

Global aid cuts could lead to 22.6 mn deaths by 2030 in 93 countries: Lancet

AID CHALLENGE

- Fell for the first time in six years in 2024
- ODA helped reduce global child mortality
- Prevented HIV/AIDS deaths by 70 per cent
- Germany significantly reduced their ODA

NEW DELHI

SLASHING global aid, particularly by the US and European countries, will reverse decades of progress in fighting diseases, and lead to 22.6 million additional deaths in people of all age groups, including children under five years of age, by 2030, warned a new study published in The Lancet Global Health on Tuesday.

The peer-reviewed study led by the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal), in Spain, showed that the additional deaths will be across 93 low- and middle-income countries, including India. The figures also include 5.4 million children under the age of five.

Severe cuts to official development assistance (ODA) will affect Sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for 38 of the 93 countries analysed, the most.

In Asia, 21 countries, in-

21 countries, including India, are at risk, 12 countries each in Latin America, Middle East, North Africa will also be affected



“Withdrawing this support now would not only reverse hard-won progress but would translate directly into millions of preventable adult and child deaths in the coming years. Budget decisions made today in donor countries will have irreversible consequences for millions of people for years to come

— **Daide Rasella, Research Professor at ISGlobal**

the ODA helped reduce global child mortality by 39 per cent; prevented HIV/AIDS deaths

cluding India, are at risk, followed by 12 countries each in Latin America, the Middle East, and North Africa. Ten countries in Europe, including Ukraine, will also be affected.

“Withdrawing this support now would not only reverse hard-won progress but would translate directly into millions of preventable adult and child deaths in the coming years. Budget decisions made today in donor countries will have irreversible consequences for millions of people for years to come,” said Davide Rasella, Coordinator of the study, ICREA Research Professor at ISGlobal, and at the Brazilian Institute of Collective Health.

The research also reveals that between 2002 and 2021,

by 70 per cent, with a 56 per cent reduction in deaths from both malaria and nutritional deficiencies. It also increased additional global health outcomes in these 93 countries, which are home to 75 per cent of the world's population.

The international aid fell for the first time in six years in 2024. The US, UK, France, and Germany significantly reduced their ODA contributions for the first time in nearly 30 years. To understand the impact of the fund cuts, the study modelled two scenarios from 2025 through 2030.

In case of a mild defunding scenario with a 10.6 per cent yearly reduction (corresponding to the average reduction of the last two years, 2024–2025), the cuts could result in 9.4 million preventable deaths, including 2.5 million children younger than five years.

However, a severe defunding scenario, based on \$32 billion (15.1 per cent) in ODA cuts from 2024 to 2025, could cause 5.4 million children younger than age five years to die as part of more than 22.6 million additional deaths of all ages.

SpaceX acquires xAI to launch space based AI data centres: Musk

MUMBAI

US-BASED entrepreneur Elon Musk said that his aerospace firm SpaceX has acquired his AI startup, xAI, and shared plans to scale AI compute in space by launching large constellations of satellites that act as orbital data centres.

“Launching a million tonnes per year of satellites generating kilowatts (kW) of compute power per tonne would add 100 gigawatts of AI compute capacity annually, with no ongoing operational or maintenance needs. Ultimately, there is a path to launching 1 TW/year from Earth,” said Elon Musk in a statement.

The SpaceX founder said that space based AI is the only viable long term path to meet the vast power needs of advanced AI, arguing that near constant solar power in orbit can deliver compute at far lower cost than terrestrial data centres.

The cost-efficiency alone will enable companies to advance training their AI models and processing data at unprecedented speeds and scales, the tech leader said.

“To harness even a millionth of our Sun's energy would require over a million times more energy than our

Says space based AI is the only viable long term path to meet vast power needs of advanced AI



Musk warned that global electricity demand for AI cannot be met with terrestrial solutions, even in the near term, without imposing hardship on communities and the environment

civilisation currently uses! The only logical solution, therefore, is to transport these resource-intensive efforts to a location with vast power and space,” he said.

Current advances in AI are dependent on large terrestrial data centers, which require immense amounts of power and cooling, he said.

Musk warned that global electricity demand for AI

cannot be met with terrestrial solutions, even in the near term, without imposing hardship on communities and the environment.

