

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

29th October, 2025

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GS-3 Economy

**IIP growth
drops to
3-month low
of 4% in Sept.**

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NEW DELHI

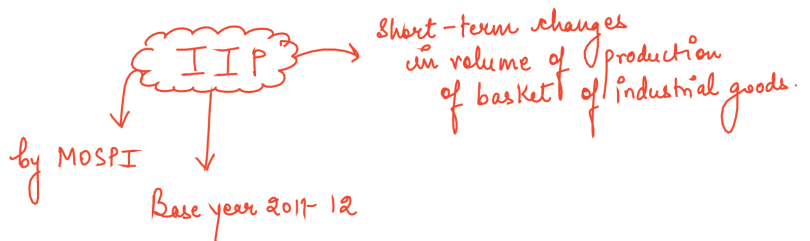
Industrial activity dipped marginally to a three-month low of 4% in September. The data also show that the growth in industrial activity during the first half of the financial year was the slowest in at least five years.

Growth in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, stood at 3.2% in September last year. However, growth had since accelerated to 4.3% by July 2025, following which it slowed again.

3% growth in April-Sept.

The overall index grew 3% in the April-September period, the first half of the financial year 2025-26. This is the slowest in at least five years, the period for which data are readily available. The index grew 24% in the first half of 2021-22, owing to the low base of the previous pandemic-affected year 2020-21. In the first half of 2022-23, the index grew 7%, which slowed to 6.3% and 4.1% in the corresponding periods of 2023-24 and 2024-25.

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Cloud-seeding trials done to combat surging air pollution

Two trials fail to induce rainfall; IIT Kanpur Director says this was due to the low moisture content in clouds; nine or 10 more such trials to be conducted in coming days: Environment Minister

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Amid rising pollution levels, the Delhi government, in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, on Tuesday conducted two cloud-seeding trials to induce artificial rain in the Capital.

However, they were unsuccessful as no rain was observed till late in the evening. The first such trial was carried out on October 23. "Today, the clouds had very little moisture content. We are doing a sortie tomorrow morning and the clouds are expected to have higher moisture content than today, and there are better chances of rainfall," Manindra Agrawal, Director, IIT Kanpur, told *The Hindu*. He said they were learning and generating a lot of data from the trials. "We are learning a lot, as cloud seeding has never been done for pollution control in Delhi or India before this," he said.

Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa said the humidity on Tuesday was only 15% to 20%. "Today, the [overall] second trial of cloud seeding was done in Delhi," he said in a



An aircraft fires flares during cloud-seeding trial to induce rain in New Delhi on Tuesday. PTI

video statement after Tuesday's first trial. "As per IIT-Kanpur, rain can happen anytime between 15 minutes and four hours. It won't happen on a large scale as the moisture is less. Today's second sortie will happen around 3 p.m.," Mr. Sirsa said, adding that nine or 10 more trials would be conducted.

After the first trial on October 23, Mr. Sirsa had said that all trials had been completed and they would conduct the actual cloud seeding. "We are completely ready. All types of trials have been completed. Around October 29-30, when clouds come, cloud

seeding will be done to have rain in Delhi and clean Delhi's air," he had said.

'Positive response'

In Tuesday's video statement, the Minister did not explain why the government had gone back to trials. The flight, which conducted Tuesday's first cloud seeding, took off from the IIT-Kanpur airstrip 13 minutes past noon and covered the route from Kanpur via Meerut, Khehra, Burari, Sadakpur, Bhojpur, and Aligarh, and landed at Meerut by 2.30 p.m. The second sortie began from Meerut and fol-

lowed a similar route and returned to Meerut.

Mr. Sirsa, in a late night statement, said, "Initial weather radar readings and on-ground observations recorded light rainfall of 0.1-0.2 mm at Delhi-Noida border around 4 p.m., indicating some positive response from the seeded clouds."

On September 25, the Delhi government signed a memorandum of understanding with IIT-Kanpur to conduct cloud seeding trials as an emergency measure to combat increasing air pollution at an estimated cost of ₹3.5 crore.

