

Current Affairs

A Magazine for All Competitive Exams

CHRONICLE

- Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath: India's 45th UNESCO World Heritage Site
- India Joins WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement
- India's First 'Index of Service Production'
- PM Modi Conferred Indonesia's 'Bintang Adipurna'
- India Approved First Dengue Vaccine 'QDENG'
- Births/Deaths & Sex Ratio: Key Facts based on the CRS-2024
- India Bans Import of Goods Produced by Forced Labour
- World's First Artificial Cell
- India's 21st Designated Repository
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- MECON Limited Accorded 'Miniratna Category-I' Status
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- Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Smart Industrial Park



Jharkhand G.K.



Ministry Insights

Data from Ministry/Departments



Exam Point of View

Parliament Q&A



Current MCQs

Based on Events in July 2026



Diary of Events

Persons in News, Appointments, Obituary, Awards, Committee/Commission, Places in News, Apps & Portals, Books & Authors, Important Days & Themes



Model Test Paper

Uttar Pradesh Combined
Lower Subordinate Services
Competitive Examination 2026

STATES' AFFAIRS

Andhra Pradesh

'Mee Bhoomi-Mee Hakku' Programme

On 9th July 2026 Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu launched the '**Mee Bhoomi-Mee Hakku**' (Your Land-Your Right) programme in Banaganapalle, Nandyal district. This initiative aims to streamline land records and secure farmers' rights.

Key Facts

- **Digital Passbooks:** Distribution of tamper-proof passbooks integrated with QR codes for fast, reliable ownership verification.
- **Dispute Resolution:** Clearing land parcels from restrictive categories like Section 22-A prohibited lists and dotted lands to restore absolute rights to farmers.
- **Blockchain Integration:** Implementation of secure Mee Bhoomi-Blockchain pilot projects to merge Revenue, Survey, and Registration data onto a single transparent platform.

Arunachal Pradesh

Naying Hydel Project

The Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of the Environment Ministry has granted environmental clearance to the 1,000 megawatt (MW) Naying Hydro Electric Project in Arunachal Pradesh.

- It will be constructed on the Siyom River.
- The project lies in Siang and Shi-Yomi districts.
- It has strategic importance due to its proximity to the India-China border.

Bihar

Development of Birpur Airport

On July 22, 2026, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) sanctioned Rs. 28.42 crore for the construction and development of Birpur Airport in the Supaul district of Bihar.

Key Facts

- **Strategic Importance:** Due to its proximity to the Nepal border, this airport is vital for national security and cross-border trade.
- **Infrastructure:** The funds will be used to construct a modern reinforced bitumen runway, a passenger terminal, and an advanced Air Traffic Control (ATC) communication system.
- **Historical Background:** This airstrip was originally built in the 1950s-60s during the construction of the Kosi Barrage project.
- **Logistics Hub:** Developed under the UDAN scheme, it will also assist in flood disaster management operations in the Kosi River basin.

Bihar's First River-Interlinking Project

On July 19, 2026, Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary inaugurated Bihar's first river-interlinking project, the 'Belwa-Minapur Link Channel', in Sheohar.

Key Facts

- **Route of the Project:** The 68.80 km long link canal starts from Belwa Ghat in Piprahi block of Sheohar and extends to Minapur in Muzaffarpur.
- **Connecting Rivers:** This project primarily connects the Bagmati River with the Burhi Gandak River. It has been constructed at a cost of Rs. 130 crore.

5 Other Major River-Interlinking Projects in India

Project Name	Concerned States	Current Status & Benefits
Ken-Betwa Link	MP & UP	Under construction; Irrigation for 11 lakh hectares in 13 districts of Bundelkhand and drinking water for 62 lakh people.
Kosi-Mechi Link	Bihar	Approved; Protecting Seemanchal from floods by diverting Kosi floodwaters into the Mechi River and providing irrigation.
Damanganga-Pinjal Link	Maharashtra, Gujarat	DPR Ready; Domestic and industrial water supply to the Greater Mumbai region.
Godavari-Krishna-Kaveri Link	AP, Telangana, Tamil Nadu	DPR sent to states; Water stability in drought-prone areas of Southern states.
Par-Tapi-Narmada Link	Gujarat, Maharashtra	Plan report ready; Diverting surplus water from Western Ghats to drought-prone areas of North Gujarat.

Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis

According to health reports released on July 11, 2026, Bihar has successfully cleared the 'First Transmission Assessment Survey' (TAS-1) conducted for the elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis (LF).

Key Facts

- **Survey Results:** Out of a total of 57 implementation units evaluated in the state, 55 have successfully passed TAS-1.
- **Cessation of MDA:** All implementation units in Araria, Madhepura, and Supaul were completely successful in the assessment, leading to the stopping of the 'Mass Drug Administration' (MDA) program there and the beginning of the surveillance phase.
- **Direct Treatment:** Bihar achieved this milestone by ensuring drug consumption in the presence of trained health workers through 'Directly Observed Treatment' (DOT).

Lymphatic Filariasis

Commonly known as 'Elephantiasis', it is a neglected tropical disease caused by parasitic worms and spread by mosquito bites. The disease causes extreme swelling of body parts (especially legs), lifelong disability, and social stigma. India has set a national target for its complete elimination by 2027.

Munger's 700-Year-Old Banyan Tree: Oldest Accurately Dated Banyan Tree

According to research published in the scientific journal 'Quaternary Research' in July 2026, scientists have identified a Banyan tree in the Munger district of Bihar as approximately 700 years old, making it the oldest scientifically dated Banyan tree in the world using high-precision radiocarbon dating.

Key Facts

- **Research Team:** The study was led by Dr. Trina Bose, Dr. Mayank Shekhar, and Dr. Akhilesh K. Yadav from the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP), Lucknow.
- **Technique:** Researchers extracted 'alpha-cellulose' from wood samples and used Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) radiocarbon dating and the IntCal20 calibration curve.
- **Historical Assumption Refuted:** The study debunked the old belief that the tree was planted in front of the British-era 'Bura Bungla' (300-350 years ago); it is significantly older.
- **Technical Significance:** Since tropical trees do not have clear annual growth rings, this method provides a new scientific protocol for the accurate dating of heritage trees.

Radiocarbon Dating

It is a scientific method for determining the age of wood, bones, and other organic materials by measuring the rate of decay of the radioactive isotope of carbon (Carbon-14).

Practice Questions

1. Which location is NOT included in the first phase of the 'Heli Tourism Scheme' to promote tourism in Bihar?
(a) Patna (b) Valmikinagar
(c) Maa Mundeshwari (d) Gaya
2. In Begusarai, a new university has been announced to be established in the name of which national poet (Rashtrakavi)?
(a) Mahadevi Varma
(b) Ramdhari Singh Dinker
(c) Makhanlal Chaturvedi
(d) Subhadra Kumari Chauhan
3. As part of the expansion of technical education in Bihar, the state's first 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Computer Science University' will be established in which district?
(a) Patna (b) Gaya
(c) Bhagalpur (d) Nalanda
4. In July 2026, the Bihar Cabinet approved the 'Bihar Prison and Correctional Services Bill, 2026', completely repealing which 129-year-old colonial law?
(a) Prisons Act, 1894
(b) Bengal Jail Code, 1864
(c) Police Act, 1861
(d) Prisoners Act, 1900
5. Under the Bihar government's new policy, what percentage of sub-quota has been fixed for ex-Agniveers in state recruitment (such as Forest Guard and Jail Warder cadres)?
(a) 10% (b) 12.5%
(c) 15% (d) 25%

Answers

1. (d), 2. (b), 3. (c), 4. (a), 5. (b)

Chhattisgarh

Approval of 10% Reservation for Agniveers

On July 22, 2026, the Chhattisgarh Cabinet approved a 10% reservation for Agniveers in the state.

Key Facts

- **Scope of Reservation:** This will be applicable to direct recruitment for selected Group C (Grade III) posts in the state government, including Police Constable, Forest Guard, and Jail Warder.
- **Eligibility:** Only those Agniveers from Chhattisgarh who have completed 4 years of service in the Armed Forces and hold a valid discharge certificate will be eligible.
- **Rules:** This policy has been named the 'Chhattisgarh Civil Services (Group C) Reservation of Vacancies for Agniveer Soldiers Rules, 2026'.

STATES' AFFAIRS

Positive Results of 'Mukhyamantri Swasth Bastar Abhiyan'

The 'Mukhyamantri Swasth Bastar Abhiyan' (Chief Minister Healthy Bastar Campaign) operating in the Sukma district of Chhattisgarh has recorded a significant improvement in maternal and child health indicators.

Key Facts

- **Launch of the Scheme:** Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai launched this initiative on April 14, 2026, to deliver healthcare services to the remote tribal areas of Sukma.
- **Institutional Delivery:** The rate of institutional deliveries in Sukma district has increased to 98.6%, leading to a major decline in the Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR).
- **Door-to-Door Service:** Health teams are traveling door-to-door in dense forests and hilly terrains to conduct prenatal check-ups, vaccinations, and monitor high-risk pregnancies.

Balod District Sets Benchmark in Water Conservation

Balod district in Chhattisgarh has emerged as a national leader in water management, creating approximately 2.85 lakh water conservation and recharge structures within a single year.

Key Facts

- **Community Drive:** Responding to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Catch The Rain" call, the project was implemented under the **Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari 2.0** campaign through active collaboration between Gram Panchayats and local communities.
- **Tangible Results:** The wide range of rainwater harvesting interventions is already showing positive results during the ongoing monsoon, effectively recharging local aquifers.
- **National Recognition:** Building on its past success, Balod had previously created over one lakh structures under Phase 1.0, securing the **third position nationally** and the first position in the Eastern Zone.

Gujarat

Viksit Gujarat Data Centre Policy 2026-29

On 9th July 2026, the Gujarat government unveiled the 'Viksit Gujarat Data Centre Policy 2026-29' in Gandhinagar. This ambitious framework aims to transform the state into India's primary destination for Artificial Intelligence and data storage.

Key Facts

- **Capacity Goal:** The state targets a massive infrastructure capacity of up to 8 gigawatts (GW).
- **Financial Investment:** The policy aims to attract a monumental Rs. 6 lakh crore in investments.

- **Job Creation:** It is designed to generate large-scale employment opportunities, boosting the state's workforce in the tech sector.

Sustainability and Innovation

- **Green Energy:** In a move toward sustainability, data centres must utilize 51% renewable energy.
- **Water Management:** Facilities are encouraged to source water from desalination plants to preserve local resources.

Incentives

- **Tax Benefits:** To attract global players, the policy offers a 20-year tax holiday for service providers.

'Unjha Cumin' and 'Unjha Fennel' Receive Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

On July 13, 2026, the Geographical Indications Registry granted the GI tag to 'Unjha Cumin' and 'Unjha Fennel' from the Unjha region of Mehsana district, Gujarat.

- **Importance of Unjha:** Unjha in Gujarat is one of Asia's largest spice trading hubs. India is the largest producer and exporter of cumin in the world.

Jharkhand

Jharkhand Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy 2026-31

On July 14, 2026, the Jharkhand government unveiled the 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy 2026-31 Roadmap' during the National Stakeholder Consultation 2026 held in New Delhi, aimed at transforming the state into an AI-powered governance and technology hub.

Key Facts

- **Investment and Employment:** The roadmap aims to attract private investment exceeding Rs. 10,000 crore, establish over 50 Global Capability Centers (GCCs), and create more than 1 lakh AI-enabled jobs.
- **Government Expenditure:** An investment of Rs. 1,150 crore will be made over five years for the development of AI infrastructure, digital governance, and innovation.
- **Key Initiatives:** Proposed systems include 'CM-DIP' for data-driven governance, 'HNVS' for public health, and 'CMAS' for transparency in the mining sector.
- **Global Capability Centers (GCCs):** These are offshore centers established by multinational companies that provide specialized and advanced functions such as IT, Research & Development (R&D), AI, and customer service to their parent organization.

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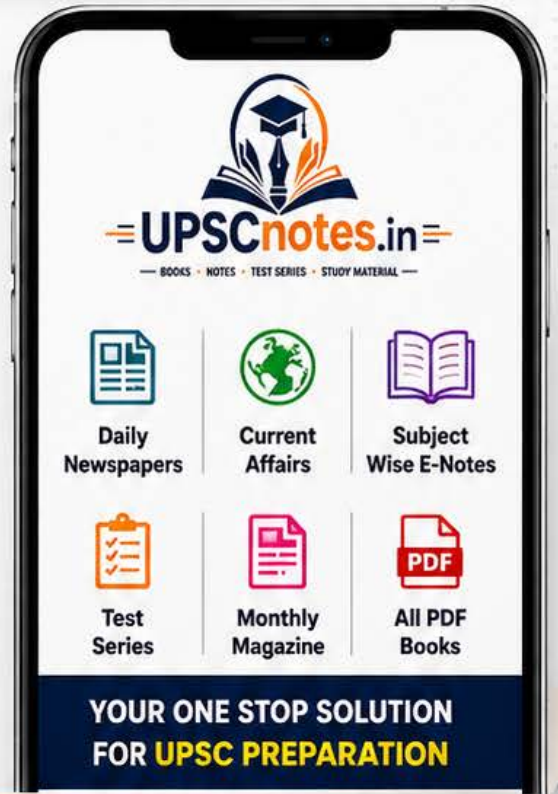
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Karnataka

ADB Loan for Karnataka Public Schools

On July 5, 2026, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a loan of **182.89 million US dollars** (Japanese Yen equivalent) to strengthen the public school system under the '**Karnataka Public School Strengthening Program**.'

Key Facts

- **Goal:** The project aims to establish **500 integrated Karnataka Public School clusters**, providing seamless education from pre-primary to the secondary level.
- **Beneficiaries:** This initiative will benefit over **1 million students** (especially girls and the underprivileged) through high-quality education.
- **Additional Funding:** Alongside the ADB loan, a **10 million grant and a 25 million guarantee** will be provided by IFFEd (International Finance Facility for Education), which will also promote **STEAM learning** (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics).

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

It is a regional development bank established on **December 19, 1966**. Headquartered in **Manila (Philippines)**, it works to promote social and economic development in the Asia-Pacific region.

Madhya Pradesh

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Smart Industrial Park

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav recently laid the foundation stone for the **Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Smart Industrial Park** in Satgarhi, Bhopal. This ambitious project is poised to transform Bhopal into a major hub for modern industrial growth.

Key Facts

- **Location & Scale:** Spread across **173 acres** in Satgarhi, Bhopal, serving as a catalyst for industrial development in the region.
- **Core Philosophy:** The park is designed on the '**work-live-grow**' model, integrating professional spaces with a high quality of life.
- **Infrastructure:** It will feature state-of-the-art facilities, including IT and AI-based systems, alongside a dedicated logistics and warehousing complex.
- **Diverse Industries:** The park will host high-value manufacturing, garment production, toy manufacturing, and cutting-edge Information Technology (IT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) sectors.

- **Job Creation:** The project is estimated to generate over **15,000 direct and indirect employment opportunities**, primarily benefiting the youth of Bhopal and surrounding districts.
- **World-Class Convention & Exhibition Centre:** A signature component of the park is a massive convention center spread over **25 acres**. It will have the ability to accommodate more than **10,000 people**.

Adani Defence to Establish Rs. 2,500 Crore Missile Hub in Madhya Pradesh

On July 5, 2026, 'Adani Defence and Aerospace,' an Adani Group company, laid the foundation stone for South Asia's largest private missile complex in Shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh, with an investment of **Rs. 2,500 crore**.

Key Facts

- **Foundation Stone:** The foundation stone of this facility was laid by the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Mohan Yadav, and the Union Minister for Communications, Jyotiraditya Scindia.
- **Integrated Manufacturing:** This will be India's first private defense complex to conduct composite propellant production, TNT manufacturing, and missile system integration at a single location.
- **Product Scope:** The center will manufacture medium and long-range missiles, ammunition, advanced weaponry, and explosive-grade materials to meet the requirements of the Indian Armed Forces and for export purposes.

Composite Propellant

It is a high-energy solid fuel used in modern rockets and missiles, featuring a precise chemical mixture of an oxidizer, a fuel binder, and metallic powder (such as aluminum).

Digital Audit Revolution in Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh has pioneered a fully digital audit system for its Panchayats through the **DRASHTI** (Digital Remote Auditing System for Transparency & Insights) portal.

Key Features of DRASHTI

- **Remote Auditing:** Auditors can verify financial records of over **23,000 Gram Panchayats** from any location.
- **Expert Collaboration:** Developed by the Directorate of Panchayati Raj and NIC under the CAG's guidance.
- **Enhanced Transparency:** Simplifies tracking income and expenditure while ensuring timely audits despite staff shortages.
- **Additional Digital Initiative: Online Payments:** A payment gateway on the **Panchayat Darpan** portal now enables citizens to pay bills online conveniently.

STATES' AFFAIRS

Maharashtra

Maharashtra Govt. Forms 7-Member Committee to Draft UCC

The Govt. of Maharashtra has formed of a seven-member expert committee to draft the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) for the state.

Key Facts

- **Leadership:** The committee is chaired by retired Supreme Court Justice **Ranjana Desai**, who previously led the UCC drafting processes for Uttarakhand and Gujarat.
- **Expert Composition:** Members include former High Court judges Justice R.C. Chavan and Justice S.G. Mehare, constitutional expert Ramesh Patange, and educationist Suvarna Rawal.
- **Scope & Timeline:** The panel will draft legislation covering marriage, divorce, inheritance, and succession for all religions. A report is expected within **six months**.
- **National Context:** Maharashtra joins Uttarakhand, Gujarat, and Assam in the pursuit of a common civil law to ensure legal uniformity across communities.

Meghalaya

Lakadong Turmeric Mission: Boosting Meghalaya's Golden Spice

Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma launched the ₹175-crore "**Lakadong Turmeric Mission Golden Spice**." Part of the USP initiative, this project aims to establish a farm-to-global-market ecosystem for Meghalaya's GI-tagged turmeric, famous for its world-high curcumin content.

Key Objectives and Impact

- **Economic Growth:** Aims to build a ₹100-crore Lakadong economy by FY 2028-29.
- **Empowerment:** Targets doubling farmers' incomes and creating over 3,000 women-led jobs.
- **Expansion:** Increasing cultivation area to 7,000 hectares.

Implementation Roadmap (2025–2030)

- **Phase 1:** Strengthening the value chain and authenticity.
- **Phase 2:** Global expansion and scaling up production.
- This mission serves as a replicable model to promote other regional products like ginger, honey, and pineapple on the global stage.

Rajasthan

Mukhyamantri Yuva Suyog Platform: Rajasthan's Youth Initiative

Rajasthan has launched the **Mukhyamantri Yuva Suyog Platform** to empower youth through sports, skills, and employment. Introduced by the Chief Minister in Jaipur, the initiative is currently in its pilot phase across the Bagru Assembly constituency and Baran district.

Sports and Infrastructure:

- **Competitions:** Organizes cricket, volleyball, kabaddi, and football matches, allowing winners to advance to higher-level tournaments.
- **Digital Mapping:** The platform digitally maps state sports infrastructure to improve accessibility and planning.

Development and Integration:

- **Yuva Suyog Clubs:** Registered youth gain membership to district-level clubs for networking and development.
- **MY Bharat Integration:** Aligned with the national "MY Bharat" program to foster volunteerism.
- **Registration:** Youth can sign up via the official portal to unlock skill-building and career opportunities.

Sikkim

Mission: Million Oak Trees by 2047

The Chief Minister of Sikkim, Mr Prem Singh Tamang launched "Mission: Million Oak Trees by 2047", a State-wide ecological restoration programme aimed at reviving Himalayan oak forests to strengthen water security, biodiversity and climate resilience.

- The Chief Minister ceremonially planted the first oak sapling under the mission, released the Oak Forest Restoration Manual, and launched the "Connect to Forest" toll-free helpline (1926) to enable citizens to report grievances, human-wildlife conflict, hazardous trees and access Forest Department services.
- Later, Mr. Tamang inaugurated the Sikkim Forest Training Institute at Bulbuley, established under the JICA-assisted Sikkim Biodiversity Conservation and Forest Management Project
- Sikkim has 47.33 per cent forest cover, with nearly half of its geographical area under forest administration and 33.77 per cent designated as protected areas and wildlife sanctuaries.

Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand: India's Sixth Fully Literate State

On 8th July 2026, Uttarakhand has become the sixth state in India to attain full literacy. This achievement follows the successful implementation of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** and the **ULLAS – New India Literacy Programme**.

Key Facts

- **National Ranking:** Uttarakhand now joins the prestigious group of fully literate states, alongside Mizoram, Goa, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, and Sikkim.
- **Program Success:** The feat was driven by the "Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society" (ULLAS) initiative, focusing on adult literacy and basic education.

Literacy & Full Literacy

The Ministry of Education (MoE) defines literacy under the New India Literacy Programme (NILP) as the capability to read, write, and compute with comprehension. It also includes the application of critical life skills like digital and financial literacy. 'Full literacy' is achieved when a State or Union Territory reaches a 95% literacy rate.

Uttar Pradesh**UP Mini Nandini Yojana 2026**

- The Uttar Pradesh government's **Mini Nandini Yojana** provides a 50% subsidy (up to ₹11.8 lakh) to establish 10-cow dairy units. This initiative under the Nand Baba Milk Mission aims to boost rural income and promote indigenous cattle.

Key Financials and Benefits

- **Subsidy:** Maximum ₹11.80 lakh credited via DBT in two phases.
- **Funding:** 15% owner contribution; 35% bank loan for the ₹23.60 lakh project.
- **Focus:** Promotion of native breeds like Sahiwal, Gir, and Tharparkar.

Eligibility and Application:

- **Experience:** Minimum 3 years in cattle rearing is mandatory.
- **Land:** Requires 1.0 acre (0.20 for infrastructure, 0.80 for fodder).
- **Process:** Apply via the official online portal or the district Chief Veterinary Officer's office.

Mukhyamantri Shikshak Cashless Chikitsa Yojana

On 8th July 2026 Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched the 'Chief Minister's Teachers' Cashless Medical Scheme' from Varanasi, marking a first-of-its-kind initiative in India for basic education employees.

- **Coverage and Beneficiaries:** The scheme provides robust medical support to over 15 lakh employees and their families.
- **Medical Limit:** Cashless treatment up to Rs. 5 lakh.
- **Inclusive Reach:** Covers regular teachers, non-teaching staff, Shiksha Mitras (para-teachers), instructors, cooks, and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya staff.

- **Insurance and Social Security (MoU with SBI):** In partnership with the State Bank of India, the government has introduced extensive insurance covers:
- **Accident Insurance:** Personal accident cover between Rs. 30 lakh and Rs. 80 lakh for employees earning over Rs. 10,000 monthly.
- **Disability Benefits:** Up to Rs. 80 lakh for permanent disability and Rs. 40 lakh for partial disability.
- **Additional Support:** Includes air accident insurance and financial aid for children's education or daughters' marriages in the event of an untimely tragedy.

Empowerment of UP's Tribal Women through the Natural Bio-Economy Model

The Uttar Pradesh government's Natural Bio-Economy Model is strengthening the rural economy by economically empowering tribal women.

Key Facts

- **Nature of the Scheme:** This model enables women through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to create value-added products (such as herbal soaps) from local natural resources.
- **Successful Example:** The 'Bajrangbali Self-Help Group' from Sajaur village in the Robertsganj block of Sonbhadra district has emerged as a highly successful model of this initiative.
- **Economic Benefits:** This group is earning an income of Rs. 50,000–60,000 per month, providing an additional income of Rs. 8,000–10,000 to each member.

Natural Bio-Economy Model

- ✦ It is an economic system that creates value-added products through the scientific processing of local natural resources (such as plants, forest produce, and organic waste).
- ✦ The primary objective is to create sustainable livelihoods and employment opportunities in rural and tribal areas while ensuring environmental conservation.
- ✦ It is a method of meeting economic, environmental, and social needs with the help of Biotechnology, Bioengineering, and other scientific techniques.

Rani Laxmibai Scooty Scheme

On July 21, 2026, the Uttar Pradesh Cabinet approved the detailed rules for the implementation of the 'Rani Laxmibai Scooty Yojana' with a budgetary allocation of Rs. 400 crore.

Key Facts

- **Target Beneficiaries:** Under this, the top 5% (approximately 50,000) of meritorious female students from the state's higher educational institutions who complete their graduation during the 2025-26 academic session will receive free petrol-powered scooties.

STATES' AFFAIRS

- **Income & Special Exemptions:** The applicant's annual family income must be less than Rs. 12 lakh. However, daughters of persons with disabilities (Divyang), martyrs, and destitute families have been given special exemptions from income and merit criteria.
- **Additional Facilities:** The scheme includes the scooter, comprehensive insurance, RTO registration, ISI helmet, and initial fuel, which will be purchased through the GeM portal.

Government e-Marketplace (GeM)

GeM is a national public procurement portal established for the transparent, efficient, and contactless online procurement of goods and services by various ministries, departments, and public sector undertakings of the Government of India.

'Kaushal Setu' and 'Kaushal Sarathi' Digital Portals

On July 15, 2026, on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day, the Uttar Pradesh government launched the 'Kaushal Setu' and 'Kaushal Sarathi' portals to make the state's skill development system transparent and technology-driven.

Key Facts

- **Kaushal Setu:** This is a portal by UPSDM (UP Skill Development Mission) that makes the process of online registration and empanelment of training partners completely paperless and digital.
- **Kaushal Sarathi:** It provides youth with accurate information and contact details of district-wise training centers, courses, and training partners through a digital map.
- **Industrial Partnerships:** Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed with KLK Private Limited and Winsome Textile for training in Robotics, AI, and the textile industry.

World Youth Skills Day

Declared by the United Nations General Assembly in 2014, this day is observed annually on July 15. Its purpose is to achieve global recognition for the importance of equipping youth with technical and vocational skills for employment, decent work, and entrepreneurship.

Uttar Pradesh 'Data Center Policy 2026'

On July 7, 2026, the Uttar Pradesh Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, approved the 'Uttar Pradesh Data Center Policy 2026' to make the state a hub for Green and AI-enabled data centers.

Key Facts

- **Investment & Capacity Goal:** The policy aims to attract investment exceeding Rs. 2 lakh crore and increase the state's data center capacity to 2 Gigawatts (GW).

- **Regional Incentives:** Replacing the 2021 policy, this policy provides special subsidies for projects established in the Bundelkhand and Purvanchal regions.
- **Technical & Employment Benefits:** The policy will promote GPU-based technologies, AI, and Tier III and Tier IV data centers, creating 50,000 jobs during the construction phase and 7,500 jobs during operations.

Tier IV Data Centre

This is a data center infrastructure with the highest availability (99.995%) and complete fault tolerance, featuring redundant components and dual independent paths for power, cooling, and network.

Renaming of Jalalabad to 'Parshurampuri'

On July 7, 2026, the Uttar Pradesh Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, approved the proposal to rename Jalalabad town in Shahjahanpur district to 'Parshurampuri'.

Key Facts

- **Central Consent:** The state government officially took this decision after the Central Government provided a 'No Objection' (NOC).
- **Cultural Background:** According to the demand of local residents and religious beliefs, Jalalabad is considered the birthplace of Lord Parshuram.
- **Historical Context:** During the Mughal era, the town was named Jalalabad after Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Akbar.
- **Implementation:** State Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna announced that the relevant department would complete the necessary legal procedures for the formal implementation of the name change.

Renaming Process

To rename a city or town in India, it is mandatory to obtain a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Railways, Department of Posts, and Survey of India after approval from the state cabinet.

Digi Rover-GNSS Special Land Measurement Campaign

On July 2, 2026, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched the statewide 'Digi Rover (GNSS) Special Land Measurement Campaign' from Saharanpur.

Key Facts

- **Campaign Duration:** This special technical campaign will be conducted in mission mode with full transparency across all tehsils of Uttar Pradesh until August 15, 2026.
- **Use of Modern Technology:** 'Digi Rover' technology based on the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) is being used for accurate land measurement and surveying.

- **Campaign Goal:** To bring complete transparency to land records, prevent encroachment, and ensure time-bound and effective resolution of pending land demarcation cases.

Global Navigation Satellite System

- ◆ GNSS is a satellite-based navigation system that provides accurate three-dimensional (3D) positioning (latitude, longitude, altitude) and time information to users worldwide.
- ◆ India has also developed its own independent and indigenous regional navigation system known as 'NavIC'.

Country's First Six-Lane Runway Underpass

India's first six-lane runway underpass is being built at Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. It features a 450-meter underground structure on National Highway-31 that allows road traffic to pass smoothly beneath an active runway.

National Family Benefit Scheme

Under the 'National Family Benefit Scheme' (NFBS) being implemented by the Uttar Pradesh government, financial assistance of Rs. 30,000 was provided to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families upon the death of the primary breadwinner on July 1, 2026.

Key Facts

- **Eligibility Age:** The age of the deceased breadwinner must be between 18 and 60 years.
- **Income Limit:** To receive financial assistance, the annual family income must not exceed Rs. 56,450 in urban areas and Rs. 46,080 in rural areas.
- **Payment Method:** This lump-sum assistance is sent directly to the beneficiary's Aadhaar-linked bank account through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

Practice Questions

1. Which state-of-the-art center, part of 'Mission Mausam', was recently inaugurated in Lucknow for accurate weather forecasting?
 - (a) National Disaster Response Centre
 - (b) Regional Meteorological Centre
 - (c) Cloud Seeding Research Lab
 - (d) Agro-Meteorological Centre
2. Under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign, how many crore saplings did Uttar Pradesh plant in a single day on July 12, 2026, setting a record?
 - (a) 30 crore
 - (b) 32 crore
 - (c) 35 crore
 - (d) 40 crore
3. The Cabinet has approved the 'Vindhya-Purvanchal Link Expressway'. Which districts will this expressway connect?
 - (a) Prayagraj - Varanasi - Ballia
 - (b) Ghazipur - Mirzapur - Chandauli

- (c) Azamgarh - Mau - Gorakhpur
- (d) Jhansi - Lalitpur - Banda

4. In July 2026, the 'Lucknow Development Authority' (LDA) started the process of preparing Master Plan-2051 for the 'State Capital Region' (SCR), including which 6 districts?
 - (a) Lucknow, Kanpur, Unnao, Rae Bareilly, Sitapur, Barabanki
 - (b) Lucknow, Ayodhya, Gonda, Basti, Hardoi, Sitapur
 - (c) Lucknow, Unnao, Hardoi, Sitapur, Barabanki, Rae Bareilly
 - (d) Lucknow, Kanpur Nagar, Kanpur Dehat, Unnao, Hardoi, Barabanki
5. Which special model was praised in July 2026 for the empowerment of tribal women in 'Sajaur' village of Sonbhadra district, Uttar Pradesh?
 - (a) Van Dhan Vikas Model
 - (b) Natural Bio-Economy Model
 - (c) Lakhpati Didi Initiative
 - (d) Herbal Cluster Scheme

Answers

1. (b), 2. (c), 3. (b), 4. (c), 5. (b)

West Bengal

West Bengal Forms Panel to Examine Uniform Civil Code Bill

The West Bengal government has constituted a nine-member committee to examine the draft Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill for the state. The decision to evaluate the legal framework for a unified civil law was finalized during a cabinet meeting held on July 2nd, with an official notification already being published.

Key Details of the Committee

- **Leadership:** The panel will be chaired by Justice (retd) Ranjana Prakash Desai.
- **Prominent Members:** Former Governor of Meghalaya, Tathagata Roy, has been appointed as one of the key members of the committee.
- **Core Objective:** The committee is tasked with a comprehensive review of the draft bill to assess its implementation and implications within the state.
- **Procedural Status:** Following the cabinet's approval, the committee will begin its examination to provide recommendations to the state government regarding the proposed civil reforms.

New Anti-Crime Acts in West Bengal

On 13 July 2026, following the Governor's assent, two landmark legislations passed in June 2026 have officially come into force in West Bengal. These laws are designed to provide the state with a more robust framework for maintaining public order and tackling organized crime.

STATES' AFFAIRS

Key Provisions and Objectives

- **Legislation Details:** The two new laws are the *West Bengal Public Safety and Control of Anti-social Activities Act, 2026* and the *West Bengal Maintenance of Public Order (Amendment) Act, 2026*.
- **Preventive Detention:** The Public Safety Act empowers authorities—including District Magistrates and Police Commissioners—to detain individuals suspected of anti-social activities for up to one year.
- **Swift Enforcement:** In cases involving internal security, immediate detention is permitted, provided the State Government grants approval within 15 days.
- **Strategic Goals:** Chief Minister Suvenhu Adhikari emphasized that these laws ensure zero tolerance for riots, attacks on police, and public disruption. A primary focus is enhancing the safety and security of women and children across the state.

