



TATHASTU
Institute Of Civil Services

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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TATHASTU
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3. RUSSIA SHIPS REACTOR VESSEL TO KUDANKULAM SIXTH UNIT
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INFLATION FALLS TO A 4-MONTH LOW IN DECEMBER

Inflation falls to a 4-month low in Dec.

Food inflation eased marginally to 8.4%, but some critical items reported sharper price rise; inflation of edible oils and fats hit a 33-month high

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

India's retail inflation eased a bit to a four-month low of 5.22% in December from 5.5% in November, with food inflation cooling marginally from 9.04% in November to 8.4% last month, the National Statistics Office said on Monday.

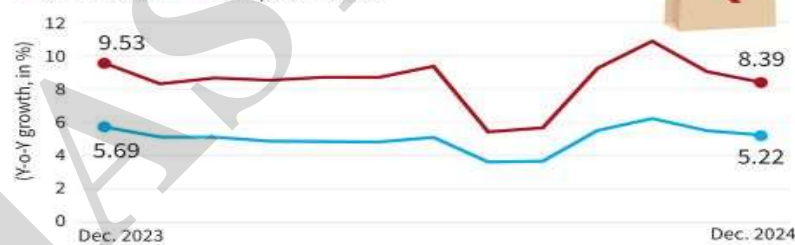
Overall consumer prices were 4.6% higher in December for urban residents compared with 4.9% in November, while rural consumers faced a steeper price rise of 5.8%, just marginally below the 5.95% recorded in November.

With December's inflation print, India's Consumer Price Inflation has averaged 5.63% in the third quarter of 2024-25, just a tad under the Reserve Bank of India projection of

Subtle relief

Consumer price rise eased to a 4-month low of 5.22% in December 2024, on a marginal dip in food inflation

— CPI Inflation — Food price Inflation



Dec. 2024
Source: CMIE

5.7%. While the RBI expects inflation to cool to 4.5% in this quarter, the latest uptick gives it little room to initiate interest rate cuts in its early February monetary policy review, even as the slowdown in growth has spurred sharp calls from government and industry to fast-track reductions.

While food inflation had also cooled to a four-

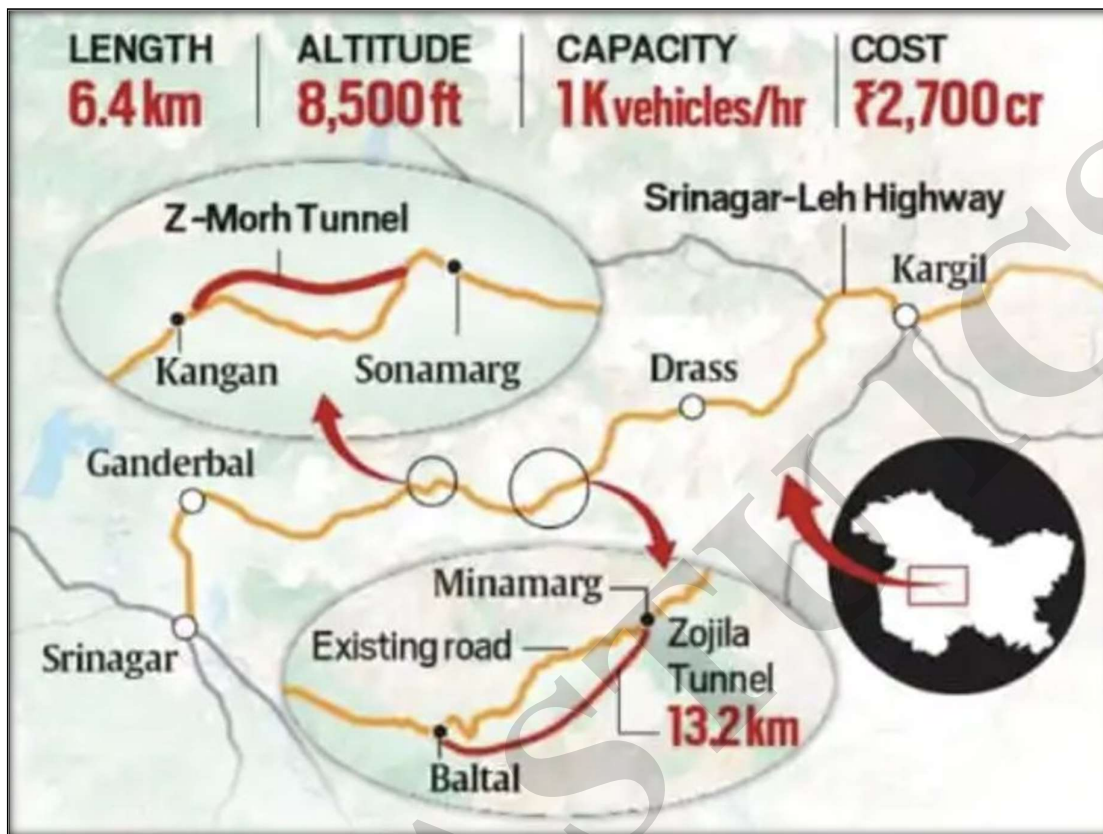
month low, marking the second month of deceleration from October's 15-month high of 10.9%, some critical food items reported faster upticks in prices, including edible oils and fats whose prices rose at a 33-month high pace of 14.6%, up from November's 13.3% rise.