Missed opportunity

India could have made better use
of the ASEAN Summit

(GIS-2 IR)

Since 1995, when India became a dialogue partner of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and 2002, when it was upgraded to Summit level, the annual ASEAN summit has been an opportunity for India to reconnect with a region with historical linkages, and now increasing geopolitical importance. In addition to the ASEAN and ASEAN-India summits, the annual East Asia Summit (including the U.S., China, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, India and the ASEAN countries) is a chance for the Indian leadership to interact with the most powerful countries on Indo-Pacific issues. The rebirth of the Australia-India-Japan-U.S. 'Quad', for example, took place in 2017, after a decade-long hiatus, on the sidelines of the ASEAN summit. Underlining this importance in his virtual speech at the ASEAN-India summit in Kuala Lumpur on Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called the 21st century "the century of India and ASEAN", and committed to India's support to "ASEAN Unity, ASEAN Centrality, and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific". He also announced that 2026 would be the year of ASEAN-India maritime cooperation, with a focus on humanitarian assistance and disaster response, maritime security and the region's blue economy. The summit – External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar represented India – came at a time of increased geopolitical turbulence, including the economic turmoil unleashed by the U.S.'s tariff policy, China's constraints on crucial exports, and maritime tensions. At the East Asia Summit, Mr. Jaishankar called the times "complicated", taking aim at the U.S. for constraining energy trade with Russia and applying its principles "selectively", and China for supply chain reliability and market access issues. India and ASEAN also committed to finalising the review of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) soon.

The strong statements and commitment to cooperation did not, however, sufficiently cover for Mr. Modi's absence from the Summit – he was absent in 2022 also. Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said Mr. Modi had expressed his inability to attend due to festivities in India, but the explanation was unconvincing as the ASEAN engagement had been planned months in advance. While some pointed to Mr. Modi's campaign schedule for the Bihar Assembly polls, others cited U.S. President Donald Trump's presence and India-U.S. trade deal tensions as a possible reason for his staying away. A few even suggested a lingering strain in the India-Malaysia relationship over Malaysia's diplomatic support to Pakistan during Operation Sindoor, and a visit by the Pakistani Prime Minister to Kuala Lumpur earlier this month. Mr. Modi may have had international, domestic or bilateral reasons, but the no-show was a missed opportunity, especially when other global players including the U.S. and China demonstrated their commitment to regional stability, by simply being there.

GS-3 : Disaster Manag.

Relief, rehabilitation

India's east coast invariably bears
the brunt of cyclones

Historically, October and November mark the period when the Bay of Bengal throws up devastating cyclones. Of the 12 such cyclones during the 18th Century CE-20th Century CE, nine were recorded in these months. They include the severe cyclone which made landfall near Nizampatnam, Andhra Pradesh, on November 19, 1977, and the super cyclone, which crossed the Odisha coast near Paradip on October 29, 1999. The human toll in both disasters was about 10,000 each, according to an India Meteorological Department (IMD) publication in 2021. Memories of such events get rekindled whenever a cyclonic storm develops in the Bay, an example being Cyclone Montha, which began to intensify into a severe cyclonic storm on October 27-28, 2025. Though not as strong as the ones in 1977 and 1999, this does not provide much comfort to the authorities in the three coastal States, including Odisha. Parts of north coastal Andhra Pradesh, especially Visakhapatnam, Anakapalli and Srikakulam districts, and also Ganjam and Gajapati of Odisha have received significant rainfall. In Andhra's Kakinada and Konaseema regions, nearly 10,000 people were evacuated. The Odisha government made arrangements for the evacuation of people from vulnerable places amid inclement weather in several southern districts where there was a "red alert". National Disaster Response Force teams were also deployed.

Over the years, the preparedness of the Union and State governments has improved to an extent where the prospect of thousands dying in cyclones has become a thing of the past, if the last 20-odd years are an indication. However, there is still damage to public and private properties, affecting the livelihood opportunities of the underprivileged sections in particular. Likewise, milch and draught animals and poultry are severely impacted. When Cyclone Gaja struck the Tamil Nadu coast near Vedaranyam in November 2018, Nagapattinam district and Thanjavur saw large-scale losses of cattle and poultry. Several coastal States have been taking measures, structural and non-structural, to mitigate the effect of cyclones. Notwithstanding improvements to their knowledge and skills, the authorities in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha will have to demonstrate in action all that they have learnt so far while undertaking relief and rehabilitation measures. The political leadership should not lag behind and must ensure that all affected people are safeguarded and treated in an impartial way.



Rethinking immigration in the age of exclusion

The arrival of Columbus in the New World marked the beginning of a long history of human migration, driven by the universal quest for survival, hope and dignity. Yet, in a grotesque inversion of history, contemporary politics in the United States, particularly under the Trump administration, has perversely transformed immigration into a toxic battleground of fear, exclusion and ideological warfare. By erasing this brutal history, successive governments in the United States have perpetuated a myth of exceptionalism, even as it denies the humanity of those seeking refuge on its shores.

