

AIR Spotlight - Good Governance and Garib Kalyan Series

AIR Spotlight is an insightful program featured daily on the All India Radio Newsonair. In this program, many eminent panellists discuss issues of importance which can be quite helpful in [IAS exam](#) preparation. In this article, the performance of the government in the past 8 years with respect to good governance is discussed.

In this article, we have combined 9 episodes of AIR Spotlight as they were part of the same series.

Background

The present Government has completed eight years in office and the commentariat has scrutinized every aspect of its governance. PM Narendra Modi has been leading the country since 2014, and in his second term, he was able to ensure that his party won the faith of the people by an even bigger margin. India appears to have put the worst of the pandemic behind, but multiple challenges loom at home and abroad for the remainder of the Government's second term.

Here are the key highlights:

Part 1 - Middle class and ease of living

- In response to rising aspirations, New India is redefining Ease of Living. Life is becoming more comfortable thanks to new generation infrastructure.
- **Metro construction** has increased to 63 kilometres per year between 2014 and 2022.
- **Digital payment** has greatly simplified daily life. Payment apps like Bhim have benefited small business owners.
- **AMRUT** provides water tap connections to 118 lakh households and sewer connections or septage coverage to 97 lakh households. Know more about [AMRUT Scheme](#).
- **PAHAL Scheme** has eliminated leaks and the middleman in LPG connections. The scheme has more than 29 crore beneficiaries and has saved more than 70 thousand crores.
- [Swachh Bharat Abhiyan](#) was launched on the 145th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, in order to accelerate efforts to achieve universal sanitation across the country. Five years after the campaign's launch, villages, gram panchayats, districts, states, and union territories declared themselves ODF by constructing over 100 million toilets in rural India.
- **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana:** Launched in June 2015, the scheme aims to ensure "[housing for all](#) by 2022".
- **JAM trinity** of Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile technology contributed towards the financial inclusion of those sections who had otherwise been left out of the system.

Part 2 - Strong Farmers - Sampanna Bharat

- The results of the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare's all-around efforts over the last eight years are being reflected in society.
- Farmers' living standards are improving, and agricultural assistance from Delhi is reaching them directly through bank accounts with complete transparency.
- The income of farmers has increased, their thinking towards accepting agriculture as a business has got a new direction.
- **Agricultural Budget:** The agricultural budget allocation has increased nearly sixfold in the last eight years, reflecting the central government's sincere concern for farmer welfare.
- **Increased MSP:** To help farmers earn a better living, the government has raised the [minimum support price](#) for Kharif, Rabi, and other commercial crops on a regular basis. This scheme is one of the central government's most comprehensive and important schemes, as well as a symbol of loyalty to farmers with no middlemen involved.
- **Soil Health Cards:** Soil Health Cards have reached crores of farmers making them aware of effective and better agricultural production results to get better yields.
- **Natural farming:** The government has made special provision for natural farming in [Budget 2022](#). In Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal, an area of 5 km on either banks of the Ganga will be brought under natural farming.
- **Schemes for Agriculture:**
 - Under the Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign, the government is giving special attention to the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission.
 - Similarly, the government is committed to providing maximum benefits to farmers through programmes such as the National Agriculture Market (e-NAM), the [Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana](#), and agricultural mechanization.
 - In order to reach out to more farmers, the 'Meri Policy, Mere Haath' campaign was also launched.
- **Kisan Rail Scheme:** It facilitates the operation of special trains for the movement of perishable agricultural products.
- **Kisan Bhagidari, Prathmikta Hamari campaign:** During this campaign, all departments in the ministry, all institutions under it, including ICAR, and more than 700 Krishi Vigyan Kendras located across the country organized farmers' fairs, seminars and workshops.

