune, Hyderabad and Kolkata due to power security and enterprise proximity

DIRECT TAX CHALLENGES:

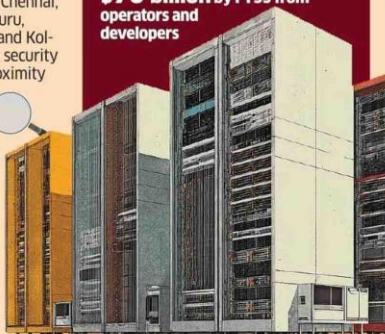
Depreciation ambiguity: Integrated assets (buildings, cooling, servers) face 10-40% rates; need unified rate for tech obsolescence

Carbon credits: Deductibility unclear for net-zero goals in energy-intensive sector

Income characterisation: Cloud services risk royalty classification, triggering higher withholding tax

PE/SEP risks* Foreign entities face profit attribution; low thresholds (₹2 crore revenue/300k users) challenge tracking

Investments could hit **\$70 billion** by FY35 from operators and developers



INDIRECT TAX CHALLENGES:

Issue	Current challenge	Proposed fix
GST on construction	ITC blocked except for plant/machinery; hyperscale facilities qualify as integrated plants	Clarify ITC eligibility; overhaul Section 17(5)
Leasehold rights	Upfront premiums taxed at 18% on private transfers; ITC disputed	Exemptions aligned with land taxing powers; allow ITC on taxable outputs
SEZ compliance	Inspections disrupt high-security ops	Digital monitoring; reduced physical checks



*PE: Permanent Establishment; SEP: Significant Economic Presence

Future recommendations:

Short-term: Finalise policy for tax clarity on PE, depreciation, GST credits

Medium-term: Green incentives, accelerated depreciation for low-PUE designs, data localisation tax holidays

Long-term: Enable data embassies (tax-neutral sovereign zones) and data cities (integrated ecosystems)

SOURCE: PWC INDIA, 'TRANSFORMING INDIA INTO A TRUSTED GLOBAL DATA HUB: A FUTURE-READY TAX POLICY FOR DATA CENTRES'

Publication : The Hans India	Editions : Hyderabad
Date :29 December 2025	Page : 4

PM Surya Ghar Yojana lights up Telangana with solar power: Kishan Reddy

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

UNION Minister Kishan Reddy, in a post shared on X on Sunday, highlighted the impressive progress of the PM Surya Ghar Yojana in Telangana, describing it as a major step toward clean energy and sustainability under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He stated that the initiative is driving a significant shift toward solar power, strengthening the state's

renewable energy footprint and ensuring long-term energy security for families.

According to Kishan Reddy, the scheme has already delivered remarkable results in Telangana as of December 22, 2025. Over Rs 176 crore has been released as subsidies, more than 35,000 households are now powered by solar energy, and the state has achieved over 97 MW of installed solar capacity. Close to 25,000 rooftop solar systems have been installed, marking

a substantial leap in green energy adoption.

The minister emphasised that the PM Surya Ghar Yojana is not just about providing electricity but also about empowering families with free power, reducing household expenses, and contributing to India's broader mission of sustainability and self-reliance. He noted that the scheme plays a crucial role in achieving the country's net-zero emissions target by 2070 and reflects the government's

commitment to building a cleaner and greener future.

Kishan Reddy called the initiative a cornerstone of India's renewable energy strategy and a vital contributor to the vision of Viksit Bharat. He urged citizens to take advantage of the scheme, which offers financial assistance and makes solar energy affordable and accessible for all. "This is about lighting up homes and lighting up hopes for a sustainable tomorrow," he wrote.



Rooftop solar plants commissioned at 148 stations

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Rooftop solar plants have been commissioned at 148 railway stations across South Western Railway (SWR) zone, as part of Indian Railways' push towards renewable energy adoption and its goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

According to officials, the large-scale rollout of solar photovoltaic systems spans stations, service and administrative buildings, workshops, traction and non-traction installations, level crossing gates and water pumping systems across Karnataka and parts of Goa under SWR. Major stations equipped with rooftop solar facilities include Krantiveera Sangolli Rayanna (KSR) Bengaluru Railway Station at Majestic, Hubballi, Mysuru, Dhawad, Belagavi, Hosapete, Gadag and Ballari.

In addition to stations, 38 service buildings, including Rail Soudha, divisional offices, railway hospitals and training institutes, have been fitted with solar installations.

"Key production and maintenance units such as the Hubballi Workshop (1,045 kilo Watt Peak kWp), Mysuru Workshop (530



South Western Railway zone's cumulative installed solar capacity has reached 7,491.6 kWp as of November 2025. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

kWp), Krishnarajapuram Diesel Loco Shed (240 kWp) and Hubballi EMD Shed (640 kWp) have further strengthened the zone's renewable energy footprint. Solar rooftop systems have also been installed at 302 level crossing gates, ensuring uninterrupted and environment-friendly power supply," a senior SWR official said.

The official further said that the SWR zone's cumulative installed solar capacity has reached 7,491.6 kWp as of November 2025, reflecting a steady rise from 6,986 kWp at the end of the previous financial year. "This increase underlines our systematic and sustained approach towards renewable energy adoption. Regular cleaning, preventive maintenance and performance

monitoring have helped improve the capacity utilisation factor and ensure optimum output," the official added.

During the current financial year 2025-26, up to October, SWR generated 4.13 million units of solar power, resulting in savings of approximately ₹2.61 crore. In 2024-25, solar generation stood at 6.86 MU, translating into savings of about ₹4.07 crore. Officials noted that consistent year-on-year growth in solar power generation has contributed significantly to reducing electricity procurement costs.

Beyond rooftop installations, SWR has leveraged open access renewable power procurement, with 36 traction sub-stations operating under such arrangements.