As schoolchildren, many of us were asked to write an essay on the theme, "What if Columbus had not discovered America?" Understandably, the very framing of this question is steeped in colonial ideology that assumes that Columbus's landing was a historic necessity, a great leap for civilisation rather than what it actually was. Our answers, drawn from textbooks that valorised explorers and erased victims, inevitably celebrated Columbus's courage and navigational daring. We were taught to admire the predator, never to mourn the prey.

The destruction of vibrant civilisations

But what if Columbus had not landed in the Bahamas in 1492? What if the Arawaks, the generous, peace-loving people he first encountered, had been allowed to live in peace? What if the Americas had been allowed to evolve on their own terms, with their own cultures, languages, and knowledge systems flourishing unmolested? The Iroquois Confederacy, for instance, had developed a sophisticated democratic system that inspired elements of the U.S. Constitution, though that influence is often buried or denied. These were not "primitive" societies awaiting rescue. They were civilisations with libraries, roads and astronomy, all destroyed in the name of gold and god.

From the early waves of European colonisation in the Americas and Africa to the apartheid regimes of South Africa, migration has not merely been a matter of movement. It has also been a means of conquest, expansion and domination. Settler colonial projects thrived through the forceful displacement and systematic downgrading of native populations, manifesting in overt and subtle ways through systems of oppression that are deeply ingrained in societal structures that perpetuate racial disparity and injustice. The U.S., frequently celebrated as an ideal for the "tired, poor, huddled masses", was



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The future of immigration policy is linked to a willingness to confront the dark past and the brutal realities of the present

itself forged through the expurgation of native peoples and the abuse of enslaved labour. By denying entry to migrants, powerful nations conveniently obscure their own complicity in creating the conditions that drive people to flee.

The intricate dynamics of historical memory and its distortion are starkly illustrated in the U.S.'s approach to immigration and counter-terrorism. Let us for a moment go back to the distressing example of "Geronimo", the code word said to have been used in the 2011 mission ("Operation Neptune Spear") to eliminate Osama bin Laden. By appropriating the name of the legendary Apache leader, Geronimo, the U.S. military inadvertently highlighted its historical amnesia. Geronimo was a complex figure, a warrior who resisted Mexican and U.S. military forces, seeking to preserve Apache sovereignty and way of life. Labelling him a terrorist overlooks the nuances of his struggle and reduces it to simplistic binaries.

But this is no isolated misstep, for it is symptomatic of a deeper sickness in the dominant historical narrative; a narrative that begins in 1492 with the mythic arrival of Christopher Columbus. This moment is still described in textbooks, museums and mindless school rhymes as the "discovery" of America. The truth, of course, is far more brutal. Columbus did not discover a new world. He invaded one, and that invasion set in motion one of the most ferocious chapters in human history. Columbus's arrival heralded not discovery, but genocide. The devastation was total.

What mainstream historians miss

Mainstream historians seldom dwell on the mass enslavement, the sexual violence or the cultural annihilation. To question Columbus's legacy is to invite accusations of being "anti-American" or "revisionist". But if revision means restoring truth to the record, then revisionism is a moral obligation. The problem is not that we remember too little; it is that we remember too selectively.

The Columbus myth, far from being a harmless fable, is the ideological blueprint for centuries of colonial expansion, white supremacy and racial capitalism. It legitimises the pillaging of the Americas, the enslavement of Africans, and the later interventions of American imperialism under the guise of spreading "freedom". The mentality that justified the extermination of the Arawaks is the same that rationalises drone strikes today.

Fast-forward to the 21st century, and the brutal calculus of migration remains unchanged: flee

war-torn Syria, economically ravaged Venezuela, or climate-ravaged sub-Saharan Africa, and you will be met with suspicion and hostility at the borders of the Global North. The Trump presidency has been a zenith of this xenophobic fervour, pathologising immigration as an existential threat to American identity. The border wall, family separations, and the Muslim ban are not just policy aberrations but ideological manifestos that codify cruelty and exclusion. These measures are not pragmatic responses to complex issues; they are declarations of war on the most vulnerable.

Moreover, the resurgence of exclusionary nationalism, a hallmark of Trump-era politics, has biased the discourse around belonging and citizenship. It designates the immigrant not as a fellow human in search of security but as an economic burden, a cultural contagion or a national security risk. What emerges, then, is a moral paradox of nations founded on violent migration and colonisation but now busy erecting moral and legal barriers to those seeking refuge.

