

2024

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS





Daily Current Affairs from *The Hindu*, *The Indian Express* & *The Assam Tribune*

11th Feb 2025

CONTENT LIST

GS 1: ART & CULTURE, HISTORY, INDIAN SOCIETY AND GEOGRAPHY

	Topics	Syllabus	Page No:
1	Jan 2025 as warmest: why La Nina did not bring down temperatures	Climatology (IE)	16

GS 2: POLITY, GOVERNANCE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS/INSTITUTIONS

	Topics	Syllabus	Page No:
2	India as a bridge between the Global North and South	International relations (TH)	6
3	The problem of regulating live-in relationships	Governance (TH)	7

GS 3: ECONOMY, ECOLOGY, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, DEFENCE, SECURITY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

	Topics	Syllabus	Page No:
4	Not a Deal, A Relationship	Economy (IE)	12
5	In Paris, An Opportunity	Growth & development (IE)	13

GS 1: ART & CULTURE, HISTORY, INDIAN SOCIETY AND GEOGRAPHY

1. Jan 2025 as warmest: why La Nina did not bring down temperatures

Context: Last month was the hottest January on record, with the global average surface air temperature being 1.75 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial level (1850-1900 average), Europe's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said last week. It also said the temperatures reached record-breaking levels despite the development of La Niña conditions in the tropical Pacific and their temporary cooling effect on global temperatures. Scientists had expected that the arrival of the La Niña phase, which emerged in December 2024, would bring some relief from the heat. However, this did not happen.

Key points

- **Record-Breaking Global Temperatures:** January 2025 recorded an average global temperature of 13.23°C, which is 0.09°C warmer than January 2024, the previous record-holder. The temperature was 0.79°C above the 1991-2020 average and 1.75°C higher than pre-industrial levels. Global temperatures have remained above the 1.5°C mark for 18 of the last 19 months.
- **Impact of La Nina on Global Climate:** La Niña is a climate pattern where the central Pacific Ocean's surface waters cool, influencing global weather patterns. It typically brings-
 - Stronger monsoons and heavier rainfall in India.
 - Droughts in parts of Africa and South America.
 - A slight cooling of global temperatures, unlike El Nino, which causes warming.
- **Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S):** The Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) is a European Union program that provides reliable and up-to-date climate data and analysis. It is implemented by the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) on behalf of the European Commission. C3S has been instrumental in reporting record-breaking global temperatures, extreme weather events, and ocean warming, helping to highlight the accelerating impact of climate change.
- **Annual Climate Conference Goals:** The primary objective of annual climate conferences is to establish global agreements to reduce carbon emissions and slow temperature increases. The goal is to prevent global temperatures from exceeding 2°C above pre-industrial levels, with the ideal target of limiting the rise to below 1.5°C to mitigate the most severe climate impacts.
- **Temperature Thresholds and Significance of 2024:** While surpassing the 1.5°C threshold in a single year does not signal an immediate climate catastrophe, experts warn that continued warming over a decade or more could result in permanent changes. The year 2024 is seen as a critical turning point. With rising carbon emissions, experts predict that global temperatures may surpass the 2°C mark by 2050, leading to devastating consequences.
- **Implications of Recorded Temperatures:** Exceeding 1.5°C in 2024 signifies the world is perilously close to irreversible climate impacts. While a single year above this threshold is not conclusive, it underscores the urgency for swift and meaningful emissions reductions to avoid exacerbating the harm to ecosystems and human populations.
- **Conclusion:** The rising temperatures have serious consequences for developing economies, which are already grappling with frequent climate disasters. The failure of climate talks in Baku, Azerbaijan, to agree on a financial package for carbon emission mitigation worsens concerns, as developing countries now face more financial strain in addressing climate impacts. This failure delays action on carbon markets, threatening to undermine efforts for sustainable development in these vulnerable regions.

Q. Discuss global warming and mention its effects on the global climate. Explain the control measures to bring down the level of greenhouse gases which cause global warming, in the light of the Kyoto Protocol, 1997. (গোলকীয় উষ্ণতা বৃদ্ধিৰ বিষয়ে আলোচনা কৰক আৰু গোলকীয় জলবায়ুৰ ওপৰত ইয়াৰ প্ৰভাৱৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰক। 1997 চনৰ কিয়েটো প্ৰট "কলৰ পৰিপ্ৰেক্ষিতত গোলকীয় উষ্ণতা বৃদ্ধিৰ কাৰণ হোৱা গ্ৰিনহাউজ গেছৰ স্তৰ হ্ৰাস কৰাৰ নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ ব্যৱস্থাসমূহ ব্যাখ্যা কৰক।)

2. India as a bridge between the Global North and South

Context: In his address in January 2025, in Conclusion a, while addressing the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas convention, the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, said, 'Today's India not only firmly asserts its own point but also strongly amplifies the voice of the Global South'. Unlike the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM), India's motivation does not appear to be based on decolonisation or strong criticism of the West. Rather, as India attempts to increase its presence in the Global South, it is simultaneously deepening its relationships with traditional partners such as the United States and Europe.