SpaceX's Starship will begin delivering the much more powerful V3 Starlink satellites to orbit in 2026, with each launch adding more than 20 times the capacity to the constellation as the current Falcon launches of the V2 Starlink satellites.

It will enable launches “every hour carrying 200 tons per flight” and ultimately lifting millions of tons to orbit and beyond, he shared his plan.

Starship will also launch the next generation of direct-to-mobile satellites, which will deliver full cellular coverage everywhere on Earth, he added.

Budget an AI-first blueprint: CEO Salesforce Arundhati

BIZZ BUZZ BUREAU
HYDERABAD

BUDGET 2026 represented India's transformation from technology consumption to AI-powered innovation—a blueprint for a \$7 trillion economy built on intelligence, not just scale, said Arundhati Bhattacharya, President & CEO, Salesforce South Asia

According to her, the strategic architecture is balanced and long-term. The tax holiday until 2047 for cloud services is a masterstroke in data sovereignty, attracting an estimated \$50 billion in data center investments by 2030 while positioning India as the cloud hub for emerging markets.

MSME reforms demonstrate sophisticated thinking. The Rs10,000 crore SME Growth Fund, combined with the TReDs platform mandate and expanded safe harbor thresholds, creates force multipliers enabling India's 63 million MSMEs to scale from survivors to global champions, she said. The High-Powered Committee on Education to Employment targets capturing 10 per cent of global services trade by 2047—ambitious but achievable given our demographic advantage: 65 per cent under 35, digital infrastructure like UPI and Aadhaar, she added.

100 women riders lead cancer awareness drive in Hyderabad

Mitali Agrawal highlights tendency of women to neglect their own health while caring for their families

BIZZ BUZZ BUREAU
HYDERABAD

MEDICOVER Cancer Institute on Sunday organised a high-visibility, all-women bike rally inHITEC City to promote cancer awareness and underline the importance of early screening and prevention. Held under the slogan “Don't Fear Cancer; With Awareness, Victory is Ours,” the initiative aimed to encourage women to prioritise their health and seek timely medical consultations.

Around 100 women bikers took part in the rally, riding through key stretches of the city and drawing public at-



tention to the need for regular cancer screenings. The event was flagged off by T Sai Manohar, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Madhapur Traffic, along with Mitali Agrawal, Mrs India Global Ambassador, who also led the riders during the rally.

Addressing the gathering, Sai Manohar compared preventive healthcare to road

safety, stating that just as helmets protect lives on the road, regular cancer screenings safeguard the future by enabling early detection and effective treatment. He urged citizens to overcome fear and adopt proactive health practices. Mitali Agrawal highlighted the tendency of women to neglect their own health while caring for their families.

We will build helicopter mfg capabilities in India: Jeet Adani

AHMEDABAD

ADANI Defence & Aerospace Director Jeet Adani on Tuesday said that with Italian multinational Leonardo Helicopters, they will build an ecosystem on Indian soil that brings manufacturing, assembly, training, and world class support into one cohesive whole.

More importantly, we will build confidence – “confidence that India's helicopter capabilities will grow here, be sustained here, and be strengthened here for generations,” Jeet

Adani said as the companies announced a strategic partnership to develop, manufacture, and sustain a helicopter manufacturing ecosystem in India.

“This initiative also carries a profound social dimension. Around the world, helicopters play roles that save lives, extend hope, and bring relief when it is needed most. Countries such as Brazil and Japan have demonstrated how crucial rotary wing aircraft can be for medical care, emergency response, and connecting communities,” Jeet Adani said in his speech.



Nobel Laureate–developed PYtest debuts at AIG Hospitals

BIZZ BUZZ BUREAU
HYDERABAD

AIG Hospitals, Hyderabad, one of the world's leading centres for gastroenterology and digestive diseases, has introduced PYtest, India's first clinically validated, non-invasive breath test for detecting active Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori) infection. Developed by Nobel Laureate Prof. Barry Marshall, who discovered the H. pylori bacterium, the test marks a major advancement in gastrointestinal diagnostics in the country.

PYtest is a Urea [14C] Breath Test that delivers rapid, highly accurate results within minutes, elimi-



nating the need for invasive diagnostic procedures such as endoscopy and biopsy-based rapid urease tests. The test provides both qualitative and quantitative results, enabling physicians to confirm infection as well as assess bacterial activity.