'Pradhan Mantri Chai Shramik Protsahan Yojana'

On July 7, 2026, the West Bengal government approved a special assistance package of Rs. 313.3 crore for the socio-economic upliftment of tea garden workers in North Bengal.

Key Facts

- **Number of Beneficiaries:** This scheme will benefit more than 3 lakh tea garden workers and their families in the plains and hilly regions of North Bengal.
- **Education Sector (CSSY):** Rs. 177 crore has been allocated for the 'Chai Shramik Shiksha Yojana' (Tea Workers Education Scheme) to upgrade educational infrastructure.
- **Health and Housing (CSSSY & CSAY):** Rs. 72 crore has been allocated for health facilities and Rs. 63 crore for the construction of 321 rest sheds.
- **Implementation Agency:** The North Bengal Development Department (NBDD) will execute the scheme in collaboration with the Health Department and the Samagra Shiksha Mission.

GI Tag for Three Traditional Products of West Bengal

On June 27-28, 2026, the Government of India granted Geographical Indication (GI) tags to three traditional products from the Hooghly district of West Bengal: Chandannagar's Jalbhara Sandesh, Janai's Monohara, and the traditional wooden boats (Dinghy boats) of Balagarh.

Key Facts

- **Jalbhara Sandesh:** Created by Surya Modak in the 19th century, this sweet is also known as «Jamai Thokno Mishti» and features a filling of rose-flavored syrup.
- **Janai's Monohara:** This is a distinct traditional Bengali sweet with a sugar-coated outer layer and a soft *chhena* (cottage cheese) filling.

- **Dinghy Boats:** A 500-year-old boat-building tradition associated with the Saptagram port, these are used for fishing and trade.

WB forms Committee to overhaul Curriculum & Syllabus for Classes 1 to 12

The West Bengal government has constituted a syllabus-cum-curriculum committee to review and recommend major revisions to the curriculum, syllabus, and textbooks for Classes 1 to 12.

- The committee will be chaired by Prof Debashis Chatterjee of Kalyani University's chemistry department.

Key Objectives and Scope

- **Curriculum Alignment:** Update Classes 1–12 syllabi and textbooks to match NEP 2020 and National Curriculum Frameworks (NCF 2022/2023).
- **Stress Reduction:** Re-evaluate exam patterns across boards to lower academic pressure and shift focus from memorization to conceptual learning.
- **Classroom Focus:** Minimize reliance on private coaching and guidebooks by improving main classroom instruction quality.
- **Teacher Training:** Propose updates to teacher development and training formats.

Practice Questions

1. In July 2026, which state signed an agreement with the UAE Food Cluster to establish a food processing hub for an export unit in Chittoor?
(a) Karnataka
(b) Andhra Pradesh
(c) Maharashtra
(d) Gujarat
2. The Jharkhand government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with which institution to establish the 'Jharkhand Film and Television Institute' in Ranchi?
(a) FTII Pune
(b) Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI)
(c) National School of Drama
(d) Indian Institute of Mass Communication
3. The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has identified Thorium reserves in the Chamarajanagar district of which state?
(a) Tamil Nadu
(b) Karnataka
(c) Kerala
(d) Andhra Pradesh

Answers

1. (b), 2. (b), 3. (b)

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

2nd India Green Hydrogen Summit 2026

On July 23, 2026, Union Minister of State for New and Renewable Energy, Shripad Yesso Naik, addressed the '2nd India Green Hydrogen Summit 2026' held in New Delhi.

Key Facts

- **Global Leadership:** The summit reiterated the commitment to making India a global leader in the green hydrogen sector through the 'National Green Hydrogen Mission.'
- **Technical Achievements:** Achievements such as commercial-scale green hydrogen production in India and the first indigenous hydrogen-powered train were highlighted.
- **Global Partnership:** Policymakers, industrialists, and scientists discussed making green hydrogen projects commercially viable.

Green Hydrogen

Green hydrogen is a clean fuel produced by splitting water molecules (H_2O) into hydrogen (H_2) and oxygen (O_2) using renewable energy (such as solar or wind power). It is completely safe for the environment due to zero carbon emissions during production. The Government of India has launched the 'National Green Hydrogen Mission,' which aims to produce 5 million tons of green hydrogen annually by 2030.

Third Rail Line Project Approved for South Eastern Railway

On July 23, 2026, the Ministry of Railways approved a third rail line project between Nimpura West Outer Cabin and Midnapore of the South Eastern Railway at a cost of Rs. 440 crore.

Key Facts

- **Project Scope:** A 14.52 km long third rail track will be constructed, facilitating smoother movement of passenger and goods trains.
- **Increase in Freight:** Upon completion, an additional freight carrying capacity of 3.52 million tons per year will be developed.
- **Network Strengthening:** This infrastructure expansion will reduce bottlenecks on busy rail routes and strengthen transport connectivity for local industries.

South Eastern Railway (SER)

SER is one of the 18 zones of Indian Railways, headquartered at Garden Reach, Kolkata. This zone primarily serves the mineral-rich and industrial areas of West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Odisha.

India to Commission 5 Small Nuclear Power Reactors by 2033

On July 23, 2026, Minister of State for Atomic Energy, Dr. Jitendra Singh, informed the Lok Sabha that the government aims to commission 5 indigenous Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) by 2033.

Key Facts

- **Development by BARC:** Bhabha Atomic Research Centre is developing a 220 MW Bharat Small Modular Reactor, a 55 MW reactor, and a high-temperature gas-cooled reactor.
- **Private Sector Entry:** Following the passage of the 'SHANTI Act, 2025', the nuclear energy sector has been opened for private participation.
- **Long-term Roadmap:** The goal is to increase the current 8.78 GW capacity to 22 GW by 2031-32 and to 100 GW by 2047 under the 'Nuclear Energy Mission.'

Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) vs. Large Conventional Reactors

Feature	Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)	Large Conventional Reactors
Power Capacity	Low: Up to 300 MW per unit	High: 700 MW – 1,600 MW+ per unit
Size & Construction	Small and Modular: Built in factories, assembled on-site	Massive: Built entirely at the site
Initial Cost	Lower and Manageable: Favorable for private investment	Extremely High: Heavy budgetary investment and financial risk
Construction Time	Fast: 3–5 years	Long: 10–15 years or more
Safety System	Passive Safety: Automatic shutdown without power/human intervention	Active Safety: Dependent on external power and operators
Space Requirement	Minimal: Less land and water; possible near the grid	Extensive: Large area and large water source needed

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Approval for Two Electronics Manufacturing Clusters in Tamil Nadu

On July 23, 2026, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw informed the Lok Sabha that the Central Government has approved two new Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC) in Tamil Nadu worth over Rs. 1,012 crore.

Key Facts

- **Cluster Locations:** Clusters will be built in Manallur across 474.3 acres (Rs. 587.47 crore) and in Pillappakkam across 379.3 acres (Rs. 424.55 crore).
- **Production Growth:** Electronics production in the country has increased from Rs. 1.9 lakh crore in 2014-15 to Rs. 13.11 lakh crore in 2025-26, with exports reaching Rs. 4.24 lakh crore.
- **Self-Reliance:** India now manufactures 99.2% of the mobile phones sold in the country, with mobile production recorded at Rs. 6.27 lakh crore.

Electronics Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) Scheme

A flagship scheme of the Ministry of Electronics and IT. It aims to develop modern infrastructure, supply chains, and support facilities for the electronics industry to boost global investment and indigenous manufacturing.

India's First 'Index of Service Production' (ISP)

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released a trial version of India's first 'Index of Service Production' (ISP) to measure the monthly performance of the formal service sector.

Key Facts

- **Base Year & Coverage:** With 2024-25 as the base year, this index covers 19 sub-sectors of the service sector, accounting for approximately 60% of India's total service GVA.
- **Sector-wise Performance:** April 2026 data recorded the highest growth in accommodation and food services (37.2%) and retail trade (30.8%).
- **Data Sources:** Administrative records from the GST database, Railways, Banking, and the ASISSE survey were used to prepare the index.

Sub-sectors Included in the Index of Service Production

Category	Sub-sectors Included
Trade	Wholesale, retail, and repair services
Hospitality	Hotels and food services
Transport	Railway, road, water, air, storage, and courier
Communication (ICT)	Telecom, broadcasting, and IT/computer services
Finance	Banking, insurance, and real estate
Business	Professional, scientific, and administrative services
Recreation	Art, entertainment, and cultural activities

Healthy Diet Policy Document for Children by ICMR-NIN

On July 22, 2026, the 'Let's Fix Our Food Consortium' of ICMR-NIN released a policy document titled 'Priority Policy Actions' for children and adolescents.

Key Facts

- **Release of Document:** NITI Aayog Member (Health) Dr. M. Srinivas officially unveiled this policy document in New Delhi.
- **Three Years of Research:** This publication is based on nearly 3 years of multi-disciplinary research and extensive consultations, focusing on a healthy food environment in schools.
- **Health Improvement:** Its primary objective is to prevent obesity, overweight, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) caused by unhealthy eating habits in children.
- **National Institute of Nutrition (NIN):** A century-old premier research institute of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), located in Hyderabad.

Key Recommendations of the ICMR-NIN Policy Document

Focus Area	Key Policy Recommendations
School Food Environment	• Complete ban on the sale and marketing of food high in fat, sugar, and salt (HFSS) within school premises and a 100-meter radius. • Actively promote nutritious and diverse foods in schools.
Food Labeling (FOPNL)	• Implement mandatory and easy-to-understand 'Front-of-Pack Nutrition Labeling' (FOPNL) on packaged foods. • Provide clear visual warnings on the front of packets to identify high fat, sugar, or salt content.
Ban on Advertisements	• Impose strict legal restrictions on unhealthy food advertisements targeting children across television, print, and digital media.
Fiscal Policies	• Implement discriminatory taxation—increase taxes on unhealthy food and provide subsidies to make nutritious foods cheaper.
Government Procurement	• Set nutrition-sensitive standards for government food programs and institutional canteens.
Educational Tools	• Use the NEAT-S toolkit to audit the school environment. • Add digital literacy modules to teach children how to read food ingredients and nutrition labels.



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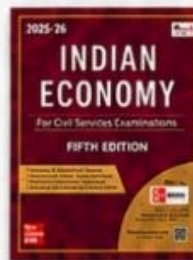
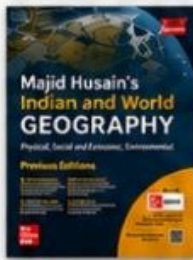
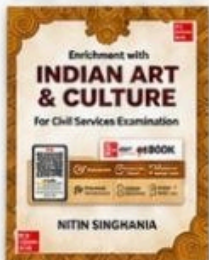
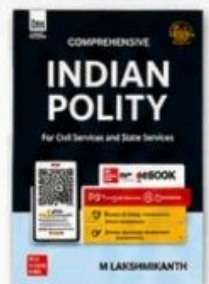
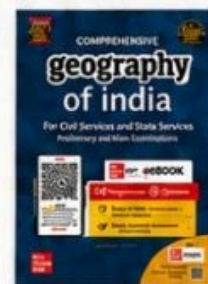
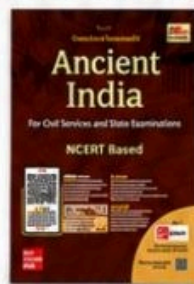
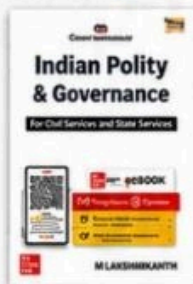
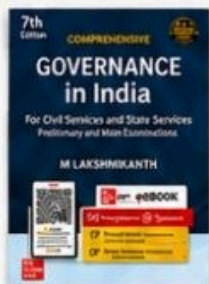
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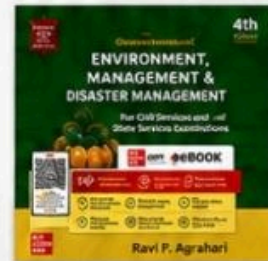
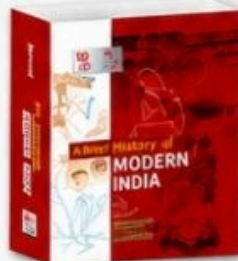
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Action Plan on Demographic Changes

Recently, the Union Home Ministry constituted a high-level committee under the chairmanship of retired Supreme Court Judge P.P. Naolekar to investigate illegal migration and unusual population shifts. On July 1, 2026, committee members met the Union Home Minister in New Delhi and shared their upcoming action plan.

Key Facts

- **Mission Objective:** Under the Prime Minister's 'High-Power Demographic Mission' announced on August 15, 2025, this committee aims to conduct a scientific assessment of demographic changes.
- **Scope of Work:** The committee will draft a framework to identify illegal migrants, detain them, and establish a permanent mechanism for deportation.
- **Security & Visits:** The demographic issue is particularly sensitive in Assam, West Bengal, and North-Eastern states, where the committee will visit to gather data.

National Register of Citizens (NRC)

This is an official record of valid Indian citizens updated under the 'Citizenship Act, 1955.' In the 2019 updated NRC in Assam, 19.06 lakh people were excluded, marking one of India's largest and most complex citizenship verification drives.

India's First Government AI University

On July 14, 2026, during the 'Google I/O Connect India 2026' held in Bengaluru, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar announced the establishment of India's first government-run Artificial Intelligence (AI) University in Bengaluru.

Highlights

- **State's Vision:** The initiative aims to make Karnataka an "AI-native state" and promote AI-driven education, research, and innovation.
- **Establishment of AI Hub:** Alongside the university, an 'AI Hub' will be created to provide a platform for startups, research, and industry-academic collaboration.
- **Use in Good Governance:** AI technologies will be utilized to improve public services in education, health, agriculture, urban mobility, and digital governance.

Key Fact

The Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI), located in Masdar City, Abu Dhabi (UAE), is the world's first fully dedicated AI university.

Practice Questions

1. Who has launched the 'Going Global' guide to guide Indian Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in export opportunities?

(a) NITI Aayog and FICCI

(b) CTIL and CII

(c) Ministry of Commerce and ASSOCHAM

(d) Ministry of MSME and FIEO

2. What percentage of the Indian Railways' Broad Gauge network electrification has been completed by July 2026?

(a) 95.2%

(b) 98.4%

(c) 99.6%

(d) 100%

3. In which institution will the third Digital India RISC-V (DIR-V) Symposium 2026 be organized?

(a) IIT Delhi

(b) IIT Madras

(c) IIT Bombay

(d) IISc Bengaluru

4. At which location did Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurate the CG Semi Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (OSAT) facility to boost India's semiconductor value chain?

(a) Noida, Uttar Pradesh

(b) Sanand, Gujarat

(c) Bengaluru, Karnataka

(d) Hyderabad, Telangana

5. What is the official name of the Central Vista Redevelopment Area in New Delhi?

(a) Kartavya Bhavan Complex

(b) Rashtriya Vikas Parisar

(c) Bharat Prashasnik Bhavan

(d) Amrit Bhavan Parisar

6. India has started its candidacy and campaign for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council (UNSC) with the 'SHANTI' approach for which period?

(a) 2026-27

(b) 2028-29

(c) 2030-31

(d) 2032-33

Answers

1. (b), 2. (c), 3. (b), 4. (b), 5. (a), 6. (b)

Indian Polity and Governance

Special Fast-Track Court for Paper Leak Cases

On July 24, 2026, the Delhi High Court constituted a special fast-track court for the speedy trial of cases under the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024.

Key Facts

- **Appointment of Judge:** The court of Anu Grover Baliga at Rouse Avenue Court has been authorized as this special fast-track court.
- **Jurisdiction:** This court will directly hear offenses registered under the Public Examinations Act and other related matters.
- **Speedy Justice System:** The High Court issued this notification immediately after the Prime Minister's announcement regarding fast-track courts to pave the way for swift justice.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

- **Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024:** A central law passed to prevent unfair means, collusion, and paper leaks in public examinations. It includes strict provisions of up to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to Rs. 1 crore for organized criminals involved in paper leaks.

Supreme Court Directive for Uniform Benefit Policy for Retired Judges

On July 21, 2026, the Supreme Court of India directed the Central Government to constitute a committee within two weeks for nationwide uniform post-retirement facilities for retired High Court judges.

Key Facts

- **Right to Equality:** The bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant considered the unequal facilities provided by different states as a violation of the constitutional rights to equality and dignity.
- **Role of the Committee:** The committee will submit its report within three months, including a mechanism for sharing the financial burden between the Center and the States.
- **Facilities:** Under this policy, uniform standards will be set for facilities such as security, drivers, domestic help, medical reimbursement, and government housing.
- **High Court:** Under Article 214 of the Indian Constitution, there is a provision for a High Court for each state. It is the highest judicial authority at the state level; the retirement age for its judges is 62 years.

AI in the Indian Judiciary

- The Supreme Court's AI Committee released the original draft rules ('Regulations for the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Courts, 2026') on June 3, 2026. Feedback was sought from the public, lawyers, and technical experts, with the deadline extended to July 15, 2026.

Key Facts

- **Institutional Framework:** Instead of creating separate AI bodies at the Supreme Court, High Court, and district levels, there is a need for a permanent technological institute to avoid fragmentation of accountability.
- **Lack of Standards:** The current draft does not define unified national standards or benchmarks for the accuracy, explainability, and acceptable error rates of AI systems.
- **Conflict of Interest:** The standard-setting body (CoRE-AI) should be kept separate from the procurement process of AI systems to maintain neutrality.
- **Center of Research and Excellence on AI (CoRE-AI):** A proposed independent technical body for the judiciary. Its main task will be to develop and update national standards for explainability, data quality, and accuracy for AI systems, without any role in procurement.

Judicial Digitization in India — At a Glance	
Initiative	Description
e-Courts Mission (Phase I-III)	A pan-India project for the computerization of district and subordinate courts, enabling e-filing, digital summons, and online case status.
NJDG (National Judicial Data Grid)	A comprehensive public online database that provides real-time statistics and tracking of pending and disposed cases across the country.
FASTER System	(Fast and Secured Transmission of Electronic Records) A platform for the secure, instant digital transmission of bail and stay orders to prisons and relevant authorities.
SuVAS	(SC Vidhik Apuvaad Software) An AI-powered tool used for translating Supreme Court judgments and legal documents from English into regional Indian languages.
SUPACE	(SC Portal for Assistance in Court's Efficiency) An AI-driven portal designed to assist judges by processing vast data and legal research to enhance judicial efficiency.
Virtual Courts	A system designed to handle petty offenses (like traffic challenges) online, eliminating the need for physical presence in court.

Integration of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and AI

India is improving state capacity and citizen services by integrating its robust Digital Public Infrastructure (Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker) with AI.

Key Facts

- **DPI Achievements:** 27 billion+ annual authentications via Aadhaar have led to a 16-fold increase in DBT beneficiaries. UPI handles 23 billion transactions per month (42% of global digital payments).
- **Economic Visibility:** 20 crore GST payments and 4.5 billion FASTag transactions provide real-time data on logistics and supply chains.
- **IndiaAI Mission Infrastructure:** Under this, more than 38,000 GPUs, 9,500+ datasets, 273 regional AI models, and a 40+ petaflop supercomputing system have been developed.
- **Proposed Initiatives:** The establishment of 'Aadhaar Punji' (Universal Lifetime Social Security Account) and 'Enterprise DPI' has been suggested.
- **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI):** A set of digital networks based on open standards and interoperability (e.g., Aadhaar for identity, UPI for payments). It enables the public and private sectors to provide transparent services at a population scale.

Social Media Access for Children

On July 11, 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised Australia's ban on social media for children under the age of 16, which has intensified the debate on age-based restrictions in India as well.

Key Facts

- **Global Trends:** Australia became the first country to impose a ban for children under 16 (though 85% of children still use it). Indonesia (<16) and France (<15) are also introducing similar rules.
- **Proposed Framework in India:** The Indian government is considering three categories: strict control for ages 8–12, monitoring for ages 12–16, and flexible rules for ages 16–18. The Economic Review 2025–26 also recommended an age limit.
- **Constitutional Status:** Under Entry 31 of the Union List (List I) of the Seventh Schedule, Parliament has the exclusive right to regulate the internet and telecommunications.

Information Technology Rules, 2021

Notified under the Information Technology Act, 2000, these rules set standards for **due diligence** for social media intermediaries. They mandate the appointment of a Grievance Redressal Officer and define obligations related to online child safety.

United Nations AI Governance Report

On July 1, 2026, the UN's 'International Scientific Panel on AI' (IISPA) released its preliminary report, expressing concern over the lack of safety standards compared to the rapid development of AI.

Key Facts

- **Panel Composition:** The 40-member IISPA is co-chaired by Turing Award winner Yoshua Bengio and Nobel Peace Prize winner Maria Ressa.
- **Compute Divide:** The US holds 75% of global AI compute capacity, China holds 15%, and the rest of the world holds only 10%.
- **Gap in Model Creation:** In 2025, US institutions created 59 notable AI models and China created 35, while the rest of the world produced only 13.
- **India's Stand:** Under the 'IndiaAI Mission,' India is building indigenous compute capacity and actively participating in the UN's AI governance dialogue.

Independent International Scientific Panel on AI

IISPA is the first independent scientific body formed by the United Nations. Its objective is to provide a scientific and impartial assessment of AI's capabilities, risks, safety standards, and its impact on democracy and human rights.

Indian Passport is Not Proof of Citizenship

On the occasion of the '14th Passport Seva Divas' on June 24, 2026, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) clarified that an Indian passport is primarily an international travel document and cannot be considered conclusive proof of citizenship.

Key Facts

- **Legal Status:** Citizenship in India is determined under the 'Citizenship Act 1955,' whereas a passport is a travel document.
- **Valid Proof:** In India, the Birth Certificate (RBD Act 1969), NRC, and Citizenship Certificate are the only legally valid documents for citizenship.
- **Diplomatic Achievement:** Currently, Indian passport holders can enter 27 countries visa-free. Additionally, visa-on-arrival facilities are available in 47 countries and e-Visas in 66 countries.

e-Passport

This is an advanced biometric passport containing an electronic microchip (RFID). It securely stores the holder's biometric data, facilitating international travel while minimizing the possibility of forgery and identity theft.

Practice Question

1. Under the 'Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill 2026' to be introduced in the Lok Sabha, which national symbol is proposed to be given legal protection?
(a) Jana Gana Mana (b) Vande Mataram
(c) Satyameva Jayate (d) National Flag Song
Ans. (b)

Art & Culture

Haveli Sangeet

The Sangeet Natak Akademi has selected Acharya Ranchhodlal Goswami for the 2025 Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar. He is the first Haveli Sangeet practitioner in post-Independence India and the first artist from Gujarat to receive this prestigious national award.

About Haveli Sangeet

- Haveli Sangeet is a 16th-century classical devotional music tradition of the Pushtimarg sect, founded by Mahaprabhu Vallabhacharya in the Braj region.
- It focuses on the selfless service of Shrinathji (Lord Krishna) through the philosophy of Shuddhadvaita (Pure Non-dualism).

Key Facts

- **The Ashta Chap:** Organized by Vitthalnath ji (Gusainji), this group of eight legendary poet-musicians (including the blind saint Surdas) composed padas for daily worship.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

- **Dhrupad Style:** It preserves the ancient Dhrupad-Dhammar genre, maintaining the purity of Ragas unlike the contemporary Mughal court music.
- **Ashtayam Pooja:** Kirtans are performed during eight specific daily services (e.g., Mangala to Shayan), strictly adhering to the "Time Theory" of Indian classical music.
- **Historical Resilience:** In 1672, to escape Aurangzeb's temple desecration, the Shrinathji deity was moved from Govardhan to Nathdwara, Rajasthan, where the "Haveli" (mansion-temple) tradition continues to flourish today.

ASI Restoration Project at Prambanan Temple Complex

On July 8, 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the historic Prambanan Temple complex in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and inaugurated an ASI-led conservation project.

Key Facts

- **Cultural Ties:** PM Modi, along with President Prabowo Subianto, unveiled a commemorative plaque for the restoration of the temple by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).
- **Temple History:** Located on Java Island, this is Indonesia's largest Hindu temple complex, built in the 9th century by the Sanjaya Dynasty and dedicated to the Trimurti (Shiva, Vishnu, Brahma).
- **UNESCO Heritage:** Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991, the main Shiva temple in the complex stands 47 meters high, with walls depicting scenes from the Ramayana.
- **Prambanan Temple:** It is the second-largest temple in Southeast Asia after Angkor Wat. It is characterized by its tall and pointed architecture, typical of traditional Hindu temple design.

"Manas and Mahabharata"- Civilization Study Center

During the Indian delegation's visit to Kyrgyzstan between July 4 and 7, 2026, the Centre for Study of International Relations (CSIR) New Delhi and the Manas National Academy established the International Civilization Study Centre "Manas and Mahabharata" in Bishkek.

Key Facts

- **Civilization Study:** The center will promote comparative epic studies, humanitarian diplomacy, and scientific cooperation between India and Kyrgyzstan.
- **Hindi Translation Release:** On the occasion of the inauguration, the first Hindi translation of the Kyrgyz epic "Manas" (translated by Hem Chandra Pande and Ramakant Dwivedi) was officially released.

- **Trilateral Agreement:** A trilateral agreement was signed between Manas National Academy, CSIR, and seven Kyrgyz universities to enhance academic cooperation.
- **Epic of Manas:** A traditional ancient epic of the Kyrgyz people, narrating the exploits and cultural heritage of the national hero 'Manas.' It is considered one of the longest epics in the world.

Inauguration of 'Swar Prerna Veethika'

On July 1, 2026, the 'Swar Prerna Veethika' photo gallery was inaugurated by Akashvani at the Rang Bhavan Auditorium in New Delhi.

Key Facts

- **Inaugurator:** The gallery was inaugurated by Padma Vibhushan Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia (renowned flute player).
- **Objective:** This permanent photo gallery is dedicated to legendary musicians who were associated with Akashvani and received the country's highest civilian honors.
- **First Phase Artists:** Portraits of 20 legendary artists, including Bharat Ratna winners such as M.S. Subbulakshmi, Pandit Ravi Shankar, Lata Mangeshkar, and Ustad Bismillah Khan, are displayed.
- **Akashvani:** Also known as All India Radio (AIR), it celebrated its 90th anniversary in 2026. Its motto is 'Bahujan Hitaya: Bahujan Sukhaya' (For the happiness of many, for the welfare of many).

Practice Questions

1. Where has India's first immersive language museum 'Shabdlok' been inaugurated?
(a) New Delhi (National Museum)
(b) Kolkata (National Library Campus)
(c) Varanasi (Sanskrit University)
(d) Hyderabad (Telugu Academy)
2. Which digital platform has been launched for the preservation of tribal art, culture, and knowledge?
(a) TribeX Digital Platform
(b) Vanvasi Tech Portal
(c) Tribal Heritage Hub
(d) Johar Digital Network
3. Under which treaty did Australia return three stolen antiquities, including Chola-era artifacts, to Tamil Nadu in July 2026?
(a) Bilateral Cultural Treaty
(b) Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty
(c) UNESCO Heritage Agreement
(d) India-Australia Extradition Treaty

Answers

1. (b), 2. (a), 3. (b)

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

India-Sri Lanka Tax Treaty: Integration of Anti-Abuse Rules

On July 21, 2026, India included a new anti-abuse rule in its bilateral tax treaty framework with Sri Lanka.

Key Facts

- **Scope of the Rule:** This rule allows tax authorities to deny treaty benefits if the main purpose of a transaction is to obtain a tax benefit.
- **Principal Purpose Test (PPT):** The Principal Purpose Test standard has been implemented to prevent 'treaty shopping' in international taxation.
- **Affected Sectors:** This provision will apply to cross-border income flows such as dividends, interest, royalties, and business profits.

Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement

It is a bilateral agreement between two countries aimed at ensuring that the same income is not taxed in both countries.

- This promotes international trade and curbs tax evasion.
- India has comprehensive tax agreements with 90+ countries, including the following major nations:
- **Asia & Middle East:** Singapore, UAE, Oman, Qatar, Japan, Sri Lanka, Malaysia.
- **Americas & Europe:** USA, UK, Germany, France, Canada, Italy, Netherlands.
- **Oceania & Africa:** Australia, New Zealand, Mauritius, South Africa, Kenya.

First Monthly Index to Track Services Sector Performance

On 14th July 2026, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the first Trial Index of Services Production (ISP) for the month of April.

Key Facts

- **Base Year:** 2024-25
- **Covered Sub Sectors:** Currently covers 19 sub-sectors representing around 60% of the services economy.
- **Broad-based Growth:** 14 of 19 sub-sectors recorded double-digit year-on-year growth.
- **Fastest-growing Sectors:** Accommodation & Food (37.2%), Retail Trade (30.8%), Administrative & Support Services (28.7%), Real Estate (27.7%).
- **Weakest Performers:** Air Transport (-13.9%) and Railway Transport (-0.4%) were the only sectors to contract.

Index of Services Production

- ✦ Index of Services Production is India's first monthly indicator designed to measure short-term movements in the formal services sector.
- ✦ With services contributing nearly 53% to India's Gross Value Added (GVA) and 30% of employment, the ISP fills a critical gap in economic monitoring previously limited to industrial activity.
- ✦ The index combines GST data, administrative records and Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises (ASISSE), with WPI/CPI deflators.
- ✦ **Monthly Release Date:** Subsequent ISP will be released on 29th of every month.

CBDT Notifies New Cost Inflation Index

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has increased the Cost Inflation Index (CII) for the financial year 2026-27 to 384.

- This represents a 2.3% rise from the previous year's figure of 376, effective for tax calculations from April 1, 2026.

Cost Inflation Index

- ✦ Cost Inflation Index or CII is a tool used in the calculation of an estimated yearly increase in an asset's price as a result of inflation.
- ✦ The Central Government fixes this index and publishes it in its official gazette for measuring inflation. This index, notified each year by the Government is defined under Section 48 of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

Sikkim Budget 2026-27

On July 20, 2026, Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang presented a state budget of Rs. 19,215 crore for the financial year 2026-27 in the State Assembly.

Key Facts

- **Budget Structure:** The total budget size is Rs. 19,215 crore, with a net expenditure of Rs. 18,455 crore. It includes a provision of Rs. 11,733 crore for revenue expenditure and Rs. 5,896 crore for capital expenditure.
- **Central Schemes:** The state government has allocated Rs. 2,460 crore for Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS).
- **Health & Education:** Initiatives include HPV screening for 1.5 lakh women (aged 30-65), the first kidney transplant program at STNM Hospital, and a medical college with 100 MBBS seats in Sochakgang.

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

- **Development Goal:** Under the "Viksit Sikkim @2047" vision, the state's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) is estimated to be Rs. 62,973 crore in 2026-27.

Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) Top 5 States (2025-2026)

Rank	State	Estimated GSDP (Rs. Lakh Crore)	Share in National GDP (%)
1	Maharashtra	Rs. 45.3 - 49.3+	~13.46%
2	Tamil Nadu	Rs. 31.5+	~8.93%
3	Uttar Pradesh	Rs. 29.7+	~8.77%
4	Karnataka	Rs. 28.8+	~8.49%
5	Gujarat	Rs. 25.0+	~8.05%

Key Highlights

- **Smallest Economy:** Among all Union Territories, Ladakh has the lowest GSDP.
- **Per Capita GSDP (Income) Leaders:**
 - ❖ **Small States:** Goa leads the country in per capita income.
 - ❖ **Large States:** Telangana and Karnataka are the top performers in terms of per capita GSDP.

RBI Forex Swap Facility: \$20.7 Billion Foreign Inflow

By July 17, 2026, the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) concessional Forex Swap Facility attracted a foreign exchange inflow of \$20.7 billion (approximately Rs. 2 lakh crore).

Key Facts

- **Launch & Objective:** The facility was announced on June 5, 2026, and became operational on June 8, 2026, with the primary objective of strengthening the country's balance of payments.
- **Components of Inflow:** The highest amount came from FCNR (B) deposits (17.406 billion), followed by foreign currency borrowings (1.97 billion) and External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) (\$1.342 billion).
- **Costs & Rates:** The RBI bears hedging costs of 280-300 bps per annum, enabling banks to offer dollar deposit rates ranging from 5.5% to 7.1%.
- **Validity:** The FCNR(B) swap is available until September 30, 2026, and the ECB swap until December 31, 2026, covering only the principal amount.

Forex Swap Facility

Forex Swap Facility is a financial arrangement where two parties (usually a commercial bank and the central bank) exchange foreign currency (buy and sell) for two different dates simultaneously. Its main purpose is to manage liquidity in the money market, strengthen forex reserves, and mitigate currency exchange rate risks.

Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme

On July 15, 2026, the Union Cabinet approved the 'Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme' (MPMS) with a financial outlay of Rs. 62,500 crore.

Key Facts

- **Scheme Duration:** The scheme will operate for 5 years from FY 2026-27 to 2030-31, replacing the old PLI scheme which ended on March 31, 2026.
- **Incentive Rates:** Eligible sales will receive incentives of 2.25% to 5%; an additional 1.5% incentive for domestic sourcing of spare parts and 3% for product design and R&D is provided.
- **Production & Exports:** The scheme is estimated to generate total production worth Rs. 39 lakh crore, exports of Rs. 15 lakh crore, and 60,000 direct jobs.
- **Main Goal:** To accelerate electronics manufacturing in India and deepen domestic value addition.

Production Linked Incentive (PLI)

The government has included 14 strategic sectors under this scheme:

- ❖ **Electronics & Hardware:** Mobiles, laptops, tablets.
- ❖ **Pharmaceuticals:** APIs, medical devices.
- ❖ **Automobile:** EVs and components.
- ❖ **Telecom:** Networking products.
- ❖ **Textiles:** MMF, technical textiles.
- ❖ **Food Products:** Ready-to-eat, organic, processed.
- ❖ **Renewable Energy:** Solar PV modules.
- ❖ **Others:** ACC batteries, drones, white goods, specialty steel.

Amendment in Windfall Tax on Petroleum Exports

Under a notification issued on July 15, 2026, the Government of India revised the windfall tax rates on the export of petroleum products effective from July 16, 2026.

Key Facts

- **Tax on Diesel:** The export duty on diesel was increased by Rs. 7 per liter, from Rs. 8.50 to Rs. 15.50 per liter.
- **Tax on ATF:** The duty on the export of Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) was raised by Rs. 7, from Rs. 7.50 to Rs. 14.50 per liter.
- **Relief on Petrol:** The export duty on petrol was reduced by Rs. 1.5 per liter, from Rs. 4 to Rs. 2.50 per liter.
- **Review Factor:** This move followed a fortnightly review after international crude oil prices surged due to US-Iran tensions and disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz.

Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme 5.0

According to data released on July 9, 2026, over 4.11 lakh loan guarantees have been issued under the 'Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme 5.0' (approved by the Cabinet on May 5, 2026), with a total disbursement of Rs. 1,55,229 crore.

Key Facts

- **Objective & Security:** To provide liquidity support to businesses affected by the geopolitical situation in West Asia, 100% guarantee coverage is provided for MSMEs and 90% for other businesses.
- **Beneficiary Structure:** The MSME sector accounts for 98% of the total number of approved guarantees and 82% of the total guaranteed amount.
- **Awareness Campaign:** The Department of Financial Services (DFS) is conducting the first phase at 9 locations and the second phase at 10 locations from May 20 to June 6, 2026.

Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme

ECLGS is a financial security scheme launched by the government to provide additional collateral-free credit to distressed sectors and MSME units to recover from cash flow disruptions.

India Chairs 9th Session of UNCTAD Expert Group

From July 6 to 8, 2026, India chaired the ninth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts (IGE) on Consumer Protection Law and Policy, organized by UNCTAD in Geneva, Switzerland.

Key Facts

- **Indian Delegation:** The session was chaired by Nidhi Khare, Secretary of the Department of Consumer Affairs.
- **Main Focus:** The highlight of the meeting was the launch of the 'UN Principles for Consumer Product Safety,' adopted by the UNGA in December 2025.
- **India's Initiative:** India showcased the success of its National Consumer Helpline (NCH), which resolved 1.47 lakh refund-related complaints in the last 14 months, ensuring refunds worth over Rs. 91.77 crore.

UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development)

Established in 1964 and headquartered in Geneva, it is a permanent intergovernmental body of the United Nations that helps developing countries integrate into the world economy and international trade fairly and effectively.

Nine Years of Goods and Services Tax

On July 1, 2026, the Goods and Services Tax (GST), launched under the "One Nation, One Tax" vision, completed nine years of successful implementation.

Key Facts

- **Historic Launch:** Implemented on July 1, 2017, GST replaced 17 indirect taxes and 13 cesses, eliminating the cascading effect of taxes.
- **Revenue & Taxpayers:** Registered taxpayers increased from 66.5 lakh (2017) to 1.65 crore by May 2026. Gross collection rose from Rs. 7.4 lakh crore (2017-18) to Rs. 22.27 lakh crore (2025-26).

- **GST 2.0 Reforms:** Effective from September 22, 2025, GST 2.0 simplified the structure primarily into two slabs—5% and 18%—while luxury/sin goods are taxed at 40%.

GSTN (Goods and Services Tax Network)

A non-profit, non-government company owned 50:50 by the Central and State governments, providing the shared IT infrastructure and portal for GST administration in India.

Viksit Bharat - Employment and Livelihood Mission (Rural) Act, 2025

On July 1, 2026, the 'Viksit Bharat - Employment and Livelihood Mission (Rural) (VB-GRAM G) Act, 2025' came into force across India.

Key Facts

- **Increase in Employment Guarantee:** Strengthening the rural employment framework, this Act has increased the statutory wage employment guarantee for every eligible rural household from 100 days to 125 days.
- **Interim Allocation:** The Central Government has made an interim allocation of Rs. 95,692.31 crore to States and Union Territories to ensure smooth implementation and timely wage payments.
- **National Launch:** The mission was launched at the national level on July 2, 2026, in Mukkuvaripalli village, Tirupati district, Andhra Pradesh.
- **Priority Areas:** The Act prioritizes water conservation, natural resource management, agriculture, and women's empowerment.

Statutory Employment Guarantee

This refers to a legal right that mandates the state to provide work to citizens who demand it, up to a specified limit.

MECON Limited Accorded 'Miniratna Category-I' Status

On July 1, 2026, the Ministry of Steel granted the status of 'Miniratna Category-I' to MECON Limited, a premier Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) of India.

Key Facts

- **Basis of Achievement:** This recognition is based on the company's consistent profitability over the last three financial years and a positive net worth of Rs. 535.42 crore as of March 31, 2026.
- **Profile of MECON:** Established in 1959 and headquartered in Ranchi (Jharkhand), it is a Schedule (A) enterprise under the Ministry of Steel, specializing in engineering, consultancy, and project management.
- **Enhanced Autonomy:** The Miniratna Category-I status will provide the company with greater financial and operational autonomy, enabling it to compete more effectively in both domestic and global markets.



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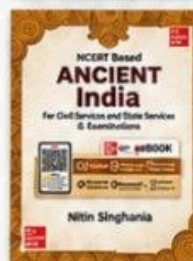
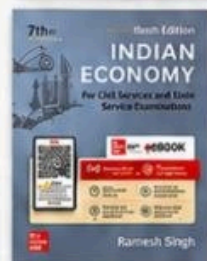
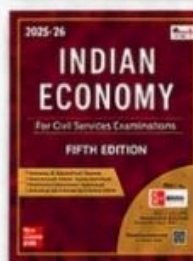
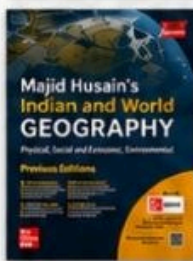
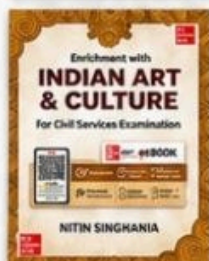
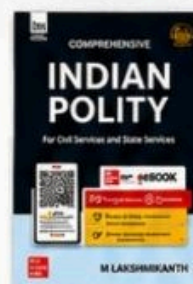
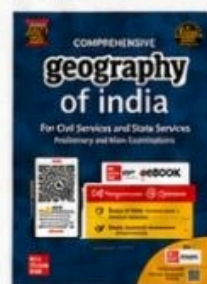
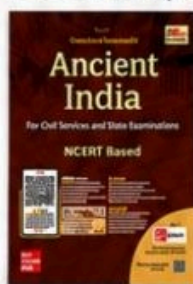
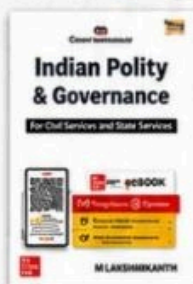
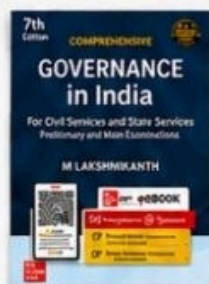
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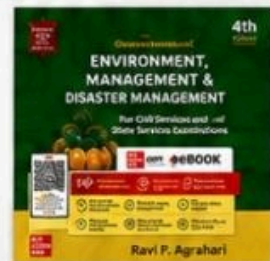
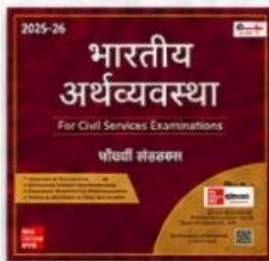
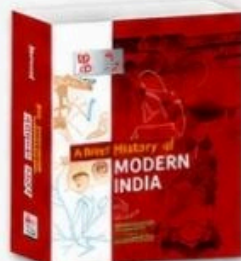
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Miniratna Category-I

This status is awarded by the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) to CPSEs that have made a profit continuously for the last three years, have a positive net worth, and have earned a pre-tax profit of Rs. 30 crore or more in at least one of the three years.

49th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC49)

From 6th July to 10th July 2026 the 49th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC49) was held in Geneva, Switzerland.

- India significantly enhanced its influence in global food safety and trade regulations. Led by the CEO of FSSAI, the Indian delegation played a pivotal role in shaping international benchmarks.

Key Achievements and Milestones

- Adoption of Standards:** The Commission adopted seven standards developed under India's leadership, specifically highlighting Dried Coriander Seeds and Fresh Curry Leaves to facilitate smoother international trade.
- New Initiatives:** India successfully secured approval to develop a first-of-its-kind global Codex standard for Cashew Kernels.
- Strategic Leadership:** India was elected Co-Chair of the Electronic Working Group on "New Food Sources and Production Systems" to review regulatory frameworks and identify gaps.
- Allergen Labeling:** Adopted a new science-based framework for precautionary allergen labeling (e.g., "may contain" statements) to ensure consistent decision-making and better consumer protection globally.
- Food Additive Updates:** Adopted recommendations from the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) to reduce the permitted use levels of the emulsifier polyglycerol esters in 19 food categories (e.g., fruit desserts) and revoke six provisions altogether.

Codex Alimentarius Commission

The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) is an international intergovernmental body established in 1963 by the FAO and WHO to develop global food safety and quality standards. Its primary goals are to protect consumer health and ensure fair practices in the international food trade.

BHAVYA Rasayan Scheme (Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana Rasayan)

On 24th July 2026, the Union Cabinet approved the BHAVYA Rasayan Scheme for establishing three dedicated

Chemical Parks across India. The scheme was announced in the Union Budget 2026-27.

Key Facts

- Ministry:** Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
- Type:** Central Sector Scheme.
- Implementation Period:** FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31 (5 years).
- Objective:** To develop an integrated, environmentally sustainable, and globally competitive chemical manufacturing ecosystem by creating world-class industrial infrastructure, promoting investment, reducing logistics costs, encouraging import substitution, and integrating India into Global Value Chains (GVCs).

Practice Questions

- With which country's 'GIZ' has the Ministry of Coal signed a technical cooperation agreement for sustainable coal mine closure in July 2026?
(a) France (b) Germany
(c) Japan (d) United Kingdom
- Which Union Territory has exported its first consignment of fresh GI-tagged apricots to the UAE?
(a) Jammu and Kashmir (b) Ladakh
(c) Lakshadweep (d) Andaman and Nicobar
- What is the name of the new index launched by the National Stock Exchange (NSE) in July 2026 that excludes companies that harm animals?
(a) Nifty500 Ahimsa Index
(b) Nifty Green Animal Index
(c) Nifty Daya Index
(d) Nifty Sustainable Index
- Which country has emerged as the world's largest Retail and FMCG GCC (Global Capability Center) hub with 180 centers?
(a) China (b) India
(c) Singapore (d) Vietnam
- Where did India and Mali hold their first platform for bilateral trade in sectors like textiles and pharmaceuticals in July 2026?
(a) New Delhi (b) Bamako
(c) Timbuktu (d) Mumbai
- How much additional investment has the Union Cabinet approved for the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIIF)?
(a) Rs. 15,000 crore (b) Rs. 20,000 crore
(c) Rs. 25,000 crore (d) Rs. 30,000 crore

Answers

1. (b), 2. (b), 3. (a), 4. (b), 5. (b), 6. (d)

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BRICS Network University: Expansion of Thematic Cooperation

On July 21, 2026, India virtually hosted the meeting of the International Governing Board of the BRICS Network University (BRICS NU) under its BRICS Presidency 2026.

Key Facts

- **New Thematic Group:** India proposed "Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge Systems" as a new international thematic group under BRICS NU, which received broad support from member countries.
- **Review of Action Plan:** The Governing Board reviewed the BRICS Network University Action Plan for 2025–2028 and discussed strengthening institutional cooperation and academic mobility.
- **Expansion of the Network:** The network expanded in 2024 and 2025 with the inclusion of Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, and Indonesia.
- **Upcoming Event:** The 5th BRICS Postgraduate Forum is scheduled to be held from June 9 to 11, 2026, at the University of Campinas, Brazil.

BRICS Network University (BRICS NU)

BRICS NU is a multilateral consortium of leading universities from BRICS member nations. Its primary objective is to promote higher education, research collaboration, joint postgraduate programs, and academic mobility for students and faculty among member institutions.

President Droupadi Murmu's First Visit to Moldova

On July 20, 2026, President of India Droupadi Murmu paid an official visit to the Republic of Moldova at the invitation of President Maia Sandu.

Key Facts

- **Historic Visit:** This was the first-ever state visit by an Indian President to Moldova since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992.
- **Discussion Focused on '3T':** Talks between the two countries focused on 'Trade, Technology, and Talent,' including AI, cyber diplomacy, pharmaceuticals, and IT.
- **Assistance in Capacity Building:** India announced the doubling of Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) training slots for Moldova.
- **Academic Recognition:** During the visit, progress was made regarding the equivalence and recognition of Moldovan veterinary degrees in India.

Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation

- ✦ Launched in 1964, the ITEC program is a flagship bilateral capacity-building program of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.
- ✦ Under this, professionals from partner developing countries are provided training in various technical and professional fields in India.

India Joins WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement

On July 20, 2026, India became the 123rd member to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies by submitting its Instrument of Acceptance.

Key Facts

- **Scope of the Agreement:** Adopted at the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference in June 2022, this agreement applies only to marine wild-capture fishing and excludes aquaculture.
- **Ban on Illegal Activities:** The agreement prohibits harmful government subsidies that promote Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and overfishing.
- **India's Stand:** In Phase-II negotiations, India has demanded a 25-year transition period for developing countries and permanent protection for small-scale and traditional fishermen.
- **Subsidy Levels:** Annual fisheries subsidies per fisherman family in India are among the lowest globally (approximately \$15).

WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

- ✦ This is the first environment-focused agreement under the WTO, adopted in June 2022.
- ✦ **Objective:** To curb harmful fisheries subsidies and promote sustainable ocean resources.
- ✦ It applies to marine fishing and fishing-related activities at sea.
- ✦ It does not include aquaculture, inland fisheries, or government-to-government payments.

India and European Union: Expanding AI and Semiconductor Cooperation

From July 14 to 16, 2026, the third ministerial meeting of the Trade and Technology Council (TTC) between India and the European Union (EU) was held in Brussels.

Key Facts

- **Strategic Cooperation:** Both sides pledged to deepen cooperation in Artificial Intelligence, Semiconductors, 6G, Quantum technologies, and High-Performance Computing.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- **Horizon Europe Dialogue:** Agreement was reached to start formal negotiations for India's association with 'Horizon Europe,' the EU's €93.5 billion research program.
- **Innovation Hubs:** The first innovation hub for electric vehicle charging technologies and an EU-India startup partnership for clean technologies will be established.
- **Semiconductor Supply:** Manufacturing and supply chains will be strengthened under the India Semiconductor Mission and the EU Chips Act.

Trade and Technology Council (TTC)

- ✦ It is a high-level strategic coordination platform established between India and the European Union.
- ✦ Its objective is to promote policy alignment and bilateral cooperation on critical issues such as trade, trusted technology, digital governance, and supply chain security.

5th BIMSTEC Security Summit

On July 16, 2026, India hosted the 5th BIMSTEC National Security Advisers' (NSA) meeting in New Delhi.

Highlights

- **Delegation:** The delegation of Bangladesh, the current chair of BIMSTEC, will be led by the Prime Minister's Defense Adviser, Brigadier General (Retd.) Dr. A.K.M. Shamsul Islam.
- **Security Agenda:** The meeting will focus on issues including cybersecurity, counter-terrorism, human trafficking, transnational crime, and satellite cooperation.
- **Role in Cybersecurity:** India previously hosted the first BIMSTEC Cybersecurity Expert Group meeting in 2022 and the second on January 21, 2025, in New Delhi.
- **Youth Engagement:** India organized the BIMSTEC Youth Leadership Exchange Program from April 25 to 30.

Key Facts

- ✦ **Full form of BIMSTEC:** Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation.
- ✦ **Member Countries (7):** India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.
- ✦ **Establishment:** Through the Bangkok Declaration on June 6, 1997.
- ✦ **Headquarters:** Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- ✦ **BIMSTEC Charter:** The 'BIMSTEC Charter' was signed during the 5th Summit (Sri Lanka, 2022), giving the group a formal legal identity.
- ✦ **Upcoming 6th Summit:** Proposed to be hosted by Thailand.

India Bans Import of Goods Produced by Forced Labour

On July 13, 2026, the Government of India, through the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), issued a notification banning the import of goods produced wholly or partially by forced labour.

Key Facts

- **Policy Amendment:** This restriction was added by amending Paragraph 2.20B of the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP), 2023, marking India's first import ban linked to forced labour.
- **International Standards:** The notification is aligned with the legal definition of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29).
- **Investigative Authority:** Under this rule approved by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, the DGFT is empowered to investigate allegations of forced labour in imported goods.
- **Effective Date:** The new rule will come into effect 30 days after its publication in the Official Gazette.

Directorate General of Foreign Trade

DGFT is an attached office of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, responsible for formulating and implementing India's Foreign Trade Policy, import-export licensing, and enforcing trade regulations.

'ACITI' Technology Partnership

On July 9-10, 2026, India, Australia, and Canada launched the 'ACITI' (Australia-Canada-India Technology and Innovation) partnership to foster cooperation in emerging technologies.

Key Facts

- **Trilateral Framework:** This is the first major trilateral diplomatic structure to guide technology and innovation between three large Indo-Pacific democracies.
- **Areas of Cooperation:** The agreement primarily focuses on Artificial Intelligence (AI), green energy, the supply of critical minerals, cybersecurity, and quantum computing.
- **Strategic Significance:** Managed by the Science and Technology ministries of the three nations, this initiative is expected to help improve India-Canada relations, which became strained following the Nijjar case.

Critical Minerals

- ✦ These are rare mineral resources (such as lithium, cobalt, and nickel) that are indispensable for manufacturing modern technology, electric vehicles, and advanced defense systems.
- ✦ Australia and Canada possess vast reserves of these minerals, while India complements the partnership with its manufacturing prowess.

Third India-Australia Annual Summit

Between July 8 and 10, 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese participated in the third India-Australia Annual Summit held in Melbourne.

Key Facts

- **Defense and Maritime Security:** Both countries signed historic defense agreements by adopting the 'Joint Defence and Security Cooperation Declaration' (JDDSC) and the 'Maritime Security Cooperation Roadmap' (MSCR).

- **Nuclear Energy Agreement:** The 2014 Civil Nuclear Agreement was operationalized, enabling Australia to export uranium to India for peaceful purposes under IAEA safeguards.
- **Economic Investment:** The Australian Super fund will invest an additional \$500 million in India's NIF for clean energy and education.

Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

CSP is an advanced level of bilateral relations between two countries involving defense, technology, and geopolitical cooperation. Established between India and Australia in 2020, its aim is to maintain stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

Prime Minister Modi's Visit to Indonesia

On July 7, 2026, during his visit to Jakarta, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was honored with Indonesia's highest civilian award, 'Bintang Adipurna,' by Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto.

Highlights

- This prestigious medal was awarded to PM Modi for his extraordinary efforts in strengthening the historic and diplomatic relations between the two countries.
- **Defense and Strategy:** This diplomatic visit has bolstered India's Indo-Pacific strategy. Additionally, defense cooperation was enhanced regarding the BrahMos missile and Astra missile systems.
- **Cultural Diplomacy:** PM Modi visited the famous Prambanan Temple, highlighting the shared historical and cultural heritage of both nations.

Key Facts

- ❖ **Sabang Port:** India and Indonesia are cooperating on the development of the strategic 'Sabang Port' located near the Andaman Sea.
- ❖ **G20 and ASEAN:** Indonesia is an influential member of ASEAN and a major trading partner of India.
- ❖ **Historical Ties:** Trade relations between India and Indonesia date back to the Chola Empire, a fact highlighted by PM Modi during his visit.

2026 NATO Summit

On July 6-7, 2026, the historic annual summit of the Western military alliance NATO was held in Ankara, the capital of Türkiye.

Highlights

- **Historic Event:** For the first time in NATO's history of over 75 years, a major summit was organized in Türkiye (Ankara).
- **Main Agenda:** The conference held extensive discussions on the Russia-Ukraine war, increasing the mandatory defense budget of member countries to 2% of their GDP, and the emerging challenges in the Indo-Pacific region.

- **India's Diplomacy:** India is not a member of NATO and strictly follows an independent foreign policy of 'Strategic Autonomy,' staying away from any military blocs.

Key Facts

- ❖ **Article 5:** This is NATO's most significant provision, based on the principle of 'Collective Defense' (an attack against one member is considered an attack against all).
- ❖ **Membership:** NATO currently has 32 member countries (Sweden became the 32nd member in 2024).

India-Israel Bilateral Investment Agreement (BIA) Enters into Force

On July 4, 2026, the Bilateral Investment Agreement (BIA) between the Government of India and the Government of Israel officially came into effect. The agreement was signed in New Delhi on September 8, 2025.

Key Facts

- **Objective:** The agreement aims to promote cross-border investment and provide investors with a secure, transparent, and predictable investment environment.
- **Reduction in Treatment Period:** Under India's 2015 Model BIT, the 5-year local remedy exhaustion period has been reduced to 3 years for Israeli investors.
- **First OECD Country:** Israel has become the first OECD member country to sign a Bilateral Investment Agreement with India.
- **Investment Figures:** Between April 2000 and March 2026, India received \$371.35 million in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from Israel.

Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)

BIT is an agreement between two states that establishes legal protections and rights for investments made by citizens and companies of one country in the other country.

16th India-Japan Annual Summit

From July 1 to 3, 2026, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi paid an official visit to New Delhi and participated in the 16th India-Japan Annual Summit.

Key Facts

- **Economic Security:** Both countries agreed to enhance cooperation in semiconductors, critical minerals, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), clean energy, and pharmaceuticals.
- **Technology and Energy:** A joint 'AI Roadmap' was prepared, covering strategic oil storage, maritime energy transport, and the full technology stack of Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- **Trade Relations:** Bilateral trade stood at \$27.47 billion in FY 2025-26. Japan is currently India's 5th largest source of FDI.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

CEPA is a free trade agreement that promotes trade and investment between two countries. The India-Japan CEPA came into effect in 2011, featuring special provisions to eliminate or significantly reduce trade tariffs on 94% of goods.

'Operation Amistad' for Earthquake Relief in Venezuela

On June 26, 2026, India launched 'Operation Amistad,' a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) mission, following devastating earthquakes of 7.2 and 7.5 magnitude in Venezuela.

Key Facts

- **Relief Material:** Two Indian Air Force (IAF) C-17 Globemaster aircraft delivered 30 tons of relief material, 6 tons of medicines, and two (BHISHM) Cube portable hospitals.
- **Rescue Team:** A 41-member Indian team, including medical professionals and experienced rescuers, will work alongside Venezuelan authorities.
- **Meaning:** "Amistad" is a Spanish word meaning "Friendship," reflecting India's solidarity in times of crisis.
- **BHISHM Cube:** An indigenously developed modular and portable field hospital designed for rapid deployment to provide advanced trauma care in disaster-affected areas.

US-Saudi Arabia Landmark Nuclear Agreement

On July 24, 2026, the United States and Saudi Arabia signed a historic 30-year peaceful civil nuclear cooperation agreement, marking a significant shift in diplomatic and energy relations in West Asia.

Key Conditions and Framework

- **Abraham Accords Linkage:** Reportedly, the deal will only take effect if Saudi Arabia joins the U.S.-brokered Abraham Accords, establishing formal diplomatic ties with Israel.
- **Legal Basis:** The agreement is structured as a Section 123 Agreement under the U.S. Atomic Energy Act.
- **Scope of Cooperation:** This legal framework is a mandatory prerequisite for the U.S. to transfer nuclear reactors, technology, equipment, or fuel to another nation for civilian use.

The Significance of the "123 Agreement"

- **Requirement for Trade:** It ensures that any nuclear assistance provided by the U.S. is used strictly for peaceful purposes.
- **Precedent (India 2008):** India signed a similar agreement in 2008, which was revolutionary because:

- It allowed civilian nuclear trade even though India is not a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).
- It established India-specific safeguards under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
- It integrated India into the global nuclear commerce market.

PM Modi's Historic Visit to New Zealand: Elevating Ties to Strategic Partnership

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to New Zealand (July 10-11, 2026) marked the first by an Indian PM in 40 years. The visit successfully elevated bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership, backed by a structured "Roadmap to 2030."

Key Outcomes of the Visit

- **Trade Ambitions:** Set a five-year target to double annual bilateral trade to ₹35,000 crore by 2030, focusing on skilled labor mobility and technology.
- **Defense & Security:** Signed a reciprocal logistics support pact between the navies and established a regular Maritime Security Dialogue.
- **Sectoral Pacts:** New Zealand officially joined the Global Biofuels Alliance. Agreements were reached on a Kiwifruit Action Plan, Antarctic research, and disaster management.
- **Counter-Terrorism:** Established a Joint Working Group (JWG) to strengthen regional security cooperation.

Key Facts: New Zealand

- **Capital:** Wellington (the southernmost capital of a sovereign state).
- **Indigenous Culture:** The Maori are the indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand; Te Reo Māori is an official language.
- **Highest Peak:** Aoraki / Mount Cook, located in the Southern Alps.
- **Historic Link:** Indira Gandhi was the last Indian Prime Minister to visit New Zealand, back in 1968.
- **Waitangi Day:** New Zealand's national day (February 6), marking the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840.

US Imposes 10% 'Forced Labour' Tariffs on India

On July 24, 2026, the United States officially implemented a permanent 10% additional tariff on a wide range of Indian imports. This decision follows a comprehensive Section 301 investigation by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) into global labor practices.

Reason for the Tariffs

- **Section 301 Investigation:** The U.S. concluded that 60 of its trading partners, including India, failed to effectively enforce prohibitions on the importation of goods produced using forced labor.

- **Global Scope:** The move is part of a broader trade action targeting 99% of U.S. imports to ensure trading partners align with U.S. standards on labor rights and human rights.
- **Permanent Nature:** These new duties replace the temporary 10% stopgap levies that expired on July 24, moving the trade barrier into a permanent legal framework with no statutory expiry.

Why India Received a "Lower" 10% Rate

- **Initial Proposal:** The U.S. had originally proposed a higher 12.5% tariff for India in early June 2026.
- **Policy Amendment:** On July 14, 2026, India amended its Foreign Trade Policy to explicitly prohibit the import of goods produced using forced or compulsory labor.
- **Diplomatic Engagement:** Following sustained consultations and submissions by the Indian government, the USTR moved India into a "lower tier" of 10%, alongside 16 other countries like Canada and the UK. Competitors like China and Vietnam face the higher 12.5% rate.

Impacted and Exempted Sectors

- **Sectors Under Pressure:** The additional duty specifically targets industries such as textiles, garments, engineering goods, leather products, auto components, chemicals, and gems/jewelry.
- **Significant Exemptions:** Approximately 45% of India's exports to the U.S. remain outside the scope of this new tariff. These include:
 - ❖ Generic pharmaceuticals and medical devices.
 - ❖ Smartphones and semiconductor equipment.
 - ❖ Aircraft and certain agricultural minerals.
- **Existing Duties:** Products already covered under Section 232 (such as steel and aluminum) will not face this additional 10% duty.

India to Establish Three Key Development Projects in Palestine

Palestine has officially welcomed India's announcement to establish three major development projects aimed at rebuilding its infrastructure amidst the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

- The initiative was unveiled by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar in Brussels during the launch of India's campaign for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council (2028-29).

Key Highlights of the Projects

- **Healthcare & Rehabilitation:** India will establish a Specialty Hospital and an Artificial Limb Fitment Centre to strengthen medical services and assist those severely injured in the Gaza Strip.
- **Skill Development:** A Vocational Training Institute will be set up to empower Palestinian youth with the

technical skills necessary to rebuild their economy and communities.

- **Diplomatic Reaffirmation:** India reiterated its support for a negotiated "Two-State Solution" and backed Palestine's bid for full membership in the United Nations.
- **Humanitarian Commitment:** The projects reflect India's long-standing development partnership and its commitment to providing aid during one of Palestine's gravest humanitarian eras.

Key Facts: India-Palestine Relations

- **Historic Recognition:** In 1974, India became the first non-Arab country to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.
- **Statehood:** India was one of the first countries to recognize the State of Palestine in 1988.
- **UN Status:** Palestine is currently a "Non-member Observer State" at the United Nations, a status granted in 2012.
- **Development Aid:** India regularly provides assistance through the ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) program and contributes significantly to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).
- **Representative Office:** India opened its Representative Office in Gaza in 1996, which was later shifted to Ramallah in 2003.

Tri-Nation Tour of President of India

The President of India Droupadi Murmu concluded a historic three-nation European state visit to Moldova, North Macedonia, and Romania from July 19 to 25, 2026.

- The tour achieved key diplomatic milestones including enhanced bilateral trade targets, strategic cooperation agreements, and landmark first-ever presidential visits.

Major Outcomes

- **Moldova:** Marked the first-ever visit by an Indian President. Both nations agreed to boost collaboration in agriculture, logistics, infrastructure, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy, and innovation.
- **North Macedonia:** Marked the first visit by an Indian head of state. Both sides agreed to double bilateral trade and explore partnerships in tourism, hospitality, and filmmaking. President Murmu also addressed the country's Assembly and unveiled a Mahatma Gandhi bust in Skopje.
- **Romania:** Marked the first visit by an Indian President in over 30 years. Both countries committed to doubling bilateral trade over the next three years and strengthening defense cooperation. President Murmu received an honorary doctorate ("Doctor Honoris Causa") from the Bucharest University of Economic Studies.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Integrated Main Parachute Airdrop Test (IMAT)

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully conducted the fifth Integrated Main Parachute Airdrop Test (IMAT) at the ADRDE drop zone in Sheopur, Madhya Pradesh. This test is a critical milestone for the Gaganyaan G1 uncrewed mission.

- **Objective:** To qualify the main parachute's structural integrity and design margins under maximum expected load conditions.
- **Execution:** A dummy mass assembly was dropped from an altitude of 2.5 kilometers using an Indian Air Force IL-76 aircraft.

Deceleration System Sequence

- The Gaganyaan Crew Module utilizes a sophisticated system comprising 10 parachutes of four distinct types to ensure a safe landing:
- **Apex Cover Separation:** Two parachutes remove the compartment's protective cover.
- **Drogue Parachutes:** Two parachutes stabilize and decelerate the module.
- **Pilot Parachutes:** Three pilots are deployed to extract the final stage.
- **Main Parachutes:** Three massive parachutes reduce speed to ensure a safe splashdown in the sea.

Gaganyaan

Gaganyaan project envisages demonstration of human spaceflight capability by launching crew of 3 members to an orbit of 400 km for a 3 days mission and bring them back safely to earth, by landing in Indian sea waters.

Mission Aagaman

Mission Aagaman was the maiden orbital launch mission by **Skyroot Aerospace**, a Hyderabad-based private space startup. It represented a historic milestone as the first private Indian company to launch a satellite into orbit from Indian soil.

Key Facts

- **Mission Goal:** To demonstrate the reliability of indigenously developed private launch technology and establish India as a key player in the global commercial small-satellite launch market.
- **Launch Vehicle:** The mission used **Vikram-1**, a seven-story, multi-stage orbital rocket. It featured an all-carbon composite structure and is powered by solid-fuel stages and a liquid-engine upper stage for precise orbital insertion.

