



HINDU EDITORIAL

22 to 27 July





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Disability Accommodations	03
Heat Stress Impact	04
Fiscal Stability	05
Budget 2024 Review	06
Paris 2024 Olympics	07
Using Children's Data Securely	08

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

22/07/24

The article emphasizes the need for reasonable accommodations for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and suggests a model to reduce institutional reluctance by providing financial incentives and cost-sharing measures.



The principle of reasonable accommodations (RA) is integral to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, which ensures equality for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). RAs include adjustments like ramps, assistive technologies, and modified job requirements. Public and private institutions can be exempt from RAs if they prove undue burden. However, many Indian institutions still resist implementing RAs due to financial concerns and perceived undue burden, often adopting efficiency-focused approaches instead of welfare-based strategies.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) outlines factors to determine undue burden, yet institutions' reluctance persists. A uniform legal standard to assess undue burden is essential. States should sensitize institutions about inexpensive RA procurement, offer incentives like tax credits, and share RA costs. This incentive and cost-sharing model would reduce disadvantage and stigma for PwDs and encourage RA provision. The RPwD Act's Section 86 highlights creating a National Fund for PwDs, supported by banks and financial institutions, but its scope is limited. To enhance this, continuous fund flow and annual budget inclusion are necessary. Institutions must address resource deficits before denying RAs, potentially supported by the National Fund. By ensuring veracity of requests, the National Fund can prevent cost avoidance. Following a welfare approach and utilitarian analysis, the Incentive and Cost-Sharing Model promotes inclusion, accessibility, and adherence to a uniform legal standard for RAs, benefiting PwDs and institutions alike.

HEAT STRESS IMPACT

Climate change-induced heat stress significantly impacts worker health and productivity, especially in vulnerable regions.

Recent periods have seen climate change and environmental degradation severely affecting worker safety and health, with heat stress emerging as a major concern. This condition hampers labor efficiency, reduces working hours, and opposes the International Labour Organization's (ILO) aim for fair employment. Heat stress can cause severe health issues like heat stroke, cardiovascular diseases, kidney injury, and even physical injuries, especially among those in heat-exposed jobs. An ILO study from 2019 projected a 2.2% reduction in total working hours globally by 2030, with a loss of USD 2,400 billion in GDP. Sectors like agriculture and construction, particularly in southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, are predicted to suffer the most, with these regions being highly vulnerable due to their large poor populations and the prevalent heat stress. This situation exacerbates poverty, inequality, and food security issues.

The decline in productivity is particularly critical in countries with large agricultural workforces, impacting economic stability and household food security. Indian data highlights that heat stress could result in a 5.8% drop in working hours by 2030, with significant impacts on women workers and sectors requiring physical labor. Recommendations emphasize the need for comprehensive national guidelines, enhanced infrastructure, better occupational health standards, and proactive governmental policies to mitigate these effects and safeguard vulnerable populations.

Effective communication between employers and workers, protective measures, and inclusive planning focusing on the most

vulnerable groups are essential steps to counter the adverse impacts of rising temperatures on labor and health.