If settler colonialism is justified under the banner of "civilising mission", why should today's migration be framed illegitimate? The glaring disparity between the revered pioneers of the past and the vilified migrants of today lays bare the insidious role of race, power and historical amnesia in shaping the immigration narrative.

A fundamental aspiration

Clearly, the future of immigration policy hinges on our willingness to confront the darkest chapters of our past and the brutal realities of our present. We need to excavate the buried subtexts of empire, capitalism and racial domination that continue to shape mobility, and forge a new path forward informed by historical reckoning and a commitment to human dignity. The right to seek safety, to move across borders, is not a privilege to be doled out to the few, but a fundamental human aspiration that must be recognised and protected.

To imagine, therefore, a world in which Columbus had not made landfall is not to indulge in idle fantasy, but to confront the brutal reality of a collective past. It is to consider the possibility of a world unshaped by genocide, a world where Indigenous peoples flourished on their own terms, where empires did not build their foundations on loot and plunder. The truth about history is not a matter of nicety, but a fundamental requirement for justice, accountability, and a future that does not replicate the wrongs of the past.



GS-1 Colonisation + impact
GS-2 Global Governance,
human rights
GS-4 Moral responsibility
of nations

★ Historical roots of migration
↳ hope / survival
↳ Columbus arrival → beginning of
conquest / genocide
↓

Colonial Continuities

modern immigration
crises esp US → rooted in
colonial / racial
hierarchies
↓

Selective historical memory

US, western powers deny their own
history of violence, forced migration
↓

Modern manifestations

eg Trump's border wall, Muslim ban
Violence with migrants of Syria etc
↓

Moral paradox of Nations

Countries built on migration &
colonisation now criminalise it.

HAL signs pact with Russian firm for civil aircraft production

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Aerospace major Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) and the Russian company United Aircraft Corporation (UAC) have signed a memorandum of understanding for production of the civil commuter aircraft SJ-100.

The SJ-100 is a twin-engine, narrow-body aircraft. As on date, more than 200 aircraft have been produced and are being operated by more than 16 commercial airline operators.

HAL said the SJ-100 would be a game changer for short-haul connectivity under the UDAN scheme in India. Under this arrangement, HAL will have the rights to manufacture SJ-100 aircraft for domestic customers.

Production in India

"This collaboration between HAL and UAC is the result of mutual trust between the organisations. This will also be the first instance wherein a complete passenger aircraft will be produced in India. The last such project was HAL's production of AVRO HS-748, which started in 1961 and ended in 1988," HAL said.

It is estimated that over



Officials from HAL and Oleg Bogomolov sign an MoU for making of the aircraft SJ-100.

the next 10 years, the Indian aviation sector will require over 200 jets in this category for regional connectivity and an additional 350 aircraft for the Indian Ocean region to serve nearby international tourist destinations, it said.

"The manufacturing of the SJ-100 aircraft marks the beginning of a new chapter in Indian aviation industry. Manufacturing will also strengthen the private sector and create direct and indirect jobs in the aviation industry," the Bengaluru-headquartered PSU said.

The MoU was signed in Moscow on Monday by Prabhat Ranjan from HAL and Oleg Bogomolov from UAC.



OLLO TRIBE

Assam Rifles empowers Ollo tribe women in Arunachal's Tirap through skill development drive

In an effort to promote self-reliance and inclusive growth, the Khonsa Battalion of the Assam Rifles has launched a skill-based initiative to empower women of the Ollo tribe under Operation Sadbhavana.



Location:

- Indigenous tribe inhabiting the Laju Circle of Tirap district, Arunachal Pradesh.
- Also found across the border in parts of Myanmar.

Other Names: Oloh or Lazu Naga.

Cross-border Ties:

- Despite living in two different countries, the Ollo people share strong kinship and cultural ties.
- They speak the same dialect, practice the same religion, and follow identical customs and traditions.

Social Structure:

- Clan-based society with a hereditary chieftaincy system.
- Society is deeply patriarchal — male members hold authority in family and community affairs.
- Succession and property rights pass through the male lineage.

Cultural Aspects:

- Historically known for distinctive facial tattoos and headhunting traditions (now discontinued).
- Strong emphasis on community cohesion and respect for ancestral traditions.
- The tribe now balances modern development with cultural preservation.

Housing:

- Traditional houses are built on stilts using bamboo and wood. • The chief's house is distinctive — constructed with massive carved blocks and wooden pillars symbolising status.
- **Population:** As per Census 2011, Ollo tribe's population in India is just over 1,500 individuals.