Key points

- **Overview:** New Delhi's aspiration to be the 'voice' of the Global South can take shape if it also learns to listen.
- **The China factor argument:** The cynical answer often circles back to India trying to counter China's growing global dominance.
 - *Trends of foreign direct investments* - In Africa indicate that India appears to be in a race with China, mainly focusing on countries which already have a significant Chinese presence.
 - *Industrialised countries* - Are thought to be strategically partnering with India to contain China's rising international footprint.
 - *The India-China competition* - India is trying to create an individual identity as an emerging power to forward its own strategic trade, defence, and geopolitical interests.
- **Steps that India must take:** The first is for India to double-down on its call for an alternate paradigm of development cooperation that is not solely top-down, dictated by the Global North. India often lays emphasis on equal partnerships with other developing countries, trying to set itself apart from traditional powers.
 - *The newly announced 'Global Development Compact'* - Aimed at facilitating growth in the Global South, was described as rooted in Indian experiences and strategies.
 - *Countries bounded news* - Countries are bound to be more receptive toward a country that views them as partners.
- **A human centric approach:** New Delhi has laid stress on a more human-centric approach to tackle developmental challenges.
 - *Rebranding India* - The need is to rebrand human-centric development in order to focus on building human resource and capacity, especially to tackle future sustainability challenges.
 - *A focus on digital infrastructure* - Climate and energy solutions as well as water and food security are key areas for cooperation.
- **Way ahead:** *Focus on Norms and rules* - As India aspires to become a stronger global development player, it must establish norms, standards and systems to work with partner countries.
The-long-term goal - For India is to create its own robust domestic systems for international cooperation.
Trilateral partnerships - Increased engagement with new partners need to be seen as a learning by doing process, where India imbibes its experiences to scale up India-led global initiatives.
- **Conclusion:** India aspires to be the 'Voice' of the Global South, but it also must 'listen' to be a good leader. When India spearheaded NAM, the country showed the world that there is a new, third option for developing countries. India should not miss out on an opportunity to do the same thing now.

3. The problem of regulating live-in relationships

Context: Uttarakhand has implemented a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) that governs various aspects of civil life. One of the novel aspects of the UCC is that it mandates compulsory registration of opposite-sex live-in relationships and criminalises those engaged in unregistered non-marital cohabitation. While some of the provisions on live-in relationships are well intentioned, others are problematic and potentially dangerous. The biggest concerns around non-marital cohabitation tend to be the protection of the interests of the party that is rendered needy and of the rights of any children born to the parties.

Key points

- **Related provisions:** The UCC protects the rights of individuals in live-in relationships, especially those who may become financially or socially vulnerable. Children born in live-in relationships will be considered legitimate, improving upon the existing legal position where only children from void or voidable marriages were deemed legitimate. The law provides maintenance rights in cases where one partner deserts the other, offering legal protection against abandonment.
- **Challenges in Maintenance Provisions:** While the law allows for maintenance in case of desertion, it does not provide maintenance rights upon termination of the relationship. Termination requires only a statement to be submitted to the registrar, meaning one partner may be left without support. Same-sex relationships are excluded from legal recognition, leaving individuals in such relationships unprotected.
- **Definition of Live-in Relationships:** The UCC defines a live-in relationship as being 'in the nature of marriage', following previous legal interpretations. However, many live-in relationships are not equivalent to marriage, making this definition problematic. The law mandates registration within one month, but live-in relationships often develop gradually without a clear start date. This rigid registration rule may force casual relationships into legal regulation, creating unnecessary complications.
- **Concerns About Sexual Autonomy:** The Supreme Court has upheld the right to sexual autonomy, meaning individuals can freely choose their relationships without external interference. However, the UCC mandates informing parents/guardians if one partner is below 21 years of age, violating privacy rights. In a society where honour-based violence is a concern, this provision may put individuals in inter-caste or inter-religious relationships at risk.
- **Increased State Surveillance:** The UCC requires all registered live-in relationships to be reported to the local police, treating such relationships as a potential law-and-order issue. Failure to register a live-in relationship is a criminal offense, punishable by imprisonment or fines, which is an extreme legal stance.
- **Conclusion:** In many countries, the purpose of registering live-in relationships is to extend marriage-like protections to cohabiting couples. However, Uttarakhand's UCC treats live-in relationships as a problem to regulate, rather than a social reality requiring legal safeguards. The law, in its current form, limits personal freedom, increases state intervention, and reinforces social control over personal choices.

Q. How does Uttarakhand's Uniform Civil Code (UCC) impact live-in relationships in terms of legal recognition, personal autonomy, and state regulation? (উত্তরাখণ্ডৰ ইউনিফৰ্ম চিভিল কোড (ইউচিচি)-এ আইনী স্বীকৃতি, ব্যক্তিগত স্বায়ত্তশাসন আৰু ৰাজ্যিক নিয়ন্ত্ৰণৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত লিভ-ইন সম্পৰ্কক কেনেদৰে প্ৰভাৱিত কৰে?)

