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Viksit Bharat cannot run on fossil fuels — and 2047 is the deadline

Nations rarely fail for lack of ambition, but when their foundations lie beyond their control. As India advances towards Viksit Bharat 2047, it faces a strategic paradox: an economy aspiring to great-power status remains exposed to imported fossil fuels and external shocks, as recent disruptions in West Asia show. The issue is not whether this vulnerability exists, but how decisively India reduces it.

India imports nearly 85 percent of its crude oil. A \$10 price increase can widen the current account deficit by up to 0.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) and raise inflation by 40-60 basis points — an untenable risk for a nation seeking developed status.

Globally, the energy transition is accelerating. At COP28, countries signalled a shift away from fossil fuels. Clean energy investment is nearing \$1.7tn annually, exceeding fossil fuel spending, while carbon-linked trade measures and green supply chains are reshaping competitiveness.

India, however, holds promise. Over 50 percent of installed power capacity is now non-fossil, solar tariffs have dropped sharply, and the Green Hydrogen Mission signals future leadership. Yet a gap persists between the 2047 development goal and the 2070 net-zero target. Bridging this divide is not environmental idealism, but economic necessity, as climate risks could cut GDP by 3-4 percent annually by 2030.

Pradeep S Mehta
Editor

Abridged from an article that appeared in The Economic Times on April 24, 2026. The same can be accessed at: <https://tinyurl.com/3amjbr57>

Message for our Readers

The 24th edition of the National Affairs Monthly Brief contains selected published news or comments on trade, regulatory, and governance issues.

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India's Trade in a Conflict-Shaped World

India's ambitious trade deals are now facing their crucial test. Agreements signed with countries like the UK and Oman are in transition. While some sectors anticipate early gains, larger firms are poised to benefit first. Geopolitical tensions and complex ratification processes present challenges. The focus is now on translating agreements into tangible market access and actual trade flows.



US\$250bn E-comm Boom Reshapes Retail, Spurs Safeguards



India's e-commerce sector is poised for massive growth, projected at US\$250bn. Gen Z shoppers are driving this expansion, favouring new models like live and creator-led commerce. However, a traders' body warns that unregulated growth could harm traditional retail. They are urging the government to implement a clear e-commerce policy to ensure fair competition and protect jobs.

- [WTO Likely to Release India's Trade Policy Review Report Soon](#)
The Week, April 14, 2026
 - [India-China SCO Talks on Trade Security & Connectivity](#)
Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, Economic Times, April 18, 2026
 - [China Insulated from Energy Shocks, India Lags](#)
Shekhar Gupta, The Print, April 04, 2026
 - [India's Data Centre Boom Faces Environmental, Regulatory Hurdles](#)
Money Control, Simran Kalra, April 03, 2026
 - [India's Two Decades of GDP Misestimation: New Evidence](#)
Abhishek Anand, Josh Felman and Arvind Subramanian, Peterson Institute for International Economics, Working Paper 26-3, March 2026
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Aatmanirbhar 2.0 to Cushion Supply & Energy Risks

India is reshaping its self-reliance strategy to secure supply chains and energy amid West Asia turmoil. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has tasked ministries with sector-specific plans to cut import dependence. Aatmanirbhar 2.0 prioritises expanding green, nuclear, and thermal energy capacity to reduce reliance on oil and gas imports.



DoT Extends SIM-binding Deadline for Messaging Apps



The Indian government has extended mandatory SIM-binding for messaging apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, and Signal to December 31, 2026. It also scrapped the six-hour logout rule for web sessions. The changes align with CUTS recommendations based on a survey of over 4,200 consumers and Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises.

- [Data Centre Power Demand Forces Rethink on Energy Strategy](#)
Rituraj Baruah, Mint, April 08, 2026
- [India Toll Revenue Hits ₹82,900 Cr, Up 14%](#)
Yogima Seth Sharma, Economic Times, April 04, 2026
- [US-Iran War Opens Opportunity for India's Space Startups](#)
Shouvik Das, Economic Times, April 04, 2026
- [Next Reforms Must Cut Cost of Doing Business](#)
Economic Times, April 03, 2026

- [60% Free Seat Rule Suspended Pending Review](#)
Dipali Banka and Abhishek Law, Mint, April 02, 2026
 - [ISRO Tech Lies Unused Despite Public Funding](#)
Prakhar Gupta, March 31, 2026
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Road Safety Recognised as a Fundamental Right

Road safety is now recognised as a fundamental right in India under Article 21. In an April 2026 ruling, the Supreme Court held that commuter safety is integral to the right to life and dignity. It declared safe travel a positive State obligation, not merely policy. The Court also warned that high-speed expressways must not become “corridors of peril” due to administrative or infrastructural failures.



Women’s Representation Bill Redefines Power



India stands at a turning point in gender equality. The 2023 Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam reserves 33 percent seats for women in Parliament and state assemblies. A forthcoming amendment aligning census, delimitation and elections for 2029 will operationalise this reform, transforming a long-delayed promise into real representation, participation and leadership for women in governance.

- [India Develops Community Health Management App](#)
Adam Ang, Healthcare IT News, April 23, 2026
- [India's Agri Exports Rise to \\$52.5 bn in FY26](#)
The Economic Times, April 22, 2026
- [India Needs Urgent Driver Training Reform to Curb Accidents](#)
The Economic Times, April 22, 2026
- [Agriphotovoltaics Transform Rural Livelihoods in India](#)
Next Billion, April 13, 2026
- [Kalpakkam Nuclear Milestone Marks Major Breakthrough](#)
KBS Sidhu, India Narrative, April 08, 2026
- [NCS Group's Legacy of Philanthropy Across Generations](#)
Daily Hunt, April 08, 2026
- [Time to Retire the "District Collector" System in India](#)
Swarajya Magazine, March 27, 2026

Events

- CUTS and CRF Roundtable Discussion – WTO MC14 Outcomes and the Future of the Multilateral Trading System
April 29, 2026

Articles

- [It's Time for New Compact for The Welfare of Labour All Across India](#)
By Pradeep S. Mehta and Tasmita Sengupta
Asian Age and Deccan Chronicle, April 30, 2026
- [India's food safety gap: Why enforcement alone cannot fix it](#)
By Amrat Singh and Simi TB
Policy Circle, April 28, 2026

Publications

- Behavioural Reallocation after the Online Gaming Ban: A Multi-State Survey-Based Analysis
- Assessing the Potential Impact of SIM-Binding Directives on Consumers and Small and Medium Businesses