Venezuela's resource curse

Despite having the world's most proven oil resources, the country has a strained economy

DATA POINT

Sambavi Parthasarathy

After announcing a naval blockade and seizing two oil tankers, the Donald Trump administration has now ordered U.S. military forces to focus on enforcing a 'quarantine' of Venezuelan oil for at least the next two months, amping up economic pressure on Caracas. The impact of this imperialist step could worsen the already weak Venezuelan economy. But how did a petrostate with the most proven resources end up with a strained economy in the first place?

Venezuela has the largest proven reserves of crude oil in the world at 303 billion barrels (2023). Yet, it ranks much lower in the production and refining of oil. Most of its resources are extra-heavy crude oil, whose extraction and processing require specialised technology and refineries. However, internal issues and international sanctions have starved it of the capital required for this.

While the state-run oil company Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A. (PDVSA) owns and operates five refineries in Venezuela, it also suffers from years of under investment, mismanagement, and a lack of technical expertise. Specifically, following a failed coup attempt in April 2002 and the subsequent general strike/oil lockout in December 2002-February 2003, the then President, Hugo Chavez, was forced to replace PDVSA's management. Critics say this led to a bureaucratisation of the company.

In 2024, the country produced 9,21,000 barrels of crude oil per day, at least 56% lower than its production in the 1980s. In the 1970s, Venezuela benefited when oil prices soared due to the Yom Kippur War, and its per capita income became the highest in Latin America. It was then a largely unequal country. However, the figure has only dwindled since 2014 following

sanctions and the oil downturn (Chart 2). Venezuela's GDP per capita in recent years has become almost similar to what it was three decades ago. No other country's GDP per capita has slid to this extent in this period.

Consequently, despite being a founding member of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Venezuela has the highest general government gross debt compared to other OPEC members (Chart 3). While others have steered through global oil price crashes, the country continues to reel under economic pressure. This points to the fact that the economic crisis in Venezuela cannot be attributed to global crude factors alone.

U.S. sanctions have played a major role in curbing the petroleum sector in Venezuela. The first Trump administration imposed sanctions in August 2017, prohibiting Caracas from accessing U.S. financial markets. It then imposed more sanctions in 2019, on PDVSA, preventing it from being paid for exports to the U.S. The sanctions also froze PDVSA's U.S. assets and disallowed the supply of diluents. There was some easing in 2023 under the Joe Biden regime, but sanctions were reinstated later, before the naval blockade imposed by the second Trump regime.

The slump can also partly be explained by the country's lack of diversification. While many other OPEC countries have diversified to non-oil exports, Venezuela has failed to do so. As seen in Chart 4, Venezuela has largely continued to rely on its mineral (oil) exports.

Despite Venezuela exporting mostly only oil, the country's share in global exports of oil fell drastically due to these internal and external factors. Chart 5 shows the share of select countries' share in global exports of crude oil over time. Venezuela formed over 4% of the global oil exports in the 1990s, second only to Saudi Arabia's share. However, this dwindled to around 0.35% in 2023.

Unfulfilled potential

The data were sourced from the World Bank, the U.S. Energy Information Administration, OPEC reports and Harvard Atlas Lab



Table 1: Venezuela's rank among crude oil reserves (2023), crude oil production (2024) and refinery throughput (2024). B/D: barrels/day

Rank	Country	Reserves (in billion barrels)
1	Venezuela	303
2	Saudi Arabia	267
3	Iran	209

Rank	Country	Production (1,000 B/D)
1	U.S.	13,208
2	Russia	9,193
3	Saudi Arabia	8,955
..	Venezuela	921

Rank	Country	Refinery throughput (1,000 B/D)
1	U.S.	16,623
2	China	14,250
3	Russia	5,347
..	Venezuela	335

Venezuela has the largest proven reserves of crude oil in the world. Yet it ranks much lower when it comes to production and refining

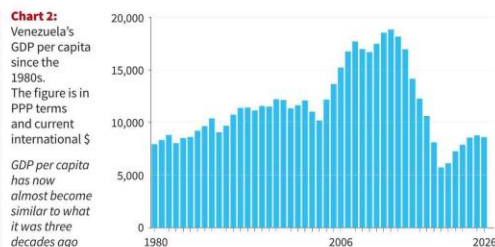


Chart 3: Gross government debt as a share of GDP (in %) for select OPEC countries

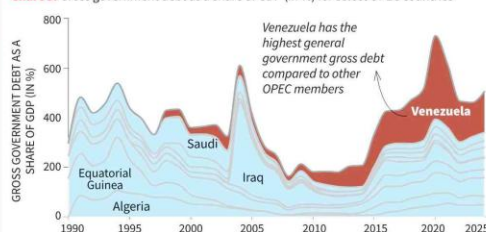


Chart 4: Venezuela's exports over time across different commodities. Figures in \$ billion

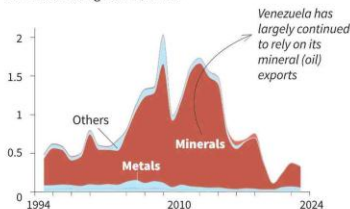
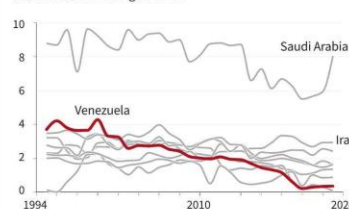


Chart 5: Select OPEC countries' share in global exports of crude oil over time. Figures in %



Publication : The Hindu Business Line

Editions : New Delhi

Date :29 December 2025

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Indo-French green R&D

India and France have selected three joint research and innovation projects under the 'Indo-French call for joint research and



innovation project proposals in green hydrogen innovations for sustainable energy solutions — 2025 edition', officials said.