Fiscal Stability

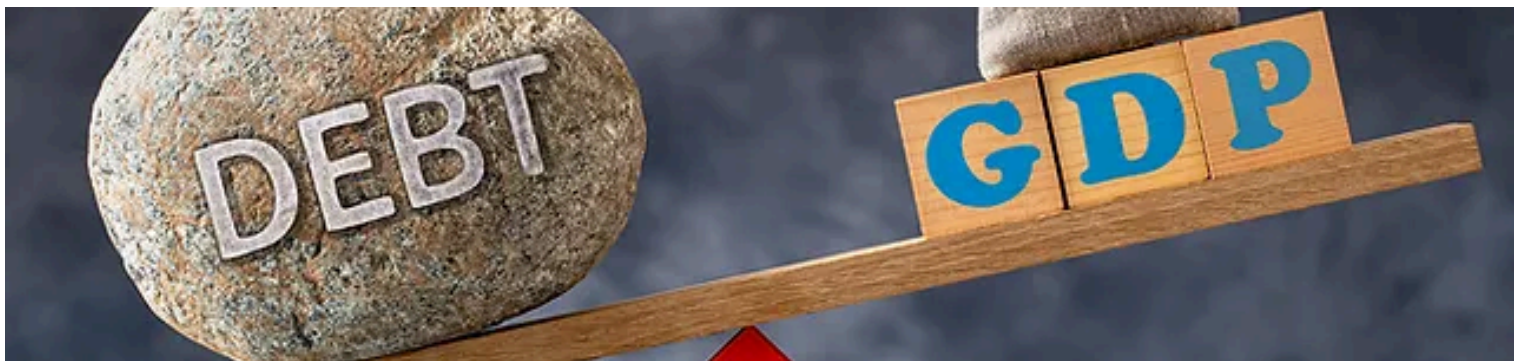


The FY25 Union Budget emphasizes fiscal stability and inclusive growth through targeted measures addressing employment, agriculture, MSMEs, and housing.

The FY25 Union Budget sends a strong message of stability and continuity, focusing on inclusive growth amidst K-shaped economic challenges. The 8.2% GDP growth in FY24, driven by consumption, highlights an uneven economic recovery. The fiscal deficit, at 5.6% of GDP, remains high, necessitating measures to support weaker economic segments. The budget prioritizes agriculture with emphasis on promoting Atmanirbhar Bharat, research, and digital public infrastructure. Additionally, the budget aims to fortify MSMEs' role in manufacturing and employment, crucial for achieving Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Employment generation receives significant attention with schemes offering incentives to employers and fresh workforce entrants, along with internships and skill development programs. Housing sees a substantial allocation with a 37% increase for urban housing under PMAY, despite it being lower compared to rural schemes. The budget promotes domestic manufacturing through the PLI Scheme and tweaks in sectoral duties to enhance local value addition. Financing constraints for MSMEs are addressed, ensuring smoother term loans. Maintaining fiscal discipline, the government has kept the FY25 headline deficit target at 4.9%, allowing for a transition to a 4.6% deficit in FY26. The allocation remains steady, benefiting from reduced debt costs and higher spending.

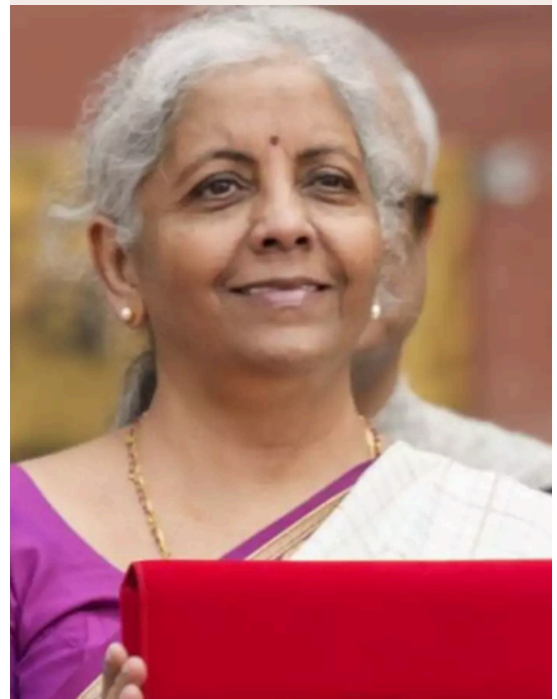
These measures aim to consolidate India's fiscal position, enhancing investor confidence and supporting job-led growth, essential for long-term economic resilience and stability.



Budget 2024 Review

The editorial critiques the Budget 2024 for its intent but highlights its lack of detailed implementation strategies.