- **Functional Payloads:** It carried technology demonstration satellites from **Grahaa Space**, **Cosmoserve**, **DCubed**, and **Skyroot's** own **SCOPE** payload to test flight data and orbital capabilities.
- **Symbolic Payloads:** As part of the celebration, the rocket carried:
 - ✦ A handwritten postcard by **PM Narendra Modi** with the words "Vande Mataram." Notes from the Skyroot team, investors, and well-wishers.
 - ✦ "**Cosmic Bloom**," a diamond-based artwork, and micro-sculptures of Indian icons like **Dr. Vikram Sarabhai** and **Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam**.

India's First Hydrogen-Powered Train

India's first hydrogen fuel cell-powered passenger train covered a distance of approximately 900 kilometers during its first five days of commercial operation on the Jind-Sonapat route in Haryana.

Key Facts

- **Operation & Capacity:** Flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 17, 2026, this 10-coach train can carry approximately 2,600 passengers and is currently operating at a maximum speed of 75 km/h.
- **Technical Framework & Fare:** The train is equipped with two 1,200 kW hydrogen-electric propulsion systems. The fare has been kept between Rs. 10 and Rs. 25, similar to ordinary DMU services. A hydrogen storage and refueling facility has been established in Jind.
- **Global Achievement:** With the launch of this service, India has joined the elite group of countries, including Germany, Japan, China, and the USA, that utilize hydrogen-based rail technology.

Proton Exchange Membrane (PEM) Fuel Cell

- ✦ This technology generates electricity through an onboard electrochemical process by combining hydrogen stored in the train with atmospheric oxygen.
- ✦ This process does not emit any harmful smoke or greenhouse gases; instead, it emits only water vapor and heat as by-products. It provides a green and zero-emission transportation alternative for non-electrified and remote rail routes.

ICMR Licenses Three Indigenous Biomedical Technologies

On July 22, 2026, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) transferred three indigenous biomedical technologies to Indian pharmaceutical companies under its 'Medical Innovation Patent Mitra' initiative.

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Key Facts

- **Anti-Cancer Drug (SHetA2):** The license for this drug, developed for the treatment of cervical cancer, was granted to Emcure Pharmaceuticals Ltd. It was jointly developed by ICMR-NICPR and the University of Oklahoma.
- **Enteric Vaccines:** Licenses for two next-generation vaccines against Typhoid and Shigella infections, developed by ICMR-NIRBI Kolkata, were handed over to Biological E Limited.
- **Objective:** The aim of these technology transfers is to provide affordable healthcare solutions by commercializing publicly funded research.

Technology Transfer

This is the process of transferring scientific findings, intellectual property, and techniques developed by research institutes or universities to commercial companies to enable large-scale manufacturing and public use.

India Approves First Dengue Vaccine 'QDENG'

On July 21, 2026, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) officially granted marketing approval for India's first dengue vaccine, 'QDENG'.

Key Facts

- **Manufacturer & Technology:** Developed by the Japanese company Takeda Biopharmaceuticals, this live-attenuated tetravalent vaccine provides protection against all four serotypes of dengue (DENV 1-4).
- **Local Production:** Takeda has partnered with India's Biological E to manufacture up to 50 million doses annually.
- **Age Group:** It is approved for individuals aged 4 to 60 years and is administered in two doses with a 3-month interval.
- **Efficacy:** In global Phase-III trials, the vaccine demonstrated a protective efficacy of up to 90.4% against hospitalization caused by dengue.

Live Attenuated Vaccine

- ❖ This is a type of vaccine that uses a weakened form of the germ (virus) that causes a disease.
- ❖ It creates a strong and long-lasting immune response in the body without causing the actual disease.

Semiconductor Centers of Excellence

On July 20, 2026, the 'National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology' (NIELIT) announced the establishment of two 'Centers of Excellence' (CoEs) in Ahmedabad (Gujarat) and Guwahati (Assam) to strengthen India's chip talent ecosystem.

Key Facts

- **Supporting the Mission:** This initiative supports 'India Semiconductor Mission 2.0' (ISM 2.0), which has an outlay of Rs. 1.28 lakh crore.
- **Skill Development:** These centers will provide specialized training in Semiconductor Assembly, Testing, Marking, and Packaging (ATMP) and OSAT technologies.
- **Industrial Partnership:** NIELIT has entered into strategic partnerships with Tata Electronics, Infineon, and Semiconductor Complex Limited (SCL) Mohali.

Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test

OSAT is the final stage of the semiconductor manufacturing process, where manufactured silicon wafers are assembled into finished chips, packaged, and tested so they can be used in electronic devices.

'ECOGEN' Center of Excellence

On July 20, 2026, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur announced the establishment of the 'Innovative and Integrated Ecosystem for Green Hydrogen' (ECOGEN) Center of Excellence.

Key Facts

- **Approval:** Sanctioned by the Uttar Pradesh government, this center has been approved by UPNEDA under the 'Uttar Pradesh Green Hydrogen Policy 2024'.
- **Research Focus:** The center will focus on the production, storage, transport, safety standards, and industrial applications of green hydrogen to reduce its production cost.
- **Leadership:** Professor Dr. Prabodh Bajpai from the Department of Sustainable Energy Engineering at IIT Kanpur has been appointed as the Principal Investigator (PI) of this center.

Green Hydrogen

This is hydrogen produced by the electrolysis of water using electricity generated from renewable energy sources (such as solar or wind energy). Zero carbon dioxide is emitted during its production.

Anil Menon Reaches International Space Station

Indian-origin NASA astronaut Anil Menon, along with two Russian cosmonauts, successfully blasted off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on July 14, 2026, and reached the International Space Station (ISS).

Key Facts

- **Successful Launch and Docking:** According to an official NASA update, the Soyuz MS-29 spacecraft took off at 8:17 PM IST on July 14 and successfully docked with the ISS 'Prichal' module after a journey of just 3 hours.

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- **Co-passengers:** Joining Anil Menon on this mission are Roscosmos cosmonauts Pyotr Dubrov and Anna Kikina.
- **Mission Duration:** The team will spend 8 months on the ISS and is scheduled to return to Earth in April 2027.
- **Expedition:** Following their arrival, there are currently 10 astronauts on the station. These three members will advance scientific research as part of Expedition 75 in the coming days.

Expedition 75

- ✦ This is the 75th long-duration mission of the International Space Station (ISS), scheduled to officially begin on July 26, 2026.
- ✦ The mission will commence following the conclusion of Expedition 74. In a change-of-command ceremony on July 25, 2026, Roscosmos cosmonaut Sergey Kud-Sverchkov will hand over command of the space station to NASA astronaut Jessica Meir.
- ✦ The mission will last approximately eight months and end in April 2027.

NASA's Mars Rover 'PROMISE'

According to a report dated July 12, 2026, NASA is considering repurposing its 'PROMISE' rover as a Lunar Explorer under its manned Artemis program.

Key Facts

- **History of PROMISE:** Formerly known as 'OPTIMISM', this rover was originally an engineering model built for testing the Curiosity and Perseverance Mars missions.
- **Lunar Exploration:** It will be sent to the Moon's South Pole, where it will search for water ice and identify suitable sites for future lunar infrastructure in detail.
- **Power Source:** This special rover is powered by a 'Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generator' (RTG).

Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generator (RTG)

- ✦ This is a special type of nuclear power source that directly converts the heat generated by the natural decay of radioactive material (such as plutonium) into electricity.
- ✦ This technology provides highly reliable energy for deep-space missions that are deprived of sunlight.

Hot Test of CE20 Cryogenic Engine

On July 10, 2026, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully completed the 'Flight Acceptance Hot Test' of the indigenous CE20 cryogenic engine for the LVM3-M7 mission in Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu.

Key Facts

- **Thrust Performance:** During the test, the engine successfully operated at a thrust of 19.5 tonnes for 45 seconds and 22 tonnes for 25 seconds.
- **Nozzle Protection System:** For the first time, a 'Nozzle Protection System' (NPS) was used in the testing of the CE20 engine, which simplifies high-altitude tests at sea level.
- **Engine Capacity:** The indigenous CE20 engine powers the upper stage of the LVM3 rocket and has been used in Chandrayaan-2, Chandrayaan-3, and Gaganyaan human-rating tests.

Cryogenic Engine

This is a highly complex rocket engine that uses extremely cold liquid gases such as liquid hydrogen (fuel, -253°C) and liquid oxygen (oxidizer, -183°C) to provide high thrust for carrying heavy payloads into space.

World's First Sub-1 Nanometer Semiconductor Chip Technology

On July 10, 2026, IBM achieved a historic breakthrough in semiconductor manufacturing by unveiling the world's first sub-1 nanometer (0.7 nm / 7 Angstrom) semiconductor chip technology.

Key Facts

- **3D Nanostack Structure:** This chip is built on IBM's 3D "Nanostack" transistor architecture, which accommodates 100 billion transistors on a chip the size of a fingernail.
- **Performance & Efficiency:** Compared to 2 nm technology, this chip provides 50% higher performance or 70% greater energy efficiency.
- **Research Center:** It was developed at the Albany Nanotech Complex in New York (USA) in collaboration with ASML, Lam Research, and Tokyo Electron.

Angstrom Scale

- ✦ It is an extremely microscopic unit of length - (1 Angstrom = 10^{-10} meters or 0.1 nanometer).
- ✦ Designing transistors at the Angstrom level, surpassing the limits of nanometers in the semiconductor field, is called atomic-scale engineering.

World's First Weekly Basal Insulin

On July 9, 2026, providing great relief to diabetic patients, 'Awiqli' was launched in India. It is the world's first once-weekly (taken once a week) basal insulin.

Key Facts

- **Active Ingredient:** It contains a long-acting active ingredient called 'Insulin Icodec', manufactured by the leading Danish pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk.
- **Patient Convenience:** Instead of the painful experience of daily injections, it now only needs to be taken once a week, which will improve treatment compliance.

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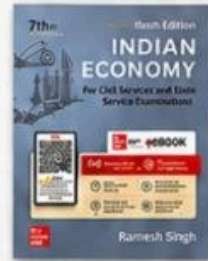
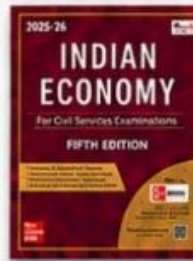
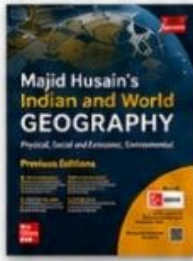
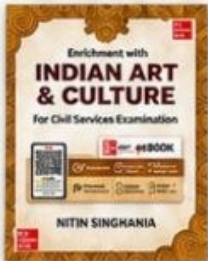
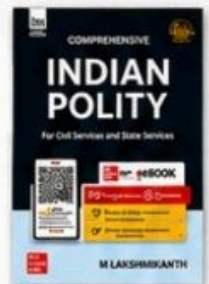
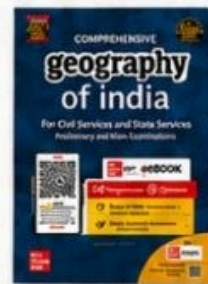
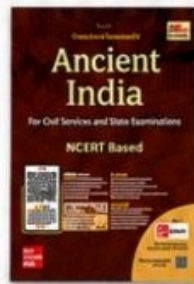
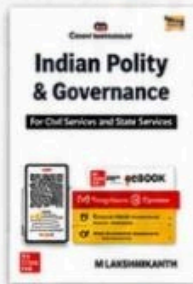
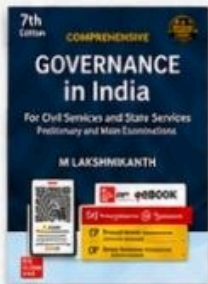
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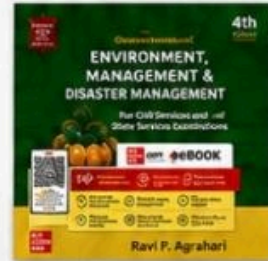
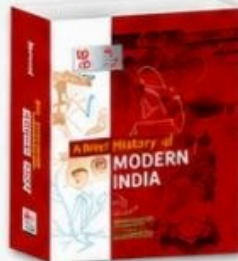
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- **Need in India:** This is aligned with India's 'Pharma Vision 2047' and is beneficial for the country's 100 million diabetic patients (the second-highest number in the world).

Basal Insulin

- ✦ Also known as background insulin, it works continuously in the body over a long period and keeps blood sugar levels stable during fasting conditions.
- ✦ According to the IDF, the number of diabetic patients in India is estimated to reach 135 million by 2045.

First UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance

Union Minister of State Kirti Vardhan Singh led the Indian delegation at the first 'UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance' held in Geneva, Switzerland, on July 6-7, 2026.

Key Facts

- **India's Perspective:** Reiterating the "AI for All" approach, India advocated for responsible, inclusive, and human-centric AI governance.
- **Establishment & Leadership:** Established under UNGA Resolution 79/325, this dialogue was co-chaired by Rwandan President Paul Kagame and Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff.
- **Report Presentation:** The first annual report of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI (IISPA) was presented during this session.

Global Digital Compact

It is a global framework adopted in September 2024 under the UN's 'Pact of the Future', aimed at ensuring an open, safe, and inclusive digital future for all.

Test of 'SOLVE' Launch Vehicle for Gaganyaan Crew Module

On July 3, 2026, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully conducted the first static ground test of the **Sub-Orbital Launch Vehicle for Experiments (SOLVE)** at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.

Key Facts

- **Objective:** SOLVE is a solid-propellant sub-orbital vehicle developed for the **Integrated Parachute Test (IPT)** of the Gaganyaan crew module.
- **Test Parameters:** The vehicle tests the deceleration of the crew module at an altitude of 10 to 17 km and the sequential opening of 10 parachutes before splashing down in the sea.
- **Technical Origin:** SOLVE has been prepared using the PSLV strap-on motor and utilizes **Secondary Injection Thrust Vector Control (SITVC)** for precise control.

Gaganyaan Mission

This is India's first manned spaceflight program, aiming to send 3 astronauts to Low Earth Orbit (LEO) at 400 km for 3 days and bring them back safely.

'Haiyang-2E' (HY-2E) Satellite

On July 2, 2026, China successfully launched its new oceanographic satellite '**Haiyang (HY)-2E**' via a Long March 4B rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China.

Key Facts

- **Mission Number:** This was China's 47th space mission of 2026 and the 654th flight of the Long March rocket series.
- **Replacement & Network:** HY-2E will replace the HY-2B satellite launched in 2018 and will work alongside HY-2C and HY-2D for global maritime environment monitoring.
- **Payload Instruments:** Manufactured by the China Academy of Space Technology (CAST), the satellite includes a radar altimeter (sea level), microwave radiometer (surface temperature), and scatterometer (wind speed).
- **Accuracy:** A calibration radiometer has also been installed to improve the calibration and accuracy of remote sensing observations.

Remote Sensing

Remote Sensing is a scientific technique for collecting data and images of the Earth's surface, oceans, and atmosphere from a distance through sensors mounted on satellites or aircraft, without physical contact.

World's First Artificial Cell

Researchers have achieved a historic success in creating the world's first fully artificial (synthetic) cell named '**SpudCell**'.

Key Facts

- **Construction Process:** It was created from non-living chemicals using a '**Bottom-up**' approach, consisting of synthetic DNA and enzymes within a lipid membrane (liposome).
- **Biological Functions:** This artificial cell is capable of performing fundamental life functions like consuming nutrition, growth, DNA replication, and division, similar to natural cells.
- **Applications:** This success will prove revolutionary, especially in the fields of **Drug Delivery**, vaccine development, and disease modeling.

Synthetic Biology

Synthetic Biology is a branch of science where new biological parts, devices, and systems that do not exist in the natural world are designed and manufactured.

- ✦ SpudCell is made entirely of non-living chemicals, giving science a new direction in understanding the origin of life on Earth.

Test of Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket

On July 8, 2026, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the flight test of the 'Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket' (LRGR) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur, Odisha.

Key Facts

- **Test Range:** The Pinaka LRGR was tested for a minimum user-defined range of 60 kilometers, where the rocket achieved a precise hit on the target.
- **Designers:** It has been developed by ARDE Pune and HEMRL with technical support from DRDL and the Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad.
- **Launcher Capability:** The rocket was fired from an operational Pinaka Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL), proving the capability to fire rockets of different ranges from a single launcher.

Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL)

This is an artillery weapon system where multiple rocket tubes are mounted on a single vehicle, capable of firing several rockets simultaneously at enemy targets in a short duration.

HAL and Safran Sign Strategic Deal for LEAP Engine Components

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and France's Safran Aircraft Engines have signed a multi-year, long-term agreement for the supply of superalloy turbine ring forgings. Inked at the Farnborough International Airshow, the contract tasks HAL with manufacturing critical components for the CFM LEAP engine program, a cornerstone of modern civil aviation.

Key Highlights of the Partnership

- **Production Site:** HAL will utilize its advanced Ring Rolling facility at the Foundry and Forge Division in Bengaluru to produce "near-net shape" forgings.
- **Technical Importance:** These forgings are vital for the high-temperature rotating sections of engines, directly impacting engine reliability and performance.
- **Global Civil Aerospace Role:** The deal marks a significant expansion for HAL into the global civil aviation supply chain, moving beyond traditional defense manufacturing.

Key Facts

- **HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited):** A central public sector undertaking headquartered in Bengaluru, established in 1940 by Walchand Hirachand.
- **CFM International:** A 50/50 joint venture between GE Aerospace (USA) and Safran Aircraft Engines (France) that produces the LEAP engine.
- **LEAP Engine:** Stands for Leading Edge Aviation Propulsion; it powers the Boeing 737 MAX and Airbus A320neo aircraft families.

Indian Navy Commissions INS Malvan

On July 22, 2026, the Indian Navy commissioned INS Malvan, the second of eight Mahe-class Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC). Built by Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), the vessel marks a significant step in enhancing India's coastal security.

Key Features and Capabilities

- **Operational Role:** Specifically designed for underwater surveillance, coastal ASW operations, and Low Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO).
- **Technical Specs:** The 80-meter-long ship displaces 1,100 tonnes and utilizes waterjet propulsion for high maneuverability in shallow waters.
- **Armament:** It is equipped with lightweight torpedoes, multi-functional anti-submarine rockets, and advanced hull-mounted sonar systems.
- **Historical Legacy:** Named after a strategic coastal town in Maharashtra, it honors the maritime heritage of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

Practice Questions

1. Which university has partnered to support the world's first all-girls international lunar mission 'Mission ShaktiSat'?
(a) Delhi University
(b) Gautam Buddha University (GBU)
(c) Jawaharlal Nehru University
(d) Banaras Hindu University
2. At which airport did the DGCA successfully test India's first Satellite-Based Landing System (SLS)?
(a) Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi
(b) Maharana Pratap Airport, Udaipur
(c) Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, Mumbai
(d) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, Hyderabad
3. The 'GAGAN' system has been jointly developed by whom?
(a) ISRO and DRDO
(b) ISRO and Airports Authority of India (AAI)
(c) NASA and ISRO
(d) Ministry of Defence and NITI Aayog
4. Where was the high-level meeting of the Heads of BRICS Space Agencies (HOSA) held?
(a) New Delhi
(b) Bengaluru
(c) Shanghai
(d) Moscow
5. At which location did ISRO recently conduct a successful semi-cryogenic engine Power Head Test Article (PHTA)?
(a) Sriharikota
(b) Mahendragiri
(c) Thumba
(d) Bengaluru

Answers

1. (b), 2. (b), 3. (b), 4. (b) 5. (b)

ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

'Campus Biodiversity Register' Initiative

On July 21, 2026, India launched a nationwide 'Campus Biodiversity Register' (CBR) initiative for higher educational institutions.

Key Facts

- **Implementing Agency:** It is being jointly implemented by the Mysuru-based 'Nature Conservation Foundation' and the 'National Biodiversity Authority' (NBA).
- **Citizen Science Platform:** Digital platforms such as iNaturalist, eBird, and SeasonWatch will be used to record the flora and fauna of the campuses.
- **Timeline and Registration:** Higher educational institutions can register until November 2026, and the documentation phase will conclude in June 2027 (Kerala launched a similar campaign on June 16, 2026).

People's Biodiversity Register (PBR)

Created under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, the PBR is a statutory document that maintains an official record of local biological resources, their usage, and traditional knowledge.

National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)

The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) is a statutory autonomous body based in Chennai that regulates the conservation of biodiversity and equitable benefit sharing in India.

Killai: Tamil Nadu's First Climate-Resilient Village

On July 22, 2026, Killai village in the Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu became the state's first fully functional 'Climate Resilient Village.'

Key Facts

- **Scope of the Scheme:** This project is operated under the 'Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission' (launched in 2022-23), which covers 11 identified villages across 11 districts.
- **Cost and Works:** Completed at a cost of Rs. 230.15 lakh, the project included desilting and cleaning plastic waste from a 3 km stretch of the Buckingham Canal (completed by March 14, 2026).
- **Ecological Measures:** More than 3,000 indigenous mangrove saplings were planted after removing the invasive species *Prosopis juliflora*. Additionally, solar panels and solar dryers were installed in public buildings.

Mangrove Forests

Mangroves are a specialized group of trees and shrubs that grow in saline and brackish water, primarily found near tropical and subtropical coastlines, deltas, and estuaries. They protect coastal areas and provide shelter to marine life.

India's Installed Renewable Energy Capacity Crosses 288 GW

On July 21, 2026, Union Minister Shripad Yesso Naik informed the Rajya Sabha that the country's installed renewable energy capacity exceeded 288 GW as of June 30, 2026.

Key Facts

- **Energy Classification:** Currently, solar energy capacity has exceeded 162 GW, wind energy 58 GW, hydropower 57 GW, and bio-energy 11 GW.
- **FDI Inflow:** From FY 2013-14 to 2025-26, the country's renewable energy sector attracted approximately 46 billion USD in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).
- **Domestic Financing:** During this period, indigenous banks and financial institutions like IREDA distributed loans worth over Rs. 12 lakh crore to this sector.

Renewable Energy

This is energy obtained from natural sources (such as the sun, wind, water, and biomass) that are never exhausted and recycle themselves naturally.

Source-wise Installed Renewable Energy Capacity (as of June 30, 2026)

Source of Energy	Installed Capacity (Megawatt - MW)
Solar Power	1,62,152.00 MW
Wind Power	57,443.39 MW
Biomass (Bagasse Cogeneration)	9,821.32 MW
Small Hydro Power	5,181.76 MW
Biomass (Non-bagasse Cogeneration)	1,047.85 MW
Waste to Energy (Grid and Off-grid)	878.40 MW
Others / Total Renewable Total	2,88,580.00 MW

ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

SC-Appointed Committee on Aravalli Range Seeks Public Feedback

On July 21, 2026, according to the Ministry of Environment, a high-level committee constituted by the Supreme Court invited public feedback on issues related to the conservation of the Aravalli hills.

Key Facts

- **Background of the Committee:** The Supreme Court formed a high-level committee in May 2026 to investigate the ecological conservation of the Aravalli Range and related matters.
- **Report Timeline:** The committee will submit its comprehensive and detailed report to the Supreme Court before August 31, 2026.
- **Public Participation:** Citizens can submit their suggestions along with documents and evidence via email (mshpcaravalli@gmail.com) within 3 weeks.

Aravalli Range

Spanning across North-West India (Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat, and Delhi), this mountain range is one of the world's oldest fold mountain systems. It serves as a crucial natural barrier to prevent the eastward expansion of the Thar Desert and is vital for maintaining the region's groundwater and environmental balance.

India's 21st Designated Repository

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, following recommendations from the National Biodiversity Authority, has notified Mizoram's Natural History Museum as India's 21st Designated Repository under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

- **Core Functions and Scope:** Established in 2022 under Mizoram University, the museum is strategically situated within the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot. Its primary responsibilities include:
- **Specimen Maintenance:** Preserving voucher specimens of flora (pteridophytes, macrofungi) and fauna (reptiles, amphibians, fishes).
- **Specialized Taxa:** Focusing on moths, beetles, and butterflies using specialized taxonomic expertise.
- **Strategic Significance:** The Northeast region is a biodiversity powerhouse, home to over 7,500 flowering plants and 2,000 faunal species.
- **Addressing Research Gaps:** The museum fills vital gaps in India's network by documenting lesser-studied taxa.
- **Conservation Support:** It strengthens the scientific documentation and preservation of the region's rich and unique biological heritage.

Designated Repositories

Designated Repositories are an important component of India's biodiversity governance framework, preserving authenticated biological specimens for scientific research and conservation.

Indian Grey Hornbills Thrive in Gir Forests

After vanishing in the 1950s, the Indian Grey Hornbill has successfully returned to Gujarat's Gir forests following a 2021 government reintroduction initiative.

Highlights

- **Successful Reintroduction:** A total of 40 birds were translocated from the Aravalli forests in phases. Recent research confirms they have established stable territories and are breeding naturally.
- **Ecological Impact:** Known as "long-distance seed dispersers," these birds play a vital role in forest regeneration by transporting seeds of fruit-bearing trees.
- **Habitat Adaptation:** Satellite tracking showed the birds have successfully adapted to Gir's dry deciduous and teak forests, preferring mature trees for nesting.

Key Facts

- ✦ **Scientific Name:** *Ocyrceros birostris*.
- ✦ **Unique Role:** Often called "Farmers of the Forest" for their essential contribution to the ecosystem.
- ✦ **Gir National Park:** Located in Gujarat, it is the world's only natural habitat for the Asiatic Lion.
- ✦ **IUCN Status:** Categorized as 'Least Concern' on the Red List of Threatened Species.

Center Bans Herbicide 'Paraquat Dichloride'

The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has officially banned the herbicide **Paraquat Dichloride** following recommendations from the Registration Committee.

Highlights

- **Reasons for Ban:** The decision stems from severe health risks, a history of poisoning incidents, and high fatality rates. A critical factor for the ban is the **absence of a specific medical antidote**.
- **Usage:** It is a non-selective contact herbicide used to control weeds and as a "harvest-aid desiccant" to dry crops like cotton before picking.
- **Scope:** The ban prohibits the manufacture, import, transport, sale, and use of the chemical across India.

Key Facts

- ✦ **Legal Framework:** Regulated under the Insecticides Act, 1968.
- ✦ **Soil Impact:** It destroys plant tissue on contact but leaves **no residual chemical activity** in the soil.
- ✦ **Global Status:** It is already banned or restricted in over **70 countries**, including the European Union and China.

Excellence Center and National Portal on Human-Wildlife Conflict

On July 15, 2026, Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav, inaugurated the 'Center of Excellence on Human-Wildlife Conflict' and the 'National Human-Wildlife Conflict Portal' at WII-SACON, Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu).

Key Facts

- **Background:** The announcement of this center was made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 7th meeting of the National Board for Wildlife.
- **Function of the Center:** It will serve as a national hub for scientific management, evidence-based research, and policy formulation regarding conflicts involving tigers, elephants, and leopards.
- **Digital Portal:** The national portal will provide a digital platform for conflict-related data collection, analysis, and information sharing across the country.

Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON)

Located in Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu), this is an autonomous campus of the Wildlife Institute of India (WII). Named after the famous ornithologist Dr. Salim Ali, this institute specializes in ornithology, wildlife conservation, and ecological research.

'PRAGATI' Initiative

On July 10, 2026, Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shivraj Singh Chauhan, launched the 'PRAGATI' initiative.

Key Facts

- **Full Name and Goal:** It stands for 'Promoting Regenerative Agriculture, Growth, Agri-Entrepreneurship and Transformative Innovation,' which aims to empower 20,000 agri-entrepreneurs and 20 lakh (2 million) farmers.
- **Services:** Village-level agri-entrepreneurs will provide facilities such as soil testing, mechanization, machine rentals, scientific advice, and access to institutional credit.
- **Implementation States:** In the initial phase, it will be implemented in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Assam, and Jharkhand.
- **Partners:** It is being implemented with the cooperation of private and charitable organizations like the PepsiCo Foundation, SBI Foundation, Gates Foundation, and TRIF.

Regenerative Agriculture

This is a sustainable farming method that focuses on improving soil health, restoring biodiversity, conserving the water cycle, and promoting carbon sequestration.

India's First 'Smart Algal Liquid Tree'

Scientists at CSIR-CIMFR (Dhanbad, Jharkhand) have developed India's first mobile "liquid tree" — the **Smart Algal Liquid Tree (SALT)** — to combat urban air pollution.

Key Facts

- **Technical Principle:** SALT is a compact container containing water and microalgae, which absorb high amounts of CO₂ and release O₂ through photosynthesis.
- **Features:** Unlike traditional trees, it does not require soil and is mobile (can be moved from one place to another). It can operate in both natural or artificial light using solar energy and electricity.
- **Installation:** Its first units have been installed at the CSIR-CIMFR campus (Dhanbad) and NCL (Singrauli).

Microalgae

These are microscopic single-celled organisms that thrive in water. They are naturally responsible for producing approximately 50% of the total oxygen generated on Earth through photosynthesis.

Practice Questions

1. Where will India's first AI-powered bird sanctuary project be developed?
 - (a) Sultanpur National Park, Haryana
 - (b) Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary, Maharashtra
 - (c) Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, Rajasthan
 - (d) Chilika Lake, Odisha
2. What is the main focus of the 'Small River Rejuvenation' (SRR) framework proposed by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)?
 - (a) Large engineering dams
 - (b) Local and nature-based solutions
 - (c) Only renaming urban rivers
 - (d) Privatization of rivers
3. Which bird species has been reintroduced to the Gir forests of Gujarat after six decades?
 - (a) Crane
 - (b) Indian Grey Hornbill
 - (c) Kingfisher
 - (d) Vulture
4. India's first standard is being prepared by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for the restoration of which ecosystem?
 - (a) Coral Reef
 - (b) Mangrove
 - (c) Alpine Meadows
 - (d) Desert Ecosystem
5. Which country became the 27th member of the 'International Big Cat Alliance' (IBCA)?
 - (a) Nepal
 - (b) Thailand
 - (c) Sri Lanka
 - (d) Bangladesh

Answers

1. (b), 2. (b), 3. (b), 4. (b), 5. (d)

REPORTS & INDICES

Investment Friendliness Index

On 17th July 2026 Niti Aayog released the report, 'Investment Friendliness Index'.

- It assesses all 28 states and eight Union Territories (UTs) on their ability to attract and sustain investments.
- Gujarat has emerged as India's most investment-friendly state in Niti Aayog's first-ever Investment Friendliness Index (IFI) 2026.

Overall Ranking (Top 5 States)		
Rank	State/UT	Score (out of 100)
1	Gujarat	56.6
2	Maharashtra	53.7
3	Tamil Nadu	53.3
4	Goa	53.1
5	Odisha	52.4

Category-Wise Leaders

- **Large States:** Gujarat (1st), followed by Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.
- **Hilly & Northeastern States:** Uttarakhand (Rank 1, Score 47.5), followed by Assam and Himachal Pradesh.
- **City-States & Union Territories:** Goa (Rank 1, Score 53.1), followed by Delhi and Chandigarh.

State-Specific Facts

- **Gujarat:** Ranks 1st in Infrastructure due to efficient port operations and low power costs (~29% below national average). It accounts for ~31% of India's merchandise exports.
- **Maharashtra:** Attracts the highest share of Private Equity/Venture Capital (PE/VC) in India (35%). It also has the highest number of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) at 1,033.
- **Tamil Nadu:** Ranks 1st in Infrastructure among Large States. It boasts a near 100% MoU conversion rate for investments.
- **Andhra Pradesh:** Recorded the highest digital transactions per capita (~18) among large states.
- **Sikkim:** Has the 2nd highest GSDP per capita in India (~Rs 4.07 lakh).
- **Chandigarh:** Ranked 1st in Rail Density and 1st in the addition of new technical workforce as a percentage of the population.
- **Delhi:** Ranks 1st among UTs for 24-hour power supply (zero downtime).
- **Goa:** Has the highest share of renewables in its power mix and highest spending on skilling/healthcare as a % of GSDP.

- **Telangana:** Offers the largest land area available for allotment among states (3x the category average).
- **Uttar Pradesh:** Recognized as a national leader in access-controlled expressways.

Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index)

On July 16, 2026, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the composite Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index) for the fiscal year ending March 2026, which has increased to 70.0.

Key Facts

- **Increase in Index:** The index rose from 67.0 in March 2025 to 70.0 in March 2026, primarily driven by growth in the 'Usage' sub-index.
- **Prudential Guidelines:** The RBI issued revised prudential norms for 'Specified Non-Financial Assets (SNFAs)' to resolve stressed assets.
- **Restriction on Sales:** Under these new rules, effective from October 1, 2026, entities cannot sell NPA (Non-Performing Asset) assets back to the defaulting borrower or its related parties.