The deadline for submission of applications was May 6; 37 joint proposals were received. Following a joint evaluation, the two countries decided to fund three projects.

The first, titled 'Low-cost earth-abundant functional materials for solar fuel production' (LEAFS), is led on the Indian side by Dr Pradip Pachfule of SN Bose Centre for Basic Sciences, Kolkata, along with researchers from the Institute of Nanoscience and Technology, Mohali, and SRM University, Amaravati. The French partner is Dr Jerome Canivet of IRCELYON, Claude Bernard University Lyon 1.

The second project, 'Prospect-H2', focuses on innovative molecular and bio-inspired catalysts for electrolyzers and fuel cells. The Indian team includes Dr Arnab Dutta of IIT-Bombay and Prof Abhishek Dey of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Kolkata, working with Dr Vincent Artero of CEA Grenoble, France.

The third selected proposal, 'HIPHYDUCE', addresses high-pressure hydrogen storage and dual-fuel utilisation in heavy-duty internal combustion engines. It is led by Dr Srikant Sekhar Padhee of IIT-Ropar and Dr Atul Dhar of IIT-Mandi, in collaboration with Dr Pierre Brequigny of the University of Orléans, France.

India reaches 50% non-fossil power capacity in '25

RAKESH KUMAR @ New Delhi

THE year 2025 has become an important milestone in India's energy transition, as the country achieved 50% non-fossil installed electricity generation capacity five years ahead of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) target.

As per the latest data, against a target of 500 GW of non-fossil capacity by 2030, India's combined installed and pipeline non-fossil capacity reached near 507 GW in 2025. India's total non-fossil capacity has increased from 81 GW to 263 GW, reflecting a growth of 225% over the years. Since 2014, solar energy has seen the fastest expansion, rising sharply from 2.8 GW to 133 GW, an increase of 4,550%. This growth has been driven by large utility-scale solar projects, rooftop solar installations, and hybrid



Non-fossil power capacity saw 225% growth in 11 yrs

India's total non-fossil capacity has increased from 81 GW to 263 GW, reflecting a growth of 225% over the years. Since 2014, solar energy has seen the fastest expansion, rising sharply from 2.8 GW to 133 GW, an increase of 4,550%.

renewable tenders. Government schemes such as the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, which aims to provide rooftop solar connections to one crore households, have also played a major role in boosting solar capacity.

Wind energy has also grown steadily, with installed capacity increasing from about 21 GW to 54 GW, a rise of 155% since 2014. Biopower capacity has expanded from 8.1 GW to 12 GW, registering a growth of 42%, supported by the use of agricultural

waste and other organic materials for power generation.

India has also emerged as the third-largest contributor to global solar capacity additions between 2022 and 2024, adding around 46 GW of solar power during this period.

Minister for New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi, in a social media post in July 2025 said that as the world looks for solutions to climate change, India is leading by example. He added that achieving 50% non-fossil fuel capacity five years ahead of the 2030 target is a proud moment for the country and credited the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for guiding India's green transformation towards a self-reliant and sustainable future.

Along with capacity growth, India has seen major progress

in renewable energy manufacturing in the year. Domestic manufacturing has helped strengthen supply chains and cut dependence on imports. Solar module manufacturing capacity has rose from 2 GW to 123 GW, a growth of over 6,000%.

Solar cell manufacturing, which was almost non-existent till 2014, has reached 27 GW, while wafer manufacturing capacity has grown to 2.2 GW. India has set up 3.2 GW of fully integrated manufacturing facilities covering the entire solar value chain.

India's renewable energy efforts have received strong global recognition. In 2023, the country became the world's third-largest solar power generator, overtaking Japan, with solar electricity generation of 1,08,494 GWh.



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Online

Headline	ONGC inks MoU with IIM Nagpur to accelerate green energy drive		
Publication	Indian Chemical News	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	28 Dec 2025		

ONGC inks MoU with IIM Nagpur to accelerate green energy drive

<https://www.indianchemicalnews.com/rd/ongc-inks-mou-with-iim-nagpur-to-accelerate-green-energy-drive-28714>

The partnership will focus on key areas including renewable energy integration, energy storage, biofuels, green hydrogen, ESG and sustainability frameworks

By ICN Bureau | December 28, 2025

ONGC Green Limited, the renewable energy arm of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IIM Nagpur to strengthen research, policy development, and leadership capabilities in renewable and future energy domains. The collaboration is aimed at supporting India's clean energy transition through structured academic engagement and industry-led implementation.

The partnership will focus on key areas including renewable energy integration, energy storage, biofuels, green hydrogen, ESG and sustainability frameworks, and carbon and green credit markets. By combining academic rigour with operational experience, the collaboration seeks to enable informed decision-making, innovation, and capacity building essential for a low-carbon and energy-secure India.

The MoU was signed on behalf of IIM Nagpur by its Director, Prof Bhimaraya Metri, and on behalf of ONGC Green Limited by its Chief Operating Officer, Harsh Nupur Joshi.

Senior faculty members of IIM Nagpur Prof. Alok Kumar Singh, Dean Executive Education Programmes and Prof. Nikunj Kumar Jain, Chairperson of the Executive MBA in Energy Management, were present. On behalf of the ONGC, Deepak Kumar, GM (Electrical), was present.

Speaking on the occasion, Joshi said the energy sector is undergoing a rapid transformation. Our aim is to work together to support India's net-zero target by 2070. We intend to take up projects in energy storage, biofuels, and future energy solutions such as green hydrogen, which is going to be a game changer for India, he said.

Dr. Metri said that India's progress in green energy is being closely observed globally. The world will be watching India's initiatives towards sustainable and green energy. IIM Nagpur is proud to be associated with ONGC Green in this important national mission. Through this collaboration, we aim to contribute research, leadership, and policy insights that can shape India's future energy ecosystem, he said.