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- ❖ India's retail inflation eased to a four-month low of 5.22% in December 2024, down from 5.5% in November, with food inflation also cooling slightly to 8.4%.
- ❖ December's inflation aligned closely with the RBI's quarterly projection, leaving little room for interest rate cuts amid calls for economic stimulus.



PM OPENS Z-MORH TUNNEL IN J&K; SILENT ON STATEHOOD



- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi **inaugurated the Z-Morh Tunnel at Sonamarg**, which has now been **renamed the Sonamarg Tunnel**.
- ❖ The tunnel is a critical infrastructure development that will provide
 - All-weather connectivity to the renowned Sonamarg tourist destination and
 - Facilitate a **year-round connection between Kashmir and Ladakh**.
 - The place is situated at an altitude of over 8,500 feet and was prone to snow avalanches in the winter, thus closing the Sonamarg road for most part of the winter.

RUSSIA SHIPS REACTOR VESSEL TO KUDANKULAM SIXTH UNIT

Russia ships reactor vessel to Kudankulam sixth unit

The 320-tonne equipment was made at the plant of Atom mash, the mechanical engineering division of Rosatom State Corporation; four steam generators for the unit to be shipped this year

P. Sudhakar
TIRUNELVELI

The VVER 1,000-MWe reactor vessel for the sixth unit of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project (KKNPP) is being transported to the construction site in Tirunelveli district. The 320-tonne equipment was made at the plant of Atom mash, the mechanical engineering division of Rosatom State Corporation, and shipped on the eve of 2025. A set of four steam generators for the sixth unit will be shipped this year.



Currently, four VVER 1,000-MWe reactors are being built at the KKNPP site. FILE PHOTO

plant's pier, where it was loaded onto a river vessel bound for the Novorossiysk seaport.

The reactor vessel was then placed in the hold of the ship for the 6,000-mile (9,656-km) journey to India.

Currently, four VVER 1,000-MWe reactors are being built at the KKNPP

site according to a Russian design. Two units with a similar capacity have been generating power since 2013 and 2016 respectively. The station is being designed, constructed, and supplied with the equipment subdivisions of Rosatom's engineering division. Rosatom supplies fuel to the KKNPP units throughout their life cycle.

