

FACTS SPEAK?

On the eve of the country's 62nd Independence Day, the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government chose to advertise extensively about achieving several goals it had envisaged in the National Common Minimum Programme. However, a Mint analysis shows that most of the claims are at best half-truths. While surveys find that corruption by officials is rampant—they are unprepared to spare even the poorest of the poor—the ambitious farm loan waiver package has failed to keep unscrupulous money-lenders at bay or help farmers wriggle out of poverty and debt traps. Funds meant to promote education in the countryside go unutilized even as higher education institutes, such as IITs, lack proper infrastructure to support students. State governments that say the Centre is not doing enough to ensure proper implementation of the Mid-day Meal Scheme and child welfare programmes are themselves missing development targets. The progress of the rural health mission programme has been tardy and the states are complacent about safeguarding the rights of the underprivileged, including tribals. Here is an independent scorecard.

By Sangeeta Singh
 sangeetas@livemint.com

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Promises under National Common Minimum Programme

- UPA Government will enact a National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
- Public investment in the agriculture sector, rural infrastructure and irrigation will be stepped up in a significant manner
- UPA Government will introduce a cess on central taxes to finance commitment to universal access to quality basic education
- A national cooked nutritious mid-day meal scheme will be introduced

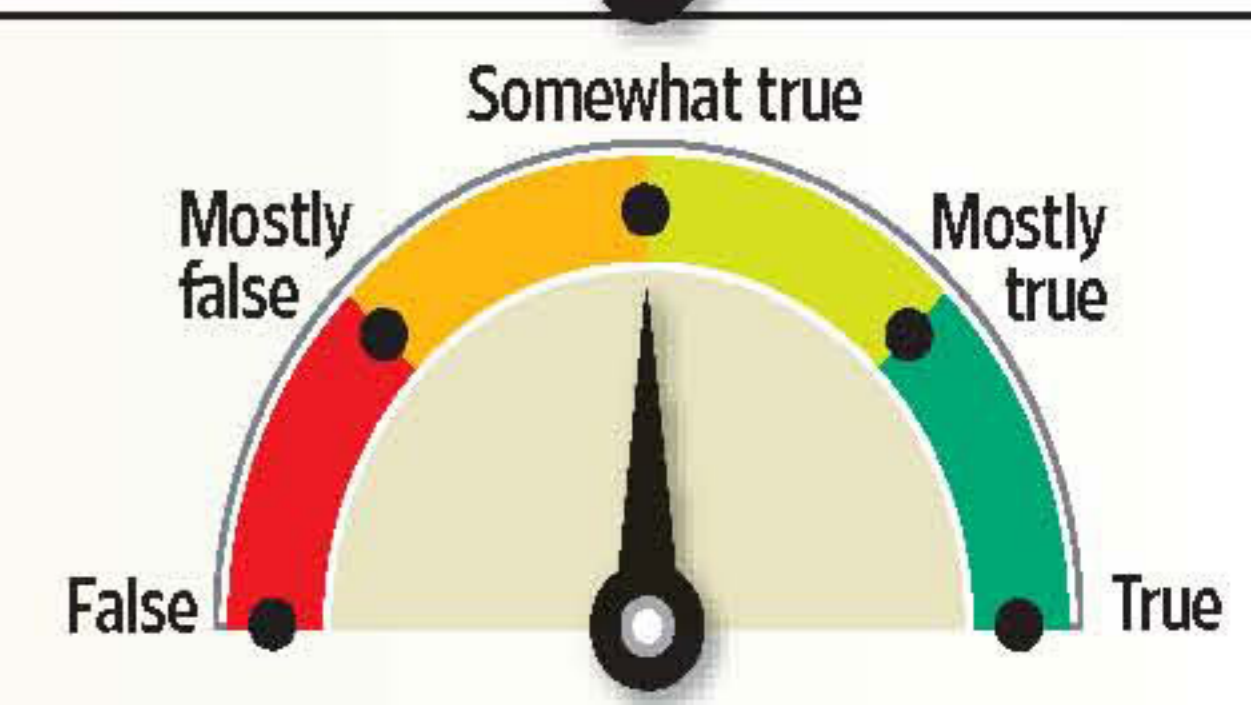
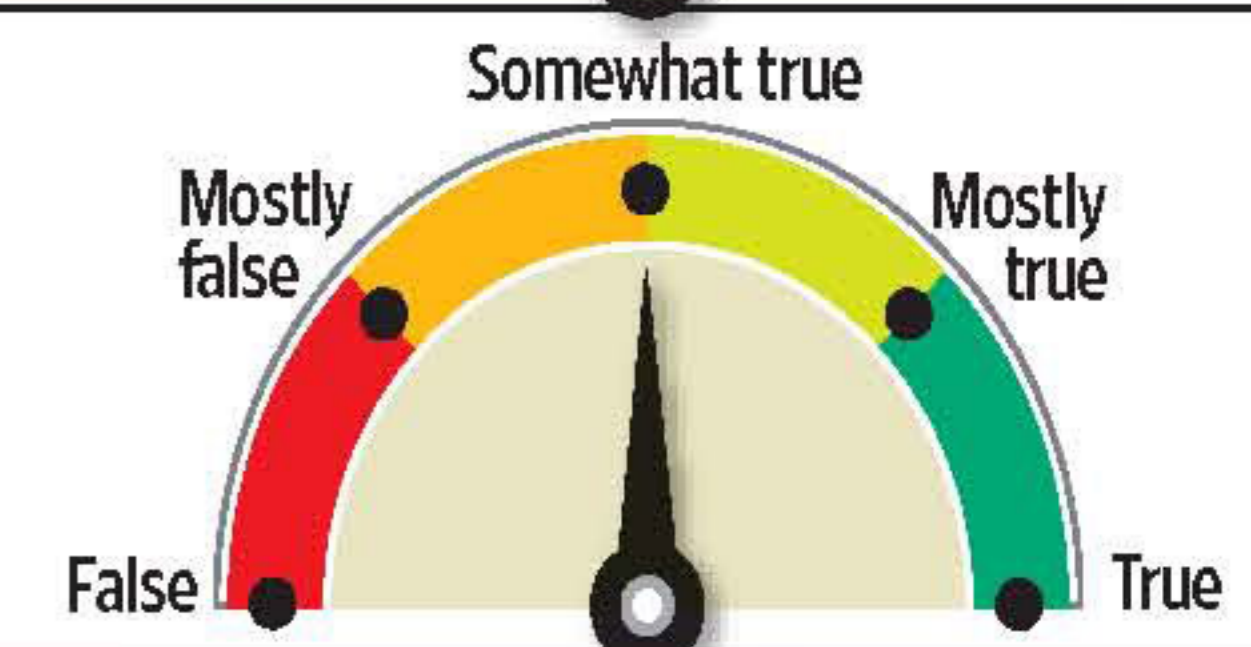