Aligned with ONGC Green's renewable expansion roadmap and India's long-term NetZero objectives, this initiative will help advance cleaner power, reduce emissions, and skilled green employment, ensuring that India's energy transition is resilient, inclusive, and future-ready.

Headline	Oil Prices Rise On China Demand Hopes, Ukraine War Talks Stall		
Publication	Business World	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

Oil Prices Rise On China Demand Hopes, Ukraine War Talks Stall

<https://www.businessworld.in/article/oil-prices-rise-on-china-demand-hopes-ukraine-war-talks-stall-585127>

Oil prices rose on Monday, supported by expectations of stronger demand from China and lingering geopolitical uncertainty after US-led efforts to end the war in Ukraine failed to produce a breakthrough.

Brent crude climbed above USD 61 a barrel, recovering part of the 2.6 per cent decline recorded on Friday, while US West Texas Intermediate traded close to USD 57.

Sentiment was buoyed by signals of sustained policy support from China, the world's largest crude importer. China's Ministry of Finance said on Saturday that Beijing would broaden its fiscal spending base in 2026, underlining the government's commitment to driving growth at a time when the economy remains under pressure from a prolonged property downturn and external challenges, including trade frictions with the United States.

Geopolitical risks also remained in focus. Although Washington has intensified diplomatic efforts to end the Ukraine conflict, key differences persist. US President Donald Trump said he made a lot of progress in talks on Sunday with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy at the Mar-a-Lago resort, adding that he aimed to hold another meeting with Zelenskiy and European leaders in January.

Despite the rebound, oil prices are still on course for a fifth consecutive monthly decline in December, the longest losing streak in more than two years. Markets have been weighed down by concerns of a global supply glut as output rises from the Opec+ group, which includes Russia, as well as from producers outside the alliance.

Headline	Crude oil rises as China pledges to broaden fiscal spending base in 2026		
Publication	CNBC TV18	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

Crude oil rises as China pledges to broaden fiscal spending base in 2026

<https://www.cnbctv18.com/market/crude-oil-rises-as-china-pledges-to-broaden-fiscal-spending-base-in-2026-19805634.htm>

Brent increased above \$61 a barrel, after declining 2.6% on Friday. Meanwhile, West Texas Intermediate was close to \$57.

Oil prices climbed higher on the prospects of improved demand from China, and also as US-led talks to end the Ukraine war failed to yield a breakthrough.

As on Dec 26, 2025 3:59 PM

Brent increased above \$61 a barrel, after declining 2.6% on Friday. Meanwhile, West Texas Intermediate was close to \$57.

China has pledged to broaden its fiscal spending base in 2026, as per its Ministry of Finance statement on Saturday, signaling government support in a sustained manner to driven growth.

While the US stepped up a push to end the war in Ukraine, sticking points remain, highlighting the difficulty in ending the conflict. President Donald Trump said he made a lot of progress in talks on Sunday with Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelenskiy at the Mar-a-Lago resort. The US leader said he aimed to convene another meeting with Zelenskiy and European leaders in January.

Oil is still on track for a fifth monthly drop in December, which would be the longest losing streak in more than two years. Prices have been dragged lower by concerns about a global glut following supply increases from the OPEC+ cartel which includes Russia as well as nations outside the group.

China is the top crude importer, and its economy has faced headwinds amid a prolonged property downturn and mounting external pressures, including trade frictions with the US. At the same time, Beijing's robust stockpiling of crude is expected to continue next year, helping to absorb the surplus.

Headline	India, Russia And China Team Up: Why Americas Dollar Power Is In Trouble		
Publication	Daily Hunt (Mobile)	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

India, Russia And China Team Up: Why Americas Dollar Power Is In Trouble

<https://m.dailyhunt.in/news/india/english/zeenews-epaper-zeeeng/india+russia+and+china+team+up+why+americas+dollar+power+is+in+trouble-newsid-n694885208>

New Delhi: From January 1, 2026, India will take over the BRICS presidency, a milestone that comes at a time when Americas policies have inadvertently pushed India, Russia and China closer.

This convergence has made BRICS more influential platform on the global stage.

Earlier this year, US President Donald Trump had threatened 100 percent tariffs on BRICS nations, highlighting the strategic weight this bloc now carries.

A recent report highlights that BRICS countries, including India, are intensifying collaboration in agriculture, treating food security as a strategic priority for the Global South. Initiatives now span agricultural trade, technology transfer, climate-adapted farming and value chain development.

Analysts say this coordinated approach could pose a major challenge to US influence in 2026.

BRICS Produces 42% Of The Worlds Oil

The combined production of crude oil, gold reserves, economic scale and food self-sufficiency determines a countrys bargaining power in global geopolitics, and BRICS holds a large share of this power. The 11-member bloc has repeatedly challenged the dominance of the US dollar.

The World Energy Statistics Review 2025 says that BRICS collectively produced about 42 percent of the worlds oil in 2024.

BRICS Owns One-Fifth of Worlds Gold

China and Russia alone hold over 14 percent of global central bank gold reserves. Including other BRICS nations, the bloc possesses around 20 percent of global gold reserves. When domestic gold holdings are added, Indias share stands out, surpassing that of many other countries.

BRICS Contributes 29% To Global GDP

The World Bank says that in 2024, China, India, Brazil and Russia ranked among the worlds 11 largest economies. BRICS nations accounted for roughly 29 percent of global GDP that year.

With economic growth in member nations and the inclusion of new members, the blocs overall economic influence has grown rapidly in recent years.

India Opens Door To Rupee Trade In BRICS

In a historic move this August, India issued an official circular allowing BRICS nations to conduct 100 percent of their trade in Indian rupees, challenging the global dominance of the US dollar.