Announcing the launch, Dr D Nageshwar Reddy, Chairman, AIG Hospitals,

said the introduction of PY-test reflects AIG's commitment to combining clinical excellence with innovation.

“The availability of PY-test, developed by Prof. Barry Marshall himself, is a milestone for gastrointestinal healthcare in India. By removing the fear and discomfort associated with invasive procedures, this test brings us closer to early detection and prevention of serious gastric diseases,” he said.

The test has undergone Phase 3 clinical validation in Indian patients, demonstrating a sensitivity of 93.8 per cent and specificity of 97.8 per cent, with no serious adverse events reported.

TOO EARLY TO DANCE!



THE POLITICA
Nothing political about it

POLITRICKS



BN Kumar

TWO weeks ago, in this column, we said it plainly: dump Trump, embrace the world. It was not provocation for its own sake, nor ideological posturing. It was a recognition that trade policy anchored to Donald Trump's America is not policy at all, but impulse. Tariffs announced as threats. Negotiations reopened after closure. Agreements treated as personal favours rather than institutional commitments. For India, a country that needs predictability more than spectacle, waiting for such a partner was never strategy.

Now comes the confirmation

India's conclusion of negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement with the European Union does not merely advance trade. It validates a choice. India did not wait for Washington to rediscover multilateralism. It did not suspend its ambitions until the next election cycle. It moved decisively towards scale, rules and durability. That alone explains why this development will sting in certain quarters in the United States—and why India should remain unmoved by the inevitable noise.

Yet vindication is not victory.

And this is not the moment for unqualified celebration. What has been announced is not yet a treaty in force. It is a political conclusion of negotiations, closer in effect to a structured memorandum of understanding. Ratification will take time. Implementation will take longer. And the economic impact, real and measurable, will not surface before a year, perhaps more. Confusing diplomatic breakthrough with economic delivery would be a mistake.

The scale of the agreement explains the excitement. Together, India and the EU represent over two billion people and a combined economic size of roughly \$24 trillion. Trade in goods already exceeds \$136 billion annually, services another \$83 billion. For two economies of this magnitude, engagement has remained below potential. This agreement attempts to close that gap.

On paper, India secures preferential access across 97 per cent of EU tariff lines, covering nearly the entirety of its export value. Over 70 per cent of tariffs are eliminated immediately, directly benefiting labour-intensive sectors: textiles, apparel, leather, footwear, gems and jewellery, marine products, toys, sports goods and processed foods. In a country where employment generation remains the central economic challenge, this design choice matters.

Services deepen this advantage. With commitments across 144 subsectors, India secures non-discriminatory, rules-based access in IT, professional services, education, business services and digitally delivered trade. Mobility provisions for professionals, intra-corporate transferees and contractual service suppliers add practical value. This is where India's com-

parative advantage is structural, not cyclical. And this is precisely where Trump-era negotiations with the United States went nowhere. Where Washington weaponised visas and market access, Brussels negotiated frameworks.

Agriculture, the historic landmine in India's trade talks, illustrates the contrast most sharply. With the United States, this issue proved fatal. Trump's negotiators pushed hard for deep access into dairy, poultry and other politically sensitive food sectors, showing little regard for the social realities of Indian agriculture. India resisted, tariffs followed, talks stalled.

With the EU, a different balance was struck. India gains preferential access for agricultural and processed food exports where it is already competitive: tea, coffee, spices, grapes, gherkins, dried onion, fresh fruits and vegetables, and marine products. At the same time, sensitive sectors such as dairy, cereals, poultry, soymeal and select fruits and vegetables are safeguarded. Farmers' interests are protected not by slogans, but by structure.

The rules of origin framework deserves equal attention. Product-specific rules are aligned with existing supply chains rather than theoretical purity. Self-certification through statements of origin reduces compliance costs, especially for MSMEs, for whom paperwork often erodes margins more than tariffs ever did. Access without capability is illusion.

But realism must temper optimism. Europe today is not the Europe of a decade ago. The EU economy is under visible stress. Growth is weak. Inflation has eroded household purchasing power. Industrial output has been hit by energy shocks triggered by



the Russia-Ukraine war. Fiscal space is constrained. Consumer sentiment is cautious. These conditions matter because market access only has value when there is demand to absorb it.