Financial Inclusion Index

- ✦ It is published annually in July. The FI-Index ranges from 0 to 100, where 0 represents complete financial exclusion and 100 represents full financial inclusion.
- ✦ The index has no base year, reflecting cumulative progress over time.
- ✦ It comprises three parameters: Access (35%), Usage (45%), and Quality (20%).

Technical Advisory Committee Report on Index of Service Production

On July 10, 2026, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the report of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC-ISP) on the compilation of the Index of Service Production (ISP) with the base year 2024-25.

Key Facts

- **Trial Release:** The trial release of the ISP index, which measures the monthly performance of the formal service sector, is scheduled for July 14, 2026.
- **GVA Contribution:** The service sector contributes approximately 53% to India's Gross Value Added (GVA), making it the largest sector of the economy.
- **Methodology & Data:** The index will be compiled using the Laspeyres Volume Index methodology, GST aggregate data, and data from banking, railways, and ASISSE.

Gross Value Added (GVA)

GVA is the actual economic value obtained after subtracting intermediate consumption from the total value of goods and services produced in an economy, reflecting the performance of a specific sector.

All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE)

- The Union Ministry of Education officially released the 'All India Survey on Higher Education' (AISHE) reports for 2022-23 and 2023-24 together on July 8, 2026.
- **Key Facts**
- **Total Enrollment:** Total enrollment in higher education reached an all-time high of 4.5 crore in 2023-24, which is 31.5% higher than the 3.42 crore recorded in 2014-15.
- **Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER):** GER significantly increased from 23.7 in 2014-15 to 30.0 in 2023-24.
- **Female & Other Enrollments:** Female enrollment rose by 42.2% to 2.24 crore (GPI 1.08). Additionally, enrollment in SC, ST, and OBC categories also saw growth, while enrollment in STEM courses crossed 1.02 crore.

Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)

- ✦ In the context of education, GER is the percentage of students enrolled in higher education relative to the total population in the 18-23 age group.
- ✦ It is the most important statistical indicator of access, overall participation, and educational development in higher education in the country.

WIPO Report: India's Rise as a Global Innovation Powerhouse

The World Intangible Investment Report 2026, launched by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and Luiss Business School, reaffirms India's emergence as a premier global innovation hub. Union Minister Piyush Goyal highlighted that India is building a knowledge-driven future by prioritizing ideas over traditional assets.

Key Facts

- **Record-Breaking Growth:** India has outperformed major global players in transitioning toward a modern economy.
- **Highest Growth:** India recorded the fastest growth in intangible investment among the world's 15 largest economies.
- **Investment Surge:** Total investment reached \$78.2 billion in 2023.
- **Outpacing Tangibles:** With a 7.9% growth rate, investment in intangibles has surpassed growth in tangible assets.

- **Key Investment Areas:** The report identifies critical sectors shaping India's economic future:
 - ✦ Software development and Research & Development (R&D).
 - ✦ Intellectual Property (IP) and organizational capabilities.
 - ✦ Strengthening the startup ecosystem through digital transformation.
- **Drivers of Innovation:** India's status as a "global bright spot" is fueled by:
 - ✦ The aspirations of young innovators and entrepreneurs.
 - ✦ Sustained government reforms and policy support.
 - ✦ A strategic shift toward a technology-led, enterprise-driven economy.

WIPO

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is the United Nations agency that promotes and protects intellectual property (IP) across the world by cooperating with countries as well as international organizations.

- ✦ **Established in:** 1967; **Membership:** 194;
- Director General:** Daren Tang; **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland

IMF World Economic Outlook: India's Growth Estimated at 6.4%

On July 8, 2026, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) released the 'World Economic Outlook July 2026' update, estimating India's GDP growth rate at 6.4% for FY 2026-27.

Key Facts

- **FY28 & Previous Performance:** The IMF increased India's growth estimate for FY28 to 6.7%, while India's GDP growth in FY26 was recorded at 7.7%.
- **Global Growth Rate:** Global economic growth is estimated to be 3.0% in 2026 and is expected to improve to 3.4% in 2027.
- **Trade & Inflation:** World trade volume growth will be 3.5% in 2026, while global headline inflation is projected to rise to 4.7% in 2026.

Global Passport Index (GPI) 2026: India at 125th Place

On July 1, 2026, India ranked 125th out of 197 countries in the 'Global Passport Index' (GPI) 2026 released by Global Citizen Solutions.

Key Facts

- **India's Score:** India slipped one spot from the previous edition (124th), though its overall score was 45.1, the highest in the last five years.
- **Top Country:** Sweden topped the world with a score of 96.05, followed by Switzerland and Finland.

- **Basis of Evaluation:** The index evaluates passports based on Mobility (50%), Quality of Life (25%), and Investment Opportunities (25%).
- **Visa-Free Access:** Indian passport holders currently have visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to 26 destinations (e.g., Bhutan, Nepal, Jamaica).

Visa-on-Arrival

This is a facility where a traveler does not need to apply for a visa before starting their journey; instead, the visa is issued immediately upon arrival at the destination country's airport or border.

India remains in the Lower-Middle-Income category with a GNI per capita of \$2,760 (Atlas Method, 2025).

Key Facts

- **Top Indian States:** Five Indian states—Delhi (\$6,217), Karnataka (\$5,579), Telangana (\$5,407), Tamil Nadu (\$5,329), and Gujarat (\$4,734)—have crossed the Upper-Middle income threshold (\$4,636).
- **Least Developed States:** Bihar (\$984) is India's poorest major state, followed by Uttar Pradesh (\$1,403) and Jharkhand (\$1,470).
- **Global Upgrades:** Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Philippines, Jordan, and Micronesia have been upgraded to the Upper-Middle income category.
- According to the World Bank, countries are divided into four income groups based on their **Gross National Income (GNI) per capita**:

World Bank Income Classification Report

According to the World Bank's country income classification (FY2027) report released on July 1, 2026,

Income Classification	GNI per capita Threshold (USD)	Countries (Examples)	Special Note
Low Income Economies	\$1,175 or less	Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, Chad, Burundi, Sudan, Central African Republic, Eritrea	Extreme poverty, limited resources
Lower-Middle Income Economies	\$1,176 – \$4,635	India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Egypt, Nigeria, Ukraine, Kenya, Togo	Togo was promoted from Low-Income this year
Upper-Middle Income Economies	\$4,636 – \$14,375	China, Russia, Brazil, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Philippines, Jordan, Argentina	Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Philippines, Jordan promoted from Lower-Middle this year
High Income Economies	\$14,376 or more	USA, Japan, Germany, France, UK, Australia, Canada, South Korea, Singapore	High standard of living, advanced technology & services

Practice Questions

- In the 'Global Influence Rankings 2026' released in July 2026, the United States ranked first. What rank did India achieve in this index?
 - 10th
 - 16th
 - 25th
 - 32nd
- According to the recently released 'India Skills Report 2026', which category's workforce employability has been recorded higher than men (54%) for the first time in 5 years?
 - Rural Youth
 - Female Workforce
 - Technical Graduates
 - Specially-abled (Divyang) Workforce
- According to global data released in July 2026, which country recorded the largest population (234 million) living in acute poverty under the Multidimensional Poverty Index?
 - Nigeria
 - Pakistan
 - Ethiopia
 - India
- According to the IMF's 'AI Preparedness Index' released in July 2026, what score did India achieve compared to the emerging economies' average score of 42.1?
 - 38.5
 - 45.2
 - 49.3
 - 52.1

Answers

1. (b), 2. (b), 3. (d), 4. (c)

DATA & FACTS

Births/Deaths & Sex Ratio: Key Facts based on the Civil Registration System-2024

India achieved near-universal vital event registration in 2024, recording 99.1% birth registration and 99.4% death registration nationally, according to the Civil Registration System (CRS) Report released by the Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India on 1st July 2026.

Legislative & Administrative Framework

- **Governing Act:** Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969.
- **Recent Amendment:** RBD (Amendment) Act, 2023 (Effective from October 1, 2023).
- **Key Change (2023 Amendment):** The Birth Certificate is now a single document for admission to educational institutions, issuance of driving licenses, preparation of voter lists, registration of marriage, and appointment to government posts.
- **Authority:** Office of the Registrar General of India (ORGI), under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- **Mandatory Reporting Time:** 21 days is the prescribed time limit for reporting births and deaths.

National Demographic Data (2024)

- **Total Registered Births:** 2.54 Crore (254.7 lakhs) — an increase of 1.1% from 2023.
- **Total Registered Deaths:** 89.4 Lakhs — an increase of 3.2% from 2023.
- **Level of Birth Registration:** 99.1% (National Average).
- **Level of Death Registration:** 99.4% (National Average).
- **Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB):** 933 females per 1,000 males (National average).
- **Gross Natural Addition to Population:** 1.65 Crore (Births minus Deaths).
- **Institutional Births:** 79.4% of all registered births occurred in medical institutions.

Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) - State Rankings

Top 5 States/UTs (Highest SRB)	Bottom 3 States/UTs (Lowest SRB)
1. Arunachal Pradesh: 1050 (Best in India)	1. Nagaland: 806 (Lowest in India)
2. Andaman & Nicobar Islands: 984	2. Lakshadweep: 865
3. Meghalaya: 974	3. Jharkhand: 890
4. Mizoram: 972	
5. Kerala: 970	

State-wise Performance (Levels of Registration)

- **100% Birth Registration Level:** 18 States/UTs achieved this, including Bihar, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttarakhand.
- **100% Death Registration Level:** 21 States/UTs achieved this.
- **Timely Registration (within 21 days):**
 - ✦ **Births:** Gujarat (99.9%) and Puducherry (99.6%) are the top performers.
 - ✦ **Deaths:** Chandigarh (98.1%) and Punjab (96.9%) lead in timely reporting.

Rural vs. Urban Composition

Vital Event	Rural Share	Urban Share
Registered Births	42.9%	57.1%
Registered Deaths	57.2%	42.8%
Infant Deaths	15.8%	84.2%

Definitions for Terminology (Glossary)

- **Still Birth:** A fetal death where the product of conception has attained at least 28 weeks of gestation.
- **Infant Death:** Death of a child less than one year old.

Global Registration (Indian Nationals)

- **Total births registered in Indian Missions abroad:** 66,413.
- **Highest Registrations:** UAE (29.1% of births abroad) followed by the United Kingdom (19.4%).
- **Death Registration abroad:** Highest in Saudi Arabia (23.1%) followed by UAE (22.6%).

Overview of Civil Registration System

- ✦ **Definition:** The CRS is a unified, continuous, permanent, and compulsory process for recording vital events, including births, deaths, and stillbirths.
- ✦ **Legal Framework:** Registration is mandated under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 (amended in 2023).
- ✦ **Significance for Individuals:** Provides legal identity and facilitates access to citizenship rights and government social benefits.
- ✦ **Significance for the Nation:** Serves as the primary source of vital statistics, essential for socio-economic planning, public health management, and evaluating social sector programs.



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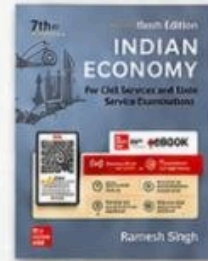
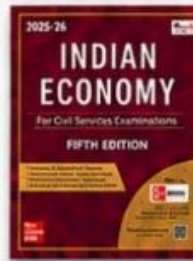
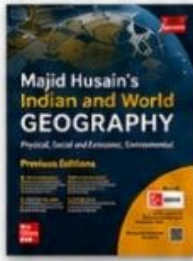
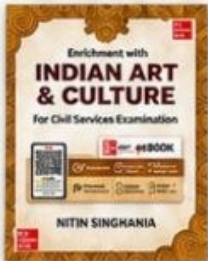
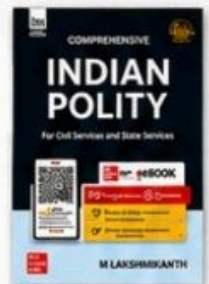
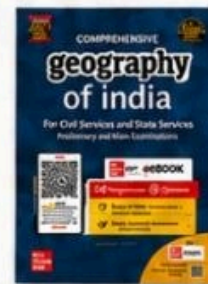
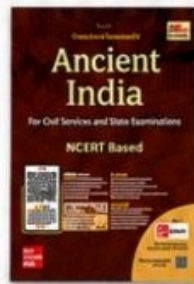
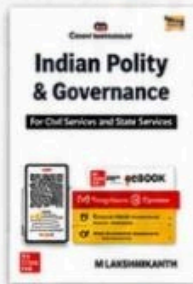
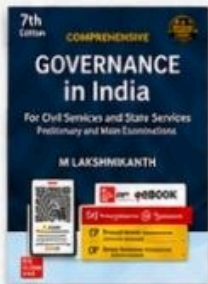
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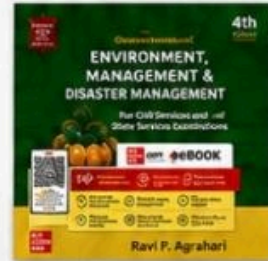
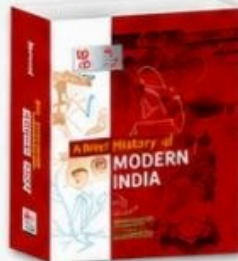
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DATA & FACTS

India: World's Second Most Electrified Railway Network Nation

Indian Railways has achieved 99.6% electrification of its broad-gauge network.

- India is now the world's second most electrified railway network after Switzerland.

The GCC Boom: India as the "World's Office"

- India has successfully positioned itself as the premier global destination for high-end services, evolving far beyond simple outsourcing.
- **Market Leadership:** India currently hosts over 2,100 Global Capability Centres (GCCs), representing approximately 50% of all such centres worldwide.
- **Rapid Expansion:** The ecosystem is growing at a rate of one new GCC every day.
- **Corporate Interest:** Over 500 of the Forbes top-2,000 companies have established their offices in India.
- **Economic Contribution:** These centres generate nearly \$100 billion in annual revenue and employ approximately 23 lakh (2.3 million) professionals.

The External Balance: Services vs. Merchandise

The 2025-26 fiscal data highlights a stark contrast between India's prowess in services and its struggles in the manufacturing sector.

Services Surplus	Merchandise Deficit
❖ Services Exports: \$421.3 billion.	❖ Goods Exports: \$446.1 billion.
❖ Services Imports: \$204.7 billion.	❖ Goods Imports: \$783.4 billion.
❖ Net Surplus: \$216.6 billion, which acts as a critical cushion for the national economy.	❖ Trade Deficit: \$337.3 billion, illustrating the heavy reliance on imported manufactured goods.

What are GCCs?

Global Capability Centers (GCCs) are internal units of multinational companies that manage functions such as IT, finance, Research & Development (R&D), analytics, and human resources. India remains the world's preferred GCC destination due to its skilled engineering talent and digital infrastructure.

India: The Global Hub for Retail and FMCG Global Capability Centers (GCCs)

India currently hosts 180 Retail and FMCG GCCs, employing over 2,72,000 professionals. This number is 34% higher than the combined workforce of five countries including Poland, the Philippines, and Germany, making India the world's largest workforce provider in this sector.

- **Leading Cities:** Bengaluru leads with 84,000 professionals, followed by Delhi-NCR (66,000) and Hyderabad (45,000).

Infrastructure Growth: Sectoral Achievements

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) recently released its quarterly update through the **PAIMANA Performance Dashboard**, highlighting significant growth across India's core infrastructure sectors for FY 2026-27.

Civil Aviation

- Cargo handled in April 2026 reached 98,920.10 tonnes, registering 11.8% year-on-year growth.
- The number of aerodromes increased to 165, up by 81 since 2014, improving regional connectivity.
- During FY 2026-27 (up to May), passenger traffic reached 7.1 crore, while cargo handled stood at 7.3 lakh tonnes, recording 10.6% YoY growth.
- The sector facilitated 10.52 lakh foreign tourist arrivals during April-May FY 2026-27, strengthening tourism, trade, and global connectivity.

Telecommunications

- Wireless/mobile data consumption reached 2,85,376 petabytes (PB) in FY 2025-26, recording 24.7% annual growth.
- Telephone subscribers increased from 120.17 crore to 133.06 crore, reflecting 10.7% growth.
- Telecom infrastructure expanded to 8.55 lakh mobile towers and 32.25 lakh Base Transceiver Stations (BTS).
- Tele-density improved to 93.26%, indicating wider digital inclusion and connectivity.

Road Transport and Highways

- 9,360 km of National Highways were constructed during FY 2025-26, enhancing road infrastructure and connectivity.
- Digital toll collection strengthened, with electronic toll transactions rising to 88 crore during FY 2026-27 (up to May), representing 39.7% year-on-year growth.

Ports, Shipping and Waterways

- Non-major ports handled 2.06 crore passengers during FY 2024-25.
- Coastal cargo handling increased to 196.81 million tonnes at major ports and 142.22 million tonnes at non-major ports.
- India's shipping fleet expanded to 1,592 vessels in 2025.
- Sea-borne trade nearly doubled from 76 million tonnes (2015) to 145 million tonnes (2023).
- Inland water vessel fleet reached 10,623, while navigable waterways expanded to 29,151.9 km, strengthening multimodal logistics.

PLANS & POLICIES

Amrit Bharat Station Scheme

On July 17, 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated 75 redeveloped railway stations across 20 states under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme.

Key Facts

- **Main Hub:** The primary event of this ceremony was held at **Jalandhar Cantt Station** in Punjab, which has been redeveloped at a cost of Rs. 125 crore.
- **Scope of the Scheme:** Launched by the Ministry of Railways in December 2022, this scheme provides for a long-term master plan for over 1,338 stations in India.
- **Redevelopment Targets:** Indian Railways completed work on 180 stations by March 12, 2026, and aims to complete 400 stations by the end of 2026 and 700 stations by the end of 2027.

Amrit Bharat Station Scheme

It is a major initiative for the modernization and redevelopment of Indian railway stations under the Ministry of Railways. It is based on the principle of **"Virasat bhi, Vikas bhi"** (Heritage as well as Development), integrating modern facilities like lifts, escalators, free Wi-Fi, and multimodal connectivity with local heritage.

'Gramoday' Program

On July 13, 2026, on the occasion of its 45th Foundation Day, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) launched an entrepreneurship initiative for rural youth called 'Gramoday'.

Key Facts

- **Program Goal:** It is a 3-year pilot program aimed at developing 4,000 rural entrepreneurs across all states and Union Territories.
- **Operational Model:** It will be operated under a **'Digital-First Hybrid Model'**, coordinating digital technology with direct practical training.
- **Institutional Collaboration:** It is a joint effort of NABARD and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), to be implemented by the Institute for Industrial Development (IID).
- **Support System:** It includes psychometric assessment, personal counseling, skill development, mentoring, and business setup assistance.

NAMASTE Scheme

According to official progress data released on July 15, 2026, 87,037 PPE kits have been distributed to sanitation workers under the Central Government's 'NAMASTE' scheme.

Key Facts

- **Nature of the Scheme:** 'National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem' (NAMASTE), launched in July 2023, is a joint Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- **Coverage Statistics:** As of July 14, 2026, the profiles of 90,942 sewer/septic tank workers have been recorded, of which 89,248 have been verified, and over 76,000 workers are linked to health insurance.
- **Financial Assistance:** Reimbursement of up to Rs. 2 lakh for safety equipment is provided to Emergency Response Sanitation Units (ERSUs), and a capital subsidy of up to Rs. 5 lakh is given for sanitation vehicles.

Emergency Response Sanitation Unit

These are specialized administrative and technical units established in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and districts. Their primary objective is to completely eliminate the hazardous manual cleaning of sewers and septic tanks and ensure safe cleaning through modern machines, safety equipment, and trained manpower.

Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM)

According to a review report released on July 9, 2026, the 'Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization' (SMAM), launched in 2014-15 under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), is promoting modern agricultural equipment across the country.

Key Facts

- **Financial Aid and Infrastructure:** Since its inception, Rs. 9,404.47 crore has been allocated, 21.61 lakh agricultural machines have been distributed, and 27,554 Custom Hiring Centers (CHCs) and 25,608 Farm Machinery Banks have been established.
- **Subsidy Rates:** A 40% subsidy is provided to general farmers, while a 50% subsidy (via DBT) is given to SC/ST, small-marginal farmers, and beneficiaries in North-Eastern states.
- **Kisan Drones:** During 2023-24 to 2025-26, 40,928 Kisan Drone demonstrations were organized across 40,918 hectares with assistance worth Rs. 52.50 crore. 30% of the total funds are reserved for women farmers.

Custom Hiring Center (CHC)

This is a center where small and marginal farmers can rent expensive and modern agricultural machinery (such as tractors, harvesters, and drones) at low rates for their farming needs.

PLANS & POLICIES

EPFO Launches Amnesty Scheme 2026

On June 29, 2026, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, launched the 'Amnesty Scheme, 2026'.

Key Facts

- **Objective:** The scheme provides a six-month one-time opportunity for exempted PF trusts to regularize their status under the EPF Act, 1952.
- **Concessions:** Special relaxations have been granted under this scheme regarding conditions such as the minimum number of employees, corpus size, and three years of prior compliance.
- **Application Process:** Eligible establishments can submit their applications via email to the Central Government through the respective EPFO Regional Office.

Employees' Provident Fund Organisation

It is a statutory organization under the Ministry of Labour. It regulates provident funds and pensions for establishments covered under the EPF Act, 1952.

Samagra Shishu Bal Swasthya Karyakram

On June 29, 2026, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare J.P. Nadda launched the 'Samagra Shishu Bal Swasthya Karyakram' (SSBSK) during the 16th meeting of the Central Council of Health and Family Welfare (CCHFW).

Key Facts

- **Program Scope:** It provides an integrated national framework for home and community-based care for children from birth to 36 months.
- **Vision:** The program is guided by the vision of "Pehle Teen Saal Sampurna Dekhbhal" (Complete Care for the First Three Years).
- **Special Monitoring:** High-risk newborns will be provided with 9 home visits in the first 42 days and 8 additional home visits up to the age of 36 months.

ABHA ID

A unique 14-digit health identification number under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission that allows citizens to securely store their digital health records and share them with healthcare providers.

Bharat Health Terminology Service: A Unified Medical Language

India has reached a digital healthcare milestone with the launch of the Bharat Health Terminology Service (BHTS) and Common Lab Codes for India (CLCI).

- These platforms act as a "universal translator," ensuring that medical data is understood identically across all hospitals and diagnostic centers.

What it Means for Patients

- **End to Duplicate Testing:** Standardized lab codes (CLCI) allow results from one lab to be accurately read by any hospital system, eliminating the need for repeat tests.
- **Faster Insurance Claims:** Unified data enables the National Health Claims Exchange (NHCE) to process insurance approvals in minutes rather than days.
- **Seamless Portability:** Patients no longer need to carry physical files; their digital history stays consistent across the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) ecosystem.

Impact on Doctors and Healthcare

- **Semantic Interoperability:** Systems will now recognize "Type 2 Diabetes" or "T2DM" as the same clinical entity, regardless of the software used.
- **Reduced Medical Errors:** Standardized terminologies (SNOMED CT) and a national drug registry help prevent fatal prescription and diagnostic mistakes.
- **Data-Driven Care:** A unified digital language paves the way for AI-driven public health tracking and more accurate clinical decisions.

Practice Questions

1. From which railway station was the main inauguration ceremony under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme organized?
(a) New Delhi Railway Station
(b) Jalandhar Cantt Railway Station
(c) Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus
(d) Howrah Junction
2. Which state is associated with the 'Lakadong Turmeric Mission Golden Spice' launched in July 2026?
(a) Assam
(b) Meghalaya
(c) Tripura
(d) Sikkim
3. How many 'ABHA' numbers have been generated under the 'Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission' (ABDM) as of July 2026?
(a) 50.20 crore
(b) 75.10 crore
(c) 93.95 crore
(d) 120.50 crore
4. Which European country has become the first EU nation to ban social media for children under 15?
(a) Germany
(b) France
(c) Italy
(d) Spain
5. India has become which member country to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement on fisheries subsidies?
(a) 100th
(b) 115th
(c) 123rd
(d) 130th

Answers

1. (b), 2. (b), 3. (c), 4. (b), 5. (c)

RBI's New Framework for Specified Non-Financial Assets (SNFA)

According to a notification issued on July 18, 2026, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) introduced a new prudential framework for Specified Non-Financial Assets (SNFA), which will come into effect from October 1, 2026.

Highlights

- **Applicability:** This framework applies to RRBs, AIFIs, Commercial Banks, Small Finance Banks, and NBFCs.
- **Definition of SNFA:** Immovable or non-banking assets acquired by banks as part of the recovery process of NPA loans will be considered SNFA.
- **Disposal and Limit:** The maximum period for the disposal of these assets is 7 years; selling them back to the original borrower or related entities is prohibited.
- **Valuation and Accounting:** SNFA will be valued at prices determined by two independent valuers and must be shown separately in the balance sheet (not under NPA).

Key Facts

- ❖ **AIFIs (All India Financial Institutions):** These include institutions like NABARD, SIDBI, EXIM Bank, and NHB.
- ❖ **SARFAESI Act, 2002:** Banks derive the power to seize assets for NPA recovery under this Act. The new SNFA framework makes this process more transparent.
- ❖ **Prudential Norms:** These are rules set by the RBI to mitigate a bank's risk and ensure financial stability.

Best Egmont Case Award 2026 for Cyber Fraud Investigation

On July 10, 2026, the Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND) secured the runner-up position in the 'Best Egmont Case Award' (BECA) 2026 at the Egmont Group Plenary held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Key Facts

- **Case Background:** The award was received for an investigation led by FIU-IND Director Amit Mohan Govil, which exposed an Rs. 868 crore cyber fraud and a money laundering network involving more than 5,000 mule bank accounts.
- **Action:** Based on this intelligence, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted searches at 13 locations under PMLA, 2002, seizing Rs. 13.6 crore in cryptocurrency and attaching assets worth Rs. 8.67 crore.

- **Significance:** This case was selected among the final two out of 182 member countries, showcasing India's strong leadership in financial intelligence.

Financial Intelligence Unit-India

FIU-IND is a central national agency of the Government of India responsible for receiving, analyzing, and disseminating intelligence related to suspicious financial transactions to national and international law enforcement agencies.

DFS Insurance Division Ranks Second in GRAI Ranking

In the Grievance Redressal Assessment and Index (GRAI) rankings for May 2026, released on July 9, 2026, the Insurance Division of the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance, secured the second position in the Group A category.

Key Facts

- **Banking Division Rank:** In the same GRAI ranking, the Banking Division of DFS secured the 6th position in Group A (departments receiving 500 or more complaints).
- **Random Review Initiative:** Since January 7, 2024, the DFS Secretary has been personally reviewing 20 randomly selected cases in the presence of complainants and top officials of financial institutions.
- **Annual Complaints:** The Banking and Insurance divisions of the DFS receive more than 2.50 lakh complaints annually.

Grievance Redressal Assessment and Index

Developed by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), this index evaluates the grievance redressal efficiency of ministries through CPGRAMS. It is based on 4 dimensions and 11 performance indicators, including efficiency, response, domain, and organizational commitment.

SBI Acquires NHB's 10% Stake in RDCL

On July 8, 2026, the State Bank of India (SBI) acquired the National Housing Bank's (NHB) 10% stake in RMBS Development Company Limited (RDCL).

Key Facts

- **Change in Shareholding:** Following this deal, NHB's shareholding in RDCL has decreased from 39% to 29%.
- **About RDCL:** Established in 2024 with a paid-up capital of Rs. 500 crore, RDCL is a middle-layer NBFC focused on the development of the Residential Mortgage-Backed Securities (RMBS) market in India.

BANKING, FINANCIAL SERVICES & INSURANCE

- **Other Shareholders:** LIC holds a 10% stake in RDCL, while HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, and Bajaj Finance hold 7% each.
- **Objective:** This acquisition will help banks and non-banking lenders pool housing loans and convert them into tradable securities.

Residential Mortgage-Backed Securities

RMBS are financial securities backed by a pool of residential home loans, allowing banks to unlock capital by converting their loans into securities.

RBI's New Draft Directions for Money Market

On July 1, 2026, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued new draft directions to regulate the Call, Notice, and Term Money Market.

Key Facts

- **Participant Expansion:** All India Financial Institutions (AIFIs) and eligible NBFCs/HFCs will be allowed as both borrowers and lenders, while corporates will act only as lenders.
- **Borrowing Limits:** Borrowing limits have been set at 200% of Net Owned Funds (NOF) for NBFCs and HFCs, and 400% for Standalone Primary Dealers.
- **Trading Rules:** All eligible participants must subscribe to the NDS-CALL platform within 6 months, and reporting of OTC transactions within 15 minutes is mandatory.

Term Money Market

Term Money Market is a short-term money market where funds are borrowed or lent for a period exceeding 14 days and up to one year, which is crucial for liquidity management in the banking system.

EPFO 3.0 Reforms and New EPF Withdrawal Rules

On July 1, 2026, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) announced new rules for Provident Fund withdrawals under its 'EPFO 3.0' digital initiative.

Key Facts

- **Speedy Settlement:** Aadhaar and KYC-verified claims will now be settled within just 3 working days instead of 7-20 days.
- **Auto-Settlement Limit:** The auto-settlement limit for eligible advance claims has been increased from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 5 lakh.
- **Minimum Balance Rule:** It will be mandatory for employees to maintain at least a 25% balance in their EPF account during service, while 75% will be withdrawable.
- **Merging of Categories:** More than 13 withdrawal reasons have been consolidated into three main categories: Essential Needs, Housing Needs, and Special Circumstances.

Universal Account Number (UAN)

UAN is a permanent 12-digit number allotted by the EPFO to each of its members, allowing employees to manage all their EPF accounts in one place.

Reserve Bank - Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS) 2026

On July 1, 2026, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) implemented the 'Reserve Bank-Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS) 2026', replacing the 2021 integrated scheme.

Key Facts

- **Objective and Scope:** It aims to provide free and fast resolution of customer complaints involving banks, eligible NBFCs, Prepaid Payment Instrument (PPI) issuers, and Credit Information Companies (CICs).
- **Redressal Process:** If an entity does not respond within 30 days or provides an unsatisfactory reply, the customer can approach the Ombudsman within 90 days.
- **Compensation Limit:** There is a provision for compensation up to Rs. 30 lakh for financial loss and up to Rs. 3 lakh for loss of time/mental harassment.
- **Filing Medium:** Complaints can be filed through the CMS portal or the Centralized Receipt and Processing Centre (CRPC) located in Chandigarh.

Practice Questions

1. To boost satellite manufacturing, 'Dhruva Space' has raised Rs. 60 crore from which venture capital fund?
(a) Antariksh Venture Capital Fund
(b) Skyway Ventures
(c) Gagan Venture Fund
(d) Bharat Space Fund
2. The European Union has imposed a fine of 550 million euros on which online platform under the 'Digital Services Act' (DSA)?
(a) AliExpress
(b) Temu
(c) Amazon
(d) Shein
3. NPCI has partnered with whom to enable real-time currency conversion for cross-border UPI transactions?
(a) HSBC India and JP Morgan Payments
(b) Standard Chartered and Citibank
(c) Barclays and Bank of America
(d) DBS Bank and HSBC

Answers

1. (a), 2. (a), 3. (a)

BUSINESS AWARENESS

News from Corporate World & PSUs

e-Shram Portal: A 'One-Stop Solution' for Unorganized Workers

According to data released by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, more than 31.78 crore unorganized workers have registered on the e-Shram portal as of July 14, 2026.

Key Facts

- **Objective:** To create a comprehensive National Database of Unorganized Workers (NDUW), including migrant, gig, and platform workers.
- **Integrated Benefits:** All unorganized workers, including street vendors, construction laborers, and domestic workers, are linked to various schemes based on their eligibility.
- **National Database:** Over 31.78 crore workers are registered and provided with a 12-digit unique UAN (Universal Account Number) card.
- **Accident Insurance:** Registered workers receive free accident insurance cover up to Rs. 2 lakh under the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY).
- **Local Microsites:** State-specific microsites have been launched to cater to regional requirements, simplifying local registration and verification.
- **UAN (Universal Account Number):** A unique 12-digit number that makes a worker's identity portable across the country.

One-Stop Solution

Under this vision launched in October 2024, e-Shram has been developed into an integrated platform. So far, 15 central schemes have been linked to it, including PM-SVANidhi, Ayushman Bharat (AB-PMJAY), PM-KISAN, and Ration Card (ONORC). Workers can now check their eligibility and received benefits on a single portal.