Experts believe this step could accelerate the decline of dollar dominance in global markets. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has instructed banks to open more dedicated vostro accounts without prior approval, allowing exporters and importers from other nations to trade directly in rupees.

Breaking Away From The Dollar

BRICS countries are actively working on an independent payment system outside the US dollar, raising new concerns in Washington about the potential weakening of American financial influence.

Brazils Ambassador to Russia Sergio Rodrigues dos Santos told Russian news agency TASS that building this BRICS payment mechanism is both realistic and achievable and represents a top strategic priority for the bloc. The initiatives

foundation was laid during Russias BRICS presidency in 2024, with discussions continuing under Brazils leadership this year.

Stable Oil Imports From Russia

Despite US sanctions on Russian oil companies, Indian refiners continue to import non-restricted crude from Russia without disruption. The Times of India reports that even after Trump imposed sanctions on Lukoil and Rosneft, December saw stable oil imports from Russia.

Bilateral relations have been strong despite Western pressure.

Indias Russian Oil Flow To Hit 1 Million Barrels Daily

Reuters reports that India is expected to import over one million barrels of Russian crude per day in December. This is contrary to expectations of a significant decline, as refiners continue purchasing discounted crude from non-sanctioned Russian suppliers.

Reliance Resumes Russian Oil Purchases

According to Bloomberg, Reliance Industries Limited has restarted buying Russian crude at discounted rates from non-sanctioned suppliers, transporting it to its refinery in Gujarat.

The company has contracted Aframax tankers from RusExport, ensuring the flow of crude to its refinery with a capacity of 660,000 barrels per day. Officials say this move could help offset the decline in Indias Russian oil purchases, potentially reducing any shortfall by more than half this month.

Headline	Oil gains as investors weigh Middle East tensions		
Publication	ET Energyworld	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

Oil gains as investors weigh Middle East tensions

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/oil-gains-as-investors-weigh-middle-east-tensions/126222541>

Despite positive signals from peace talks, significant hurdles remain, particularly regarding territorial control in the Donbas region.

Market watchers are also monitoring US actions against Venezuelan oil and fallout from strikes in Nigeria.

Oil prices rose in early Asian trading on Monday as investors weighed Middle East tensions that could disrupt supply, while a major hurdle remains in the Russia-Ukraine peace talks.

Brent crude futures rose 57 cents or 0.94 per cent to \$61.21 per barrel by 0112 GMT, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude was up 54 cents or 0.95 per cent to \$57.28.

Both benchmark prices fell more than 2 per cent on Friday as investors weighed a looming global supply glut and the possibility of a Ukraine peace deal ahead of weekend talks between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy and US President Donald Trump.

"The main reason prices are rising is that geopolitical tensions remain elevated, as Russia and Ukraine continued striking each other's energy infrastructure over the weekend.

"The Middle East has also been unsettled recently, with Saudi air strikes in Yemen and Iran saying the country is in a 'full-scale war' with the US, Europe, and Israel. This may be what's driving market concerns about potential supply disruptions," said Yang An, analyst at Haitong Futures.

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The two leaders spoke at a joint press conference late Sunday afternoon after meeting at Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida. Trump said it will be clear "in a few weeks" whether negotiations to end the war will succeed.

The peace talks were positive. However, there was no breakthrough, and a significant hurdle remains in the form of territorial control of the Donbas region, said IG's analyst Tony Sycamore.

Crude oil is expected to trade within a \$55-\$60 type range with an eye also on US enforcement actions against Venezuelan oil shipments and any fallout from the US military strike against ISIS targets in Nigeria, which produces about 1.5 million barrels per day, IG said in a note.

Headline	Indigenous crude output at 2.3 MMT in November; refinery throughput rises 2.3%		
Publication	ET Energyworld	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

Indigenous crude output at 2.3 MMT in November; refinery throughput rises 2.3%

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/indigenous-crude-output-at-2-3-mmt-in-nov-refinery-throughput-rises-2-3/126222590>

Total crude oil processed increased by 2.3%, driven by both PSU and private refiners. Petroleum product output marginally decreased, while crude oil imports rose significantly.

New Delhi: India's indigenous crude oil and condensate production stood at 2.3 million metric tonnes (MMT) in November 2025, with 76 per cent coming from nomination fields, 13.4 per cent from pre-NELP fields and 10.4 per cent from NELP fields, according to data released by the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC). Production during the month registered a 2.6 per cent decline compared with the corresponding period of the previous year, PPAC said.

Total crude oil processed during November 2025 rose to 22.3 MMT, marking a 2.3 per cent increase over November 2024. Of this, PSU and joint venture refiners processed 15.1 MMT, while private refiners processed 7.3 MMT. Total indigenous crude oil processed during the month was 2.1 MMT, while imported crude oil processed stood at 20.2 MMT across all Indian refineries.

PPAC said total crude oil processed during AprilNovember of the current financial year grew 2.1 per cent compared with the same period of the previous year. Production of petroleum products during November 2025 was 23.3 MMT, marginally 0.2 per cent lower than November 2024. Of this, 23 MMT came from refinery production and 0.3 MMT from fractionators. PPAC said petroleum product output during AprilNovember FY26 recorded a growth of 0.5 per cent compared with the same period of FY25.

In November 2025, the product-wise share of total POL production showed high-speed diesel at 41.5 per cent, motor spirit at 18.1 per cent, naphtha at 6.3 per cent, aviation turbine fuel at 5.8 per cent, petcoke at 5.4 per cent, LPG at 4.4 per cent, with the remaining share accounted for by bitumen, FO/LSHS, LDO, lubes and other products, PPAC said.

Crude oil imports increased by 11.1 per cent in November 2025 and by 2.4 per cent during AprilNovember FY26 compared with the corresponding period of the previous year, PPAC said.