There is also a structural shift underway in European consumption that Indian exporters must understand early. The market is fragmenting. Northern Europe remains relatively resilient, while Southern and Eastern economies struggle with debt pressures, demographic stagnation and subdued demand. Consumers are trading down. Sustainability credentials matter, but price sensitivity has returned. This creates opportunity for Indian exporters, but only if they resist treating Europe as a uniformly premium market. Value-for-money, reliability and consistency will matter more than aspirational branding.

Competition further sharpens the challenge. Indian exporters will not enter an empty marketplace. China remains deeply embedded in European supply chains despite political tension. Vietnam has leveraged its trade agreement with the EU efficiently. Bangladesh dominates apparel volumes. Korea commands technology-heavy segments. Tariff reduction alone does not confer advantage in such an environment.

Competition in Europe is no longer just about cost. It is about supply-chain credibility. European

buyers are actively diversifying risk. They are willing to pay a marginal premium for stability, regulatory comfort and democratic alignment. India's differentiator will not be the lowest price, but reliability at scale. That stability must be priced intelligently, not surrendered in a race to the bottom.

This agreement also comes with obligations. India opens over 92 per cent of its tariff lines to the EU, covering nearly all European exports. Machinery, engineering goods, medical devices, automobiles and high-technology products will enter India at lower duties over phased timelines. Consumers and downstream industries will benefit. But domestic manufacturers who have delayed productivity upgrades behind tariff walls will face pressure.

India's experience with trade agreements has been uneven. Where industry invested, modernised and scaled, FTAs expanded exports and value addition. Where comfort replaced competitiveness, deficits widened. This agreement will not forgive complacency.

Ratification itself will test resolve. Trade politics within Europe are fragmented. Domestic producers, labour unions and environmental groups have shown their willingness to block or delay agreements. Europe signals silently and slowly. The noise comes later, from the vox pop.

Implementation will be the true

test. Tariff schedules, regulatory convergence, customs facilitation and dispute-resolution mechanisms will determine outcomes. If India wants this agreement to alter export trajectories, it must invest as seriously in trade facilitation as it did in negotiation. Logistics efficiency, certification support, export credit, MSME handholding and regulatory clarity will decide whether this pact reshapes the export base or benefits only a narrow slice of firms.

The most urgent task now lies at home. India must conduct a rigorous, ground-level market survey to identify real demand hotspots within Europe, not rely on aggregate trade projections or diplomatic optimism. Domestic industry, including MSMEs, must be actively pushed and supported to produce to European standards, not merely promised market access in speeches. That requires rapid industry education, targeted compliance handholding and fast-tracked certification support at scale. Public money must flow decisively into manufacturing capacity, logistics efficiency, skills and employment generation—not into permanent political redistribution dressed up as welfare. Feeding over 60 per cent of the population on free rations may win elections, but it weakens the economy. No number of FTAs will lift per-capita GDP if jobs are not created and purchasing power is not raised.

India has waited and wasted too long in tu-tu-main-politics—consumed by ideological and historical debates while productive capacity stagnated. Trade agreements can open doors, but they cannot drag industry through them. That requires political will, capital deployment and an unambiguous national focus on work,

output and competitiveness. It is time to get back to business in the true 1947 spirit: urgent, unsentimental and ambitious. Build factories. Give full support to existing ones. Uplift languishing units starved not of capability but of market access, marketing support and standards alignment. Create jobs. Train workers. Export at scale. Compete without apology. The world is opening doors, but it will not wait forever.

One final caution must anchor this push for Liberalisation 2.0. Growth cannot come at the cost of health and environment. India's environmental record is already dismal—air quality crises and water stress are daily realities. For the Indian exporter, “green” is no longer elective; it is an entry requirement. With the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism and strict sustainability due-diligence norms, carbon-intensive production will face prohibitive border costs. Development that poisons the air and sickens the workforce will not just damage public health; it will disqualify Indian goods from European markets.

Economic ambition must therefore move in lockstep with environmental responsibility. An unhealthy workforce cannot sustain productivity, and a high-carbon factory cannot sustain exports to a climate-conscious Europe. Growth that ignores health and carbon footprints ultimately destroys its own bottom line.

India should stop negotiating with itself—and get aggressive about growth, wisely.

(The columnist is a Mumbai-based author and independent media veteran, running websites and a youtube channel known for his thought-provoking messaging.)