Part 3 - Healthcare and Epidemic Management

- During the [COVID-19](#) crisis, the government launched a nationwide vaccination campaign.
- India has administered over 193 crore doses of the COVID vaccine in what is said to be the world's largest vaccination drive.
- The country has also managed to vaccinate the majority of its adolescent population aged 15 to 18. India has also successfully implemented a precautionary dose campaign for its adult citizens.
- In the shortest amount of time, India developed indigenous vaccines. Not only has the country vaccinated its citizens, but it has also assisted neighbouring countries by providing vaccines through the Vaccine Maitri scheme.

- **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana** is a national public health insurance fund that aims to provide low-income earners in the country with free access to health insurance coverage. People have saved between 50% and 90% of their money thanks to Jan Aushadhi Kendras.

Part 4 - Serving the Poor and Marginalized

- **Reduced Poverty Rate:** In the last eight years, the country's poverty rate has dropped from 22% to less than 10%. The extreme poverty rate has remained constant at less than 1%, at 0.8%.
- **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana** provides women beneficiaries in vulnerable households with concessional LPG connections, giving them greater dignity through ownership of an amenity.
- **Ujjwala Yojana** provides women with a smoke-free environment while relieving them of the arduous task of collecting fuelwood, lifting them out of the poverty of time and health.
- **'One Nation, One Ration Card' initiative** was launched to transform the lives of migrant workers by ensuring food security, guided by a vision of technology-driven system reforms.
- **PM Awas Yojana:** With an objective to ensure housing for all, over three crore houses were constructed under the PM Awas Yojana.
- The IMF also appreciated the [PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana](#) and said it helped to avert extreme poverty during pandemic.
- The government also gave 10 per cent reservation to the **Economically Weaker Section** from the general category and gave constitutional status to the OBC commission.

Part 5 - Women Power is Country Power

- In the run-up to the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, the government has heralded a new era of "nari shakti".
- Women are now prolific leaders, valuable labour force members, and the nerve centre of Indian society.
- This has been accomplished through the development of a variety of mindful policy interventions.
- The ration card's exclusionary logic of identification was replaced by **Aadhaar**, a universal identification system.
- The **Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY)** was redesigned to provide a broader range of services for women's ailments; male-preferenced cap of five beneficiaries per family was removed and replaced by the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY).
- Women's entrepreneurial skills have taken off thanks to the [Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana](#), with such women accounting for 68% of Mudra account holders.
- The **World Health Organization Director-General's Global Health Leaders Awards** recognised and awarded India's one million all-female ASHA workers for their "outstanding" contribution to global health.

- According to **NFHS-5**, the sex ratio at birth (SRB) has increased by 29 points from 991 (2015-16) to 1,020 (2019-21). According to UDISE data, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) of girls in secondary schools has increased from 68.17 percent in 2012-13 to 79.46 percent in 2020-21.
- The undignified practice of **instant triple talaq** has been nullified through the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019; the permissible gestational age for abortion has been revised to 24 weeks for vulnerable women through the [Medical Termination of Pregnancy \(Amendment\) Act, 2021](#).

Part 6 - Good Governance and Youth Centric Development

- **Good Governance:** In the past, the country bore the brunt of government-centric governance. However, in the twenty-first century, India is taking a people-centric approach to governance.
- **Youth Centric Development:** The Prime Minister stated that the reforms implemented over the last eight years have prioritized the youth in order for them to reach their full potential. Our youth can easily create and operate their businesses. As a result of reducing over 30,000 compliances, repealing over 1,500 laws, and decriminalizing several provisions of the [Companies Act](#), we have ensured that Indian businesses not only grow, but also reach new heights.

Part 7 - Economy and Reforms

- Economists and experts have stated that even before the pandemic, demonetisation, the implementation of GST, and the bad loan problem began to have an impact on India's economic growth. In the last eight years, the government's main talking point has been India's goal of becoming a \$5 trillion economy.
- Economic growth has been erratic over the last eight years, exacerbated by an unprecedented pandemic and then a war in Europe.
- With the Russia-Ukraine conflict causing ripples on Indian shores and around the world, major challenges to sustaining growth and creating a trillion-dollar economy remain.

GDP growth:

- Data showed that India's growth rate slowed due to slow growth in agriculture and manufacturing. Due to the NBFC crisis, the implementation of GST, and demonetisation, the GDP rate fell further to 3.7% in 2019.
- With the COVID-19 pandemic affecting every economy in 2020, India's GDP growth fell into negative territory for the first time in four decades.
- According to the International Monetary Fund, GDP growth in 2021 was estimated to be 8.9 percent, and it is expected to be 8.2 percent in 2022.

India's Real GDP growth (2014-2021)

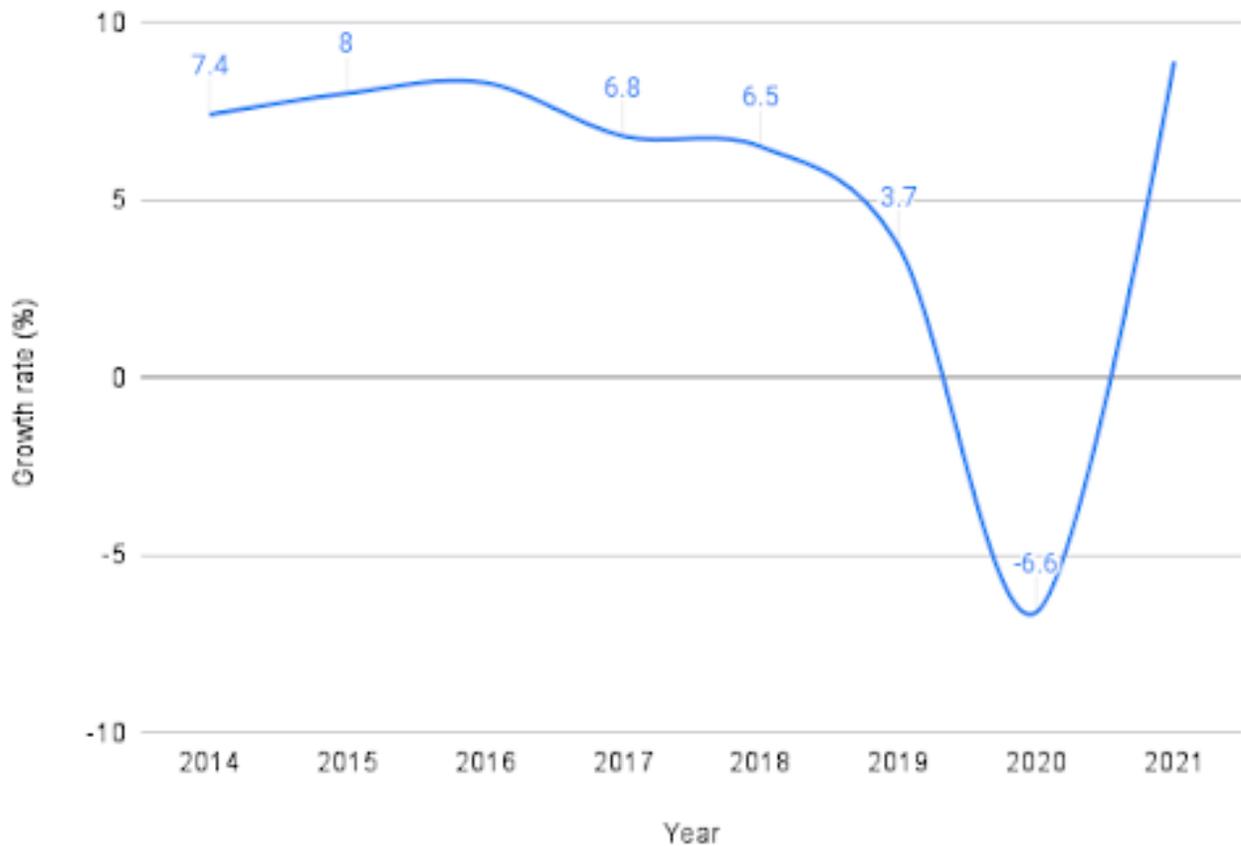


Image source: www.financialexpress.com

Inflation rate

The Reserve Bank of India has a lower tolerance limit of 2% for consumer inflation and an upper tolerance limit of 6% for inflation. In 2020, average consumer inflation was 6.2 percent. It was primarily driven by rice in food prices, as well as high fuel and commodity prices as a result of the lockdowns imposed after the pandemic.

Consumer inflation (2014 - 2022)

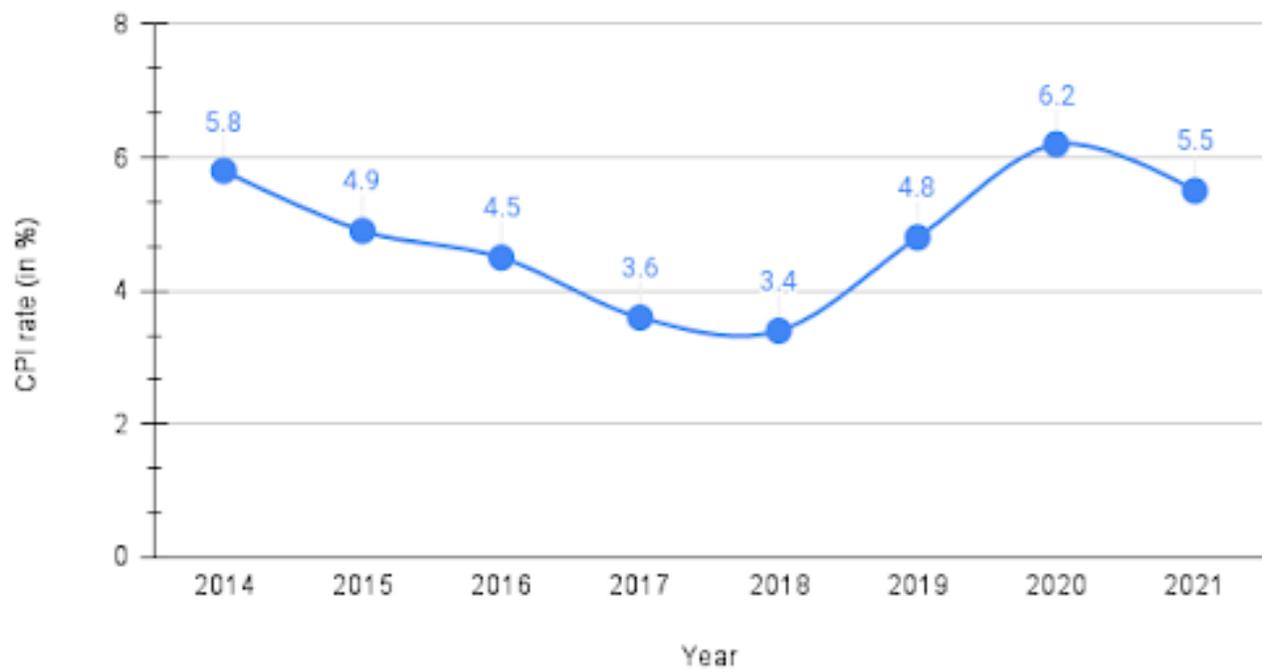


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Joblessness



Joblessness in India (2014-2021)

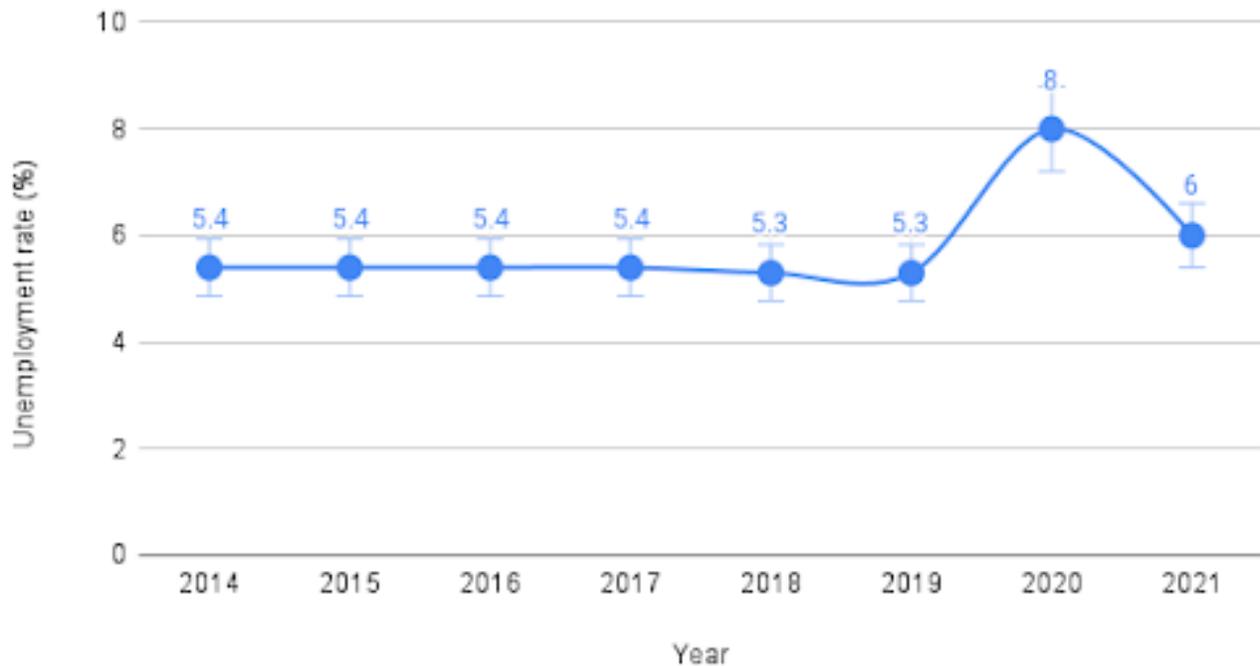


Image source: www.financialexpress.com

- According to Pew research, the middle class shrank by 35 million, while the number of people forced into poverty increased by 75 million as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic-caused recession.
- According to World Bank data, it will remain high in 2021 at 6%. According to the Center for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), India's labour force participation rate has dropped to 40% from 47% in 2016, indicating economic distress.
- Creating broad-based jobs, i.e. jobs for youth, women, and across sectors, will be a challenge for the current administration.

Part 8 - Ease of Doing Business

- Many major business reforms are in the works, including the direct listing of Indian public companies' securities in permitted foreign jurisdictions.
- The administration has also announced a one-year moratorium on new insolvency proceedings, as well as a decision to exempt COVID-19-related debt from the [Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code's \(IBC\)](#) definition of "default".
- The central government has worked tirelessly to transform India into an international manufacturing powerhouse.

- Beginning with the reduction of corporate tax rates, ensuring investment policy reforms, lowering the compliance burden, and improving the 'Ease of Doing Business' ranking, India has today become the leading nation in attracting investment in the manufacturing sector.
- This is due to various programmes such as Skill India, Digital India, Make in India, Vocal for Local, and performance-based incentives, among others.

Part 9 - Strengthening infrastructure

- Various initiatives, such as Bharatmala, [Sagarmala](#), inland waterways, dry/land ports, UDAN, Parvatmala, and now **PM Gati Shakti**, have ensured seamless connectivity for people, goods, and services movement.
 - Work is currently underway to construct an all-weather road that will connect char dham destinations, as well as the launch of the **Atal tunnel and other tunnel projects** to reduce travel time in the hills.
 - Last-mile connectivity, such as new lines in Jammu and Kashmir, the introduction of new luxurious trains such as **Vande Bharat** and vista-dome coaches, the improvement of existing train facilities, the increase in the number of trains, and so on are being implemented.
 - The government also invested in faster regional connectivity with better facilities to make travel between cities even easier. The **Regional Rapid Rail Transport System (RRTS)** is one such project. Trains that are faster than metro and have better stations will allow for a faster and more secure commute between cities.
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