The VVER 1,000-MWe reactors have been proving their reliability and efficiency for decades. Their operation in Russia and abroad has exceeded 2,000 reactor years. Installations of this type have the potential for long-term use. In particular, reactor installations of this type can form the basis of nuclear power plants

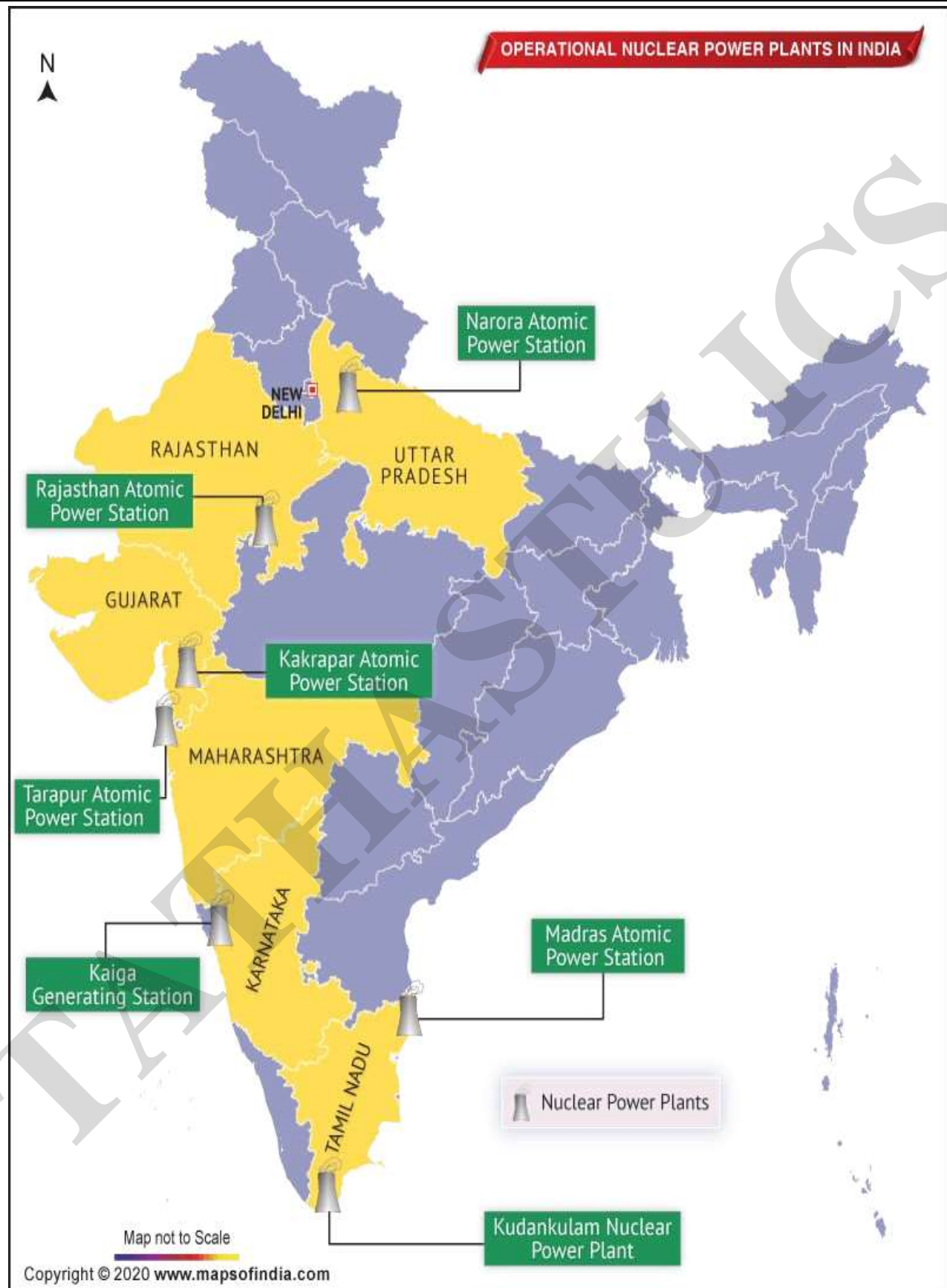
planned to be built in the Far East, according to an official statement.

"Despite the confident position we have achieved in the nuclear world, we are not standing still. We are developing and making our work more perfect both in terms of equipment design, ensuring an unprecedented level of safety, and in terms of the economic efficiency of our products. We are currently developing a reactor installation for a nuclear power plant with increased capacity, more modern operational properties, and improved technical and economic indicators for use in Russia and abroad," says OKB Gidropress general designer Valery Kryzhanovsky.