At the same time, imports of petroleum products declined by 8.6 per cent in November 2025 and by 0.6 per cent during AprilNovember FY26. PPAC said the reduction in product imports during the cumulative period was mainly due to lower imports of fuel oil, motor spirit and petcoke.

Exports of petroleum products fell by 1.7 per cent in November 2025, while exports during AprilNovember FY26 increased by 0.4 per cent compared with the corresponding period of the previous year. The cumulative increase was driven mainly by higher exports of motor spirit, high-speed diesel and naphtha, PPAC said.

Headline	India's climate moment: Why 2026 must become the year of execution		
Publication	ET Government	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

India's climate moment: Why 2026 must become the year of execution

<https://government.economictimes.indiatimes.com/blog/indias-climate-action-execution-is-key-for-2026/126216771>

India enters 2026 with significant advantages. It has scale, technical capability, entrepreneurial depth, and a development trajectory that is still being built.

Climate change can either slow that trajectory or strengthen it. The outcome will depend on how quickly intent is converted into implementation.

As 2025 ends, India is confronting climate change not as a distant environmental risk but as a measurable economic variable. The past year saw India experience one of its hottest recorded summers, with prolonged heat waves across northern and central regions affecting labour productivity in construction, manufacturing, and logistics.

According to government and industry estimates, heat stress alone is already costing India between 4 and 6 percent of GDP annually through lost working hours, health impacts, and lower agricultural output. Climate change is no longer a future discount factor. It is a present cost embedded in India's growth model.

What clearly shifted in 2025 was how these impacts translated into financial and operational decisions. Infrastructure projects experienced delays due to extreme weather events. Urban flooding disrupted transport and municipal services in multiple tier one and tier two cities. Insurance penetration remained low, but premiums and exclusions increased sharply in high-risk zones, particularly for commercial assets.

Food price volatility became more sensitive to erratic rainfall patterns, complicating inflation management. Climate risk is now influencing credit assessments, project timelines, and public expenditure planning across India.

At the same time, India's role as a climate solutions economy strengthened significantly. By mid-2025, India had crossed 190 gigawatts of installed renewable energy capacity, with solar accounting for the largest share. Annual renewable additions remained among the highest globally.

Domestic manufacturing of solar modules, electrolyzers, and battery components expanded under production linked incentive schemes. Green hydrogen projects moved beyond announcements into pilot scale industrial use, particularly in refining, fertilisers, and steel. Sustainability is no longer discussed in isolation. It is increasingly linked to energy security, import substitution, and industrial competitiveness.

Yet the execution gap remains visible. India needs an estimated 300 billion dollars annually in climate related investment through 2030 to stay on a credible transition pathway. Current flows are significantly below this level. While global capital is available, India's ability to absorb it efficiently is constrained by lack of long tenor debt, currency risk, limited credit enhancement, and uneven project readiness at the state and municipal level.

This gap is most acute in adaptation. Despite being one of the world's most climate vulnerable economies, less than a quarter of India's climate finance flows currently support adaptation.

Urban resilience illustrates the problem clearly. India's cities face rising heat stress, flooding, and water scarcity, yet most investments in cooling, drainage, and water systems remain publicly funded with limited private participation.

District cooling climate resilient housing flood control infrastructure , and wastewater reuse are technically viable and commercially proven globally, but in India they lack standardised procurement models and predictable revenue streams. Without these, private capital remains cautious, leaving states and cities fiscally exposed.

The global climate process reinforces the urgency of execution. COP30 marked a clear shift from ambition to implementation, with adaptation finance and delivery mechanisms receiving far greater attention.

For India, the signal was unambiguous. International credibility will increasingly depend on whether national priorities translate into measurable outcomes rather than long term targets alone. As the world looks toward the next COP, large emerging economies will be evaluated on execution frameworks, industrial transition pathways, and financing structures, not headline commitments.

This makes 2026 a decisive year. The policy groundwork laid in 2025 must now translate into outcomes. The launch of India's draft green taxonomy has brought long awaited clarity on what qualifies as sustainable economic activity, enabling more credible capital allocation.

The Reserve Bank of India's Regulatory Climate Oversight framework, notified on 27 September 2025, has begun embedding climate risk into the financial system through stronger governance, risk management, and disclosure expectations. In parallel, the Department of Science and Technology's climate focused R&D roadmap and India's CCUS roadmap signal a shift from intent to industrial scale planning in hard to abate sectors.

Carbon markets are also entering a new phase. With the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism moving into its execution phase in 2026, Indian exporters in steel, cement, aluminium, and chemicals will face direct carbon cost exposure.

The government's green steel notification and associated schemes announced in 2025 are therefore strategically important. They provide early movers with a pathway to protect market access while aligning growth with emissions intensity reduction.

Adaptation must move to the centre of India's climate strategy in 2026. Heat resilient building codes, reflective roofing, district cooling , advanced weather forecasting, climate resilient seeds, water efficient industrial processes, and decentralised energy systems already exist. These are not experimental technologies.

What is missing is coordinated deployment at scale. This requires regulatory clarity, bankable project structures, and financing models that blend public capital with private investment to manage early-stage risk.

Industry must lead this transition in practical terms. Energy efficiency will be one of the fastest and most cost-effective levers in the coming year. Improvements in industrial processes, buildings, and transport reduce exposure to energy price volatility while delivering immediate productivity gains.

Combined with electrification and clean energy procurement, energy efficiency will shape how well companies manage compliance costs, including CBAM related reporting and verification requirements.

Financial institutions also have a central role. Climate risk must be embedded into lending, underwriting, and portfolio strategy as a matter of asset quality and long-term returns. Banks and insurers that develop climate analytics, support transition finance, and price risk accurately will be better positioned as climate volatility increases. This is not about ethics. It is about financial resilience.

