



## Rapid Fire Current Affairs

### India's Current Account Deficit Narrows Amid Trade Shifts

India's [Current Account Deficit \(CAD\)](#) is being influenced by shifts in trade patterns. The deficit is expected to **decrease to around USD 10 billion or 1% of the GDP** in the April-June quarter of **2023-24**, down from USD 18 billion or 2.1% in the same period of 2022-23.

- **CAD** is a crucial economic indicator that **quantifies the difference between a country's earnings from foreign trade and its expenditures on imports of goods and services**, including transfer payments.
  - A CAD arises when a **nation's imports exceed its exports**, leading to an outflow of currency and often necessitating foreign borrowing to bridge the gap.
- A low CAD can be seen as a positive economic indicator because it often implies that the **country's economy is self-sustaining** and is able to finance its external commitments without straining its resources.
  - It can also **indicate that the country is competitive in international trade** and has a balanced approach to its imports and exports.

Read more: [Current Account Deficit](#)

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### Public Declarations Not Necessary for Marriages: Supreme Court

Recently, the [Supreme Court](#) has declared that **not all marriages necessitate a public declaration or solemnization**. Also, the court approved a Tamil Nadu law that allowed "self-respect" marriages and affirmed that **lawyers can officiate at 'self-respect marriages'** between consenting adults.

- Through a state amendment in 1967, **Section 7-A of the Hindu Marriage Act, applicable to Tamil Nadu**, provides legal recognition to self-respect or reformist marriages among Hindus.
  - These marriages can be solemnized in the presence of relatives, friends, or other individuals and allow couples to marry without a formal public ceremony and empower advocates to conduct such unions in private settings.
- The court's ruling upholds an individual's right to choose a life partner without external interference, in accordance with [Article 21 of the Indian Constitution](#).
- **Solemnizing marriage without a Brahmin priest** was the prime objective of the **Self Respect Movement started by E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker (Periyar)** in 1925.

Read more: [Hindu Marriage Act](#), [Article 21](#), [Supreme Court](#).

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### Exploring Consciousness in Artificial Intelligence

Researchers have developed a checklist based on **neuroscience-based theories** that could help assess whether an [Artificial Intelligence\(AI\) system is conscious](#).

- The study suggests that the rapid progress in the field of AI has raised the possibility that **conscious AI systems could be built in the near future**.
  - However, human-like behaviors can make it difficult to judge the true level of engagement by AI systems.

- Being conscious means **experiencing consciousness or having the potential for it.**
  - **"Conscious" is different from "sentient" which refers to having senses.**
- No AI system appears to be a strong candidate for consciousness at present.
  - **Microsoft's study: [GPT-4 AI can think and use common sense like humans.](#)**
- Researchers believe assessing AI consciousness is scientifically doable, and the authors provided initial evidence that many of the **indicator properties can be implemented in AI systems using current techniques.**

Read more: [India and Generative AI](#)

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## Kampala Declaration on Climate Change

A significant step has been taken by **48 African countries to adopt the Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment, and Climate Change (KDMECC)** to address the interconnection between **human mobility and climate change on the continent.**

- The decision was discussed at a Conference of States co-hosted by Kenya and Uganda. The initiative was supported by the [International Organization for Migration \(IOM\)](#) and the [UN Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#).
  - IOM was born in 1951 out of the chaos and displacement of Western Europe following the Second World War.
- Africa is highly vulnerable to climate change's impacts, leading to increased migration due to extreme weather events.
- **KDMECC** Originally signed by **15 African states** in Kampala, Uganda, in July 2022. The KDMECC-AFRICA is expected to be signed by Member States during the Africa **Climate Summit** in Nairobi on September 4, 2023.
  - The Declaration is the **first comprehensive, action-oriented framework** led by Member States to address **climate-induced mobility** in a practical and effective manner.
  - The KDMECC-AFRICA will ensure that all voices, including those of youth, **women, and persons in vulnerable situations** are the priority of the expanded declaration.

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