MRF Emerges as India's Most Valuable and Strongest Tire Brand

According to the **Brand Finance India 100-2026** report, MRF has been declared India's most valuable and strongest tire brand. With a brand value of US\$ 863 million and a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 87.7 out of 100, it also ranks among the top 3 strongest tire brands in the world.

Key Facts

- **Growth in Brand Value:** MRF's brand value has increased by 24% compared to the previous year, reaching \$863 million.

- **Indian Ranking:** In the Brand Finance India 100 2026 report, MRF is the 48th most valuable brand in India, up from 51st place last year.
- **Success Factors:** The company's strong domestic position, extensive distribution network, superior product quality, and wide portfolio have played a key role in this achievement.
- **Global Standing:** In addition to its Indian ranking, MRF has secured a place among the top 3 strongest tire brands globally.
- The combined brand value of India's top 100 brands has exceeded US\$ 236.5 billion this year.

Brand Value

Brand value is the perception of an organization in the minds of consumers, stakeholders, and the broader market. It is not limited to just a logo or slogan; it is the sum total of all the values the company represents. It depends on the company's image in society and the emotional connection it fosters with its target audience.

"Going Global" Guidebook: The Export Path for MSMEs

On July 16, 2026, the guidebook "**Going Global: A Practical Guide for Indian MSMEs**" was launched in New Delhi. It has been jointly prepared by the Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL) of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

Key Facts

- **Objective:** To provide practical guidance to Indian MSMEs for entering the international market. It assists in identifying export opportunities, market analysis, international quality standards, and finding foreign buyers.
- **Features and Solutions:** The guidebook provides information on using free digital tools for low-cost market research. It also explains the benefits of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and 'Rules of Origin.'
- **Rules of Origin:** These rules determine the national source of a product to ensure that customs duty benefits under an FTA are not misused.
- **Trade Remedies:** These include anti-dumping and safeguard measures that protect domestic industries from unfair competition from foreign products.
- **CII (Confederation of Indian Industry):** A non-governmental, non-profit, industry-led organization established in 1895.
- **CTIL:** A premier research center within IIFT focusing on trade and investment laws.

DIARY OF EVENTS

Persons in News

- **Nandan Nilekani:** The Indian government has constituted a six-member high-powered task force, chaired by Infosys co-founder and Aadhaar architect Nandan Nilekani, to recommend reforms aimed at making India's entrance examinations more secure, transparent and leak-proof. Other members are - S Somanath, Former ISRO chairman and space scientist; Tapan Deka, Former Intelligence Bureau director; V Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras and computer scientist; Anita Karwal, Former Education Secretary and ex-CBSE chairperson; Amrit Lal Meena, Senior IAS officer and logistics expert.
- **S. Somanath:** Former ISRO Chairman S. Somanath has joined Agnikul Cosmos - a Chennai-based private space startup as an observer on its Board of Directors. Agnibaan is India's privately developed orbital launch vehicle by Agnikul Cosmos.
- **Anurag Jain:** Senior IAS officer Anurag Jain has been appointed as the new CEO of NITI Aayog.
- **Leander Paes:** Olympic medallist and Hall of Famer Leander Paes was appointed Player Ambassador of the Asian Tennis Federation during Wimbledon. The 53-year-old Indian legend, who won 18 Grand Slam titles and an Olympic bronze, will promote tennis across Asia, mentor emerging players, and support grassroots development.
- **Anil Menon:** A NASA astronaut of Indian descent, Anil Menon and two Russian cosmonauts on July 14, 2026 lifted off onboard a Soyuz MS-29 spacecraft from Kazakhstan on an eight-month mission to the International Space Station.
- **Aswath S:** 17-year-old Aswath S from Kanyakumari became the country's 98th Grandmaster after clinching his final GM norm at the 2026 Pune International Grandmaster Round Robin.
- **Sunil Bharti Mittal:** The US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) presented its 2026 Leadership Award to Sunil Bharti Mittal, founder and chairman of Bharti Enterprises for transforming India's telecommunications landscape and for his contributions as a global business leader to advancing economic ties between India and North America.
- **Chandrakant Kumar:** He is the first loco pilot to operate India's hydrogen-powered train during the inaugural run on the Jind-Sonapat route.
- **Soumya Swaminathan:** On July 10, 2026, Soumya Swaminathan was formally inducted as a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) in London (she was elected in May 2026). She is the second Indian woman

scientist to receive this honor after Prof. Gagandeep Kang (2019).

Appointments

- **Andy Burnham:** He was sworn in as the new Prime Minister of the United Kingdom by King Charles III on July 20, 2026. He succeeded Keir Starmer.
- **Harjit Singh Grewal:** The Centre on July 16, 2026 appointed Harjit Singh Grewal as the Chairperson of the National Commission for Minorities (NCM), filling a post that had remained vacant since April 2025 after the tenure of Iqbal Singh Lalpura ended. He is the second Sikh leader to head the statutory body in succession.
- **Air Marshal Jasvir Singh Mann:** Appointed as the new Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (AOC-in-C) of the Southern Air Command (SAC).
- **Lieutenant General Rajesh Pushkar:** On 1st July, 2026 he assumed the charge as the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C) of the Southern Command.
- **Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit:** On 1st of July, 2026 Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit has assumed the charge as the Vice Chief of the Air Staff (VCAS). He succeeds Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor.
- **Air Marshal Tejinder Singh:** He took over as the Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee (CISC).
- **General Dhiraj Seth:** On 1st July 2026, General Dhiraj Seth assumed the charge as the 31st Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) succeeding General Upendra Dwivedi.
- **Kanishka Narayan:** Muzaffarpur, Bihar, born Kanishka Narayan has been appointed as the United Kingdom's first Cabinet-level Minister for Artificial Intelligence.

Obituary

Rudolph A. Marcus

- Nobel laureate in Chemistry (1992) Rudolph A. Marcus was best known for formulating the celebrated Marcus theory, which explains how electrons move between molecules during chemical reactions without breaking bonds.

Susumu Tonegawa

- A Japanese scientist, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1987 "for his discovery of the genetic principle for generation of antibody diversity".

Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani

- He was Emir of Qatar from 1995 until his abdication in 2013. He was also prime minister of Qatar from 1995 to 1996.

Teejan Bai

- Teejan Bai was a singer and exponent of Pandavani, a traditional performing art form, from Chhattisgarh, in which she enacted tales from the Mahabharata, with musical accompaniment.
- Bai was awarded the Padma Shri in 1988, Padma Bhushan in 2003, and Padma Vibhushan in 2019, along with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1995.

Moozhikkal Pankajakshi

- Moozhikkal Pankajakshi was an Indian expert in Nokkuvidya pavakali, a form of puppetry from Kerala. She was awarded her country's fourth highest civilian award, the Padma Shri, in 2020.
- In Nokkuvidya pavakali is a method of telling stories by moving small puppets fixed on a two foot long thin stick which is holding between the nose and the upper lip. It usually depicts stories from Ramayana and Mahabharata.

Garfield Sobers

- Sir Garfield St Aubrun Sobers was a Barbadian cricketer who played for the West Indies between 1954 and 1974. He is widely considered to be cricket's greatest ever all-rounder and one of the greatest cricketers of all time.

Poomani

- Poomani was a writer and novelist. He wrote about the lives of ordinary people in the karisal bhoomi, the rain-fed black-soil tracts of southern Tamil Nadu.
- Poomani won the Sahitya Akademi award in 2014 in the Tamil language category for his novel Agnaadi.
- Poomani's novel Vekkai was adapted into the film Asuran (2019) which brought wider attention to his work.

Gita Upadhyay

- Gita Upadhyay was an educator, writer and translator from Assam.
- She is known for her contributions to both Assamese and Nepali literature, particularly through translation works aimed at fostering cultural understanding.
- She was awarded the Padma Shri (2025) and Sahitya Academy Award (2016).
- She is noted as the first woman from the Gorkha community of Assam to obtain a post-graduate degree.

S Janaki

- S Janaki was a veteran playback singer, fondly known as the "Nightingale of South India".

- Born as Sistla Sreeramamurthy Janaki in Andhra Pradesh, Janaki enjoyed an illustrious career spanning more than six decades, during which she recorded over 40,000 songs in around 20 Indian languages.

Girish Bharadwaj

- Girish Bharadwaj was an Indian social worker often referred to as 'Sethu Bandhu' and Bridgeman of India for building around 127 bridges in remote villages across India. He was conferred the Padma Shri award in 2017.

Vijaya Mehta

- Vijaya Mehta was a noted film and theatre personality - one of the pioneers of experimental Marathi theatre.
- Through the theatre group Rangayan, she introduced a new theatrical language, fresh perspectives, and a globally informed approach to Marathi stagecraft.
- She was honoured with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1975 and the National Film Award for Best Supporting Actress for 'Rao Saheb' in 1986, among other honours.

Awards

PM Modi Conferred Indonesia's 'Bintang Adipurna'

In July 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred with the 'Bintang Adipurna' (Star of the Republic of Indonesia Adipurna), the highest civilian honor of Indonesia.

- The award was presented by the Indonesian President during PM Modi's state visit to Jakarta, marking a new era in the India-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Key Facts

- **Highest Distinction:** The *Bintang Adipurna* is the first class of the *Bintang Republik Indonesia*, reserved for heads of state who have significantly fostered bilateral ties.
- **75 Years of Ties:** The award coincides with the celebration of 75 years of diplomatic relations between the two maritime neighbors (established in 1949).
- **Strategic "Act East":** This honor underscores India's "Act East Policy" and joint cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, particularly regarding security in the Malacca Strait.

Lokmanya Tilak National Award 2026

NSA Ajit Doval has been selected for the prestigious Lokmanya Tilak National Award 2026 for his outstanding contribution to India's national security.

- **Date:** August 1, 2026 (106th death anniversary of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak)
- **Presented By:** Lokmanya Tilak Smarak Trust, Pune (Maharashtra)
- **Prize:** Rs. 1 lakh in cash, a citation, and a memento

Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar

The Sangeet Natak Akademi selected Acharya Ranchhodlal Goswami for the 2025 Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar.

- The Ahmedabad scholar and 16th Acharya of the historic Kalupur Haveli is being celebrated for his monumental contributions to safeguarding and promoting the 550-year-old Pushtimarg Haveli Sangeet tradition.
- He is the first Haveli Sangeet practitioner in post-Independence India and the first artist from Gujarat to receive this prestigious national award.
- Despite his young age, Goswami has composed over 22,000 devotional *padas* (hymns) in seven languages (including Braj Bhasha, Sanskrit, and Charani) and authored eight books.

Haveli Sangeet

- ✦ Founded about 550 years ago by Mahaprabhu Shri Vallabhacharya, Haveli Sangeet is a classical devotional music style practiced in the Pushtimarg sect.
- ✦ Unlike regular stage performances, it is a living medium of daily worship.
- ✦ It preserves ancient musical forms like *Dhrupad*, *Dhamar*, and *Prabandh*.
- ✦ Compositions are sung by *Ashtachhap* poets (such as Surdas and Parmananddas) based on exact times of day, seasons, and festivals.

About the Award

- Instituted by the Sangeet Natak Akademi under the Union Ministry of Culture, the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar honors outstanding young artists (under 40 years of age) across various disciplines of the performing arts.

Pushtimarg

Pushtimarg, or the "Path of Grace," is a Vaishnava sect founded by Vallabhacharya in the early 16th century. It centers on the loving, selfless devotion (bhakti) to Lord Krishna in his child form (Shrinathji).

The Bukhman International Booker Prize 2027

The International Booker Prize is undergoing a major transformation. Starting in 2027, it will be renamed the **Bukhman International Booker Prize** following a landmark 10-year funding commitment (until 2036) from Bukhman Philanthropies, founded by Daria and Dmitri Bukhman (co-founder of Playrix).

Key Facts

- **Doubled Purse:** The winner's prize money will double from £50,000 to **£100,000** (approx. Rs. 1.08 crore), split equally between the author and translator.
- **Evolution:** Launched in 2005 as the *Man Booker International*, it became an annual award for

translated fiction in 2016 and was renamed the *International Booker* in 2019.

- **Eligibility:** Features long-form fiction translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland.

ICC Hall of Fame

On 11th July 2026 the International Cricket Council (ICC) inducted three legendary cricketers into the **ICC Hall of Fame**. The Class of 2026 was honored at a ceremony held in **Edinburgh**, bringing the total number of inductees in the prestigious list to 125.

- **Sourav Ganguly (India):** Former India Men's Captain and legendary left-handed batter. He is the **10th Indian male cricketer** to receive this honor.
- **Anjum Chopra (India):** Former India Women's Captain and batter. She was the first Indian woman to score 1,000 ODI runs and the first to play 100 ODIs. She played a pivotal role in India's journey to the 2005 ICC Women's World Cup final. She is only the **3rd Indian female cricketer** to be inducted to ICC Hall of Fames.
- **Kevin Pietersen (England):** Former England batter and innovative power-hitter. A key figure in England's 2010 T20 World Cup victory (where he was Player of the Tournament) and their historic Ashes win in 2005.

Indians in ICC Hall of Fame

Cricketer	Year of Induction
Bishan Singh Bedi	2009
Kapil Dev	2009
Sunil Gavaskar	2009
Anil Kumble	2015
Rahul Dravid	2018
Sachin Tendulkar	2019
Vinoo Mankad	2021
Diana Edulji	2023
Virender Sehwag	2023
Neetu David	2024
MS Dhoni	2025
Anjum Chopra	2026
Sourav Ganguly	2026

Samriddh Gram Wins Global WSIS Prize 2026

India's Department of Telecommunications (DoT) was declared the global winner of the prestigious **WSIS Prize 2026** in Geneva. Its flagship project, "**Samriddh Gram**," secured the top honor under Action Line C6 (Enabling Environment) for its innovative rural service delivery model.

Key Highlights of the Initiative

- **Phygital Model:** Powered by BharatNet, it integrates digital connectivity with physical delivery via village-level **Samriddhi Kendras**.
- **Comprehensive Services:** Provides one-stop access to tele-healthcare, smart education, drone-based agriculture, and digital banking.
- **Rural Empowerment:** Transforms connectivity into socio-economic opportunities across 2.17 lakh service-ready Gram Panchayats.

72nd National Film Awards 2026

The 72nd National Film Awards winners have been announced in New Delhi.

- **Presented by:** The National Film Awards are presented by the President of India at an annual ceremony in New Delhi.
- **Administered by:** The awards are announced by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and are administered by the National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC).
- **Head of the Jury (2026):** Jayaraj (Malayalam filmmaker)

Notable Awards & Awardee**Feature Films**

Best Feature Film	Article 370
Best Actor	Kartik Aaryan (Chandu Champion), Mammooty (Bramayugam)
Best Actress	Yami Gautam (Article 370)
Best Director	Rajkumar Periasamy (Amaran)
Best Feature Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment	Kalki 2898 AD
Best Film Promoting National & Social Values	Captain Miller
Best Hindi Film	Srikanth

Non-Feature Films

Best Film Promoting Social & Environmental Values	Piplantri: A Tale of Eco Feminism – Director: Suraj Kumar
Best Arts/Culture Film	Main Nida – Director: Atul Pandey
Best Biographical/Historical Reconstruction Film	Kakori – Director: Kamlesh K. Mishra

International Physics Olympiad 2026

The 56th International Physics Olympiad (IPhO) 2026 was, held in Bucaramanga, Colombia, from the 4th to the 12th July 2026.

- Five Indian students have won gold medals. With this India secured the joint first position, along with Russia, China, Kazakhstan, South Korea and Taiwan, among 381 students from 87 countries.

International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) 2026

A six-member team of India secured 2 Gold and 4 Silver medals at the 67th International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) 2026 held in Shanghai. This placed India at a global country rank of seven with 166 points.

International Chemistry Olympiad (ICHO) 2026

- At the 58th International Chemistry Olympiad (ICHO) 2026 held in Uzbekistan.
- The four-member Indian contingent delivered an extraordinary performance, with every student securing a Gold medal.

International Biology Olympiad (IBO) 2026

- At the 37th International Biology Olympiad (IBO) 2026, held in Vilnius, Lithuania.
- The four-member Indian team won one Gold and three Silver medals.

Committee/Commission**NCW Expert Committee for IVF Sector Review**

The National Commission for Women (NCW) has constituted a high-level Expert Committee to review the regulatory framework governing IVF clinics, ART centers, and gamete banks.

- **Chaired by:** Justice Asha Menon (Former Judge, Delhi High Court), the committee includes experts from the judiciary, medicine, law enforcement, and public policy.
- **Core Goal:** The initiative aims to safeguard the **reproductive rights, dignity, and safety** of women by ensuring informed choice and ethical treatment across the fertility sector.

Mandate and Objectives

- **Legislative Review:** Evaluation of the ART (Regulation) Act 2021, the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act 2021, and the 2026 Amendment Rules.
- **Procedural Gaps:** Identifying loopholes in consent, privacy, and biological traceability.
- **Reforms:** Proposing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and clinical protocols to ensure transparency and institutional accountability.

IVF (In vitro fertilization)

IVF is a primary assisted reproductive technology (ART) where mature eggs are retrieved from the ovaries and manually fertilized with sperm in a laboratory dish. The resulting embryos are cultured for a few days before being transferred to the uterus to establish a successful pregnancy.



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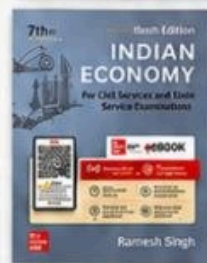
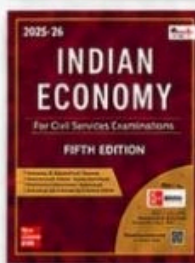
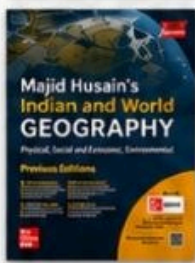
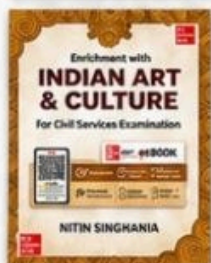
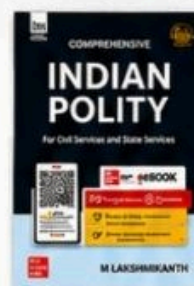
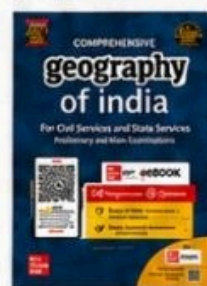
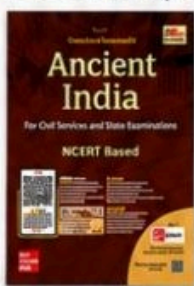
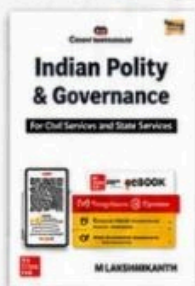
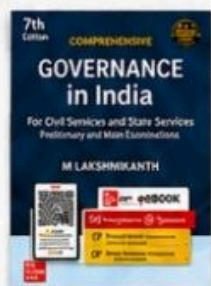
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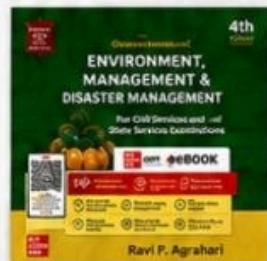
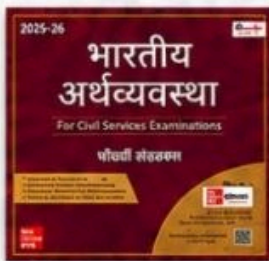
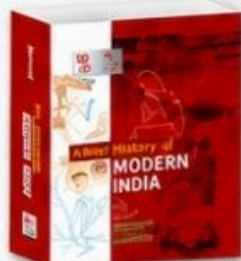
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Heritage In Focus

Ancient Buddhist Site of Sarnath: India's 45th Heritage Site

The ancient Buddhist site of Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh was officially inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as India's 45th property, following a decision announced on July 25, 2026, during the 48th session of the World Heritage Committee in Busan, South Korea.

Key Facts

- **45th Property:** Sarnath is India's 45th World Heritage Site, placing the country 6th globally and 2nd in the Asia-Pacific region for the highest number of sites.
- **The First Sermon:** Sarnath is the sacred site where Gautam Buddha delivered his first sermon, known as *Dharmachakra pravartana* (Turning of the Wheel of the Law), establishing the Buddhist Sangha and the Noble Eightfold Path.
- **Pilgrimage Hub:** Indicated by Buddha as one of the four key pilgrimage sites, it joins Lumbini and Bodhgaya as a recognized World Heritage Property.
- **Serial Property:** The inscription includes two major components: the **Chaukhandi Stupa** and the **Archaeological Remains of Sarnath** (comprising Dhamekh Stupa, Dharmrajika Stupa, and Mulagandhakuti Vihara).
- **National Emblem:** The excavations at Sarnath yielded the famous **Mauryan Lion Capital**, which was later adopted as the National Emblem of India.

Places in News

Kamrajar Port

After the completion of Capital Dredging Phase VI, Kamrajar Port in Tamil Nadu has become India's 2nd major port, after Visakhapatnam Port to provide an 18 meter operational draft.

Moldova

It is a landlocked country in Eastern Europe, bordered by Romania to the west and Ukraine to the north, east, and south.



- Chisinau is the Capital and largest city of Moldova.
- President Droupadi Murmu recently visited Moldova on the first leg of her three-nation tour of Europe, marking the first visit by an Indian head of state to the country.

North Macedonia

The Republic of North Macedonia is a landlocked country in Southeast Europe.



- It shares land borders with Greece to the south, Albania to the west, Bulgaria to the east, Kosovo to the northwest and Serbia to the north.
- Skopje is the capital and largest city.
- President Droupadi Murmu recently visited North Macedonia and unveiled a bust of Mahatma Gandhi at the Museum of the City of Skopje in North Macedonia.

Important Days & Themes

Date	Day	Theme
1 July	GST Day	Simple Tax System, Strong Nation
4 July	International Day of Cooperatives	"Cooperatives for a Peaceful World"
6 July	World Rural Development Day	"Financing the First Mile of Food Systems"
11 July	World Population Day	"Realizing the hopes and aspirations of young people – today and for the future"
15 July	World Youth Skills Day	"Skills for a Shared Future"
22 July	National Flag Day	-
24 July	Income Tax Day	-
28 July	World Hepatitis Day	"Hepatitis: Let's break it down"
30 July	World Day Against Trafficking in Persons	"Trapped behind the scam"

Athletics

Commonwealth Games 2026

The 23rd Commonwealth Games (CWG) taking place from July 23 to August 2, 2026 in Glasgow, Scotland.

- Teams from 74 nations will participate in the 10-day event.
- The official mascot for the 23rd Commonwealth Games (Glasgow 2026) is Finnie, a unicorn featuring a traffic cone horn, a purple mane, and a pink-purple hairdo.
- The Glasgow CWG will feature 16 sports - 10 able-bodied and six integrated para sports. Indian athletes will compete in 13.
- India has opened their medal tally at the Commonwealth Games before the opening ceremony as the Olympic medallist boxer Lovlina moved straight into the women's 75kg semifinals after receiving a bye. With only five athletes in the draw, three competitors, including Lovlina, advanced straight to the last four, while the remaining two were scheduled to contest the lone quarterfinal match.
- India won 61 medals at the last Commonwealth Games held in Birmingham, England.

Indian Flag and Baton bearers at CWG 2026

- ✦ **Flag Bearer:** Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu carried the Indian Tricolour during the Parade of Nations.
- ✦ **Baton Bearer:** Boxer Lovlina Borgohain carried the ceremonial King's Baton.

8th Khelo India Youth Games 2026

The 8th Khelo India Youth Games 2026 will be hosted by Telangana.

- The last (7th) event was hosted by Bihar from May 4 to May 15, 2025.

Archery

Archery World Cup Stage 4

The Indian women's compound team of Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Prithika Pradeep and Chikitha Taniparthi won the silver medal at the Archery World Cup Stage 4 in Madrid, Spain.

Badminton

Japan Open 2026

India's PV Sindhu, 12th in the women's singles

badminton rankings beat third-ranked and three-time world champion Akane Yamaguchi of Japan 21-17, 21-17 and won her maiden BWF Super 750 title at the Japan Open 2026 badminton tournament.

- She became the first Indian - and at 31, the oldest woman -- to win a BWF Super 750 title.
- After the Japan Open, in another event (China Open Super 1000) she suffered a defeat against China's Chen Yufei in the women's singles round of 16 in Changzhou, China.

Cricket

First-ever Women's Test Match at Lord's

In the first-ever Women's Test played at Lord's, England, India beat England by 270 runs - India's second-highest winning margin by runs.

Record-Breaking Feats

- **Kranti Gaud:** She became the first woman to claim a five-wicket haul at Lord's.
- **Yastika Bhatia:** She scored first-ever women's test century at the venue.

Women's T20 World Cup

The 2026 ICC Women's T20 World Cup was hosted by the England and Wales Cricket Board from 12 June to 5 July 2026.

- Australia defeated England to lift the ICC Women's T20 World Cup at Lord's.
- The Australian women's cricket team has won the T20 World Cup a record seven times in 10 appearances. It includes a hat-trick of titles from 2018 to 2023.
- ✦ **Player of the Series:** Beth Mooney (Australia)
- ✦ **Most Runs:** Danni Wyatt-Hodge (England) - 302
- ✦ **Most Wickets:** Shree Charani (India) - 14

Rohit Sharma: Historic Milestone at Lord's

On July 19, 2026, former Indian captain Rohit Sharma became the first Indian batsman to score a One Day International (ODI) century at the Lord's ground.

- Rohit achieved this feat at the age of 39 years and 80 days. He surpassed Sachin Tendulkar's record to earn the distinction of being the oldest Indian to score a century in international cricket.
- This was the 34th ODI century of Rohit Sharma's career.
- This was his 8th ODI century in England. With this, he has surpassed Sachin Tendulkar for the most ODI centuries by a visiting batsman in a single country.

SPORTS

Vaibhav Suryavanshi's Historic Cricket Debut

On July 4, 2026, 15-year-old Vaibhav Suryavanshi became the youngest player to represent India in international cricket.

- He received his T20I cap before the second T20I match against England at Old Trafford, Manchester.
- Suryavanshi broke Sachin Tendulkar's 37-year-old record (16 years 205 days).
- He also surpassed Washington Sundar's record for the youngest T20I debut. Among ICC Full Members, he is now the youngest male T20I debutant.
- The global record for the youngest player is still held by Romania's Marian Gherasim (14 years 16 days).

Football

FIFA World Cup 2026

Spain won their second FIFA World Cup title defeating defending champions Argentina 1-0.

- Substitute Ferran Torres scored the decisive goal in the 106th minute of extra time.

Key Facts

- **Host Nations:** The event was historic as the first World Cup co-hosted by three nations: the United States, Canada, and Mexico.
- **Expansion:** It featured a record 48 teams and 104 matches, setting new benchmarks for attendance and global reach.
- **Mascot:** Maple (moose, Canada); Zayu (Jaguar, Mexico); and Clutch (Bald Eagle, USA) were the official mascots of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.
- **Total Goals Scored:** 308 (in 104 matches)
- **Third Place:** England
- **Fourth Place:** France

FIFA World Cup 2026 Awards/Winners

- ❖ **Golden Ball (Best Player):** Rodri (Spain)
- ❖ **Golden Boot (Top Scorer):** Kylian Mbappe (France) – 10 Goals
- ❖ **Golden Glove (Best Goalkeeper):** Unai Simon (Spain)
- ❖ **FIFA Young Player Award:** Pau Cubarsi (Spain)
- ❖ **FIFA Fair Play Trophy:** The Netherlands
- **Next Host (2030):** The primary hosts are Spain, Portugal, and Morocco. In a unique "Centenary" move, the opening three matches will be played in Uruguay, Argentina, and Paraguay to honor the first World Cup held in 1930.

Most FIFA World Cup Titles

1. Brazil – 5 titles ; 2. Germany – 4 titles
3. Italy – 4 titles ; 4. Argentina – 3 titles
5. France – 2 titles ; 6. Uruguay – 2 titles
7. England – 1 title ; 8. Spain – 2 titles

Gothia Cup 2026

India's Minerva Academy FC won the Gothia Cup 2026 (Boys Under-12 category) in Gothenburg, Sweden, by defeating Brazil's RS Sports Yellow 2-1 in the final on July 18, 2026.

- The Chandigarh-based team captained by Singamayum Shami went completely unbeaten through 9 matches, scoring an incredible 86 goals.
- This victory closely followed their triumph at the Helsinki Cup 2026 in Finland, completing a remarkable European youth tournament.

Gothia Cup is a youth association football tournament held annually in Gothenburg, Sweden, open for both boys and girls of ages 11 to 18.

Hockey

India & New Zealand Celebrate 100 Years of Sporting Ties

In 2026, India and New Zealand are marking a historic centenary of sporting relations.

- **Historical Milestone:** The relationship began in 1926 when the Indian Army Hockey Team became the first Indian sports team to tour New Zealand. This legendary squad included the "Wizard of Hockey," Major Dhyan Chand.
- **Modern Success:** The legacy thrives today, evidenced by the Indian Women's Hockey Team's recent victory in the FIH Women's Nations Cup held in Auckland, where they defeated the hosts in the final.

FIH Youth Hockey5s Asian Championship

The inaugural FIH Youth Hockey5s Asian Championship will be held in Muscat.

- It served as the Asian qualifier for the inaugural FIH Under-18 Youth Hockey5s World Cup.

Tennis

Wimbledon 2026

Men's Singles

- Top seed Italy's Jannik Sinner retained the Wimbledon men's singles title, defeating second seed Germany's Alexander Zverev in the final at the All England Club.
- It is Sinner's second consecutive Wimbledon men's singles title and his fifth Grand Slam singles title.
- He also became the 10th player to successfully defend the Wimbledon men's singles crown.

Women's Singles

- Linda Nosková (Czech Republic) defeated Karolína Muchová (Czech Republic) in the final to win the ladies' singles tennis title at the 2026 Wimbledon Championships.
- Iga Świątek (Poland) was the defending champion, but lost in the third round to Alexandra Eala. ■■

MINISTRY INSIGHTS

Authentic Data/Fact from Ministries/Departments

Ministry of Finance

According to cumulative data shared in Parliament on July 20, 2026, the number of registered users on India's premier digital payment system, the 'Unified Payments Interface' (UPI), reached 55.49 crore by June 2026.

Key Facts

- **Historic Transactions:** During the financial year 2025-26, UPI recorded a historic milestone of 24,161.69 crore transactions valued at Rs. 314.23 lakh crore.
- **International Expansion:** Through the international wing of NPCI (NIPL), UPI is now live in Bhutan, Singapore, UAE, France, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Qatar, Greece, and Cambodia.
- **Security Framework:** NPCI has implemented 'CUISE 2025' and AI-based fraud monitoring solutions to secure the UPI ecosystem.

Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

- ✦ **Acceptance in 12 Countries:** As of June 2026, the UPI network is fully active with payment partnerships established in 12 international countries.
- ✦ **Partner Countries:** Indian expatriates, merchants, and tourists can now perform seamless **Person-to-Person (P2P)** and **Person-to-Merchant (P2M)** payments in countries like France, Singapore, UAE, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Qatar, Greece, and Cambodia.

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

Recently, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) assigned IIT Madras and C-DAC the responsibility of centralizing the **National Bridge Health Monitoring Software**.

Key Facts

- **BHMS Technology:** The 'Bridge Health Monitoring System' (BHMS) will use modern sensor-based technology for real-time monitoring of stress, vibration, and the structural health of bridges on National Highways.
- **New Tendering Process:** The Ministry has introduced a standardized 'Model RFP', under which the supply and maintenance of sensors will be assigned through separate competitive bidding.
- **Digital Inventory:** Agencies have been strictly instructed to complete the nationwide digital survey of bridges under IBMS by September 30, 2026.

Indian Bridge Management System (IBMS)

IBMS is a comprehensive digital national database of all bridges in India. Its primary objective is the scientific evaluation of bridges, proper maintenance, and accurate identification of timely structural interventions (repairs) to increase their life expectancy.

Ministry of Ayush

On July 8, 2026, three major research initiatives were unveiled during the **5th Executive Committee meeting of CCRAS** in New Delhi, chaired by Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary, Ministry of Ayush.

Key Facts

- **Research Methodology Textbook:** Written by 50 scientists under the 'Ayurveda Prabodhini Granthmala' series, this book is aligned with the outcome-based curriculum of NCISM.
- **CCRAS PRAYATNA 2026-27:** A major workshop initiative aimed at promoting scientific writing and publication skills among postgraduate and PhD scholars.
- **Digital Dashboard:** The 'CCRAS Digital Ecosystem Dashboard' (dashboard.ccras.org.in) was launched to transparently disseminate research outcomes and resources.

Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences

CCRAS is an autonomous apex body under the Ministry of Ayush that controls and coordinates scientific research, development, and dissemination of knowledge in the field of Ayurveda.

Ministry of Tribal Affairs

On July 7, 2026, Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Jai Oram launched India's first dedicated digital learning platform, 'TribeX', at a national workshop in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Key Facts

- **Platform Content:** TribeX is an integrated platform for the digitization, research, and skill development of tribal art, culture, languages, and traditional knowledge.
- **Courses:** In the initial phase, 20 free certificate courses have been made available, which will be expanded to over 100 courses.
- **PG Diploma & MoU:** Five hybrid PG Diplomas (such as Santali language OI Chiki) recognized by the UGC have been introduced, for which an MoU was signed with Sampurnanand Sanskrit University.

MINISTRY INSIGHTS

Ol Chiki

- It is the official script for the Santali language, developed by Pandit Raghunath Murmu in 1925.
- Santali is one of the 22 official languages included in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India.

Ministry of Cooperation

During the 5th Foundation Day celebrations of the Ministry of Cooperation in New Delhi on July 6, 2026, Union Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah made major announcements for the cooperative sector.

Key Facts

- Cooperative Life Insurance Company:** A new 'Cooperative Life Insurance Company' will be established to increase the reach of cooperatives in the life insurance sector and promote financial inclusion.
- Bharat Taxi Expansion:** The cooperative-driven ride-hailing platform 'Bharat Taxi' will be expanded to 500 cities across the country over the next two years.
- Current Network:** Currently, over 6.37 lakh drivers and 35.77 lakh customers are connected to the Bharat Taxi platform.
- Other Initiatives:** Emphasis was also placed on promoting organic farming and entrepreneurship through Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS).

Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS)

PACS are village-level primary cooperative credit institutions that provide short-term loans and input assistance to farmers for agricultural activities and the purchase of seeds, fertilizers, and tools.

Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

The Government of India recently established the 'Bureau of Port Security' (BoPS) under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways to strengthen maritime security.

Key Facts

- Security Role:** BoPS will act as the supreme regulatory authority for the security of ships, ports, and port infrastructure (including cyber threats).
- Statutory Status:** The Bureau of Port Security (BoPS) has been formed as a statutory body under Section 13 of the new Merchant Shipping Act, 2025.
- Directorate:** Initially, it will function under the Directorate General of Shipping (which is being renamed as the 'Directorate General of Maritime Administration'), with Shyam Jagannathan as its Director General.
- Security Forces:** CISF has been designated as the Recognized Security Organization (RSO) to conduct port security assessments and train Private Security Agencies (PSAs).

Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS)

This organization, functioning under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, serves as the base model for BoPS, setting policies and standards for civil aviation security in India.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

On the occasion of the 111th Foundation Day of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Union Minister Bhupender Yadav officially inaugurated the three-day 4th Animal Taxonomy Summit (ATS 4.0) in Kolkata on June 30, 2026.

Key Facts

- New Data Released:** During the summit, 709 new faunal records were documented, and the 'Animal Discoveries-2025' and 'Plant Discoveries-2025' reports were released.
- Digital Platforms:** The 'Fauna of India Checklist Version 3.0' and the 'Paleo-India Portal' were launched on this occasion.
- Botanical Records:** In the Botanical Survey of India's (BSI) 'Plant Discoveries-2025', 353 new taxa were added to the Indian flora database.

Taxonomy

Taxonomy is the branch of biology concerned with the naming, identification, and classification of organisms based on their biological characteristics.

Practice Questions

- Which Union Ministry has approved new scientific vessels under the 'Deep Ocean Mission' for the exploration of deep-sea resources in the country?
(a) Ministry of Earth Sciences
(b) Ministry of Defence
(c) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(d) Ministry of Jal Shakti
- Recently, which national program's new phase was launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to promote secure digital transactions?
(a) Digital India Safe Guard
(b) Surakshit Bharat Mission 2.0
(c) National Cyber Security Skill Development Scheme
(d) Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative
- Recently, which new national portal was started by the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare for AI-based crop monitoring?
(a) Krishi-Drishti AI (b) Kisan Mitra Portal
(c) PM-Fasal Monitoring (d) Digital Krishi Suraksha

Answers

1. (a), 2. (d), 3. (a)

PARLIAMENT Q&A

Exam-Centric Facts from Ministerial Answers

Q. What steps have been taken to ensure transparency in National Testing Agency (NTA) examinations?

Ans. The Government informed Parliament that the 'Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024' is in effect, which provides for a fine of up to Rs. 1 crore and 10 years of imprisonment for paper leaks.

Q. What is the target set to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education?

Ans. Under the National Education Policy (NEP), the Government reiterated its commitment in Parliament to achieve a target of 50% GER in higher education by the year 2035.

Q. How many youths have been trained under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) so far?

Ans. According to data from the Ministry of Skill Development, more than 1.37 crore youths have received technical training for various industries under this scheme so far.

Q. How many approvals have been granted so far for foreign universities to open campuses in India?

Ans. According to the Ministry of Education, two prestigious foreign universities have been allowed to operate their campuses in the country, including in GIFT City (Gujarat).

Q. What was the cumulative growth rate of the eight core industries (ICI) until July 2026?

Ans. According to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the cumulative growth rate of infrastructure sectors in the first quarter of the current financial year was recorded at 4.8%.

Q. What is the coal production target for the current financial year according to the Ministry of Coal?

Ans. The Ministry of Coal assured Parliament that the target for this year is to produce 1 Billion Tonne (BT) of coal to meet the country's growing energy demand.

Q. What is the current daily pace of National Highway construction in the country?

Ans. According to the Ministry of Road Transport, the average speed of National Highway construction in the country reached 28 kilometers per day by July 2026.

Q. Data from how many ministries has been integrated under the 'PM GatiShakti National Master Plan'?

Ans. For the rapid development of infrastructure, data layers from more than 39 Central Government ministries/departments have been integrated into this digital platform.

Q. What is the total currently installed renewable energy capacity in the country?

Ans. According to the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, India's total installed RE capacity has crossed the 190 Gigawatt (GW) mark.

Q. How many families are targeted to benefit under the 'PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana'?

Ans. The Government informed Parliament that a target has been set to install rooftop solar systems on 1 crore houses across the country through this scheme.

Q. What is India's current global position in steel production?

Ans. According to a written reply from the Ministry of Steel, India is firmly established as the world's second-largest producer of crude steel.

Q. How many Gram Panchayats have been connected under the BharatNet project as of July 2026?

Ans. According to data from the Ministry of Communications, more than 2.10 lakh Gram Panchayats have been connected via optical fiber under rural broadband connectivity.

Q. How many projects are currently underway under the Sagarmala project?

Ans. According to the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, more than 800 projects worth over Rs. 5.5 lakh crore are being implemented for the development of coastal infrastructure.

Q. How much foreign exchange has the country saved through ethanol blending?

Ans. The Government informed Parliament that by blending ethanol in petrol, the country has saved more than Rs. 24,300 crore in foreign exchange over the past years.

Q. What is the budgetary outlay for the 'National Green Hydrogen Mission'?

Ans. To promote clean energy, the Government has approved a total budget of Rs. 19,744 crore for this ambitious mission.

Q. What measures are being taken to prevent the decline in domestic crude oil production?

Ans. The Government is increasing the allocation of domestic exploration blocks under the 'Open Acreage Licensing Policy' (OALP) to reduce import dependency.

Note: Parliament was not in session prior to July 20, 2026. The Monsoon Session commenced on July 20, 2026. This Q&A also includes reports from Parliamentary Committees, official ministry releases, and the 'Digital Sansad' portal.

ONELINER CURRENT AFFAIRS

National Affairs

- Under which bill will 'Vande Mataram' be given legal protection equal to the National Anthem?
- **Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill 2026**
- Which new policy has been approved to increase domestic urea production?
- **National Investment Policy for Urea-2026**
- For which period has the draft of CAFE-III norms for passenger vehicles been released?
- **From 2027-28 to 2031-32**
- For which period did India launch its campaign for a non-permanent UNSC seat?
- **For 2028-29**
- How many jobs have been created by the PMFME scheme so far?
- **Approximately 11 lakh**
- Which ministry launched the next phase of the 'Nasha Mukta Yuva For Viksit Bharat' campaign?
- **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**
- What is the goal of the 'Gramodyam Program' launched by NABARD?
- **To develop 4,000 rural entrepreneurs**
- What is the new official name of the Central Vista Redevelopment Area in New Delhi?
- **Kartavya Bhavan Complex**
- Where was the National Conference on NextGen Administrative and e-Governance Reforms held?
- **Shillong**
- The world's largest rural telecom survey will take place under an MoU between which two entities?
- **India Post and TRAI**
- Australia recently returned three ancient artifacts of which period to India?
- **Chola Period (handed over to Tamil Nadu)**
- What is New Delhi's rank in the Global Liveability Index 2026?
- **120th**
- Which digital platform was launched for the preservation of tribal art and culture?
- **TribeX**
- Which became the 42nd port in India to be authorized for drug imports?
- **Navi Mumbai Airport**
- Where will IIM Bangalore establish its first overseas campus?
- **Sinhasari, Indonesia**
- Which scheme did PM Modi launch for regional connectivity?
- **Viksit UDAN**
- Which city hosted the 12th BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting?
- **Hyderabad**

States' Affairs

- From which city Madhya Pradesh's first international flight service to Abu Dhabi began on 15th July 2026?
- **Indore**
- In which city was Uttarakhand's first Geographical Indications (GI) Products Gallery inaugurated in 2026?
- **Dehradun**
- What is the new name of the Delhi Government's 'Mahila Samridhi Yojana'? - **Delhi Lakshmi Yojana**
- Which state enforced new legal provisions for preventive detention and the attachment of properties of rioters in 2026?
- **West Bengal**
- Which state's Unjha cumin (Jeera) and Unjha fennel (Saunf) were recently granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag?
- **Gujarat**
- Which state became India's 6th fully literate state under the ULLAS (New India Literacy Programme) 2026?
- **Uttarakhand**
- Which state launched the 'Mee Bhoomi-Mee Hakku' programme to streamline land records and ownership in 2026?
- **Andhra Pradesh**
- Which states signed the Narmada Project Payment Pact to resolve the long-standing cost-sharing dispute?
- **Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra.**
- Which state's first GI-recognised fruit is the Sirsa Kinnow?
- **Haryana**
- What is the new name of Jalalabad town in Uttar Pradesh?
- **Parashurampuri**
- Which Indian state's Jalbhara Sandesh and traditional wooden boats recently received Geographical Indication (GI) tags?
- **West Bengal**
- Which state launched the Digi Rover Special Land Survey Campaign to modernise land demarcation?
- **Uttar Pradesh**
- Which state launched the second phase of the 'School Chalo Abhiyan' to achieve 100% school enrolment?
- **Uttar Pradesh**
- Which disease was recently declared by the J&K government as a notifiable disease?
- **Leprosy**
- West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari recently stressed on the plantation of which trees to remain safe against thunder strikes?
- **Coconut trees**
- Which state became the first in India to commercially produce Matcha tea?
- **Assam**

International Affairs

- Where did India host the 'BRICS Labor and Employment Ministers' Meeting' under its 2026 BRICS Presidency? - **Hyderabad**
- During PM Modi's visit, India and which country signed 10 agreements for a strategic partnership and 2030 roadmap? - **New Zealand**
- Which new partnership have India, Australia, and Canada jointly launched? - **ACITI Partnership (focusing on AI, Green Energy, and Critical Minerals)**
- Which is the only Indian city to feature in the top 10 of the 'Global Happy City Index 2026'? - **Jaipur (6th rank)**
- Which country will host the 'Geneva AI Summit' in June 2027? - **Switzerland**
- Where was the 23rd Border Coordination Meeting between India and Myanmar (July 2026) held? - **New Delhi**
- Where was the second meeting of the 'Joint Defense Cooperation Committee' between India and Rwanda held? - **New Delhi**
- What was India's rank in the 'Global Passport Index 2026' out of 197 countries? - **125th**
- India presided over the ninth session of which Intergovernmental Group of Experts (IGE) in Geneva in July 2026? - **Consumer Protection Law and Policy**
- In which Indian city is the meeting of the heads of 'BRICS Drug Control Agencies' being hosted? - **Guwahati**
- Which country is presiding over the ninth session on consumer protection at UNCTAD? - **India**

Economy

- Which company was declared India's most valuable and strongest tyre brand in the 'Brand Finance India 100-2026' report? - **MRF**
- The DGFT has amended the Foreign Trade Policy to ban the import of which type of goods? - **Goods made from Forced Labour**
- From which date the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between India and the United Kingdom came into force? - **15 July 2026**
- Which organization released the Investment Friendliness Index (IFI) 2026? - **NITI Aayog (with CRISIL as the knowledge partner)**
- Which state secured the overall Rank 1 in the Investment Friendliness Index 2026? - **Gujarat**
- According to the World Bank, what average real GDP growth must India achieve to become a high-income economy by 2047? - **7.8%**

- Which pillar in the Investment Friendliness Index (IFI) 2026 framework carries the highest weightage at 25%? - **Infrastructure**
- Which state topped the category of 'Hilly and Northeastern States' in Investment Friendliness Index (IFI) 2026? - **Uttarakhand**
- Which state/UT ranked first in the 'City States and Union Territories' category - in the Investment Friendliness Index (IFI) 2026? - **Goa**
- Which state attracts the highest share of Private Equity and Venture Capital (PE/VC) investments in India? - **Maharashtra (35% of total)**
- Which state contributes approximately 31% of India's total merchandise exports? - **Gujarat**
- Which state boasts a near 100% Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) conversion rate for investments? - **Tamil Nadu**
- Which city-state/UT holds the rank for the highest rail density in India? - **Chandigarh**
- Which state has the highest available land for industrial allotment relative to its total area? - **Telangana**
- Which state ranks first in terms of the share of renewables in its power mix? - **Goa**
- From which state/UT first shipment of 5 metric tonnes of organic apricots were exported to the United Arab Emirates (UAE)? - **Ladakh**
- In which Indian fund, Australia's largest pension fund - AustralianSuper - would invest a further 500 million Australian Dollars? - **National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)**

Science & Technology/Health

- ATREE scientists have discovered two new species of Solitary Bees in which state? - **Arunachal Pradesh**
- What is India's first private orbital-class rocket to reach Low Earth Orbit (LEO) under 'Mission Aagman'? - **Vikram-1 (by Skyroot Aerospace)**
- On which rail section will India's first indigenous hydrogen-powered train start on July 17, 2026? - **Jind-Sonapat section**
- Where was the White Rabbit Technology-based Indian Standard Time distribution network inaugurated under 'One Nation One Time'? - **Bengaluru**
- Which institute has developed a portable room-temperature ammonia sensor for industrial safety? - **CeNS, Bengaluru**
- Who is the Indian-origin NASA astronaut recently went to the International Space Station on the Russian Soyuz MS-29 craft on July 14, 2026? - **Anil Menon**
- Which Long Range Guided Rocket did DRDO successfully test in Chandipur on July 8, 2026? - **Pinaka**

ONELINER CURRENT AFFAIRS

- The US Department of Commerce has approved the rollout of which latest model from OpenAI? - **GPT-5.6**
- ISRO recently conducted a successful ground test of the solid motor of which vehicle under the Gaganyaan program? - **SOLVE vehicle**
- Which global commission was launched on July 3, 2026, for inclusive AI development? - **'AI for Good Global Commission'**
- Who is building the 3,600 km long 'I-2SEA' undersea cable system connecting India, Malaysia, and Singapore? - **Consortium of Microsoft and Lightstorm**

Environment/Biodiversity

- In which region of Kerala have researchers recently discovered new damselfly species? - **Western Ghats**
- Which snake was spotted after 30 years in the Ubeshwar Wildlife Area of Udaipur? - **Laudankia Vine Snake**
- Which institution was declared India's 21st Biodiversity Repository? - **Natural History Museum of Mizoram University**
- Which new species of monkey have scientists discovered in the Democratic Republic of Congo? - **Colobus kongoensis**
- Which state is home to the Borjuli site that was notified as a Biodiversity Heritage Site? - **Assam**
- In which Indian state was the world's oldest (around 700 years) accurately dated banyan tree scientifically identified? - **Bihar (Munger)**

Defence/National Security

- Under which operation did the Central Bureau of Narcotics dismantle a high-tech Mephedrone manufacturing laboratory in Pune? - **Operation Garuda**
- Which stealth frigate was commissioned into the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet as the sixth and final vessel of Project 17A? - **INS Mahendragiri**
- Where will South Asia's largest private sector integrated missile manufacturing plant be established by Adani Defence and Aerospace? - **Shivpuri (Madhya Pradesh)**
- Which Indian Naval sail training ship represented India at the United States International Naval Review 250 and Sail4th 250 celebrations in New York? - **INS Sudarshini**
- Which city will host the 16th edition of Aero India from February 8-12, 2027? - **Bengaluru**
- Which defense project, aimed at developing an indigenous long-range air defense system, successfully conducted its first test flight in July 2026? - **Project Kusha**

Sports

- Which country won the FIFA World Cup 2026 title by defeating Argentina 1-0? - **Spain**
- Who became the first Indian badminton player to win the Japan Open title? - **P. V. Sindhu**
- What is the name of the mascot launched by Delhi for the Commonwealth Table Tennis Championship 2026? - **Mayur**
- Who became the 12th Indian cricketer to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame in July 2026? - **Sourav Ganguly**
- What is the name of the 17-year-old player from Tamil Nadu who became India's 98th Chess Grandmaster in July 2026? - **S. Aswath**
- Which Brazilian star footballer retired from international football at the age of 34 after the 2026 FIFA World Cup? - **Neymar Jr**

Awards

- Which Indian project was selected as the 'WSIS Prize 2026' Global Winner in Geneva in July 2026? - **'Samridh' Gram Project (Department of Telecommunications)**
- Who was awarded the 'Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar 2025' for the preservation of the Haveli Sangeet tradition? - **Acharya Ranchhodlal Goswami**
- Who was honored with Indonesia's highest civilian honor 'Bintang Adipurna'? - **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**
- Who won the Gold Award under the 'Innovation in AI' category at the National Awards for e-Governance 2026? - **ICMR's AI-powered platform 'ICMR-MINDS'**
- From which year will the International Booker Prize be renamed the 'Buckman International Booker Prize'? - **From the year 2027**
- What will be the prize money for the 'Buckman International Booker Prize' after the new changes? - **£100,000 (double the current amount)**
- Who was honored with the '2026 Leadership Award' by the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum? - **Sunil Bharti Mittal**

Important Days

- When is 'International Justice Day' observed annually? - **July 17 (Commemorating the adoption of the Rome Statute and the establishment of the ICC)**
- When was 'World Snake Day' 2026 observed? - **July 16**
- In whose memory is 'World Zoonoses Day' celebrated on July 6? - **Commemorating Louis Pasteur's discovery of the first successful rabies vaccine in 1885**

EXAM POINTERS

Summary of Yojana, Kurukshetra (July 2026)

Yojana

Editorial

- In the vision of 'Viksit Bharat 2047', which fundamental elements are considered essential to make progress truly meaningful alongside physical growth? – **Values, culture, community, and nature.**
- Besides technical capability and institutional reforms, through which other key means can the country's 'Self-Reliance' (Atmanirbharata) be strengthened? – **Local knowledge, community participation, and responsible management of resources.**
- Rather than viewing 'Sustainable Development' merely as an environmental necessity, it is considered a commitment to ensure what kind of growth? – **Equitable, resilient, and long-lasting growth.**
- What are the key civic values that continuously shape India's democratic and developmental journey? – **Duty, service, courage, and the spirit of collective effort.**

Development Along with Heritage: India's Civilizational Renaissance

- The 'Sengol' installed in the new Parliament House is a symbol of the tradition of the just transfer of political power of which ancient dynasty? – **Chola Dynasty.**
- How many formal entrance gates, featuring sandstone statues of auspicious animals inspired by Indian cultural traditions, have been built in the new Parliament House? – **Six.**
- Where was the exhibition 'The Light and the Lotus: Relics of the Awakened One' organized after the homecoming of the Piprahwa relics associated with Lord Buddha? – **Qila Rai Pithora.**
- Which two ancient Indian texts were recently included in UNESCO's 'Memory of the World Register'? – **The Bhagavad Gita and Bharata Muni's Natyashastra.**
- Which mission has been launched by the Government of India for the conservation, digitization, and listing of India's ancient manuscript heritage? – **Gyan Bharatam Mission.**
- From which famous ancient text is the verse 'Alabdham Chaiva Lipset...' quoted, reflecting India's civilizational approach to conservation and promotion? – **Mahasubhashita Samgraha.**

From Speed to Progress: Logistics Revolution for Viksit Bharat

- On which route has the country's first hydrogen-powered train been started? – **Sonipat-Jind route**

- The number of civil airports in India has increased from 74 in 2014 to how many in 2026? – **165**
- Under the development of logistics and maritime sectors, at which location has a greenfield multi-modal port been recently announced? – **Vadhvan**
- What is the total length of the newly constructed 'Ganga Expressway' connecting Meerut to Prayagraj? – **596 km**
- The 2150 km long third 'Dedicated Freight Corridor' announced in Budget 2026 will connect which two places? – **Dankuni to Surat**
- At what maximum speed is India's first high-speed train (Bullet Train) planned to operate between Ahmedabad and Mumbai? – **320 km/h**
- How many 'Gati Shakti Cargo Terminals' have been established to strengthen multimodal logistics connectivity in India? – **306**

A Strategic Framework Towards Self-Reliant Fertilizer Sector

- According to the Economic Survey 2025-26, what has been the approximate growth rate of India's agriculture sector over the last five years? – **More than four percent**
- What are the current estimated annual requirement and domestic production of Urea in India respectively? – **Requirement: approx. 3.9 crore tonnes; Domestic Production: 3.1 crore tonnes**
- In terms of the supply of Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) fertilizer, India depends on imports for approximately what percentage of its total requirement? – **60 percent**
- Under the National Coal Gasification Mission, what is the target for coal gasification by the year 2030? – **100 metric tonnes**
- In 'Green Ammonia', which is emerging as an alternative to fossil fuel-free fertilizer production, what is the approximate percentage of nitrogen content? – **82 percent**
- To encourage pulse production, the government has adopted a policy to purchase the entire quantity of which three major pulse crops at 'Minimum Support Price' (MSP)? – **Urad, Tur (Arhar), and Masur**

Nature-Compliant Cities in the Era of Climate Crisis

- Which concept is being rapidly promoted globally to tackle climate change and achieve urban resilience? – **Nature-Based Solutions (NbS)**
- The 'East Kolkata Wetlands' are primarily known for which ecological and livelihood-related functions? – **Wastewater treatment, fisheries, flood control, and biodiversity conservation.**

EXAM POINTERS

- Which National Park plays a crucial role in regulating the temperature and protecting the catchment areas of Mumbai, one of the world's most densely populated metropolises? – **Sanjay Gandhi National Park**
- What are the green drainage structures that absorb rainwater in urban climate discussions technically called? – **Bioswales.**

India's Health Journey: Progress, Resolve, and the Path Ahead

- According to the 80th round (2025) of the National Statistical Office (NSO), what is the overall rate of institutional deliveries recorded in India? – **96.2 percent**
- According to the Sample Registration Survey (SRS)-2024, the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in India has decreased to what? – **87**
- According to the Sample Registration Survey (SRS)-2024, what is the birth rate per 1,000 population in India? – **18.3**
- According to the latest NFHS-6 data, what has the full immunization coverage among children aged 12-23 months increased to? – **87.1 percent**
- Between NFHS-5 and NFHS-6, the coverage of which vaccine has more than doubled from 36.4 percent to reach 85.4 percent? – **Rotavirus vaccine**

Cornerstone of Atmanirbhar Bharat: Inherent Knowledge and Grassroots Innovation

- How many distinct communities have been documented in the country by the Anthropological Survey of India under the 'People of India' project? – **4,635 distinct communities**
- According to the 'People's Linguistic Survey of India', approximately how many languages have been identified across India? – **Approximately 780 languages**
- To revive Kerala's traditional stitched boat-building tradition, which project was recently completed to build a ship using natural resin and coconut rope without iron nails? – **Project Koudinya**
- India, one of the 17 megadiverse countries in the world, is home to approximately how many plant and animal species despite having only about 2.4% of the Earth's total land area? – **Approximately 45,000 plant and over 91,000 animal species**

Education, Skills, and Human Capital: The Foundation of Viksit Bharat

- According to current demographic data, what percentage of India's population is under 35 years of age? – **More than 65 percent**
- The formation of which high-level standing committee, chaired by the CEO of NITI Aayog, was announced in Budget 2026-27? – **'Education to Employment and Entrepreneurship'**
- A major objective of the high-level standing committee on 'Education to Employment and Entrepreneurship'

is to take India's share in the global services sector to what percentage by 2047? – **10 percent**

Sustainable Development: Knowledge Inherent in Nature

- During which conference did the term 'Sustainability' or 'Sustainable Development' first gain broad global recognition? – **At the Second Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 1992**
- When was the 'National Action Plan on Climate Change' (NAPCC) released by the Government of India to face the challenges of climate change? – **June 30, 2008**
- The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) is a long-term and multi-dimensional strategy primarily based on how many 'National Missions'? – **Eight National Missions**
- How many rivers have been successfully rejuvenated through the construction of more than 15,000 water conservation structures by the efforts of 'Tarun Bharat Sangh'? – **23 rivers**
(e.g., Arvari, Ruparel, Sarsa, etc.)

Veer Gatha Project: From Heritage to Civic Consciousness

- Under which portal was the 'Veer Gatha Project' jointly started by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Defence in 2021? – **Gallantry Awards Portal**
- What has the nationwide student participation in Veer Gatha 5.0 (2025-26) increased to? – **Approximately 1.92 crore participants**
- How many students are selected as winners through a multi-level evaluation process at the national level under the Veer Gatha Project? – **100 students (known as the 'Super 100')**
- The Veer Gatha Project aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), and the "Atma va are drashtavyah..." ideal of which Upanishad? – **Kathopanishad**
- Veer Gatha 5.0 is being conducted as a nationwide movement for students of which classes? – **For students from Classes 3 to 12**

Kurukshetra

Editorial

- What is considered one of the most powerful expressions of India's cultural diversity? – **Language**
- In India, what is the real basis of unity, rather than 'uniformity'? – **Respect and acceptance of differences.**
- In the current era of rapid urbanization and global influences, which systems have become essential to document? – **Traditional art forms, local knowledge systems, and community traditions**

- Which efforts play a vital role in reducing prejudices among citizens and strengthening national unity?
– **Efforts that promote dialogue and cultural participation between regions**

Unity in Diversity: India's Cultural Strength

- Which tribal painting tradition of India expresses agriculture-based community life and respect for nature?
– **Warli Painting (Maharashtra)**
- In which festival, celebrated mainly by the Oraon, Munda, and Ho communities in Jharkhand as the arrival of spring and the tribal New Year, is the Sal tree worshipped?
– **Sarhul Festival**
- Which semi-classical dance, popular in Odisha, Jharkhand, and West Bengal, is an excellent example of a 'cultural bridge' and holds UNESCO 'Intangible Cultural Heritage' status?
– **Chhau Dance**
- What is the oral tradition in Punjab called that preserves Sikh history, heroic sagas, and religious traditions through storytelling and folk performances?
– **Dhadi Jatha**
- In which musical tradition of Bengal is there a beautiful cultural synthesis of Hindu Vaishnava tradition, Sufi Islam, and the tantric concepts of Buddhist Sahajayana?
– **Baul Music**
- Which art, famous for the lost-wax casting technique, reflects dimensions associated with tribal life and nature in Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand?
– **Dhokra Art**
- Which mission started by the Government of India in 2017 aims to map rural cultural assets and provide them with institutional support?
– **National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCN)**

From Villages to the Global Stage: Rural Crafts and Handloom Traditions

- The textile and apparel sector is the second-largest employer in the country after agriculture, directly providing employment to how many people?
– **Over 4.5 crore**
- The village of 'Pochampally' in Telangana, recognized as a 'World Craft City' by UNESCO, is famous for which specific weaving technique?
– **Ikat Weaving**
- According to the Ministry of Textiles' Year-End Review 2025, what is the percentage contribution of the textile and apparel sector to India's total exports?
– **8.63 percent**
- Which mobile app has been developed by Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) for marketing authentic handicraft products made by women of Self-Help Groups?
– **eSARAS**
- Under rural livelihood missions, which brands have been developed by Assam, Jharkhand, and Jammu & Kashmir respectively for marketing handicrafts and textile products?
– **Asomi (Assam), Palash (Jharkhand), and Ummeed (J&K)**

- By the beginning of 2026, approximately how many Geographical Indications (GI Tags) have been registered in India under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)?
– **Over 650**

India's Tribal Communities and Indigenous Knowledge Systems

- Over 10.4 crore tribal population in India resides as approximately how many distinct communities?
– **Over 700**
- The 'Soliga community' of the Biligirirangana Hills in Karnataka reverently worships which animal as 'Huli Veerappa', the vehicle of Lord Madheshwara?
– **Tiger**
- What is the traditional method of the 'Soliga community' called, which involves setting controlled fires to forest litter to prevent severe summer wildfires?
– **Taragu Benki**
- What are the traditional arched dwellings made of bamboo, rattan, and dried grass by the 'Toda community' of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve called?
– **Arths**
- Inspired by the rare Kurinji flower, 'Puthukuli embroidery' (red, black, and white embroidery) is primarily the cultural identity of which tribal community?
– **Toda Community**
- What are the 'Living Root Bridges' grown from the roots of rubber fig trees by the Khasi and Jaintia communities of Meghalaya called in the local language?
– **Jingkieng Jri**

Preservation of India's Manuscript Heritage

- Which visionary national campaign has been launched by the government for the preservation, digitization, and wide dissemination of India's vast manuscript heritage?
– **Gyan Bharatam Mission**
- Under the Gyan Bharatam Mission, which centers will be established across the country for the identification, documentation, and listing of manuscripts?
– **Manuscript Resource Centers**
- Which institution has undertaken a major digitization drive to prepare high-quality digital copies of historical records?
– **National Archives of India**
- Which national repository is being created to make digitized manuscripts secure and accessible globally?
– **National Digital Repository (NDR)**
- With the coordination of ancient knowledge tradition and modern innovations, a broad vision has been set to establish India as 'Vishwaguru' by which year?
– **By the year 2047**

Rural Festivals: A Confluence of Culture

- Dhordo village (Gujarat), honored as the 'Best Tourism Village' in 2023 by the UN World Tourism Organization, is the venue for which famous festival?
– **Rann Utsav**
- Which traditional tribal festival, also known as 'Kus', is celebrated amidst heavy snowfall in the Pattan Valley of Himachal Pradesh?
– **Fagli Festival**

EXAM POINTERS

- Which festival is celebrated by the Muria and Gond tribes in the Bastar region of Chhattisgarh by engaging in symbolic warfare with bamboo 'Tupkis' and fruits?
– **Goncha Utsav**
- Which festival in Goa, held upon the arrival of the monsoon, showcases the relationship between humans and nature through traditional games in mud-filled fields?
– **Chikhal Kalo Festival**
- Which rural festival is celebrated in the Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand through mask dances, folk theater, and rituals related to paddy cultivation?
– **Hiljatra Festival**
- Which fair in Gujarat, inspired by Draupadi's Swayamvar described in the Mahabharata, features young men from the Koli and Rabari communities displaying embroidered umbrellas?
– **Tarnetar Mela**

Rural Cultural Tourism: Community-Based Development Model

- Which village in Madhya Pradesh has been included in the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) 'Upgrade Programme'?
– **Madla**
- What is the primary objective of the 'NIDHI' initiative/scheme prepared for the tourism sector?
– **To assist in 'policy formulation and planning'**
- Which concept of tourism is being supported specifically to promote conventions, events, and business trips?
– **MICE Tourism**

Nari Shakti: Protector of Tradition, Pioneer of Development

- Through which traditional art is the cultural tradition of the Pongal festival being primarily preserved by women in Tamil Nadu?
– **Kolam art**
- Which famous traditional storytelling style is being actively kept alive by women artists in Chhattisgarh?
– **Pandwani storytelling tradition**
- The specific traditional handicraft art called 'Toda Embroidery,' preserved by women, is associated with which Indian state?
– **Tamil Nadu**
- Under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), approximately how many women are currently connected with Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the country?
– **More than ten crore**
- Which marketing platform is operated by 'TRIFED' to bring the indigenous products of tribal women artisans to national and international markets?
– **Tribes India**
- The 'Kudumbashree Network,' which promotes traditional foods and indigenous products through women-led enterprises, is a successful initiative of which state?
– **Kerala**

Languages, Dialects, and Oral Traditions: Preserving the Soul of Rural India

- How many languages are currently officially recognized in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India?
– **22 languages**

Vigyan Pragati

Editorial

- Through which program is the effort primarily being made to reduce air pollution in India?
– **National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)**
- Which special public campaign is currently being run to directly link environmental protection with public participation?
– **"Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam"**

India's Significant Steps Towards Environmental Protection

- With the aim of strengthening environmental governance, after which historic event was the 'Environment Protection Act, 1986' implemented in India?
– **Bhopal Gas Tragedy**
- According to the 2022 wildlife census, what is the total number of tigers recorded in India as a result of the success of Project Tiger?
– **More than 3,600**
- In which year was 'Project Elephant' launched to conserve Asian elephants and their natural habitats and to reduce human-elephant conflict?
– **1992**
- In which year was the 'Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act' implemented in India to control pollution and conserve water resources?
– **1974**
- In which year did the Government of India launch the 'National Action Plan on Climate Change' (NAPCC) featuring 8 national missions to tackle climate change?
– **2008**
- What is the main objective of the 'International Solar Alliance' (ISA), jointly launched by India and France in 2015, specifically regarding the countries it aims to connect?
– **Tropical regions**
- Under 'Mission LiFE' (Lifestyle for Environment), by what special name are the citizens who play an active role in environmental protection defined?
– **Pro-Planet People**

IHBT Laboratory Strengthening Rural Economy

- Where is the 'Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology' (IHBT), working under CSIR, located?
– **Palampur (Himachal Pradesh)**
- Which are the new advanced varieties of Lavender and Chamomile recently registered by the institute with ICAR-PGRC respectively?
– **Him Arohi and Him Kanti**
- In which year was the 'Aroma Mission' started by CSIR with the aim of increasing farmers' income and utilizing barren (unproductive) land?
– **2016**
- As a result of continuous institutional efforts of IHBT, in which state has the commercial cultivation of 'Rosa damascena' been successfully established?
– **Punjab**
- In which district of Himachal Pradesh was a Stevia processing plant based on innovative green process technology developed by IHBT recently inaugurated?
– **Una**

- Which new advanced variety of Stevia has been recently released by the institute to further promote Stevia cultivation? – **'Him Stevia Utkrisht'**
- For the development of modern agricultural methods (tissue culture, hydroponic, aeroponic), with which African country's 'Empowering Farmers Foundation' (EFF) has IHBT signed an international agreement? – **Tanzania**
- On what two major items is the institute conducting research using Himalayan bacteria for an environment-friendly future? – **Biodegradable bioplastics and pigments**

Artemis-2: The Moon Calls Again

- What record distance did the Artemis-2 mission, launched on April 1, 2026, travel to establish the record for the longest human space journey in history? – **4,06,000 kilometers**
- What name has been given to the command module (capsule) that carries astronauts under NASA's Artemis mission? – **Orion**
- Which element, found in abundance in lunar soil (regolith), is being considered a source of clean energy for future fusion reactors? – **Helium-3**
- Which lunar mission of China created history in June 2024 by bringing samples from the far side of the Moon to Earth? – **Chang'e-6**
- Which is the international agreement signed by 60 countries for cooperation in peaceful space exploration, under which the Artemis mission is being operated? – **Artemis Accords**
- 'SLIM' (Smart Lander for Investigating Moon), which demonstrated precision landing technology on the Moon in 2024, is a mission of which country? – **Japan**

Critical Minerals: The Invisible Power of National Security

- Which rare earth magnets are mandatorily used in high-capacity radar and missile control systems? – **Neodymium and Dysprosium**
- Currently, China controls approximately what percentage of global 'rare earth processing'? – **60-70%**
- India's import dependence for its critical mineral requirements is more than approximately what percentage? – **90%**
- By which year has India set an ambitious target of achieving 500 GW of renewable energy capacity? – **2030**
- By which year has the Government of India set a target of 'Net Zero' carbon emissions? – **2070**
- At approximately what annual rate (CAGR) is India's electric vehicle (EV) market expected to grow between 2023 and 2030? – **49%**
- In 2023, India's 'battery storage market' was estimated at approximately how many billion dollars? – **\$2.8 billion**

Why are Termites Important for the Environment?