- ❖ The **1,000-MWe reactor vessel** for the **sixth unit of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project (KKNPP)** is **en route to its site in Tamil Nadu**.
- ❖ **Manufactured by Rosatom's Atom mash division**, the 320-tonne vessel began its 9,656-km journey to India after being shipped from Russia.
- ❖ **Currently, KKNPP operates two reactors and is constructing four more**, all designed by Rosatom, which also supplies their fuel.
- ❖ **These reactors are noted for their safety, reliability, and long-term efficiency.**

Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project

- ❖ It is India's largest nuclear power station, located in **Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu**. It is being developed in collaboration with **Russia's Rosatom State Corporation** and features advanced **VVER (Water-Water Energetic Reactor)** technology.
- ❖ **Features:**
 1. VVER-1000 (Pressurized Water Reactors).
 2. Each reactor has a capacity of **1,000 MWe**.
 3. Two reactors (Unit 1 and 2) have been operational since **2013** and **2016**, respectively.
 4. Four additional units (Unit 3, 4, 5, and 6) are in various stages of construction.



ARMY CHIEF SAYS A 'DEGREE' OF STAND-OFF
 PREVAILS ALONG THE LINE OF ACTUAL CONTROL

Army chief says a 'degree' of stand-off prevails along the Line of Actual Control

General Upendra Dwivedi terms situation 'sensitive but stable', says the Army's deployment is 'balanced and robust'; on disengagement, he says two rounds of verification patrolling completed

Dinakar Peri
 NEW DELHI

Stating that a "degree" of stand-off prevails along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi said on Monday that he had authorised all Corps Commanders to handle issues at the ground level with respect to patrolling and grazing so that these trivial issues can be resolved at the military-level itself. He termed the situation along the LAC "sensitive but stable", and said the Army's deployment along was "balanced and robust".

"All the Corps Commanders have been empowered to go through the patrolling and grazing issues and wherever you can harmonise relations between the two sides, you should be able to do. When Special Representative talks took place a press release was given. So we are also looking at Kailash Mansarovar yatra to resume, some trade points to be resumed. So similarly, we are also looking at, if we



Straight talk: Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi addressing the annual press conference in New Delhi on Monday R.V. MOORTHY

can have some kind of understanding please go ahead. That kind of delegation has been given to Division Commanders and Corps Commanders. They will come back to us... as far as we are concerned, from my side it is approved," General Dwivedi said in response to a question on whether an understanding had been reached with China not to block their patrols in the Yangtse area in Arunachal Pradesh.

He was addressing the annual press conference ahead of the Army Day on Wednesday.

On the recent disengagement from Depsang and Demchok in eastern

Ladakh, he said two rounds of verification patrolling had been completed by both sides.

"There is nothing called as buffer zone," he said, terming them "temporary moratorium". "Where you feel that the nature or the degree of violence can be high and the fuse is short, you create some distances," he said.

"So when we carried out these negotiations over a period of time, some places were declared as a temporary moratorium. It means that both sides will remain back and will not go to the common areas because we still feel that if we meet at those places the

violence level may go high."

After April 2020, the trust between the two countries has to have a new definition, he remarked and therefore, there is a requirement for us to sit together and come to a broader understanding of how we want to calm down the situation and restore the trust.

On the situation along the Line of Control with Pakistan, the ceasefire understanding reached in February 2022 is holding on, but the terror infrastructure across remains intact and infiltrations attempts continue. "The violence level is being orchestrated by the epicentre of terrorism that is Pakistan... If the support is not forthcoming the way India is looking at it, this kind of terrorist infiltration will continue to be there," he said.

To a query on the row over the 1971 painting, he described the new one as depicting India's civilisation connect and modern technology as also reaching out to the newer generations.



Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi's Remarks on LAC and Security Issues:

❖ **LAC:**

- The **LAC remains "sensitive but stable,"** with balanced Army deployment.
- Corps Commanders have been empowered to resolve patrolling and grazing issues locally to maintain harmony and avoid escalation.