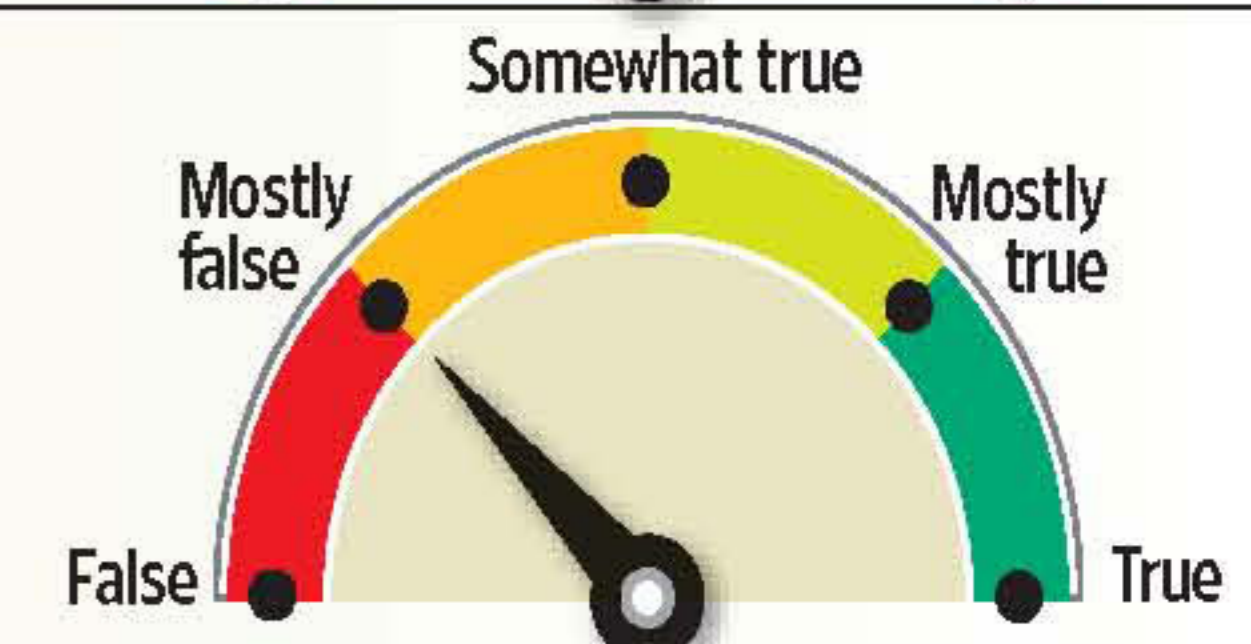
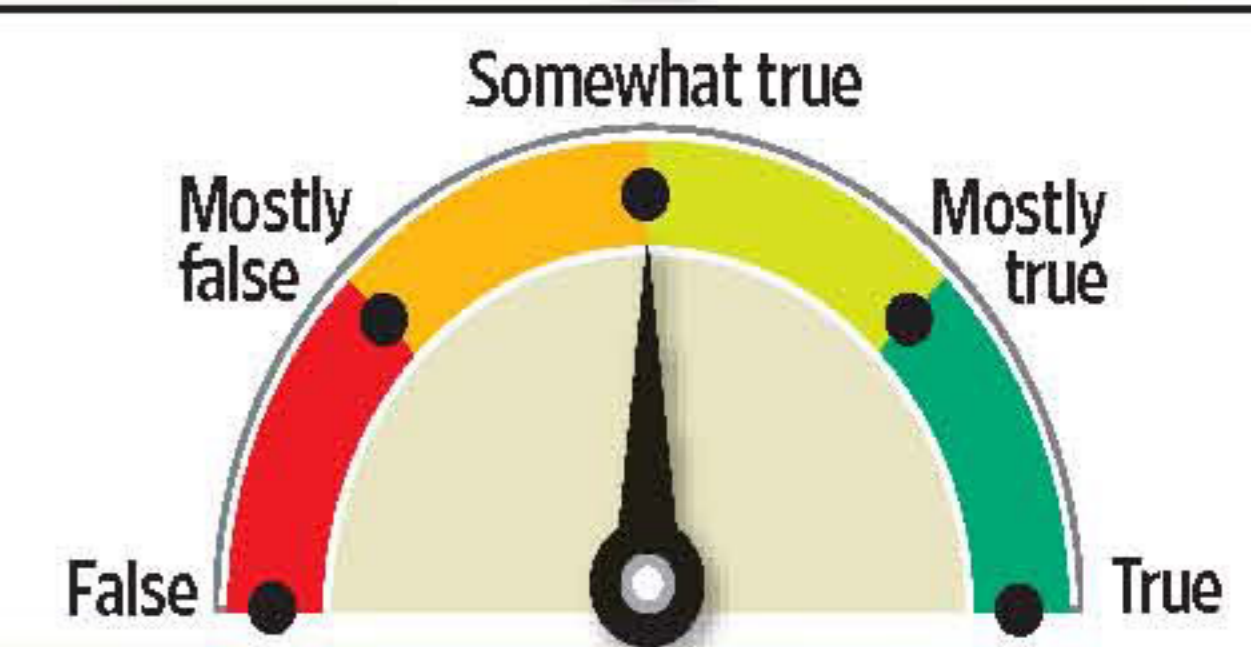
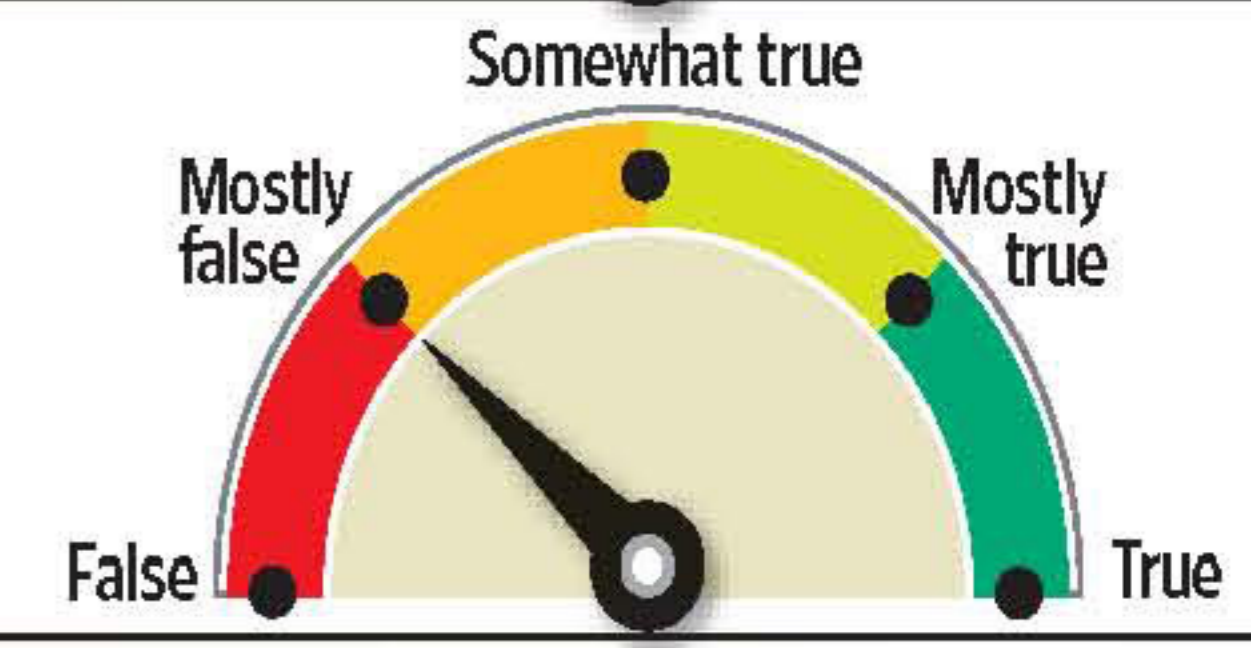
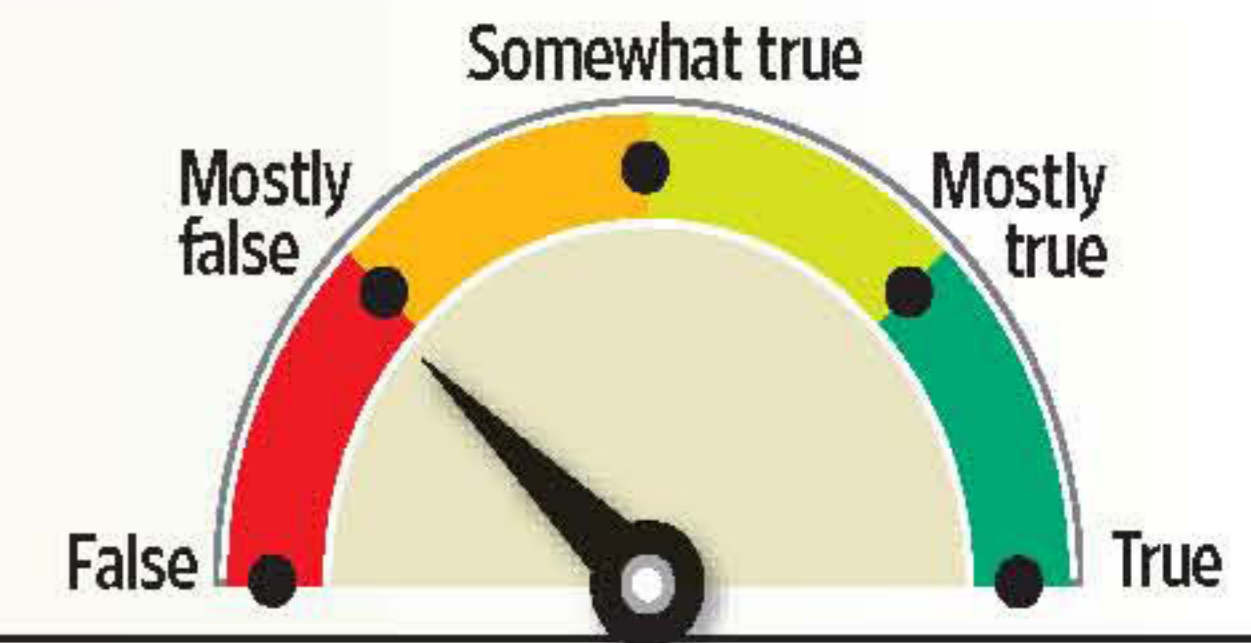
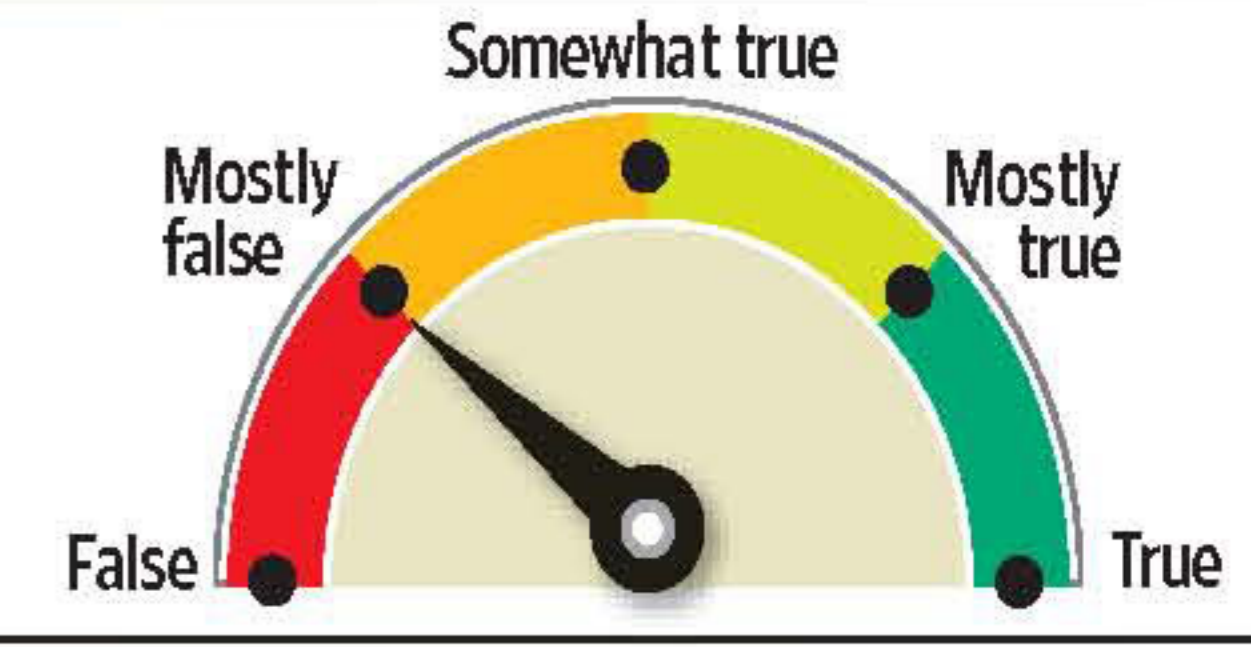
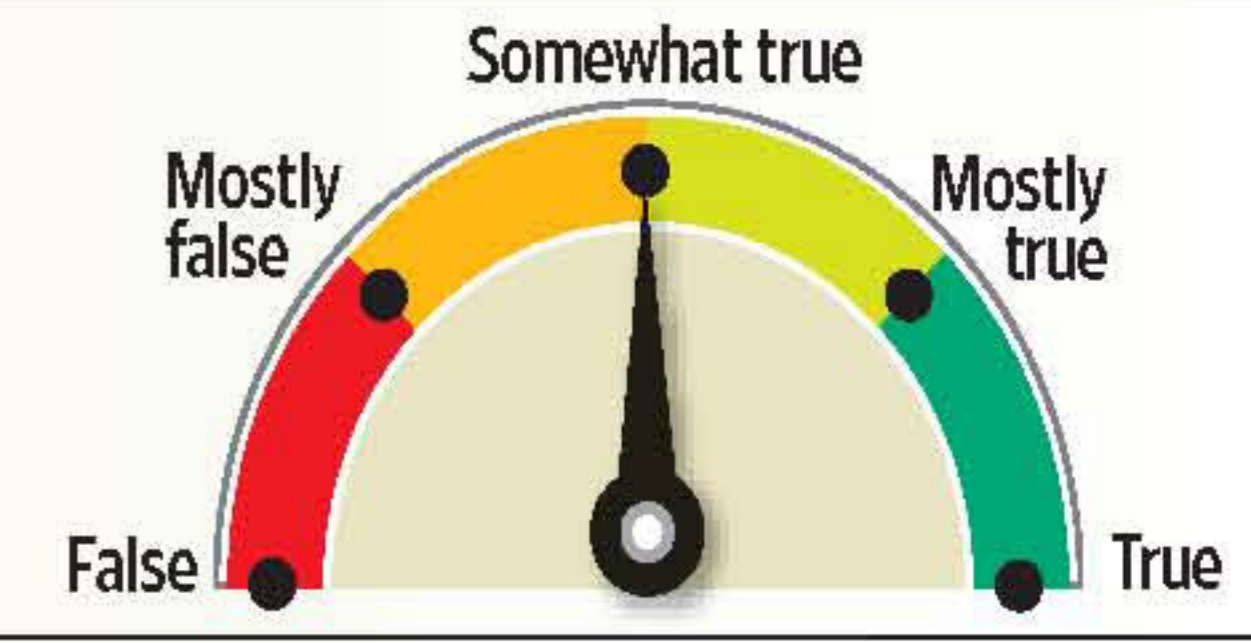
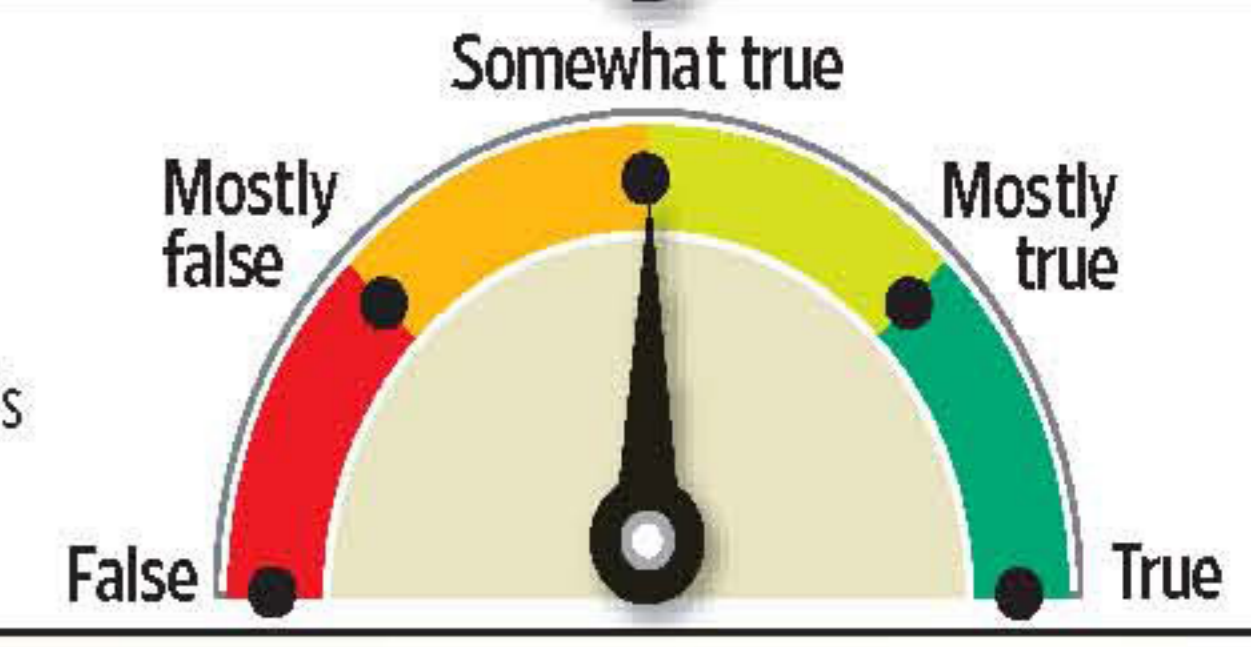
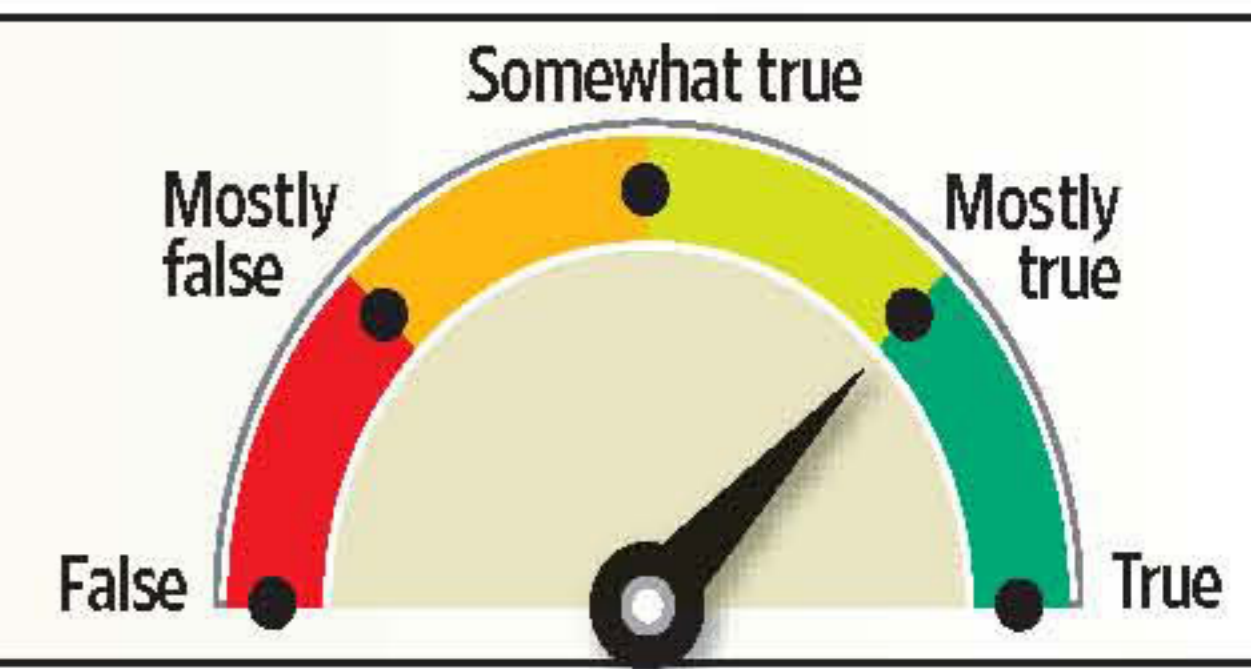
Status