For policymakers, 2026 should be about enabling execution. Standardised climate data and disclosure frameworks, stronger municipal finance mechanisms, scalable blended finance platforms, and alignment between industrial policy and decarbonisation pathways are critical. Public capital must be used strategically to de-risk projects and crowd in private investment rather than substitute for it.

India enters 2026 with significant advantages. It has scale, technical capability, entrepreneurial depth, and a development trajectory that is still being built. Climate change can either slow that trajectory or strengthen it. The outcome will depend on how quickly intent is converted into implementation.

2025 made the risks visible and measurable. 2026 must be the year India demonstrates that climate action, grounded in science and executed through industry and finance, is not a burden to be managed but a strategic opportunity to be realised.

Headline	Oil gains as investors weigh Middle East tensions		
Publication	Mint	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

Oil gains as investors weigh Middle East tensions

<https://www.livemint.com/market/commodities/oil-gains-as-investors-weigh-middle-east-tensions-11766971580901.html>

Dec 29 (Reuters) - Oil prices rose in early Asian trading on Monday as investors weighed Middle East tensions that could disrupt supply, while a major hurdle remains in the RussiaUkraine peace talks.

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Headline	Oil Edges Higher With Ukraine Talks and China's Pledge in Focus		
Publication	Mint	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

Oil Edges Higher With Ukraine Talks and China's Pledge in Focus

<https://www.livemint.com/market/commodities/oil-edges-higher-with-ukraine-talks-and-china-s-pledge-in-focus-11766975729237.html>

Oil ticked higher as US-led talks to end the war in Ukraine failed to yield a breakthrough, and China vowed to support growth next year.

Brent rose above \$61 a barrel, while West Texas Intermediate was near \$57. While the US stepped up a push to end the war, sticking points remain, highlighting the difficulty in reaching a deal. President Donald Trump said he made a lot of progress in talks on Sunday with Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelenskiy at Mar-a-Lago. More meetings are planned.

Oil is still on track for a fifth monthly drop in December, which would be the longest losing streak in more than two years. Prices have been dragged lower by concerns about a global glut following supply increases from members of the OPEC cartel as well as nations outside the group. Geopolitical tensions from Venezuela to Nigeria have helped stem the slump in recent weeks.

On Ukraine, there's been no breakthrough, which lent some support to prices, said Gao Mingyu, chief energy analyst at China Futures Co., citing issues including the fate of the Donbas region that's partially occupied by Russian forces. It feels like there's still back-and-forth ahead, she added.

China, meanwhile, pledged to broaden its fiscal spending base in 2026, according to a statement from the Ministry of Finance on Sunday, signaling government support to drive growth. The world's top crude importer has faced headwinds amid a property downturn and external pressures, including trade frictions with the US. At the same time, Beijing's robust stockpiling of crude is expected to continue, helping to absorb the surplus.

Headline	Most Gulf markets retreat on weak oil prices		
Publication	Reuters	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

Most Gulf markets retreat on weak oil prices

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/most-gulf-markets-retreat-weak-oil-prices-2025-12-28/>

Most stock markets in the Gulf ended lower on Sunday in response to Friday's fall in oil prices amid thin holiday-season trading.

Oil prices - a catalyst for the Gulf's financial markets - settled more than 2% lower on Friday as investors weighed a looming global supply glut, while also keeping an eye on Ukraine peace deal talks on Sunday between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy and U.S. President Donald Trump.

Despite a rebound fuelled by recent supply issues from the December 16 near-five-year lows, oil is on pace for its biggest annual loss since 2020, with Brent crude down 19% year-to-date as increased production sparks worries of an impending oversupply next year.

Saudi Arabia's benchmark index (.TASI), opens new tab dropped 1%, with Al Rajhi Bank (1120.SE), opens new tab losing 1.1% and oil behemoth Saudi Aramco (2222.SE), opens new tab retreating 0.8%.

Lower oil prices and disruptions to crude exports impact fiscal balances in countries reliant on oil income.

In Qatar, the index (.QSI), opens new tab fell 0.4%, with the Gulf's biggest lender Qatar National Bank (QNBK.QA), opens new tab dropping 1.1%.

Outside the Gulf, Egypt's blue-chip index (.EGX30), opens new tab gained 0.9%, with Telecom Egypt (ETEL.CA), opens new tab rising 2.2%.

Egypt's central bank announced a 100 basis point cut to its overnight interest rates on Thursday, according to a statement from the monetary policy committee.

Headline	India's Nuclear Power		
Publication	Rising Kashmir	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