The Budget 2024, presented by the Union Finance Minister, focuses on three primary areas: long-term vision, recognition of unemployment issues, and strategy based on coalition government dynamics. However, it lacks detailed measures for achieving the ambitious goals it sets out. The budget maintains continuity with a slight reduction in the fiscal deficit, aimed at enhancing fiscal consolidation efforts. Significant concerns are raised about the reduction in various expenditure items and the potential impact on employment and economic growth. The budget includes measures to support MSMEs, enhance private consumption, and improve the internship scheme, yet falls short in providing a comprehensive plan for effective implementation. Additionally, notable omissions such as industrial sectors and specific educational and health initiatives are highlighted, which could hinder the overall efficacy of the budget. Thus concludes that while the budget's vision is bold, the absence of detailed execution plans could undermine the potential to realize its targets.



Paris 2024 Olympics



The Paris 2024 Olympics, commencing amidst global turmoil, promises intense competition and hope, featuring over 200 nations and diverse sports, including new additions like breakdancing.

The Paris 2024 Olympics, starting this Friday, mark a return to a more typical setting compared to the pandemic-affected Tokyo 2020 Games. Despite the ongoing global issues, such as Russia's ban due to its war activities and Israel's controversial presence, the Olympics continue to embody competitive spirit and unity. Individual Russian athletes will compete neutrally, but the country is barred from team events. The event features a diverse range of countries, from superpowers like the U.S. and China to smaller nations like Fiji, all vying for glory. Athletes participating earn the prestigious title of Olympian, with medal winners gaining further acclaim.

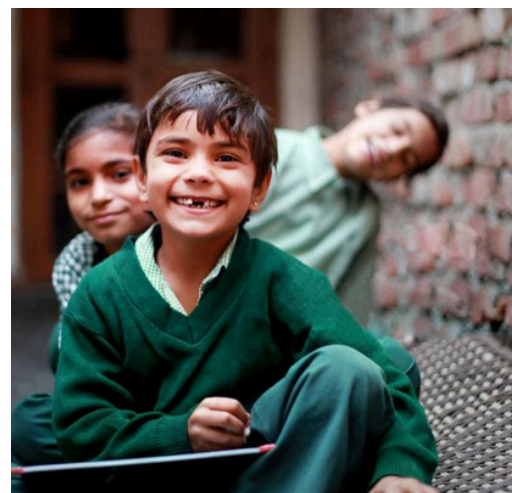
Paris and France face challenges, both economically and logistically, in hosting this major event. Key contenders include the U.S., China, Japan, Great Britain, Australia, Germany, and France. The Games also spotlight individual talent, with stars like Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz representing Spain in tennis. New additions, such as breakdancing, highlight the blend of sport and entertainment. With 204 countries, including India, neutral athletes, and a refugee team, the Olympics offer smaller nations a chance to shine, as seen in Morocco's football victory over Argentina.

The event symbolizes hope and diversion, especially for countries like Afghanistan. Security concerns persist, recalling the tragic 1972 Munich attack. Recent COVID-19 cases among the Australian women's water polo team underscore the ongoing pandemic's impact. As the world watches, the Paris Olympics aim to provide a platform for excellence and unity.



USING CHILDREN'S DATA SECURELY

The editorial discusses the secure and lawful handling of children's personal data in India's education system, emphasizing the need for strict data privacy measures.



India's education system is one of the largest globally, with extensive data collection to manage it efficiently. The Ministry of Education's UDISE+ platform, launched in 2018, aims to collect and exchange real-time information on various educational metrics to improve educational quality. The National Education Policy 2020 introduced the Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) for unique student identification, facilitating academic data consolidation and demographic information collection with voluntary consent.

Despite efforts to enhance schooling through systems like APAAR and UDISE+, there are concerns about data privacy and protection, especially with the absence of specific regulations under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. The editorial emphasizes the need for consent, secure data usage, and strict adherence to data privacy principles given the sensitivity of children's personal data.

The article highlights the Supreme Court's ruling in Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd.) vs. Union of India (2018) that reinforced the fundamental right to privacy, mandating stringent measures to protect children's data. Current challenges include the integration of third-party systems and the complexity of ensuring data protection and compliance. The lack of clarity in legal liability and grievance redressal mechanisms poses significant issues.

The editorial calls for specific protocols, clear regulations, and a robust framework to ensure the security and privacy of children's data in India's educational ecosystem, emphasizing the importance of these measures in the context of evolving digital and educational trends.