- National Rural Employment Guarantee Act enacted in India is a global first for guaranteed employment to rural households for 100 days a year. 3.4 crore households benefited in year 2007-08.
- Public investment in agriculture stepped up. Agriculture sector achieves an unprecedented growth of 4.5%.
- Rs 71,000 crore debt waived to give relief to farmers
- Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana of Rs 25,000 crore under implementation.
- Bharat Nirman launched as a six-point, time-bound plan for rural infrastructure; 49,250 villages electrified in 3 years.
- Ensured that livelihoods of farmers in India are totally protected in WTO negotiations
- Cess introduced and credited to Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh; 2.4 lakh schools opened in the last four years and 8 lakh teachers appointed.
- Unprecedented five fold increase for education in the 11th plan to Rs. 2,74,000 crore.
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- 30 new Central Universities, 8 new IITs, 7 IIMs and 20 new Institutes of Information Technology herald the new wave of investment in higher education.
- For employability of youth, plan to create 500 million skilled jobs by 2022. National Skill Development Council under the Prime Minister will oversee the plan of Rs. 31,000 crore.
- Universal cooked mid-day meal programme operationalized benefiting 140 million children
- 382 lakh 'anganwadis' opened

Mint updates

Awareness levels in poorer states are very low and a latest Transparency International India-Center for Media Studies survey on corruption showed that one in 10 below poverty line (BPL) households had to pay bribes to enrol in the programme

Mint truth index



Promises under the National Common Minimum Programme

Official report from PM

UPA government will enact a National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act enacted in India is a global first for guaranteed employment to rural households for 100 days a year; 34 million households benefitted in the year 2007-08

Public investment in the agriculture sector, rural infrastructure and irrigation will be stepped up in a significant manner