India's Nuclear Power

<https://risingkashmir.com/indias-nuclear-power/>

India's nuclear power journey has been guided by a series of landmark legislations that ensured the peaceful use of atomic energy while safeguarding national interests. Each step reflected the country's growing confidence and maturity in managing nuclear technology responsibly. The Atomic Energy Act, 1962, replaced the earlier 1948 law and laid down the foundation for India's nuclear programme. It empowered the government to regulate atomic energy for peaceful purposes, ensuring strict control over research, development, and use of nuclear materials. Amendments in 1986, 1987, and 2015 in the Atomic Energy Act of 1962 gradually opened the sector beyond the Central Government, allowing government companies and joint ventures to participate in nuclear power generation. The amendments reflected India's intent to expand capacity while keeping strategic oversight intact. The Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010, introduced a no-fault liability regime, ensuring compensation in case of nuclear incidents. This law provided clarity on responsibility and built public trust by prioritizing safety and accountability in nuclear operations. At this stage of India's energy transition, the country is revisiting the foundations of its nuclear framework to match present-day needs and future ambitions. Over the decades, India's nuclear programme has matured, its technological capabilities have strengthened, and its cleanenergy goals have expanded. These developments have created the need for a modern, comprehensive legislation that reflects today's realities and tomorrow's requirements. India's nuclear energy programme has maintained a steady role in the country's electricity mix and is now poised for significant expansion. Nuclear power has consistently accounted for around 3% of total electricity generation, with a share of 3.1% in 202425. The present nuclear capacity stands at 8.78 GW. With the indigenous 700 MW and 1000 MW reactors being developed through international cooperation, the capacity is projected to rise to 22.38 GW by 203132. India's growing energy demands and clean energy commitments make a strong case for expanding nuclear capacity. Round-the-clock electricity is vital for emerging needs such as data centres and advanced industries, yet existing laws do not provide the flexibility or speed required for such growth. To meet the national target of 100 GW nuclear capacity by 2047 and advance long-term decarbonisation by 2070, a modern legal framework is essential, which enables wider participation, leverages indigenous resources, and integrates innovation with safety. Taken together, these developments highlight the need for progressive legislation that can repeal the 1962 Act and the 2010 liability law. A unified legislation allows India to expand the role of nuclear energy in its overall energy mix, encourage innovation, support non-power applications, and continue to uphold the highest standards of safety, security, safeguards, and liability. In this way, the bill serves as a natural progression of India's evolving nuclear journey and provides a foundation for the sector's future growth. As India moves toward a more modern and future-ready nuclear energy structure, the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Bill, 2025, lays down a set of focused provisions to strengthen governance, safety, and institutional mechanisms. Its key objectives can be understood through the following major elements. The Bill permits private companies to participate in India's nuclear sector, enabling them to undertake plant operations, power generation, equipment manufacturing, and selected activities such as the fabrication of nuclear fuel including conversion, refining and enrichment of uranium-235 up to such threshold value, or production, use, processing or disposal of other prescribed substances. In addition, all activities that involve radiation exposure must obtain prior safety authorisation from the regulatory authority. Under the Bill, certain sensitive nuclear fuelcycle activities are reserved exclusively for the Central Government or its wholly owned institutions. These include enrichment or isotopic separation of prescribed or radioactive substances (unless otherwise notified), management of spent fuel such as reprocessing, recycling, radionuclide separation, and high-level waste handling, production and upgradation of heavy water, and any other facilities or activities specifically notified by the Government.

Headline	Approval of coal mines is easy, now the board will decide		
Publication	Tezzbuzz	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

Approval of coal mines is easy, now the board will decide

<https://tezzbuzz.com/approval-of-coal-mines-is-easy-now-the-board-will-decide/>

In the direction of increasing coal production in the country (Coal Mining Approval Process) Center The government has made an important and far-reaching reform and simplified the process of opening a coal mine.

By amending the Colliery Control Rules, 2004, the Coal Ministry has abolished the system which was considered to be the biggest obstacle in the path of coal production for a long time. After this change, coal companies will no longer need to obtain separate prior permission from the Coal Controller Organization to open a mine.

According to the notification issued by the government on 23 December 2025, Rule-9 has been amended under the Colliery Control (Amendment) Rules, 2025. Earlier, to open any coal or lignite mine whether new or old allotment approval from the Coal Controller Organization was required.

Even a mine that had been closed for more than 180 days had to obtain permission to restart it. Now this process has been abolished and companies have been given the right to take decisions from their boards.

This decision is being considered a big step towards speeding up the Coal Mining Approval Process. However, government regulatory oversight has not been completely eliminated. The company board must ensure that all necessary approvals are already obtained from the Central and State Governments and relevant statutory bodies.

Apart from this, it will be mandatory to inform the Coal Controller Organization within 15 days of opening the mine, for which only a prescribed form will have to be filled. The system of prior permission for non-company units will continue as before.

Coal Ministry officials say that this improvement will save time of about two months in the operation of mines. With this, coal production, which has already reached record levels, will be further accelerated.

The total coal production of the country in the year 2024-25 was 104.77 crore tonnes, which was 11.71 percent more than the previous year. This figure is expected to reach 111 crore tonnes in the current financial year, in which captive and commercial mines will play an important role.

The requirement of coal is continuously increasing due to the demand of growing electricity, steel and cement industries. In the year 2024-25, the demand for coal for the power sector alone had reached 94 crore tonnes. The Government believes that the simplified approval process will strengthen energy security and ensure timely availability of coal to industries, while maintaining a balance with renewable energy.

Mining approval easy, possible saving of two months in mine operation

Coal Ministry officials say that this improvement is expected to save up to two months in the operation of the mines. It is expected that coal production, which has already reached record levels, will increase further. The country's total coal production in the year 2024-25 was 104.77 crore tonnes, which was 11.71 percent more than the previous year.

Coal production in Coal India Limited (CIL) and its subsidiaries has continuously increased and the production is expected to reach 111 crore tonnes during the current financial year. According to the Coal Ministry, the highest growth in production is being recorded from captive and commercial mines.

The present government has already implemented the policy of single window clearance' regarding coal mining. Coal production has increased at an average rate of 10 percent every year in the last five years.

Sharp jump in demand for coal from power, steel and cement sectors

In India, the need for coal is continuously increasing due to the increasing demand of power generation, steel and cement industries. In the year 2024-25, the demand for coal for the power sector had reached 94 crore tonnes.

According to an estimate, the demand for coal in the country's thermal power plants will continue to grow at a pace of three to four percent for the next five years. However, due to the increasing use of renewable energy sources, the share of coal in electricity generation is expected to decline from about 70 percent by 2025 to 60 percent by 2030.

Headline	Oil gains as investors weigh Middle East tensions		
Publication	The Economic Times	Edition	Online Coverage
Published Date	29 Dec 2025		

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<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/markets/commodities/news/oil-gains-as-investors-weigh-middle-east-tensions/articleshow/126222548.cms>

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