



DATE: 5 OCTOBER 2026

1 Food Inflation (Source: The Indian Express)

Food inflation refers to a sustained rise in the prices of food items such as cereals, pulses, vegetables, fruits, milk, eggs, and edible oils

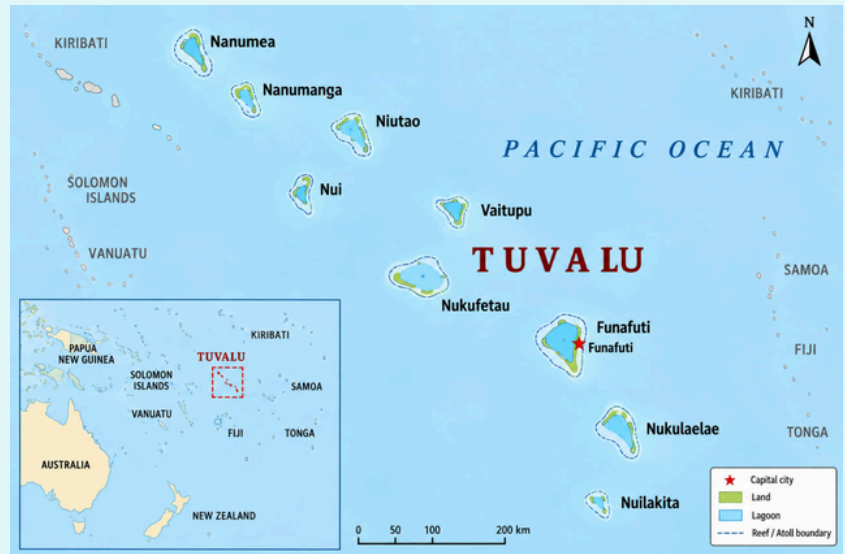
Reasons For Food Inflation

- **Weather and Climate Shocks:** Erratic monsoon, droughts, floods, heatwaves and unseasonal rainfall reduce agricultural output and disrupt supply.
- **Supply-Demand Mismatch:** Rising population, urbanisation and incomes increase demand, particularly for milk, eggs, fruits, vegetables and protein-rich foods, while supply may adjust slowly.
- **Low Agricultural Productivity:** Small and fragmented landholdings, inadequate irrigation, limited mechanisation and productivity gaps constrain food supply.
- **High Input Costs:** Increase in prices of fertilisers, diesel, electricity, seeds, fodder and agricultural labour raises the cost of production.
- **Supply-Chain Bottlenecks:** Poor storage, inadequate cold-chain facilities, transport disruptions and high logistics costs increase farm-to-retail prices.
- **Perishability and Post-Harvest Losses:** Fruits and vegetables have short shelf lives; inadequate processing and storage can cause significant wastage and sharp seasonal price fluctuations.
- **Global Commodity Prices:** India remains exposed to international prices of commodities such as edible oils and pulses. Global supply disruptions and geopolitical tensions can therefore transmit inflation domestically.
- **Fuel Price Increase:** Higher fuel costs increase the cost of agricultural operations, processing, and transportation, indirectly raising food prices.
- **Market Imperfections:** Multiple intermediaries, inadequate market integration, hoarding, and speculative activities can widen the gap between farm-gate and retail prices.
- **Structural Changes in Consumption:** Dietary diversification from cereals towards protein-rich and high-value foods can create persistent demand pressures when domestic supply does not expand correspondingly.
- **Government Policies:** Changes in MSP, procurement, buffer-stock operations, import duties and export restrictions can influence domestic availability and prices.
- **Seasonal Factors:** Vegetables such as onion, tomato, and potato frequently experience temporary supply shortages between crop cycles, producing sharp price spikes.

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2 Tuvalu (Source: The Hindu)

- **Location:** An island country in the Polynesian subregion of Oceania in the Pacific Ocean.
- **Capital:** Funafuti
- **Nearest Countries:** Vanuatu, Nauru, Kiribati, Tokelau, Samoa, and Wallis and Futuna, and Fiji.
- **Nature:** Coral Island
- **Fact:** It is the second-least populous country in the world
- **Grouping:** Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), Pacific Island Forum.