- Public investment in agriculture stepped up. Agriculture sector achieves an unprecedented growth of 4.5%
- Rs71,000 crore debt waived to give relief to farmers
- Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana of Rs25,000 crore under implementation
- Bharat Nirman launched as a six-point, time-bound plan for rural infrastructure; 49,250 villages electrified in three years
- Ensured that livelihoods of farmers in India are totally protected in WTO negotiations

UPA government will introduce a cess on Central taxes to finance commitment to universal access to quality basic education

- Cess introduced and credited to Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh; 240,000 schools opened in the last four years and 800,000 teachers appointed
- Unprecedented fivefold increase for education in the 11th Plan to Rs2.74 trillion; 30 new Central universities, eight new IITs, seven IIMs and 20 new Institutes of Information Technology herald a new wave of investment in higher education
- For employability of youth, plan to create 500 million skilled jobs by 2022. National Skill Development Council under the Prime Minister will oversee the plan of Rs31,000 crore

A national cooked nutritious Mid-day Meal Scheme will be introduced

Universal cooked mid-day meal programme operationalized; benefiting 140 million children

Universalize Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)

382,000 'anganwadis' opened

Special attention will be paid to poorer sections in the matter of health care

National Rural Health Mission launched in 2005 to strengthen rural health care; 146,000 sub-centres, 22,370 primary health centres, 4,045 community health centres and 568 district hospitals supported for upgrading; 600,000 village level women health workers provide basic health services as ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist)

A national scheme for health insurance for poor families will be introduced

Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana introduced, covering people in the unorganized sector

Social security for the poor

Aam Aadmi Bima Yojana made operational and National Old Age Pension Scheme expanded to cover all families below the poverty line

Action for weaker sections

Sachar committee and 15-point programme for welfare of minorities, land rights for scheduled tribes and other traditional forest dwellers, reservation in educational institutions for OBCs, increased scholarships for scheduled caste and scheduled tribe students, Act on domestic violence to protect women

Right to Information

Right to Information, a landmark legislation operationalized empowering all citizens

Ensure that the economy grows at least 7-8% per year in a sustained manner

Economy grew at an average of 8.9% in the first four years of the government. This enabled the country to mobilize adequate additional resources for development and the government was able to substantially protect citizens from inflation arising out of global increase in prices of crude oil, fertilizer and food by subsidizing oil by Rs77,000 crore, food by Rs32,000 crore and fertilizer by more than Rs40,000 crore in 2007-08

Agriculture is a state subject and most states are yet to come up with investment proposals. Meanwhile, agriculture growth to halve to 2% in current fiscal

- Will hurt profitability of public sector banks, increase fiscal deficit burden
- Several states are yet to give innovative development plans
- Rural electrification target to be missed by about 50%; only six million BPL households out of the 23 million will have been provided a power connection
- An estimated 17,000 farmer suicides across the country

- Much of it remains unspent because poorer states have not been able to match the Centre's funds
- New IITs lack infrastructure to support students. Seats going empty

- The ministry of human resource development which oversees education has raised the government contribution to the Mid-day Meal Scheme by 5%
- State governments say allocations not enough and they are unable to absorb a spurt in food prices

- Universalization of ICDS, which food campaign experts are demanding, would mean setting up more than 1.4 million 'anganwadi' centres
- ICDS, which has been running for more than three decades, has come under the scanner of Supreme Court for poor implementation

- Criticized by government-funded study for slow pace of progress and blamed it on administrative constraint, government issue and manpower crunch
- Government yet to move on long-promised fake drugs bill

Insurance companies in various states still to be awarded jobs to carry on the insurance policy

Aam Aadmi Bima Yojana and National Old Age Pension Scheme were announced by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Independence Day last year. Both schemes need to be implemented across the nation in a full-fledged manner

There is a wide variation in how the schedule tribes and other traditional forest dwellers Act is being implemented. States like Chhattisgarh have not even begun to implement the Act in a substantial manner

- Under-publicized. Only two television ads and a radio spot in all of 2007
- Issue of inclusion of private entities and stock exchanges taken to courts

Growth to moderate to 7.7% in 2008-09; off-budget liabilities incurred to protect citizens to push fiscal deficit up to 75% of GDP in current fiscal. Inflation at 16-year high at 12.44%.