4. Not a Deal, A Relationship

Context: Global trade, collaboration and advanced technologies boost ambitious achievements, propelling nations to new heights as highlighted by India's space success. The same thinking applies beyond space exploration, extending to economic partnerships that harness expertise, investment and innovation. The economic ties between the four European Free Trade Association (EFTA) states (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) and India hold immense potential.

Key points

- **Overview:** India-EFTA trade agreement opens the door to long-term, multifaceted cooperation.
- **European Free Trade Association (EFTA):** *Countries included* - Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.
Strengths of EFTA - EFTA industries excel in areas such as precision engineering, renewable energy, pharmaceuticals and financial services — sectors that align with India's growth ambitions and innovation-driven economy.
- **EFTA-India Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA):** Recently signed it aims to reduce tariffs, streamline customs, enhance intellectual property protections, and promote sustainable trade. Targets \$100 billion in investments and 1 million jobs in India over 15–20 years.
- **Economic Opportunities:** *EFTA Strengths* - Advanced technologies, innovation, and global investment leadership. Expertise in renewable energy (Norway, Iceland), precision engineering (Switzerland), and pharmaceuticals.
India's Growth Areas - Green energy transition, digital economy, and manufacturing (e.g. Make in India).
- **Role of the EFTA Desk:** *Purpose* - Facilitate partnerships, navigate regulatory frameworks, and provide market insights. Serve as a resource hub for businesses entering new markets.
Impact - Over 100 EFTA businesses visited India to explore opportunities post-TEPA signing.
- **Long-Term Vision:** *Beyond Transactional Trade* - Focus on trust, shared values, and mutual growth. The collaboration combines economic, social, and environmental goals (e.g. sustainable trade practices).
Technology Transfer - Swiss precision technology aided India's moon mission. Similar synergies could accelerate India's green transition.
- **Opportunities for India:** *Job Creation* - 1 million jobs through investments in high-tech sectors.
Sustainability - Leverage Nordic expertise in renewable energy to meet climate goals.
- **Opportunities for EFTA countries:** *Market Expansion* - Access to India's vast consumer base and skilled workforce.
Investment Returns - Capitalize on India's growth in infrastructure, healthcare, and digital services.
- **Challenges:** *Regulatory Harmonization* - Aligning standards and procedures across diverse economies.
Scaling Investments - Ensuring long-term commitment to meet the \$100 billion target.
Sustainability Compliance - Balancing economic growth with environmental safeguards.
- **Conclusion:** Building a transformative win-win partnership will require sustained joint efforts. EFTA is committed to working alongside India to unlock new opportunities, drive innovation and contribute to the sustainable prosperity of our societies.

5. In Paris, An Opportunity

Context: Technology evolves quickly, and it's often hard to predict who will come out on top. A small AI startup from China, DeepSeek, spooked big tech investors on Wall Street last month with its generative AI chatbot, a direct rival to ChatGPT. It introduced a new approach to building AI models with fewer resources through reverse engineering, one that fundamentally challenges how US tech companies have been approaching AI development. Some may call the Chinese lab's attempt at a world-class AI model a fluke, because the US is still dominant in AI. But India needs to take this seriously and start working on a plan to focus more on R&D's.

Key points

- **Overview:** At Paris AI Action Summit, much is riding on how India positions itself in the global AI landscape.
- **India's Position in Tech and AI:** *UPI* - Global fintech success but is limited to payments.
Challenges - Lack of indigenous foundational AI models (reliance on OpenAI/Google). Limited long-term R&D investment and ecosystem.
Missed Opportunities - Historically India prioritized app development over core tech innovation. Absence of homegrown AI platforms with global impact.
- **Available Opportunities:** *Geopolitical Advantage* - Partner with the US/EU for semiconductor access and AI collaboration. Establish joint ventures (JVs) for equal representation in global AI projects.
Responsible AI Frameworks - Lead in ethical AI governance to build global trust.
- **Long-Term Strategies:** Build indigenous AI models (not reliant on foreign tech). Prioritize programming, mathematics, and statistics in education.
 - *Research & Talent Development* - Create AI research labs with PhD talent from IITs/technical institutes. Incentivize retention of skilled professionals through competitive pay.
 - *Sector-Specific Goals* - Identify priority sectors (e.g. healthcare, agriculture) for AI integration.
- **Technical and Structural Barriers:** *Resource Constraints* - Competing with US/China's funding and infrastructure.
Skill Gap - Need for advanced technical expertise in AI development.
- **Global Competition:** *US Dominance* - Closed-source models (e.g., OpenAI).
China's Open-Source Push - Lower-cost AI democratization.
India's Opportunity - Leverage open-source AI to build affordable, scalable solutions.
- **Policy and Execution Risks:** Balancing speed with sustainable innovation. Ensuring political will and long-term policy consistency.
- **Conclusion:** India needs to realise that any nation that manages to scale up AI, democratise it, and generate developer interest is the one that will control the narrative and lead the AI arms race. With China aspiring to be the global leader in open-source AI, it has a better chance to expand AI at a much lower cost. But in tech, anything is possible, and India could jump in if it plays its cards right.