Recent Developments with China:

- ❖ Disengagement in areas like **Depsang and Demchok** in eastern Ladakh includes two rounds of verification patrolling.
- ❖ "Buffer zones" were temporary measures areas to prevent potential violence due to heightened tensions.
- ❖ Trust between India and China needs redefinition post-April 2020, with efforts underway to restore calm and confidence.

Line of Control with Pakistan:

- ❖ The February 2022 ceasefire is holding, but terror infrastructure in Pakistan remains active, fueling infiltration attempts.
- ❖ Violence is linked to Pakistan's support for terrorism, which needs to cease for long-term stability.





INDIANS ABROAD

Indians abroad

Absence of opportunities remains the main driver of migration

At the inauguration of the 18th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi described the Indian diaspora as India's "ambassadors to the world", having "seamlessly assimilated" into the local society, served the community, and contributed to India's growth and prosperity. The strength of the India-origin community worldwide of over 35 million – about 15.85 million NRIs and 19.57 million PIOs, who are foreign nationals – is their ability to adapt and thrive in different fields, including in politics, where Indian-origin people have become leaders of more than 30 other countries. Where they retain their Indian passports, the diaspora is known for its distinguished services in many professional spheres. The PBD's purpose is to celebrate this success and discuss issues of importance; President Droupadi Murmu handed out about 27 Pravasi Bharatiya Samman awards. The event, which was first held in 2003, is organised around January 9, when Mahatma Gandhi returned to India from South Africa in 1915. The latest event, held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, brought more than 3,000 delegates from across 70 countries, with much of the focus on how the diaspora can help in developing India (Viksit Bharat programme).

- ❖ At the inauguration of the 18th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) last week, Prime Minister described the Indian diaspora as India's "ambassadors to the world", having "seamlessly assimilated" into the local society, served the community, and contributed to India's growth and prosperity.
- ❖ **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)** is an annual event organized by the Government of India to recognize and celebrate the contributions of the Indian diaspora to the development of India and to acknowledge their achievements across the world.
- ❖ The event is held on **January 9** each year, marking the day when **Mahatma Gandhi** returned to India from South Africa in 1915.
 - The India-origin community worldwide is **over 35 million** — about 15.85 million **NRIs** and 19.57 million **PIOs**, who are foreign nationals.
 - Their strength is their ability to adapt and thrive in different fields, including in politics.
 - Indian-origin people have become leaders of more than 30 other countries.





- ❖ The **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award (PBSA)**: highest honors to members of the Indian diaspora. The award was introduced in 2003.
- ❖ It recognizes the outstanding contributions in various fields such as **business, public service, culture, philanthropy, and community work that help strengthen India's ties with its diaspora and promote its interests globally.**
- ❖ The issues for the diaspora, particularly for those who are still Indian nationals, are more acute now.
- ❖ The **increase in far-right populist governments**, particularly in the West, is *making visa and entry conditions for Indians more difficult*, and it is important for the government to address such issues.
- ❖ Global conflicts, especially in West Asia where more than nine million Indians live and work, are also putting lakhs of Indians in danger.
- ❖ Given the broad spread of the diaspora, it is necessary to ensure that India's ties with its diaspora be inclusive, and non-biased on political issues.

Above all, it is important to acknowledge that one of the biggest drivers of Indians migrating is the lack of economic opportunities within India.

While there are no easy fixes for this, the loss to India of some of its most talented people must be counted, even as the country celebrates their incredible success and impact on the global stage.

PYQ's

Q.1 Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)?

1. PBD is celebrated annually on January 9th to mark the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India from South Africa in 1915.
2. The PBD event is aimed at recognizing the contribution of the Indian diaspora to India's development and fostering closer ties between India and its diaspora.
3. The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award is presented by the President of India to distinguished members of the Indian diaspora.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| (a) 1 and 3 only | (c) 1 only |
| (b) 2 and 3 only | (d) 1, 2 and 3 |



Q.2 Which of the following statements about the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project (KKNPP) is/are correct?

1. KKNPP is India's largest nuclear power station, located in Tamil Nadu.
2. The project is being developed in collaboration with the United States' General Electric.
3. KKNPP features the advanced VVER-1000 technology, which is a type of Pressurized Water Reactor (PWR).

How many statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