- Which 'Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups' (PVTG) living in the Kandhamal district of Odisha consider termite mounds to be natural indicators of the Earth's health? – **Kutia Kandha and Dongria Kandha**
- What is the average lifespan of a healthy queen termite, and what is the maximum number of eggs she can lay in a day? – **15 to 25 years (20,000 to 30,000 eggs)**
- What do termites primarily cultivate inside their mounds (as indoor farming) to make complex wood fibers digestible? – **Specific types of fungus**
- According to research in the international science journal 'Science', who plays the role of a 'lifesaver' for plants during droughts by bringing moisture up from the depths of the ground through their tunnels? – **Termites**
- According to scientific research, the nitrogen content in the soil around a termite mound can be what percentage higher than in ordinary soil? – **50 percent**

Kasni: A Multi-purpose Plant Rich in Medicinal Properties

- By what special nickname is Kasni known in Ayurveda because it is highly beneficial in treating jaundice and fatty liver? – **Friend of the Liver (Jigar ka Mitra)**
- The roots of Kasni, which help in controlling blood sugar, are a rich source of which element (which is also an industrial source of fructose)? – **Inulin**
- Which part of the Kasni plant is roasted and used to prepare an alternative to caffeine-free coffee? – **Root**
- In which Indian State or Union Territory is Kasni traditionally used by various ethnic groups to relieve 'rheumatic pain'? – **Jammu and Kashmir**

Indian Bay Leaf: Immense Potential in Agriculture and Industry

- Indian Bay Leaf (*Cinnamomum tamala*) is an important evergreen tree belonging to which botanical family? – **Lauraceae family**
- The bay leaf of which specific region in India has been granted Geographical Indication (GI) status due to its quality? – **Uttarakhand (Uttarakhand Tejpatta)**
- Which major chemical compound is found in the highest quantity (66.85%) in the leaves of the Indian Bay Leaf? – **L-linalool**

Guardians of Nuclear Power: Special Materials for Reactors

- Which ore of uranium is primarily Uranium (IV) oxide, mined mainly in Canada, Australia, and Kazakhstan? – **Uraninite (Pitchblende)**
- Which gas is primarily used as a coolant in Gas-Cooled Reactors (GCR) and Advanced Gas-Cooled Reactors (AGR)? – **Carbon dioxide (CO₂)**
- Which fissile nuclide is produced from Uranium-238 (U-238) using fast neutrons in Fast Breeder Reactors? – **Plutonium-239 (Pu-239)**

CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQs

1. The Murchison Widefield Array (MWA), which was recently in the news, is a low-frequency radio telescope located in which country?
(a) Australia (b) New Zealand
(c) China (d) Russia
2. The Scheme for Strengthening of Medical Device Industry (SMDI) is implemented by which organization?
(a) Department of Pharmaceuticals
(b) Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)
(c) National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC)
(d) National Medical Commission (NMC)
3. Who has been recently appointed as the Executive Director (ED) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)?
(a) Sanjay Malhotra (b) Ravi Shankar
(c) Pankaj Kumar (d) Rajeshwar Rao
4. Mount Erebus, which was recently in the news, is located on which continent?
(a) Antarctica (b) Australia
(c) North America (d) Europe
5. National Chartered Accountants (CA) Day is celebrated every year on which day?
(a) July 1 (b) July 2
(c) July 3 (d) July 4
6. The Southern Birdwing (*Troides minos*), recently seen in the news, is the State Butterfly of which state?
(a) Kerala (b) Karnataka
(c) Tamil Nadu (d) Andhra Pradesh
7. Hokato Hotozhe Sema, who recently became the World No. 1 in the men's shot put F57 category, belongs to which state?
(a) Nagaland (b) Tripura
(c) Mizoram (d) Gujarat
8. In which state was the 2026 Pashujanya Yudh Abhyas (Zoonotic War Exercise) organized?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Gujarat
(c) Karnataka (d) Rajasthan
9. Recently, the oldest accurately dated Banyan tree (*Ficus benghalensis*) was identified in which state?
(a) Odisha (b) Jharkhand
(c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Bihar
10. The Caspian Cobra, which was recently in the news, is primarily native to which region?
(a) South America (b) Central Asia
(c) Southeast Asia (d) East Africa
11. The Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana (KSVY) is implemented by which ministry?
(a) Ministry of Tourism
(b) Ministry of Education
(c) Ministry of Culture
(d) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
12. Borjuli Wetland, which was recently notified as a Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS), is located in which state?
(a) Assam (b) Arunachal Pradesh
(c) Tripura (d) West Bengal
13. Which state launched a cybersecurity campaign named "Operation Surakshit Cyberspace" in July 2026?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh
(c) Gujarat (d) Rajasthan
14. Which state government launched the "Namo Swachhata Abhiyan" and "Amritpan Abhiyan" in July 2026?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Rajasthan
(c) Gujarat (d) Karnataka
15. Which Indian city was ranked among the world's top 10 happiest cities in the Happy City Index 2026 by Time Out?
(a) Jaipur (b) Ahmedabad
(c) Bengaluru (d) Hyderabad
16. In which city was the 35th Annual Mango Festival 2026 inaugurated?
(a) New Delhi (b) Chennai
(c) Hyderabad (d) Bengaluru
17. Which organization has launched the 24x7 Women Helpline - 14490?
(a) National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)
(b) National Commission for Women (NCW)
(c) Ministry of Women and Child Development
(d) National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)
18. In which state was the first made-in-India Export-Import (EXIM) shipping container unveiled?
(a) Uttarakhand (b) Uttar Pradesh
(c) Gujarat (d) Bihar
19. A new species of deep-sea fish named 'Cyttopsis indica' was recently discovered in which state?
(a) Maharashtra (b) Goa
(c) Karnataka (d) Kerala
20. A new species of bacteria named 'Micromonospora shyamaprasadii' was recently discovered in which state?

- (a) West Bengal (b) Maharashtra
(c) Karnataka (d) Tamil Nadu
21. Which state government has launched the 'Nethanna Bharosa' scheme?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Karnataka
(c) Odisha (d) Kerala
22. Which port has become the second major port in India after Visakhapatnam to achieve an operational draft of 18 meters?
(a) Jawaharlal Nehru Port (b) Chennai Port
(c) Paradip Port (d) Kamarajar Port
23. Vepdegestrant, the world's first FDA-approved PROTAC therapy, was recently approved by the regulatory authority of which country?
(a) USA (b) Australia
(c) France (d) Russia
24. The amendment allowing drug imports through Navi Mumbai Airport was issued under which Act?
(a) Pharmacy Act, 1948
(b) Essential Commodities Act, 1955
(c) Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940
(d) National Medical Commission Act, 2019
25. According to the TeamLease Digital report, which country has emerged as the world's largest hub for Retail and Consumer Global Capability Centres (GCCs)?
(a) Myanmar (b) India
(c) Singapore (d) Sri Lanka
26. The Drishti-10 Starliner Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) is primarily designed for which type of mission?
(a) Cargo transport
(b) Aerial combat
(c) Search and rescue
(d) Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR)
27. On which day is the 'International Day of Combating Sand and Dust Storms' observed annually?
(a) July 11 (b) July 12
(c) July 13 (d) July 14
28. According to the World Directory of Modern Military Aircraft (WDMMA) 2026 rankings, which three countries' air forces are ranked at the top globally?
(a) USA, Russia, India
(b) Australia, China, France
(c) China, Israel, Iran
(d) Israel, India, France
29. The 'National Innovation Challenge for Drone Applications and Research' (NIDAR) 2.0 has been launched under which initiative?
(a) Digital India (b) SwaYaan
(c) Namo Drone Didi (d) SVAMITVA Scheme
30. Where was the AI Champions Summit 2026 for Digital Governance held?
(a) New Delhi (b) Chennai
(c) Hyderabad (d) Mumbai
31. Which ministry released the second edition of the 'Digital Threat Report 2025-26'?
(a) Ministry of Home Affairs
(b) Ministry of Finance
(c) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
(d) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
32. In July 2026, where was the 31st 'Divya Kala Mela' organized?
(a) New Delhi (b) Kolkata
(c) Chennai (d) Hyderabad
33. Which state has announced India's first government-run Artificial Intelligence (AI) University?
(a) Telangana (b) Karnataka
(c) Maharashtra (d) Gujarat
34. Handloom products 'Kuchai Silk', 'Bhagaiya Saree and Fabric', and 'Dumka Chadar', which received GI tags and were recently showcased at Bharat Tex 2026, belong to which state?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Uttarakhand
(c) Jharkhand (d) Odisha
35. Which helpline was launched under the 'Ageing with Dignity' campaign to provide assistance and support to senior citizens?
(a) Elderline 14567 (b) Senior Care 181
(c) Jeevan Sathi 112 (d) Sneha 1098
36. In which state is the Korku community primarily found?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Jharkhand
(c) Odisha (d) Bihar
37. 'Colobus congoensis', a new species of African monkey, was recently discovered in which country?
(a) Uganda
(b) Kenya
(c) Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
(d) Cameroon
38. Through which organization is the 'Semicon India Programme 2.0' implemented?
(a) Electronics Corporation of India Limited (ECIL)
(b) India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)
(c) Semiconductor Laboratory (SCL)
(d) Digital India Corporation
39. The 'i-DRONE' initiative, which was recently in the news for TB diagnosis, is a flagship program of which organization?
(a) Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)
(b) Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)
(c) National Medical Commission (NMC)
(d) HelpAge India

CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQs

40. 'Project INROAD', recently seen in the news, is associated with the development of which sector?
(a) Coffee cultivation
(b) Natural rubber plantations
(c) Bamboo production
(d) Jute cultivation
41. The 'REWARD' program, which was recently in the news, is assisted by which organization?
(a) World Bank
(b) International Monetary Fund (IMF)
(c) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
(d) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
42. Under which ministry does the Border Roads Organization (BRO) operate?
(a) Ministry of Home Affairs
(b) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
(c) Ministry of External Affairs
(d) Ministry of Defence
43. Which organization launched the one-time dispute resolution scheme 'VISHWAS 2026'?
(a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
(b) Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)
(c) NITI Aayog
(d) Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)
44. In which city is the headquarters of the 'World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization' (WAICO) located?
(a) Geneva
(b) Shanghai
(c) Paris
(d) London
45. The Laudankia vine snake (*Ahaetulla laudankia*), recently seen in the news, is endemic to which country?
(a) Australia
(b) Myanmar
(c) Sri Lanka
(d) India
46. What is the objective of the recently launched E-commerce Council of India (ECCI)?
(a) To regulate online retail prices in India
(b) To represent and promote the interests of India's digital commerce ecosystem
(c) To provide financial assistance to e-commerce startups
(d) To monitor cybersecurity threats in online marketplaces
47. The recently released 'Lives, Choices and Futures - Demographic Futures Survey' has been published by which organization?
(a) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
(b) World Health Organization (WHO)
(c) United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
(d) United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
48. The species named 'Lestes paloti', recently discovered in the Western Ghats, belongs to which of the following insect groups?
(a) Butterflies
(b) Beetles
(c) Damselflies
(d) Grasshoppers
49. The recently released draft norms of Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE-III) are issued to regulate which of the following?
(a) Fuel efficiency and CO₂ emissions of a vehicle manufacturer's fleet
(b) Carbon emissions from thermal power plants
(c) Fuel consumption of commercial aircraft
(d) Energy efficiency of industrial machines
50. Whom has Policybazaar appointed as its new brand ambassador?
(a) Shah Rukh Khan
(b) Amitabh Bachchan
(c) Aamir Khan
(d) Akshay Kumar
51. Which company has been declared India's most valuable and strongest tire brand?
(a) Apollo Tyres
(b) CEAT
(c) JK Tyre
(d) MRF
52. Scientists from which institution discovered two new species of solitary bees in Arunachal Pradesh?
(a) CSIR
(b) ICAR
(c) ATREE
(d) ICMR
53. Who has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of Ukraine?
(a) Denys Shmyhal
(b) Volodymyr Zelenskyy
(c) Serhii Koretskyi
(d) Mykhailo Fedorov
54. Under which law did the European Union impose a fine of €550 million on AliExpress?
(a) General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
(b) Digital Services Act (DSA)
(c) Digital Markets Act (DMA)
(d) Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act)
55. Which country won the 2026 FIFA World Cup title?
(a) Argentina
(b) France
(c) Spain
(d) Brazil
56. Recently, P.V. Sindhu became the first Indian player to win the title of which badminton tournament?
(a) China Open
(b) Korea Open
(c) Japan Open
(d) Malaysia Open
57. What budgetary amount has been approved for the Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS)?
(a) Rs. 50,000 crore
(b) Rs. 62,500 crore
(c) Rs. 75,000 crore
(d) Rs. 80,000 crore
58. In which city was the White Rabbit Technology-based Indian Standard Time (IST) Distribution Demonstration Network inaugurated in July, 2026?
(a) Bengaluru
(b) Hyderabad
(c) Chennai
(d) Pune
59. Who is set to take charge as the new Prime Minister of the United Kingdom on July 20?
(a) Rishi Sunak
(b) Keir Starmer
(c) Andy Burnham
(d) Boris Johnson

60. Which private company successfully launched India's first privately developed orbital-class rocket under "Mission Aagman"?

- (a) Agnikul Cosmos (b) Skyroot Aerospace
(c) ISRO (d) HAL

61. Recently in the news, 'NIDAR 2.0' is a national innovation challenge focused on which of the following technologies?

- (a) Artificial Intelligence for healthcare
(b) Autonomous drone technology
(c) Quantum computing
(d) Semiconductor manufacturing

62. The 'Māori' people, recently in the news, are native to which of the following countries?

- (a) Australia (b) Fiji
(c) New Zealand (d) Papua New Guinea

63. Recently, a proposal was made to upgrade the Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary into Debrigarh-Gaur National Park. In which of the following states is it located?

- (a) Chhattisgarh (b) Odisha
(c) Jharkhand (d) Madhya Pradesh

64. With reference to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Act, 1997, recently in the news, consider the following statements:

1. This Act was enacted for the purpose of establishing a Legislative Assembly for the Union Territory of Ladakh.
2. The LAHDC Act, 1997 provides for the establishment of Autonomous Hill Development Councils in the Ladakh region.
3. This Act was initially applicable to the Leh and Kargil districts.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only 1 and 2 (b) Only 2 and 3
(c) Only 1 and 3 (d) 1, 2 and 3

65. Forward Deployed Engineering (FDE) was recently in the news. What is it primarily related to?

- (a) Manufacturing semiconductor chips for AI tools
(b) Implementing AI solutions directly into real-world business environments
(c) Design of satellite communication systems
(d) Management of cloud data centers

66. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Codex Alimentarius Commission' (CAC):

1. Codex Alimentarius is a collection of internationally recognized food standards, guidelines, and codes of practice.
2. It provides a scientific international reference for countries to harmonize their food laws.
3. Standards adopted under Codex Alimentarius are legally binding on all member countries.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only 1 and 2 (b) Only 2 and 3
(c) Only 1 and 3 (d) 1, 2 and 3

67. 'Tritium', which was recently in the news, is a radioactive isotope of which of the following elements?

- (a) Hydrogen (b) Helium
(c) Oxygen (d) Nitrogen

68. What is the name of the world's first once-weekly basal insulin launched in India for the treatment of adult diabetes?

- (a) Humalog (b) Awikli
(c) Lantus (d) Tresiba

69. Consider the following statements regarding the 'National Investment Policy on Urea-2026':

1. This policy promotes the establishment of only coal-based urea manufacturing units.
2. The objective of this policy is to increase indigenous urea production by encouraging the establishment of new gas-based urea manufacturing units.
3. This policy has been approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only 1 and 2 (b) Only 2 and 3
(c) Only 1 and 3 (d) 1, 2 and 3

70. Recently, which state became the first in India to implement the Women Farmers Empowerment Act, 2026?

- (a) Karnataka (b) Maharashtra
(c) Gujarat (d) Telangana

71. With reference to the Gaganyaan Mission, consider the following statements:

1. The Department of Space has restricted the routine acceptance of resignation and voluntary retirement (VRS) requests from ISRO scientists associated with the Gaganyaan mission.
2. The objective of the Gaganyaan mission is to demonstrate India's capability to send humans into space.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only 1 (b) Only 2
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

72. The Indian Grey Hornbill was in the news due to its successful reintroduction into the Gir forests. What is its scientific name?

- (a) Oryx capensis
(b) Buceros bicornis
(c) Anthracoceros albirostris
(d) Rhyticeros undulatus

73. Which stealth frigate was commissioned into the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet as the sixth and final vessel of Project 17A?

- (a) INS Mahendragiri (b) INS Nilgiri
(c) INS Himgiri (d) INS Udaygiri

CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQs

74. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a health advisory following a multi-state outbreak of 'Cyclosporiasis'. This disease is caused by what?
- (a) Bacterium (b) Virus
(c) Parasite (d) Fungus
75. What was the main objective of the international seminar 'Sushrutam 2026' organized by the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), New Delhi?
- (a) To promote the export of Ayurvedic medicines
(b) To promote collaboration, research, and innovation between Ayurveda and modern surgical science
(c) Global promotion of traditional Yoga practices
(d) To implement a new regulatory system for Ayurvedic medical institutions
76. Which organisation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with TRAI to conduct India's largest village-level telecom network performance survey?
- (a) Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL)
(b) National Informatics Centre (NIC)
(c) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)
(d) Department of Posts
77. With reference to the recently released Investment Facilitation Index (IFI) 2026, consider the following statements:
1. The Investment Facilitation Index (IFI) 2026 was released by NITI Aayog, which assesses the capacity of states and union territories to attract investment.
 2. Maharashtra secured the first position in the Investment Facilitation Index (IFI) 2026, while Gujarat stood second.
 3. In this index, states and union territories are evaluated based on 8 key pillars, such as infrastructure, business environment, regulatory ease, and environmental resilience.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only 1 and 2 (b) Only 2 and 3
(c) Only 1 and 3 (d) 1, 2 and 3
78. With reference to the 'World Day for International Justice' observed on July 17, 2026, consider the following statements:
1. This day is observed to mark the anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute.
 2. The Rome Statute, 1998, is the founding treaty establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC).
 3. The objective of the International Criminal Court (ICC) is solely to hear cases related to war crimes.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only 1 and 2 (b) Only 2 and 3
(c) Only 1 and 3 (d) 1, 2 and 3
79. On July 8, 2026, whom did the Central Government appoint as India's next Ambassador to Ukraine?
- (a) Anjani Kumar (b) Subodh Singh
(c) Rajiv Jain (d) Deepak Agarwal
80. On July 7, 2026, which state government decided to recommend Hampi, Mysuru, and Lakkundi for the Global Destination Development Project?
- (a) Tamil Nadu (b) Karnataka
(c) Kerala (d) Maharashtra
81. On July 4, 2026, who was awarded the first Navbharat Times (NBT) Bhushan-Samman-2026?
- (a) Anupam Kher (b) Gajendra Singh
(c) Prasoon Joshi (d) Narendra Modi
82. Regarding the Bihar Heli-Tourism and Air Tourism Service Scheme, 2026, which of the following facts is NOT correct?
- (a) The scheme was launched on July 13, 2026, in Patna.
(b) In the first phase, Valmikinagar, Kaimur, Rajgir, and Patna have been connected by helicopter service.
(c) The state government will provide a subsidy of up to a maximum of Rs. 15,422 per ticket.
(d) Regular helicopter services will be operated every Monday and Tuesday.
83. On July 11, 2026, under whose chairmanship was an expert committee formed for a detailed investigation of the Kalladi landslide in Wayanad?
- (a) Dr. C. P. Rajendran (b) A. P. Anil Kumar
(c) Rajiv Kumar (d) Uttam Singh
84. On July 11, 2026, where was the National Conference-2026 on strengthening legal education by incorporating regional languages held?
- (a) Nagpur (b) Pune
(c) New Delhi (d) Lucknow
85. Regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Quality Council of India (QCI) and the National Small Industries Corporation Limited (NSIC) on July 9, 2026, which of the following facts is NOT correct?
- (a) The objective of the agreement is to strengthen the quality, competitiveness, and market access of MSMEs.
(b) Under this agreement, MSME Sustainable (ZED) certified MSMEs will be provided digital trade and export opportunities through MSME Global Mart.
(c) The meeting of the Joint Coordination Committee formed for the implementation of the agreement will be held every six months.
(d) Assistance will be provided to NSIC's testing laboratories in obtaining National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) accreditation.

86. Where was the National Conference-2026 on the theme "Next Generation Administrative and e-Governance Reforms" held between July 13-14, 2026?
 (a) Shillong (b) Kolkata
 (c) Guwahati (d) Jaipur
87. Under which operation did the Central Bureau of Narcotics dismantle a high-tech Mephedrone manufacturing laboratory in Pune?
 (a) Operation Trident
 (b) Operation Vajra
 (c) Operation Garuda
 (d) Operation Rakshak
88. Which bank launched the national-level cybersecurity hackathon FinSpark'26 to address technology-driven security challenges in the banking sector?
 (a) Punjab National Bank
 (b) Bank of Baroda
 (c) Canara Bank
 (d) Bank of Maharashtra
89. Which state reported the highest number of cyber fraud complaints in India during the first half of 2026?
 (a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Maharashtra
 (c) Karnataka (d) Gujarat
90. Which state's Unjha cumin (Jeera) and Unjha fennel (Saunf) were recently granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag?
 (a) Gujarat (b) Rajasthan
 (c) Maharashtra (d) Punjab
91. Which space agency successfully conducted the first lift-off and vertical landing test of its reusable prototype rocket in Akita prefecture in 2026?
 (a) NASA (b) JAXA
 (c) ESA (d) ISRO
92. Which city created a Guinness World Record by planting 3.61 lakh saplings in one hour using the Miyawaki method?
 (a) Surat (b) Vadodara
 (c) Ahmedabad (d) Rajkot
93. Which state became India's 6th fully literate state under the ULLAS (New India Literacy Programme) 2026?
 (a) Uttarakhand (b) Himachal Pradesh
 (c) Sikkim (d) Goa
94. Where was the foundation stone laid for the ICMR Centre for High Altitude Medicine and Public Health Research?
 (a) Leh (b) Keylong
 (c) Shimla (d) Dharamshala
95. Which institution is establishing the Centre of Excellence (ECOGEN) for Green Hydrogen Research under the Uttar Pradesh Green Hydrogen Policy 2024?
 (a) IIT Delhi (b) IIT Madras
 (c) IIT Kanpur (d) IIT Bombay
96. Which state became the first in India to pass the Ease of Doing Business Act, 2026 with a trust-based business permission framework?
 (a) Madhya Pradesh
 (b) Chhattisgarh
 (c) Odisha
 (d) Telangana
97. Which country partnered with Arunachal Pradesh to establish India's first river kinetic energy demonstration plant?
 (a) Norway (b) Sweden
 (c) Denmark (d) Finland
98. Which country signed a technical cooperation agreement with India's Ministry of Coal to promote scientific mine closure on July 22, 2026?
 (a) Japan (b) Australia
 (c) France (d) Germany
99. Which state is set to establish India's first AI-powered bird sanctuary?
 (a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat
 (c) Karnataka (d) Odisha
100. Which pharmaceutical company developed QDENG, India's first approved dengue vaccine?
 (a) Pfizer
 (b) Moderna
 (c) Astra Zeneca
 (d) Takeda

Answers

- | | | | | | | |
|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. (a) | 2. (a) | 3. (b) | 4. (a) | 5. (a) | 6. (b) | 7. (a) |
| 8. (a) | 9. (d) | 10. (b) | 11. (c) | 12. (a) | 13. (c) | 14. (c) |
| 15. (a) | 16. (a) | 17. (b) | 18. (b) | 19. (d) | 20. (a) | 21. (a) |
| 22. (d) | 23. (a) | 24. (c) | 25. (b) | 26. (d) | 27. (b) | 28. (a) |
| 29. (b) | 30. (a) | 31. (c) | 32. (b) | 33. (b) | 34. (c) | 35. (a) |
| 36. (a) | 37. (c) | 38. (b) | 39. (a) | 40. (b) | 41. (a) | 42. (d) |
| 43. (b) | 44. (b) | 45. (d) | 46. (b) | 47. (c) | 48. (c) | 49. (a) |
| 50. (b) | 51. (d) | 52. (c) | 53. (c) | 54. (b) | 55. (c) | 56. (c) |
| 57. (b) | 58. (a) | 59. (b) | 60. (b) | 61. (b) | 62. (c) | 63. (b) |
| 64. (b) | 65. (b) | 66. (a) | 67. (a) | 68. (b) | 69. (b) | 70. (b) |
| 71. (c) | 72. (a) | 73. (a) | 74. (c) | 75. (b) | 76. (d) | 77. (c) |
| 78. (a) | 79. (a) | 80. (b) | 81. (c) | 82. (d) | 83. (a) | 84. (c) |
| 85. (c) | 86. (a) | 87. (b) | 88. (d) | 89. (a) | 90. (a) | 91. (b) |
| 92. (c) | 93. (a) | 94. (b) | 95. (c) | 96. (b) | 97. (a) | 98. (d) |
| 99. (a) | 100. (d) | | | | | |

TERMS IN NEWS

Windfall Gains Tax

- A windfall gains tax is a one-off or temporary levy imposed by governments on companies that generate unexpectedly high profits due to external events like wars, supply shortages, or commodity price spikes. The tax captures a portion of these excess profits for public welfare and to prevent excessive corporate profiteering.
- Effective from 16th July 2026, the government has increased the windfall gains tax on exports of diesel and ATF.

PinS Instrument Approach Procedure

- On 1st July 2026, Govt. of India approved the country's first Private Point-in-Space (PinS) instrument approach procedure for helicopter operations at Undavalli Heliport, Andhra Pradesh.
- PinS procedures use advanced satellite-based navigation technology to enable helicopters to conduct safe and precise instrument approaches to heliports that do not have conventional instrument landing infrastructure.

Insurance Plan FHIR Object Creator

- This specialized tool enables insurance companies and TPAs to represent their various health insurance plans as standardized digital objects using the FHIR framework.
- These standardized objects ensure that different healthcare systems can accurately interpret coverage details, benefit limits, and exclusions without manual data entry.
- It acts as a foundational component for the NHCX, allowing for the seamless integration of diverse insurance products into the national digital health ecosystem.

e-Sushrut Clinic

- e-Sushrut Clinic is a cloud-based, lightweight Hospital Management Information System (HMIS) designed specifically for small outpatient clinics, primary health centers, and pharmacies.
- Developed by C-DAC, it provides affordable digital tools for patient registration, billing, and electronic prescriptions, enabling even small facilities to become ABDM-compliant.
- The platform features advanced additions like speech-to-text documentation and a Clinical Decision Support System (CDSS) to enhance the quality of primary healthcare delivery.

National Health Claims Exchange (NHCX)

- The NHCX is a centralized digital gateway developed to standardize and automate the exchange of health insurance claims between healthcare providers and insurance companies.
- It leverages Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR) standards to ensure that claim data is machine-readable and interoperable, leading to faster pre-authorizations and reduced wait times for hospital discharge.

Unified Health Interface (UHI)

- The UHI is an open network that establishes a common protocol for digital health services, allowing patients and providers to interact across different applications.
- Similar to UPI for payments, UHI eliminates platform dependency, meaning a patient on one app can book a teleconsultation with a doctor on a different UHI-enabled platform.
- It promotes "fair discoverability," ensuring that verified healthcare professionals and facilities are visible to all users regardless of the specific app they use.

Drug Registry

- This registry serves as the "single source of truth" for all medicines in India, providing standardized names and unique codes for branded, generic, and substance-level drugs.
- It addresses the issue of fragmented drug data, reducing errors in e-prescriptions, supply chain management, and clinical decision-making.
- The registry is built in collaboration with the CDSCO and NRCeS, ensuring that all ecosystem stakeholders use a common language for identifying pharmaceuticals.

Common Logical Observation Identifiers Names and Codes for India (CLCI)

- CLCI is a national adoption of the international LOINC standards, providing a common language for identifying laboratory tests and clinical observations.
- It ensures that lab results from different facilities are coded consistently, allowing them to be easily understood and compared by doctors and systems across the country.
- This standardization is crucial for the seamless exchange of diagnostic reports and the creation of longitudinal health records.