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Reza Pahlavi

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Dear Aspirants,

“Preparation is the silent action of future leaders; every page read today shapes the decisions of tomorrow.”

The journey to becoming a civil servant is defined not only by hard work but by the ability to think critically, connect ideas, and remain deeply aware of the changing world. For UPSC aspirants, current affairs are the backbone of preparation—interwoven across Prelims, Mains, and the Personality Test. Consistent engagement with national and international developments enables aspirants to develop analytical depth, multidimensional understanding, and policy-oriented thinking that the Civil Services Examination demands.

It is rightly said, “Excellence is not an act, but a habit.” Daily and disciplined reading of current affairs transforms information into insight and opinions into balanced arguments. This habit strengthens answer writing, sharpens elimination skills in Prelims, and builds the intellectual maturity expected of future administrators.

This monthly issue has been curated to help aspirants navigate complex issues with clarity and perspective. Environmental governance takes center stage with an analysis of the Aravalli redefinition controversy, highlighting the tension between development, legal interpretation, and ecological preservation. In the realm of international security and geopolitics, the Bella-1 maritime chase sheds light on the shadowy intersection of oil trade, sanctions, and global enforcement mechanisms, while the renewed interest of Donald Trump in Greenland is examined through the lens of strategic resources and great-power competition.

Global political instability is explored through Iran’s nationwide unrest triggered by the call of an exiled prince, offering insights into legitimacy, dissent, and state response. Science and technology coverage examines the PSLV-C62 mission failure—a rare setback for ISRO that underscores the importance of institutional resilience and learning in high-stakes technological endeavors. Domestic political developments are addressed through the I-PAC controversy, unpacking the implications of ED raids, political consequences, and the evolving legal battle in West Bengal.

The issue also deepens regional understanding by explaining why Myanmar’s military junta is proceeding with elections amid an ongoing civil war, a case study in power, legitimacy, and conflict management. Completing the global energy perspective, Japan’s decision to restart a reactor at the world’s largest nuclear power plant highlights the complex balance between energy security, safety concerns, and climate commitments.

Each article in this magazine is designed to go beyond facts, encouraging you to think like a policymaker and write like an administrator. Read with curiosity, reflect with discipline, and prepare with purpose. The habits you build today will shape the decisions you make tomorrow in service of the nation.

“Read. Reflect. Serve the nation with knowledge.”

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Polity & Governance

The I-PAC Controversy: ED Raids, Political Fallout, and Legal Battle in Bengal

What Is the I-PAC Row About?

The I-PAC row refers to a major political and legal controversy unfolding in West Bengal, centred on Enforcement Directorate (ED) raids at the office and residence of I-PAC (Indian Political Action Committee), a political consultancy firm associated with the Trinamool Congress (TMC). The dispute has escalated into a broader political storm involving allegations of obstruction, data seizure, legal battles, and protests by TMC leaders.

Who Is I-PAC?

- Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) is a political consultancy firm.
- It has worked closely with the TMC on election strategy, IT, media, and campaign management.
- Founded by poll strategist Prashant Kishor, though current operations are led by directors including Pratik Jain.

Why Did the ED Raid I-PAC?

- The Enforcement Directorate launched search operations on 8 January 2026.
- The action was part of a money-laundering investigation linked to an alleged coal smuggling syndicate in West Bengal.
- ED alleges proceeds of crime from illegal coal sales were routed through hawala channels, with some funds linked to I-PAC-related operations.
- Searches were conducted at I-PAC's Kolkata office and the residence of its director, Pratik Jain.

What Triggered the Political Row?

- Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee arrived at the raid site and, according to the ED, removed documents and electronic data, leading the agency to claim the probe was obstructed.
- The TMC and state authorities have denied wrongdoing and challenged the legality of the raids.
- Police in Kolkata registered FIRs against ED personnel, alleging unlawful entry and seizure.

Legal Escalations

- The Calcutta High Court has been hearing petitions regarding the raid, including disputes over seized data and probe conduct.
- The ED has moved the Supreme Court, seeking directions for a CBI FIR against Mamata Banerjee and others for obstruction and evidence tampering.
- The TMC has filed counter-petitions seeking protection of data and challenging the ED's authority.
- Court proceedings have seen disruptions and are being live-streamed under court orders.

Why It Matters

- The row highlights tensions between central investigative agencies and state governments, issues around political data privacy, and concerns over the use of enforcement powers in a highly contested electoral context.

Responsible Nations Index (RNI)

Why in News?

Government of India has launched the Responsible Nations Index (RNI) 2026 in New Delhi to provide an alternative global framework for evaluating nations on ethical governance and shared responsibility. Organised Under: World

Intellectual Foundation (WIF). The index is the result of three years of research involving institutes like Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Mumbai.

What is the Responsible Nations Index (RNI)?

RNI is a comprehensive assessment tool to measure countries on ethical governance, human well-being, environmental stewardship, and global responsibility — beyond traditional measures like GDP or military strength. It emphasises sustainable and equitable development rather than purely economic or power-based metrics.

Key Rankings (Top & India's Position – RNI 2026)

Country	RNI Rank
Singapore	1
Switzerland	2
Denmark	3
Sweden	5
India	16

Why RNI Matters?

- **Alternative Development Metrics:** Challenges neoliberal growth models focusing only on GDP by including governance and social responsibility.
- **Ethical Governance:** Emphasises transparency, accountability, human rights, equity, and justice, critical for civil services understanding of governance quality.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Aligns with global frameworks like SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) and Paris Climate Agreement priority areas.
- **Foreign Policy Insight:** Offers a lens for evaluating India's role on the global stage beyond power politics — moral and cooperative leadership.

Comparison with Other Global Indices

- **Human Development Index (HDI):** Focuses on health, education, and standard of living (UNDP).
- **Global Peace Index (GPI):** Measures peacefulness based on safety, security, and militarisation.
- **RNI's Unique Angle:** Adds ethical governance and global responsibility, blending domestic policy quality with international contribution.

Relevance to India

India's rank (16) reflects strengths in social policies, governance frameworks, but indicates room for improvement in areas like environmental sustainability or global health leadership. Supports India's G20 vision where inclusive growth and sustainability are highlighted.

International Policy Linkages

Aligns with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by moving beyond economic measures towards holistic human-centric progress. Provides a tool for nations to benchmark responsible governance practices internationally.

Live-in Relationships: Legal Protection for Women

Why In News?

The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court said that women in live-in relationships should be given the legal status of a "wife." This was said to protect women's rights and safety when relationships break down.

Background of the Case

- The ruling came while refusing anticipatory bail to a man accused of having a sexual relationship with a woman under false promises of marriage.
- The woman alleged the man repeatedly promised marriage and then backed out after they lived together.

Court's Concern for Women's Protection

- The court said women in live-in relationships are vulnerable because of lack of legal safeguards similar to marriage.
- Many enter live-in relationships thinking they are a modern choice but later face no protection if the relationship ends.

Cultural Context

- The judge described live-in relationships as a cultural shock in India but noted they are now widespread.
- The court referenced Gandharva marriage from ancient Indian tradition as a parallel concept of consensual love unions.

Legal Provision Invoked

The court invoked Section 69 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, which criminalises sexual relations based on deception or false promises of marriage. It noted that men who promise marriage and later refuse cannot escape legal consequences.

Observations on Exploitation

The court observed that some men initially present themselves as modern by entering live-in relationships but later attack the woman's character when things go wrong.

Importance of the Ruling

- The judgment highlights a gap in legal protection for women in live-in relationships.
- It suggests such relationships could be viewed legally like consensual love marriages to ensure women are not left unprotected.

Amendment to Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989**Why In News?**

Recently, the Union Government of India notified the Central Motor Vehicles (Second Amendment) Rules, 2026 to strengthen compliance with user fee payments at toll plazas on National Highways under the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989.

Key Provisions of the Amendment**Definition of "Unpaid User Fee":**

The amendment introduces a formal definition of unpaid user fee — the toll charge payable for National Highway use where an Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) system has recorded a vehicle's passage but the fee hasn't been received as per the National Highways Act, 1956.

Conditional Issuance of NOC:

No Objection Certificate (NOC) for transfer of vehicle ownership (including inter-state transfers) will not be granted unless all outstanding user fees are cleared.

Link with Fitness and Permit Services:

Renewal of Fitness Certificate such as for roadworthiness and issuance of National Permits for commercial vehicles will be blocked if unpaid user fee dues exist.

Updated Form 28:

Form 28, which is used for applying for an NOC, now requires the applicant to declare any pending unpaid toll dues along with details of those fees.

Focus on Electronic Tolling:

The changes aim to enhance efficiency and transparency of Electronic Toll Collection and curb toll evasion on National Highways.

Legal Framework:

- The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 empowers the Central Government to make rules for motor vehicles and transport; the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 were framed under this Act.
- The National Highways Act, 1956 governs the collection of user fees for National Highway use and sets the legal basis for toll payments.

Digital Tolling Context:

India has widely implemented Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) with FASTag, a prepaid RFID tag linked to bank accounts or digital wallets for frictionless toll payment. Previous changes (from 2025) penalised non-FASTag users by charging higher toll fees (up to double in cash and 1.25× via UPI) to encourage digital payments at toll plazas.

Barrier-Free & Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF):

The amended rules support the rollout of Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling, which enables barrier-less tolling using RFID/GPS tech to reduce congestion and speed up movement on highways.

Administrative Impact:

Linking toll dues with registration services, permits, and fitness certificates strengthens compliance and ensures that unpaid fees cannot be circumvented.

Transport Department Enforcement:

Regional Transport Offices (RTOs) will enforce these provisions before issuing NOCs, fitness renewals, or national permits, which could affect vehicle resale and commercial operations.

Honour Killing Law**Why in News?**

The Karnataka government is drafting a special law to address honour killings. This move comes after the murder of 20-year-old Manya Patil in Hubballi, allegedly killed by her family for marrying a man from a Scheduled Caste. Honour killings are caste- or community-based murders over “family honour.”

What the Proposed Law Is Called

The draft law is named the ‘Eva Nammava Eva Nammava Kanoonu, 2026’. The phrase comes from a 12th-century Vachana by Basavanna, promoting brotherhood and social inclusion.

What the Law Aims to Do

It seeks to punish honour killings and related caste-based crimes strongly. It will also protect the right of adults to marry who they choose, without needing family or caste approval. The law would cover a wide range of acts done “in the name of honour,” including physical harm, threats, harassment, social boycotts, forced separation of couples, and intimidation.

Legal Rights Reinforced

The draft law confirms that fundamental rights under Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution apply fully to marriage choices and personal liberty.

Penalties Proposed

- Minimum five years' imprisonment for an honour killing.
- Grievous hurt in the name of honour: 10 years to life imprisonment and up to ₹3 lakh fine.
- Simple hurt: three to five years' jail and up to ₹2 lakh fine.
- Other honour crimes or rights-violating acts: two to five years' jail and up to ₹1 lakh fine.
- All offences are cognizable and non-bailable.

Additional Provisions

The law would make it compulsory for the government to provide safety and protection measures for couples facing threats. It also introduces a new offence for sexual intercourse obtained by false promise of marriage in inter-caste contexts.

Why This Law Is Seen as Important

So-called honour killings are not technically separate offences under current laws and are treated as ordinary "murder" under the Indian Penal Code. A specific law is intended to highlight and punish caste-based and honour-related crimes more effectively.

Broader Context

- Honour killings often occur in caste-divided societies when individuals choose partners outside their caste, religion, or community, and families see this as a threat to "honour."
- India's Supreme Court has condemned honour killings as barbaric acts of murder that violate fundamental rights.

Repealing and Amending Act, 2025

Why in News?

Parliament has passed the Repealing and Amending Act, 2025 to simplify and modernise India's legal system by repealing obsolete laws and making minor amendments to select existing Acts, thereby reducing legislative clutter and improving administrative efficiency.

Key Highlights

- The Act repeals 71 obsolete and redundant laws that had lost relevance over time.
- These laws were enacted between the colonial period and recent decades but were no longer in use.
- The Act also amends certain existing laws to remove inconsistencies and ensure clarity.
- A savings clause ensures that repealing laws does not affect existing rights, liabilities, penalties, or ongoing legal proceedings.

1. Purpose of Repealing & Amending Acts

- Such Acts are passed periodically to:
- Remove outdated and overlapping legislation
- Simplify statute books
- Improve ease of governance and legal clarity

2. Importance for Governance

- Reduces legal confusion for citizens, administrators, and courts.
- Helps decrease judicial burden by eliminating unused laws.
- Supports the government's agenda of minimum government, maximum governance.

3. Constitutional Aspect

- Parliament has the authority to repeal or amend laws under Article 245 of the Constitution.
- Repeal does not invalidate actions already taken under repealed laws due to the savings clause.

4. Historical Context

- India has earlier passed similar Acts in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019, and 2023 as part of legal reforms.
- Repealing obsolete laws is considered a key step in legal system rationalisation.

5. Relevance to Ease of Doing Business

- Simplified legal framework improves regulatory transparency.
- Reduces compliance burden on businesses and institutions.

Jan Vishwas (Amendment) Bill

Why in News?

The Delhi Cabinet has approved the Delhi Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026, to decriminalise minor, technical, and procedural offences and simplify compliance procedures, making it easier for citizens and businesses.

- Chief Minister Rekha Gupta stated the Bill will reduce the burden on courts and enhance administrative efficiency by replacing criminal charges with civil penalties, administrative fines, and an appellate mechanism.
- Serious offences affecting public health, safety, and life will continue to attract strict criminal action, and the Bill is expected to be tabled in the upcoming winter session of the Delhi Legislative Assembly.
- The proposed legislation includes automatic revision of fines — increasing penalties by 10% every three years to keep them in line with inflation and costs, and will not require additional financial resources or new administrative posts.

About the Jan Vishwas Reform Framework

- The Jan Vishwas initiative is a legal reform agenda aimed at decriminalising minor and procedural offences across central and state laws, promoting ease of doing business and ease of living.
- The central government's Jan Vishwas Act decriminalised hundreds of minor offences in central statutes and encouraged states and Union Territories to undertake similar reforms.

Principle of Proportionality of Punishment

The Bill reflects the legal principle of proportionality, where punishment is commensurate with the severity of the offence, avoiding criminal prosecution for trivial breaches.

Civil Penalties vs Criminal Sanctions

- Civil penalties include fines, administrative sanctions, and appeals, which avoid arrest, imprisonment, or a criminal record for minor defaults.
- This helps in reducing litigation, court backlogs, and distress for businesses and individuals.

Laws Proposed to Be Amended

The Bill proposes changes to several key Delhi Acts governing:

- Shops and Establishments
- Industrial Development
- Bed & Breakfast registrations
- Agricultural Produce Marketing
- Water supply and professional/institutional regulations

Ease of Doing Business & Governance

By limiting criminal sanctions to serious offences, the reform aims to create a trust-based regulatory environment that encourages compliance and reduces fear of disproportionate penalties. It aligns with the Minimum Government, Maximum Governance approach emphasising simpler regulatory frameworks.

Administrative Efficiency

Replacing criminal prosecutions with administrative mechanisms enables faster resolution of disputes and penalties, reducing burden on judiciary and improving public service delivery.

No Extra Fiscal Burden

Implementation will be undertaken by existing departments and resources, requiring no additional financial allocation or recruitment of new staff.

News in Shorts

Supreme Court of India signs MoU with Bhutan Apex Court for exchange of law clerks

Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant announced that the Supreme Court of India has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Supreme Court of Bhutan (the apex court of Bhutan) to facilitate an exchange programme for law clerks. Under the agreement, two law clerks from Bhutan will be attached to the Supreme Court of India for a period of three months, where they will assist justices, conduct legal research and observe courtroom proceedings. The Bhutanese law clerks will receive the same honorarium (stipend) as Indian law clerks, and the travel expenses for their stay in India will be borne by the Supreme Court of India. During their tenure, the clerks are expected to be assigned to different courts/benches of the Supreme Court to gain a broader judicial exposure. CJI Surya Kant described the visiting law clerks as “young and bright” and said the initiative is aimed at strengthening judicial cooperation and institutional links between India and Bhutan.

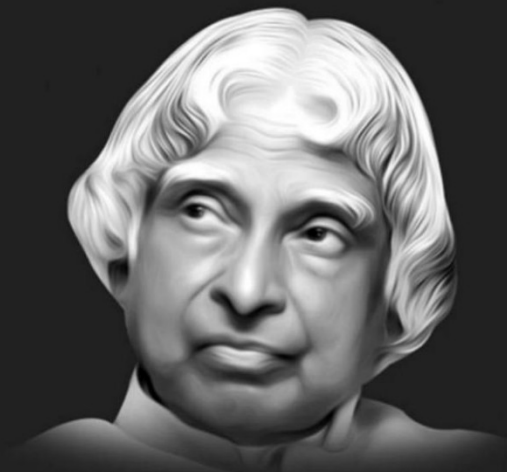
Judicial Cooperation and Law Clerk Exchange

A law clerk in the Supreme Court assists judges with legal research, drafting opinions, reviewing case law, and preparing case summaries — a role that enhances legal learning and judicial functioning. Judicial cooperation between nations through such exchange programmes promotes shared legal culture, comparative jurisprudence and capacity building among young legal professionals. The MoU with Bhutan reflects India’s Judicial Diplomacy and support for neighboring countries’ legal systems as part of “Neighbourhood First” policy — aimed at strengthening ties through cooperation in law, governance, and institutions.

Punctuality is not
about being on time,

It's basically about
respecting your own
commitments..

A.K. Bhat



International Relations & Events

Myanmar Civil War (2021–present)

Background: Myanmar's Political Turmoil

Myanmar's military junta seized power in a coup in February 2021, ousting the democratically elected government led by Aung San Suu Kyi. The coup triggered mass protests, violent crackdowns, and a civil war involving pro-democracy forces and ethnic armed groups. Large parts of the country remain outside junta control due to ongoing conflict.

The 2025–26 Elections: What's Happening

- The general election began on 28 December 2025 in a phased manner and is scheduled to conclude by 25 January 2026.
- The junta claims the vote will restore constitutional order after the state of emergency — lifted in mid-2025 — and lead to a return to civilian rule.
- Election law changes have significantly altered the political landscape, including restrictions on party registration and participation that disadvantage opposition groups.

Why the Junta Is Pushing the Election Amid War

- Legitimising Military Rule
- Holding elections gives the junta a veneer of democratic process and internal and external legitimacy despite widespread conflict.
- Critics call the poll a “sham election” designed to entrench military control through proxy political parties.

Consolidating Power Legally

- The junta's new electoral framework favours the military-aligned Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP).
- Opposition forces, including Aung San Suu Kyi's party, remain dissolved or unable to participate meaningfully.

International Strategy

- The military hopes the election will soften international criticism and ease diplomatic isolation.
- Countries such as China and Russia have shown support or recognition of the process.

Criticism and Challenges

- United Nations and Western governments describe the vote as lacking the conditions for free and fair elections due to repression, displacement, and civil war.
- Many areas of the country cannot participate because of security constraints.
- International rights groups and opposition forces reject the elections as a legitimacy-building exercise, not a genuine democratic transition.

Why It Matters

These elections, taking place amid intense conflict and political repression, are a key moment in Myanmar's prolonged crisis. They reflect the junta's attempt to convert military dominance into a formal political mandate while facing rejection from significant domestic and international actors.

Iran in Turmoil

Why in News?

Iran is witnessing a rapid escalation of anti-government protests following a public call by exiled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi. Demonstrations have spread across multiple cities, reflecting growing public anger over political repression and economic distress.

Key Triggers of the Protests

- Call for nationwide protests and strikes by Reza Pahlavi
- Deepening economic crisis, inflation, and currency devaluation
- Long-standing grievances against authoritarian governance
- Public frustration over lack of political freedoms

Geographical Spread of Unrest

Protests have been reported in several major cities and provinces:

- Tehran
- Isfahan
- Mashhad
- Shiraz
- Bushehr
- Other urban and semi-urban centres
- The scale indicates nationwide mobilisation rather than isolated incidents.

Internet and Communication Blackout

In response to the unrest, Iranian authorities imposed a near-total internet shutdown.

Details of the Blackout

- International internet access largely cut off
- Social media platforms blocked
- Mobile data and broadband services disrupted
- Limited access allowed only to state-controlled domestic networks

Purpose of the Shutdown

- Prevent coordination among protestors
- Restrict flow of information to the outside world
- Limit media coverage and documentation of events
- Government Response and Crackdown
- Iranian security forces have moved to suppress protests.

Reported Actions

- Deployment of police and security personnel
- Use of force against demonstrators
- Mass arrests reported across provinces

Human Rights Concerns

- Rights groups report significant casualties and detentions
- Exact figures remain unclear due to communication restrictions

Role of Reza Pahlavi

- Son of Iran's last Shah, living in exile
- Called for peaceful protests and civil resistance
- Urged citizens to reclaim public spaces and apply pressure on authorities
- Iranian government accuses him of foreign-backed interference

Why the Protests Matter

- Reflect widespread dissatisfaction with Iran's political system
- Highlight the state's reliance on internet shutdowns to control dissent
- Draw renewed international attention to human rights conditions in Iran

The Bella-1 Maritime Chase**What Was Bella-1 (Later Known as Marinera)?**

- Bella-1 was an oil tanker linked to Venezuelan oil exports, operating within a network often described as a "shadow fleet"—vessels used to move sanctioned oil by frequently changing names, flags, and registrations.
- Built in 2002
- Previously linked to Venezuelan oil shipments under US sanctions
- Flag-hopping and renaming were part of its operating pattern

Why the Tanker Came Under US Scrutiny

- In late 2025, US authorities attempted to board the vessel in the Caribbean region as part of sanctions enforcement.
- The tanker refused to comply with the boarding request
- This refusal triggered sustained monitoring by US forces

Identity Change at Sea

- During its escape attempt, the tanker took unusual steps:
- Renamed itself from Bella-1 to Marinera
- Claimed registration under the Russian flag
- Displayed Russian markings on the hull
- These actions were intended to complicate legal enforcement by suggesting Russian jurisdiction. However, rapid flag changes during an active pursuit are not automatically recognised under international maritime law.

Russian Involvement: What Is Confirmed

- During part of the tanker's journey across the Atlantic:
- Russia deployed naval assets, reportedly including a submarine, to shadow the tanker
- This presence was observational and symbolic, not confrontational
- There was no direct engagement with US forces

Importantly:

- The tanker was not escorted into Russian territorial waters
- No Russian warship was present at the moment of seizure

Tracking and Seizure

- The tanker was tracked for nearly two weeks:
- By US Coast Guard ships and aircraft
- With intelligence and surveillance support from allied forces, including the UK
- In January 2026, US forces boarded and seized the tanker in international waters under a federal court warrant related to sanctions violations.

Current Status of the Ship

- The vessel remains under US custody
- The US does not recognise the Russian flag change as valid
- Russia protested diplomatically but did not regain control

Why This Case Is Significant

- Demonstrates how sanctions enforcement is increasingly extending to the high seas
- Shows the limits of flag-switching and symbolic naval support
- Highlights growing geopolitical tensions over energy transport routes
- The Bella-1 / Marinera case underscores how oil trade, sanctions, and great-power politics are converging in global maritime spaces.

Data Embassy in UAE**Why in News?**

India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are exploring the idea of setting up a data embassy in each other's country. This idea was discussed during the official visit of the UAE President to India and talks between the leaders.

What Is a Data Embassy?

A data embassy is a specialised centre where a country stores its critical digital data on servers located in another country. The data stored remains under the home country's control and jurisdiction, even though the servers are physically in the host country. This setup helps ensure digital continuity and sovereignty in emergencies like cyberattacks, natural disasters, or geopolitical disruptions.

Why India Is Interested

The proposal shows the high level of trust between India and the UAE. India may store important government and financial data in a data embassy in the UAE for security and backup. These data centres could help India continue essential services even if there are problems in the home country's infrastructure.

How It Works

Although called an "embassy," a data embassy is not a traditional diplomatic mission. Instead of diplomats and offices, it involves servers and secure data infrastructure. Data stored there is only accessible to the home country and its authorised officials, and host country authorities cannot access or tamper with it without permission.

Examples from Other Countries

Estonia was the first country to create a data embassy in Luxembourg to protect its digital assets. Monaco also set up an e-embassy in Luxembourg later on. India's proposal would be one of the first of its kind if it materialises.

What Still Needs to Be Worked Out

India and the UAE still need to develop a legal and regulatory framework to implement this idea. Officials acknowledge that data issues have sovereignty implications that must be carefully addressed.

Why It Matters

A data embassy could enhance digital and national security by safeguarding critical data beyond borders. It reflects deepening India-UAE cooperation in technology and strategic infrastructure. This initiative could serve as a model for future international partnerships on digital sovereignty.

Autonomous Territory**What Is an Autonomous or Overseas Territory?**

- An autonomous territory is a region that has its own local government and some freedom to make decisions but still belongs to a larger country.

- An overseas territory is part of a country but geographically located far away from the main land, often for historical or strategic reasons.

Why Do These Territories Exist?

- Many originated from colonial history, when countries established control over distant lands.
- Today, they often remain for strategic, military, economic, or political reasons.

Top Countries With the Most Overseas or Autonomous Regions

Here are countries with the highest numbers of overseas or autonomous territories:

1. United Kingdom: 14 territories around the world.
2. United States of America: 14 territories outside the mainland.
3. France: 13 regions including overseas departments.
4. Australia: 7 territories.
5. Netherlands: 6 territories in the Caribbean.
6. Norway: 5 territories.
7. New Zealand: 4 territories.
8. Denmark: 2 (including Greenland and the Faroe Islands).
9. China: 2 special regions with autonomy.
10. Portugal: 2 autonomous regions.

What Varies Among These Territories?

- Some are fully self-governing, making many of their own internal decisions.
- Others rely on the main country for defense and foreign affairs.
- Some territories are uninhabited and used mainly for research or strategic reasons.

Difference Between Autonomous and Overseas Territories

- Autonomous territory: Focuses on self-government within a country.
- Overseas territory: Usually geographically distant from the parent country but still administratively part of it.
- For instance, Greenland is part of Denmark but runs many of its own affairs and lies far from Europe.

Why This Is Important

- Overseas and autonomous regions play roles in global politics, economics, and defense.
- They show how some parts of countries can have different levels of self-rule while still linked to a larger nation.

News in Shorts**Canada removed from Board of Peace****Why in News?**

- US President Donald Trump has removed Canada from his newly formed Board of Peace.
- This decision came after a diplomatic disagreement between the United States and Canada.

What Is the Board of Peace?

- The Board of Peace is an initiative announced by Trump at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland.
- It is meant to be a group of world leaders working on resolving global conflicts and promoting peace.

Why Was Canada Removed?

- The move followed a spat (public disagreement) between Trump and Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney at the WEF.
- Carney had recently criticized Trump's statements on global leadership, and Trump responded by withdrawing Canada's invitation.

How Did Canada React?

- Canadian leaders responded by saying Canada is a strong, independent nation and doesn't rely on the United States.
- Carney's comments emphasized Canada's sovereignty and national strength.

Nato's Article 5**Why in News?**

U.S. President Donald Trump suggested the United States should have considered invoking NATO's Article 5 to deal with illegal immigration at the southern border. Article 5 says an attack on one NATO member is viewed as an attack on all, triggering collective defence, but it has never been used for border control or immigration issues before.

Why Is This Suggestion Controversial?

Article 5 has traditionally been reserved for armed military aggression, not domestic issues like migration. Trump's idea departs from normal NATO practice and legal interpretations, causing concern among allies.

The Context Behind Trump's Statement

- The remark came shortly after Trump paused proposed tariffs on several European countries following talks about Greenland and Arctic security.
- Trump has also been pushing for greater U.S. influence or control over Greenland, a strategic Arctic territory that belongs to Denmark.

What Is Article 5 and Why It Matters

- Article 5 is the collective defence clause of NATO, meaning harm to one member is harm to all.
- It has been invoked just once before — after the September 11 attacks — and has historically been about military aggression.
- Applying Article 5 to illegal immigration is unusual and not supported by NATO's usual interpretation.

Reactions from NATO Allies

- NATO officials and European leaders have highlighted that Article 5 is meant for security threats, not for domestic border enforcement.
- Some allies have expressed concern and confusion over Trump's comments, especially since they followed debates over Greenland's strategic role.

Link to the Greenland Issue

Trump's comments on Article 5 came amid his broader push regarding Greenland, where he has sought greater U.S. access or influence. NATO and European leaders have been in talks about a security framework in the Arctic, which includes Greenland's role but not its transfer of sovereignty

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)

- Formation: 4 April 1949
- Type: Military alliance
- Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium
- Membership: 32 states

- Secretary General: Mark Rutte
- Chair of the NATO Military Committee: Giuseppe Cavo Dragone

US Officially Leaves WHO

Why in News?

The United States has formally withdrawn its membership from the World Health Organization. This ends the US's 78-year membership in the global health body.

Reason Given by the US Government

US leaders say the WHO failed in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They claim the organisation did not share accurate information promptly and was influenced by politics. The US government says this failure hurt American lives and interests during the pandemic.

How the Withdrawal Happened

The withdrawal was carried out through an executive order signed by President Donald Trump. The US had previously notified WHO of its intention to leave a year in advance, as required by rules.

End of Funding and Participation

The United States has stopped all funding and staffing of WHO programs. US engagement with WHO will be limited to finalising the withdrawal process.

US Plans After Leaving WHO

The US says it will now work with other countries and trusted health institutions directly rather than through WHO. It claims these bilateral partnerships will continue global health cooperation.

Symbolic Dispute and Reactions

After the withdrawal, WHO reportedly did not return the American flag displayed at its headquarters. The exit has sparked widespread debate about global health cooperation and WHO's future role.

Significance of the Decision

The United States was a founding member of WHO in 1948 and had been its largest financial supporter. The exit marks a major shift in international health policy and US engagement with global health institutions.

WHO

- Formation: 7 April 1948
- Type: United Nations specialized agency
- Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
- Director-General: Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

India to buy Venezuelan oil again

Why in News?

The United States government has indicated it is prepared to allow India to buy crude oil from Venezuela again under a new framework controlled by the U.S. This proposal is part of a broader energy and sanctions strategy, coming after recent changes in U.S.-Venezuela relations.

Why This New Framework Is Being Suggested

U.S. sanctions had previously restricted exports of Venezuelan oil, including to India, one of Venezuela's significant buyers before the sanctions. Under the new system, the U.S. would manage and oversee the sale and payment process to ensure compliance with its rules.

How the Controlled Framework Would Work

- The framework is likely to involve strict U.S. oversight of oil sales and financial flows.
- The U.S. Energy Secretary has explained that oil exports would be marketed by the U.S. government, and payments would flow through accounts controlled or monitored by Washington.

What This Means for India

India was a major buyer of heavy Venezuelan crude before sanctions reduced trade. Renewed access could help India diversify its oil imports and support its growing energy needs, which rely heavily on imported crude.

Broader Context

Venezuela has the world's largest proven oil reserves, making it an attractive source of crude for large energy consumers like India. India's refiners, familiar with heavy crude from Venezuela, stand ready to process it once trade flows resume.

Still under Discussion

While the U.S. has signalled its willingness, details of the arrangement — including pricing, volume, and how the framework will operate — are still being negotiated.

Why This Matters

This shift could affect global oil trade patterns and reduce India's dependence on specific crude sources like Russia. It also shows how geopolitics and energy security concerns are shaping international energy agreements.

Military Assets in the Arctic**Why Greenland Is Important Militarily**

Greenland is strategically located in the Arctic region, between North America and Europe, making it crucial for defence and early warning systems. It hosts military facilities like the U.S. Pituffik Space Base, important for space surveillance, missile warning, and early detection systems for North American defence. The Arctic has become a focus of global competition involving the U.S., Russia, China, and NATO allies.

Existing Military Presence in Greenland

The Pituffik Space Base (formerly Thule Air Base) is the U.S. military's northernmost installation, supporting missile and space monitoring operations. The base contributes to NORAD (North American Aerospace Defense Command) early warning and space control systems. Denmark also maintains a military presence — adapted to Arctic conditions — to protect sovereignty and support NATO defence.

Military Assets Across the Arctic

- The Arctic is shared by eight countries: Russia, the United States, Canada, Denmark (via Greenland), Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland.
- Russia has a large military footprint in the region — reopening and modernising bases, operating nuclear-related facilities, and maintaining its Northern Fleet.
- Other Arctic states have defence forces, patrol capabilities, and installations suited to their geography and security roles.

Recent Military Movements in Greenland

Denmark has reinforced troop deployments in Greenland amid rising geopolitical tensions linked to U.S. interest and Arctic security concerns. There are ongoing NATO exercises like Operation Arctic Endurance, intended to demonstrate the ability to defend the territory and deter use of force.

Why the U.S. Focus on Greenland's Military Role

President Donald Trump has repeatedly emphasised Greenland's role in U.S. national security, citing threats from Russia and China and the island's strategic importance. Trump even revived interest in acquiring Greenland, though Denmark and Greenland have firmly rejected any sale or transfer of sovereignty.

U.S. proposals and discussions have included enhanced military cooperation and possible revised frameworks under NATO allies, though not formal annexation.

Broader Geopolitical Context

Greenland's Arctic position is valuable for monitoring missile trajectories and early warning systems, especially in the context of nuclear deterrence and strategic defence. Climate change has opened new shipping routes and access to resources, intensifying interest in the region's strategic infrastructure and military importance.

Key Takeaway

Greenland is militarily significant not because of its size, but because of where it is — sitting between major powers and overlooking fast-changing Arctic space, where defence, surveillance, and geopolitical influence intersect.

US tariffs is actually paid by Americans

Why in News?

A new study by the Kiel Institute for the World Economy shows that most of the cost of US tariffs is actually paid by Americans — not foreign exporters. About 96% of the tariff burden falls on American importers and consumers, with only around 4% absorbed by foreign sellers. This contradicts claims by some US leaders that tariffs would mainly be paid by other countries.

What Are Tariffs?

A tariff is a tax on imported goods charged by the importing country. The idea of Trump's tariff policy was to protect domestic industries and reduce the trade deficit. Tariffs are expected to raise revenue for the government, but this study shows they act like a tax on consumers and businesses inside the US.

How Most Costs Are Passed On

Even though importers pay the tariff to customs, businesses often pass these extra costs onto consumers by raising prices on goods. As a result, American households face higher prices for imported items and goods made with imported components.

Customs Revenue vs. Real Burden

The study notes that in 2025, US customs revenue from tariffs jumped by about \$200 billion, reflecting the large volume of tariffs collected. But this revenue essentially comes from domestic consumers and importers, not foreign producers.

Claim vs. Reality

Some US officials have claimed that tariffs force foreign exporters to pay and protect American workers. The study's findings show this is not true — Americans end up paying almost all the costs.

Broader Economic Impact (Context)

Other research and reports have also warned that Trump's tariff approach can raise consumer prices, hurt some industries, and slow economic growth.

Why This Matters

Understanding who really pays tariff costs is important because it affects consumer prices, business costs, and economic policy debates. If tariffs mostly raise costs for Americans, then claims that they protect domestic interests become questionable.

Trump's Actions Appear to Boost China**Why in News?**

Although Donald Trump aims to "Make America Great Again," many of his policies are having an unintended effect of strengthening China's global position. Global public opinion and recent trends suggest that China's influence is seen as rising while confidence in the U. S. is declining in many countries.

Trump's First Year Back in Office

Since returning to power in 2025, Trump has taken bold steps:

- Signed hundreds of executive orders.
- Started a trade war and imposed tariffs.
- Pulled the U. S. out of key global agreements and institutions.

These moves have caused economic uncertainty and shifts in international relationships.

China's Economic Position Is Strengthening

Instead of weakening, China's trade surplus hit record highs under global tariff pressures. China's economic growth remained robust, meeting government targets. Beijing has successfully integrated into global trade networks even as U. S. influence recedes.

Global Leaders Are Resetting Trade Relationships

Leaders from several countries are visiting China to reset or deepen trade ties.

For example:

- Canada announced new partnerships with Beijing.
- South Korea's leader visited China for trade talks.
- UK and Germany also planned high-level visits.

The U. S. Role in Global Trade Is Changing

- The U. S. is seen as less willing to act as a global trade leader.
- Traditional U. S. influence in trade frameworks appears to be waning, while China steps into more central roles.

Shifts in Global Supply Chains

- Global trade flows show greater integration across regions like Asia, West Asia, and Africa.
- Trade distances and relationships are broadening beyond U. S. -centric routes.

Public Perception and Influence

- A global survey found that many people now expect China's influence to grow in the next decade.
- Trust in U. S. leadership has declined in many countries, including some traditional allies.

Impact on India

India has adjusted its engagement with China partly in response to U. S. tariff pressures. Indian exports to China increased recently even as U. S. exports fell, showing economic realignment.

Overall Takeaway

Trump's policies have reset global trade relationships.

This has contributed to perceptions that China is becoming more central economically and diplomatically. The U. S. role as global trade leader is being challenged, and many nations are diversifying partnerships.

Nobel Peace Prize to Trump

Why in News?

Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado, who won the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize, met US President Donald Trump in Washington. She presented her Nobel Peace Prize to Trump as a symbolic gesture of gratitude for his support for Venezuela's freedom.

Trump's Reaction

- Trump accepted the medal and posted on social media that it was a “wonderful gesture of mutual respect.”
- A framed note said the medal was given to Trump in recognition of his “leadership in promoting peace, advancing diplomacy, and defending liberty.”

Can a Nobel Peace Prize Be Transferred?

No. The Norwegian Nobel Committee clarified that a Nobel Peace Prize cannot be transferred, shared, or revoked. The title of Nobel laureate remains permanently linked to Machado even if the physical medal is given or shown to someone else.

Why Machado Did This

Machado's action is seen as an attempt to appeal to the US government after it helped remove Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. She hoped the gesture might help her gain political support and strengthen her position in Venezuela's future leadership.

Historical and Symbolic Notes

The article points out that in history, Nobel medals have been given away or entrusted to others by winners, but this does not change the official award or laureate status.

Key Clarification

The Nobel Peace Prize officially remains Machado's, and Trump does not become a Nobel laureate just by receiving the medal.

Trump Unveils New Gaza Bodies

Why in News?

US President Donald Trump has created two new bodies as part of his Gaza peace plan following the long conflict between Israel and Hamas. These bodies are meant to help govern Gaza and support reconstruction and stability.

1. National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG)

This is a Palestinian committee chosen to run daily public services and administration in Gaza. It is led by Dr. Ali Sha'ath, a Palestinian with experience in governance roles. The NCAG's work includes restoring electricity, water, healthcare, education, and building a stable society.

2. Gaza Executive Board

This board was created to support governance and deliver services in Gaza with peace and stability goals.

It has 11 members from different countries and backgrounds. Key members include Trump's Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff, Jared Kushner, former UK PM Tony Blair, UAE minister Reem Al-Hashimy, and an Israeli businessman Yakir Gabay. The board oversees the NCAG and supports rebuilding and service delivery.

How Hamas Has Reacted

Hamas has not yet responded to the creation of these new bodies. In earlier stages of the peace plan, Hamas had said it accepted some elements, like giving up some power and releasing hostages, but wanted more consultation among Palestinians.

Israel's Reaction

Israel has reacted strongly against the new bodies. Israel's far-right National Security Minister said Gaza does not need such committees and should be cleared of Hamas instead. The Israeli government also said some appointments were made without Israel's coordination and did not align with its policies. This shows a key challenge: Israel insists on eliminating Hamas before agreeing to governance changes.

Why This Matters

Trump's peace plan aims to set up governance and reconstruction in Gaza after years of war. The new bodies are intended to balance Palestinian-led administration with international oversight. The different reactions from Hamas and Israel show tension about how Gaza should be governed and what conditions are necessary for lasting peace.

Board of Peace Vs United Nations

What Is the Board of Peace

The Board of Peace is a new international body proposed by US President Donald Trump. It is meant to help supervise peace efforts, governance and rebuilding after the Israel-Hamas conflict, especially in Gaza.

How It Started

Trump announced the idea as part of a wider Gaza peace plan after the 2025 war and ceasefire. The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution welcoming the plan, giving it initial international backing.

What the Board's Purpose Is

The Board aims to guide the transition from conflict to peace, including governance, security and reconstruction in Gaza. It is expected to oversee transitional Palestinian administration, including a technocratic body to run daily services. It may also have a role in disarming militant groups and supporting peacekeeping forces.

Who Is Involved

- Trump is expected to serve as chair of the Board personally.
- Several world leaders and officials have been invited to join, with countries like India receiving invitations.
- Around 60 countries and figures are reportedly invited, reflecting broad international outreach.

Membership and Funding Model

In early drafts, the initiative suggested that permanent membership could cost about \$1 billion, although the White House later said no mandatory fee is required.

Countries that do not pay could still join for limited periods, typically three years.

Why This Is Controversial

Some countries and officials are uneasy or cautious about joining because the Board's mandate seems to go beyond Gaza and could represent a parallel peace mechanism outside existing international systems. Critics say the Board may undermine or sideline the United Nations, raising questions about legitimacy and global governance. Countries like France and Canada have expressed hesitation, showing mixed reactions among allies.

Why It Matters

The Board of Peace represents a new model of international peacebuilding, focused on select nations coming together rather than traditional multilateral institutions. How it develops will influence Gaza's future governance and reconstruction and could shape global conflict resolution frameworks.

Economy & Trade

Eurozone

Why in News?

Bulgaria officially adopted the euro as its national currency, replacing the Bulgarian lev and becoming the 21st member of the Eurozone. This step represents Bulgaria's deeper economic and monetary integration with the European Union (EU), nearly two decades after joining the EU in 2007.

- Transition Period: Both lev and euro accepted in January 2026; euro becomes the sole legal currency from 1 February 2026
- Fixed Conversion Rate: €1 = 1.95583 Bulgarian lev
- Dual Pricing Rule: Prices displayed in both currencies until August 2026 to ensure consumer clarity

What is the Eurozone?

The Eurozone consists of EU member states that have adopted the euro (€) as their official currency. Monetary policy for all Eurozone countries is managed by the European Central Bank (ECB). Membership requires meeting convergence criteria on inflation, public finances, exchange rate stability, and interest rates.

Maastricht Convergence Criteria

To adopt the euro, a country must meet:

- Price Stability: Inflation comparable to best-performing EU members
- Fiscal Discipline: Budget deficit $\leq 3\%$ of GDP; government debt $\leq 60\%$ of GDP
- Exchange Rate Stability: Participation in Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM II) for at least two years
- Long-Term Interest Rates: Similar to stable eurozone countries

Historical Context

- Bulgaria joined the EU in 2007.
- Adoption of the euro comes 19 years after EU accession, reflecting long-term economic reforms and policy alignment.

Transition Measures

- Parallel Circulation: Both lev and euro accepted in January 2026
- Free Exchange: Citizens could exchange lev for euros at banks without charges
- Consumer Protection: Dual pricing and monitoring to prevent unjustified price increases

Dorjilung Hydro Project

Why in News?

The World Bank has approved a long-term financing package worth USD 815 million for the Dorjilung Hydropower Project. This decision was made by the Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank.

What Is the Dorjilung Project?

- It is a 1,125 megawatt (MW) hydropower plant being developed in Bhutan under a public-private partnership (PPP) model.
- The project is being built by a special purpose vehicle (SPV) with Bhutan's Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC) owning 60% and India's Tata Power owning 40%.

How Will the Funding Be Structured?**The financing package includes:**

- A USD 150 million grant and USD 150 million credit from the International Development Association (IDA).
- A USD 15 million loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) to DGPC.
- A USD 200 million IBRD enclave loan and USD 300 million loan from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to the project company.
- Additional funds will be arranged from other market participants.

What Will the Project Produce?

- Once completed, the plant is expected to generate more than 4,500 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of clean electricity per year.
- About 80% of this electricity will be supplied to India, strengthening clean energy exports.

Bhutan

- Capital: Thimphu
- Currencies: Bhutanese Ngultrum, Indian Rupee
- Official language: Dzongkha
- King: Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck

LIC Demerger**Why in News?**

- Some experts and reports have suggested splitting LIC into smaller parts to make it more “efficient.”
- The idea is that breaking up large organisations helps them perform better.

Why LIC Is Special in India

- LIC wasn't formed like regular private companies — it came into being because private insurers kept failing and people did not trust insurance products.
- LIC was nationalised in 1956 and became a trusted organisation for long-term savings and security.
- Its brand, reach, and promise of security (its famous tagline) made it the most trusted life insurer in India.

Main Arguments Against Demerger**a. Trust and Long-term Security**

- Insurance is about trust — people buy a policy expecting long-term support.
- Splitting LIC could weaken that trust because policyholders might worry about what happens to their long-term contracts.

b. LIC Has Multiple Roles

- LIC is not only an insurance provider — it also:
- Mobilises long-term savings from millions of households.
- Helps finance long-term government bonds and infrastructure.
- Balances social objectives (like rural insurance) with commercial functions.
- Splitting it up may weaken its ability to do all of these well.

c. Global Lessons Show Risks

- In countries like the United Kingdom, breaking up life insurers led to governance and trust problems.
- Some insurers collapsed when they faced market stress after demutualisation.

India's Current Context Matters

- India still has limited pension coverage and social security for many people.

- LIC acts as a fallback institution for retirement income and long-term security.
- Weakening LIC before strong alternatives exist could shift risk onto households.

Market Share Isn't the Whole Story

- LIC's leading market share doesn't necessarily mean unfair dominance because it also serves small-ticket and rural customers.
- Private insurers focus more on urban and high-income customers, so comparing them directly isn't straightforward.

Reforms Should Focus on Clarity, Not Splitting

Instead of breaking LIC up, experts suggest reforms such as:

- Clear separation of social vs commercial goals.
- Stronger governance and better use of analytics.
- Better capital and risk management, and sharper performance expectations.

LIC's Role in India's Big Economic Goals

- LIC's large balance sheet helps stabilise markets and support long-term development financing.
- Breaking it up now could weaken this capacity, even as India pursues goals like "Insurance for All by 2047."

SIDBI to MSME

Why in News?

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved a ₹5,000 crore equity infusion into the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI). The move aims to strengthen SIDBI's capital base and significantly enhance the flow of credit to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The equity capital will be infused by the Department of Financial Services (DFS) in a phased manner: ₹3,000 crore in FY 2025–26 (at book value as on 31 March 2025). ₹1,000 crore each in FY 2026–27 and FY 2027–28 (based on book value as on 31 March of the preceding financial year).

Expected Expansion of Credit Outreach

After the infusion, the number of MSMEs receiving financial assistance from SIDBI is expected to increase from 76.26 lakh (end of FY25) to around 1.02 crore (end of FY28), adding approximately 25.74 lakh new MSME beneficiaries.

Employment Impact

Based on Ministry of MSME data (as of September 30, 2025), about 6.90 crore MSMEs employ approximately 30.16 crore people, averaging 4.37 persons per enterprise. Using this metric, the expanded assistance could generate around 1.12 crore new jobs by the end of FY28.

Capital Adequacy & Lending Capacity

SIDBI's risk-weighted assets (RWA) are expected to rise due to expanded lending, new digital credit products and venture debt for start-ups — increasing the need for stronger capital support. The equity infusion will help SIDBI maintain a healthy Capital to Risk-weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) above regulatory norms even under stressed scenarios.

Credit Generation & Interest Rates

Additional capital will enable SIDBI to mobilise funds at competitive interest rates, thereby increasing affordable credit flow to MSMEs.

About SIDBI

SIDBI is the principal financial institution for the promotion, financing and development of the MSME sector in India. Established in 1990 under an Act of Parliament, SIDBI supports MSMEs with credit, refinance and developmental services.

- Headquarters: Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
- Chairman & MD: Manoj Mittal

Importance of MSMEs in India

- MSMEs form a critical segment of the Indian economy:
- They contribute significantly to GDP, exports and employment.
- They act as ancillary units to large industries and enhance regional economic balance.
- According to the latest available data, MSMEs employ tens of crores of people and contribute significantly to India's industrial output and exports.

Capital Adequacy Concepts

- Capital to Risk-weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) is a key indicator of a financial institution's ability to absorb potential losses and remain solvent.
- Maintaining a healthy CRAR is important for protecting credit ratings and enabling banks/financial institutions to raise funds at reasonable costs.

Government's Focus on Formal Credit

The infusion is part of efforts to:

- Improve access to credit for MSMEs
- Promote formalisation of small enterprises
- Support digital and collateral-free loan products
- Enable venture debt facilities for start-ups

News in Shorts

India Emerges as Fourth-Largest Economy

Why in News?

India's economy has been highlighted as experiencing a "Goldilocks moment" of high growth and low inflation in 2025, reflecting a strong expansion trajectory. With a nominal GDP of approximately USD 4.18 trillion, India has surpassed Japan to become the fourth-largest economy in the world. Projections indicate that India's GDP could reach USD 7.3 trillion by 2030, positioning it to overtake Germany and become the world's third-largest economy. The economic momentum in 2025 was supported by robust domestic demand, business investment, export growth, and easing inflation, reflecting resilience amid global uncertainties.

Economic Growth Indicators

Real GDP growth in India continued to remain strong in 2025, with quarterly growth rates consistently above 7%, indicating sustained expansion across sectors. Growth has been broad-based, driven by services, industry, and consumption, which together underpin overall economic stability.

Inflation and Macroeconomic Stability

- Inflation rates remained moderate or low in 2025, contributing to a "Goldilocks economy" — growth that is neither too hot nor too cold, supporting sustainable expansion.
- Controlled inflation improves purchasing power and encourages investment by maintaining stable pricing environments.

Employment and Labour Indicators

- Unemployment rates declined in late 2025, showing improvement in job creation and labour market participation.
- A growing economy typically leads to higher labour force participation, employment opportunities, and income generation, especially among the youth.

Exports and External Sector

- Merchandise and services exports have shown steady improvement, helping maintain strong trade performance and foreign exchange reserves.
- A resilient external sector enhances economic stability and global competitiveness.

Global Economic Rankings

- India's rise to the fourth-largest economy reflects its increasing share in the global economic landscape by nominal GDP.
- Continued expansion could see India becoming the third-largest economy by 2030, ahead of Germany.

ADNOC Gas Deal with HPCL

Why in News?

The Abu Dhabi National Oil Company Gas (ADNOC Gas) has signed a 10-year liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply agreement with Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), valued between US \$2.5 billion and \$3 billion. The pact was formalised during UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's visit to India where he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, underscoring deepening India-UAE energy cooperation.

Duration & