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RESPONSIBLE NATIONS INDEX



- It is **India's first globally anchored index**.
 - It is developed by the **World Intellectual Foundation (WIF)** in collaboration with **Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)**, **IIM Mumbai**, and the **Dr. Ambedkar International Centre**.
 - The Index **covers 154 countries** and is built on transparent, globally sourced data to ensure credibility and comparability.
 - It is designed to assess countries on the basis of **responsible governance, social well-being**, environmental stewardship, and global responsibility, moving beyond conventional power- and GDP-based measures.
 - It is structured around three core dimensions, namely
 - **Internal responsibility:** It focuses on dignity, justice, and the well-being of citizens;
 - **Environmental responsibility:** It is covering stewardship of natural resources and climate action.
 - **External responsibility:** It measures country's contribution to peace, cooperation, and global stability.
 - **Significance:** It seeks to promote a **global dialogue on ethics, responsibility, global food security**, and sustainable leadership in international affairs.
 - It is expected to contribute to a more balanced and **value-based understanding of national performance** on the global stage.
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WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF)



- It is an international non-profit organisation that brings together business, political, and social leaders to discuss global challenges.



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- **Established in 1971**, the WEF promotes stakeholder theory for broader societal impact.
- This body has a concise **mission**: ‘To improve the state of the world through public-private cooperation’.
- WEF addresses major global concerns such as **climate change**, **economic challenges**, and **global security**.
- The organization is **funded by its diverse membership**, which includes prominent global figures.

CENTRAL SILK BOARD

**Central
Silk Board**



- It is a **statutory body** established in **1948** by an Act of Parliament.
- **Nodal Ministry**: It is working under the administrative control of **Ministry of Textiles**, Government of India.
- **Headquarter**: Bengaluru
- **Mandate of Central Silk Board**:
 - To **advise the central Government** on all matters relating to the development of silk industry including import and export of raw silk
 - To prepare and furnish such other **reports relating to the silk industry** as may be required by the Central Government from time to time.
 - To create greater **opportunities for gainful employment** and improved levels of income in sericulture through spread of scientific sericulture practices

Silk production in India:

- **India is the second-largest producer** and consumer of silk globally.
- India's raw **silk production increased** from 31,906 MT in 2017-18 to 38,913 MT in 2023-24.
- **Major silk producing states**: Karnataka (the largest silk producing state), Andhra Pradesh.
- **Major Silk varieties Produced**: Mulberry, Eri, Tasar and Muga.



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TRUMP'S TRADE WARS: HOW U.S. PROTECTIONISM IS HANDING CHINA A STRATEGIC EDGE

US President Donald Trump's second term has triggered sweeping geopolitical and economic disruptions, with his aggressive trade and foreign policies paradoxically strengthening China's global economic position.

In his first year back in office, President Trump signed hundreds of executive orders, launched a renewed trade war, withdrew the US from key international institutions, ordered mass deportations, and undertook military actions in Yemen, Iran, and Nigeria, reshaping global stability.

Trump's Upheaval and its Unintended Impact

- **From Ally to Threat: Europe's Shock** - Where Russia once dominated Europe's threat perception, the US has now emerged as a major source of uncertainty, unsettling transatlantic relations and altering Europe's strategic calculations.
- **Markets Signal Global Anxiety** - Rising geopolitical and economic instability under Trump has driven investors toward safe-haven assets, pushing gold and silver prices to record highs amid fears linked to US policy unpredictability.
- **The China Paradox** - Despite Trump's intent to isolate China through trade curbs and technology restrictions, China has emerged economically stronger, benefiting from a record trade surplus that surged to historic highs by December 2025.
 - China achieved 5% economic growth in 2025, meeting official targets. A booming trade surplus offset domestic challenges such as weak consumption and a prolonged property crisis, even amid tariff pressures.
 - Rather than retreating, China responded to US pressure by **deepening integration with global markets**, reinforcing its position in international trade and reshaping global trade relationships.



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Global Supply Chains Are Stretching, Not Shrinking

- Recent analysis by the analysts shows that global trade is reconfiguring rather than retreating.
- Average trade distances are at record highs, with expanding flows across Asia, West Asia and Africa more than offsetting reduced US trade.
- As per their analysis, trade surged in early 2025 as firms front-loaded shipments ahead of expected tariff changes.

China's Rising Influence in Global Perceptions

- A January 2026 paper by Timothy Garton Ash and colleagues highlights a growing global expectation that China's influence will expand over the next decade.
- More countries now view Beijing as an ally or necessary partner, even as confidence in US leadership declines.
- Another study points out that the expectations of US leadership under Donald Trump have fallen sharply over the past year, including in countries like India and South Africa.
- Many now believe Trump's actions have inadvertently strengthened China's global standing.

India's Cautious Rebalancing Toward China

- New Delhi has begun a calibrated opening in its engagement with China, reflecting a pragmatic reassessment of foreign policy options amid a sharply deteriorating economic relationship with the United States under the Trump administration.
 - Even as border disputes and strategic differences persist, India and China have addressed some "low-hanging fruit" in bilateral ties.
 - However, **New Delhi now expects reciprocity from Beijing**, particularly in easing curbs on Indian businesses and sensitive sectors such as rare earth magnets, before further liberalisation on its part.
 - India's trade data signals this pivot. In December, exports to China surged nearly 70% to \$2 billion, while shipments to the United States fell by almost 2% to \$6.8 billion, as steep US tariffs reshaped export priorities.
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HIMACHAL SEEKS FULL IMPORT DUTY TO SHIELD DOMESTIC APPLE GROWERS

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister has urged the Centre to **raise import duty** on foreign apples from 50% to 100% and impose a seasonal ban on imports from July to November to protect about 2.5 lakh apple farmers. Apples account for nearly 80% of the state's fruit output.

The demand follows the Centre's decision to cut import duty on **New Zealand apples** to 25% for April–August under the India–New Zealand FTA.

Farmers' Concerns Over Cheaper Imports

- Apple growers are worried about the **overlap** between New Zealand's export window and India's off-season market.
- In India, apples are harvested between **July and November**, while off-season sales depend on cold storage and Controlled Atmosphere (CA) facilities.
- New Zealand, however, harvests apples between January/February and May, allowing it to supply fresh apples when Indian farmers sell stored produce.
- **Impact on Domestic Prices and Sales**
 - Farmers warn that lower import duties will make foreign apples cheaper than domestic produce, directly affecting sales.
 - In Jammu & Kashmir, high-density varieties like Gala arrive in June, while Royal Delicious reaches markets by September.
 - Since the duty cut applies from April to August, growers fear significant losses during peak marketing periods.
- **Threat to Market Share**
 - Orchardists from Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir argue that cheaper imports will depress domestic prices, reduce market share.
 - It will hit farmers hardest during the off-season, undermining incomes in India's key apple-producing regions.

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Challenges Beyond Import Competition

- **Climate Stress and Falling Yields** - Apple production in HP and J&K has been hit hard by climate change, erratic weather, reduced snowfall, prolonged dry spells, floods, cloudbursts and landslides.
 - These factors have weakened orchards and lowered productivity.
- **Rising Disease Burden** - Changing climatic conditions have led to a surge in plant diseases such as fire blight, apple scab, powdery mildew, sooty blotch and bitter rot.
 - Reduced snowfall and higher temperatures have worsened water scarcity, increasing disease vulnerability during dry seasons.
- **Production Losses and Quality Decline** - In 2023, Himachal's apple output fell to 4.84 LMT, nearly 28% lower than 2022, following devastating floods.
 - Although production recovered to 6.87 LMT in 2025, excessive rainfall and disasters caused quality deterioration, with nearly 1 LMT rejected for poor size and quality.
- **Infrastructure and Transport Bottlenecks** - Logistical disruptions have compounded farmers' problems.
 - The prolonged closure of the Jammu–Srinagar National Highway (NH-44) due to landslides last year stranded hundreds of trucks during peak harvest, delaying market access and causing losses.

Farmers' Demands for Protection

- Given these cumulative pressures, farmers' groups have demanded 100% import duty on foreign apples, a July–November import ban, special category protection, and higher subsidies.
 - They argue that unlike countries such as New Zealand, where apple farming is heavily subsidised and insured, Indian growers receive limited direct support.
 - Farmer leaders stress that instead of increasing exposure to foreign competition, the government should focus on targeted support, productivity enhancement, and resilience-building for domestic apple growers.
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THE EV BOOM IS ACCELERATING A COPPER CRUNCH

- The electric vehicle transition shows a strong, near one-to-one relationship between EV sales growth and copper demand.
- From 2016 to 2024, copper demand rose faster than EV adoption, with elasticity mostly above 1.0, despite efficiency improvements.
- **Rising Copper Intensity of Electrification**
 - EV-related copper use jumped from about 39,000 tonnes in 2016 to over 1.1 million tonnes in 2024, alongside EV sales growth from 0.75 million to nearly 17 million units.
 - The peak elasticity in 2019 reflected larger batteries, more power electronics, and rapid charging infrastructure.
- **Structural Pressure on Copper Supply**
 - Even as elasticity moderates with efficiency gains, absolute copper demand will keep rising due to scale.
 - EVs use four to five times more copper than conventional vehicles, with no viable substitutes, making copper a key constraint on global electrification.

Supply–Demand Imbalance in the Copper Market

- Global copper demand is rising rapidly, while supply growth has slowed, creating a widening structural gap often described as a “jaw-opening deficit”.
- This imbalance marks the start of a prolonged copper shortage phase.
- **Why Supply Is Falling Behind** - Supply growth is constrained by declining ore grades at existing mines, long 10–15 year timelines for new projects, and environmental opposition in key producers such as Chile, Peru and the United States.
- **From Surplus to Severe Deficit** - In 2024, global copper supply is expected to exceed demand by about 0.3 million tonnes. By 2026, demand may reach 30 million tonnes, while supply lags near 28 million tonnes.

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- **A Rapidly Widening Gap** - The deficit could widen to 4.5 million tonnes by 2028 and nearly 8 million tonnes by 2030 — equivalent to the combined output of the world's ten largest copper mines.
- **Implications for Electrification** - Such shortages could raise EV costs, delay charging infrastructure, and strain decarbonisation goals. Without rapid expansion of mining, recycling and material innovation, copper scarcity may become electrification's main bottleneck.

China at the Centre of EV-Driven Copper Demand

- The geography of EV-led copper consumption is reshaping global market dynamics, with China emerging as the dominant force.
 - China's EV-related copper demand rose from about 78,000 tonnes in 2020 to nearly 6,78,000 tonnes in 2024 and is projected to reach around 7,80,000 tonnes by 2025, accounting for almost 60% of global EV-linked copper use.
 - **Integrated Supply Chains and Strategic Advantage**
 - China's dominance is driven not just by EV sales but by its control of over 70% of global battery cell production and a deeply integrated supply chain.
 - This gives Beijing strong pricing power, long-term contracting leverage, and strategic influence over copper-rich regions.
 - **Uneven Global Consumption Patterns**
 - By 2025, EV-related copper demand is expected to reach around 2,10,000 tonnes in the European Union and 1,14,000 tonnes in the United States, while India's demand remains modest at roughly 7,200 tonnes.
 - This asymmetry reinforces China's structural advantage.
 - **Copper as the Artery of the Energy Transition**
 - The EV revolution is transforming not just transport but the global metals economy.
 - Copper has become the critical artery of electrification, with demand nearing levels that outpace supply in unprecedented ways.
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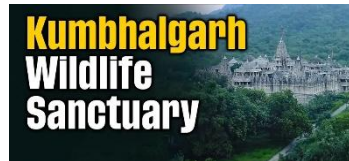
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KUMBHALGARH WILDLIFE SANCTUARY



- It is situated in **Rajasthan**.
- It encompasses the historic **Kumbhalgarh Fort** and is also named after the fort.
- Drainage:
 - The **eastern section** is the **starting point for the Banas River**, which flows into the Bay of Bengal.
 - Meanwhile, **rainwater from the western slopes forms small rivers like Sukdi, Sumer, Mithdi, and Kot**, all of which are **tributaries of the Luni River** that eventually **flow into the Arabian Sea**.

Flora: The flora of the sanctuary is **mainly herbs**. The species of **Churel, Dhok, Khair,** and **Salar** grow abundantly. among others.

Fauna: The sanctuary provides a natural abode to many creatures like **Wolf, Leopards,** **Sloth bear, Hyena, jackal, Jungle cat,** Sambhar, Nilgai, **Chausingha** (the four horned antelope), **Chinkara** and Hare.