3 Tigray (Source: The Hindu)

Tigray is Ethiopia's northernmost regional state, located in the Horn of Africa.

- **Capital:** Mekelle.
- **Borders:** Eritrea, Sudan, Amhara Region, and Afar Region.

Geographical Setting

- Northern Ethiopian Highlands with rugged plateaus, deep valleys, and escarpments.
- *The eastern part descends towards the arid Denakil or Danakil Depression, one of the hottest and lowest regions of Africa.*
- Major rivers are Tekeze and Gash/Mareb.

Political

- The region is disputed between Ethiopia and Eritrea.
- The region is an area of civil war between the Ethiopian government and rebels.



4 Rabies (Source: The Hindu)

RABIES

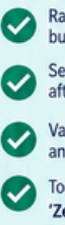
A Preventable but Fatal Zoonotic Disease

Rabies is a viral zoonotic disease that affects the central nervous system of mammals, including humans. It is almost always fatal once symptoms appear, but it is 100% preventable through timely vaccination and proper post-exposure care.



Zero deaths are possible with awareness and timely care

Rabies virus (Rhabdovirus)

CAUSATIVE AGENT - Rabies virus (genus <i>Lyssavirus</i>, family <i>Rhabdoviridae</i>). - Enveloped, single-stranded RNA virus, bullet-shaped. - Highly neurotropic (attacks the nervous system).  Bullet-shaped rabies virus	RESERVOIR AND SOURCE - Usually found in the saliva of infected animals. - Common reservoirs: dogs (main source of human infection), bats, foxes, jackals, wild carnivores. - Transmitted through the bite, scratch or lick on broken skin or mucous membranes. 	HOW IT SPREADS - Bite from an infected animal (most common) - Scratch from an infected animal - Saliva entering through broken skin, eyes, nose or mouth 
INCUBATION PERIOD Usually 1–3 months (can range from a few days to more than a year) depending on the site of exposure, severity of wound and viral load. 	SYMPTOMS Early symptoms (flu-like) - Fever - Headache - Malaise - Tingling or burning at the bite site  Later symptoms (neurological) - Anxiety and confusion - Hydrophobia (fear of water) - Aerophobia (fear of air) - Muscle spasms and paralysis - Coma and death 	TREATMENT - No specific cure once symptoms appear. - Treatment is mainly supportive and palliative. - Hence, prevention and early post-exposure care are crucial. 
PREVENTION - Vaccination of domestic animals, especially dogs. - Responsible pet ownership and control of stray dog population. - Avoid contact with unknown or wild animals. - Wash wounds immediately with soap and water for at least 15 minutes. - Timely post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) after any animal bite. 	POST-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PEP) Immediate wound care Wash thoroughly with soap and water; apply antiseptic (povidone-iodine). Rabies vaccine Start as early as possible (e.g., 0, 3, 7, 14, 28 days). Rabies immunoglobulin (RIG) Given for severe (Category III) exposures, infiltrated around the wound. Complete the full course Do not discontinue once started. 	PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PrEP) - Recommended for high-risk groups: veterinarians, animal handlers, laboratory workers, wildlife professionals, and travellers to high-risk areas. - Rabies vaccine given in 3 doses (0, 7, 21/28 days). - Provides protection but does not eliminate the need for PEP after exposure. 
GLOBAL AND INDIAN SCENARIO - Causes around 59,000 human deaths every year worldwide, mostly in Asia and Africa. - Over 95% of human cases are due to dog bites.  - India accounts for about 36% of global rabies deaths. - Dog-mediated rabies is a major public health challenge, especially in rural areas. 	KEY MESSAGES - Rabies is almost always fatal, but 100% preventable. - Seek immediate medical care after any animal bite. - Vaccinate pets and support animal birth control measures. - Together, we can make 'Zero human deaths from rabies' a reality. 	Prevent Rabies Protect Lives  "Healthy animals, safer communities, rabies-free future."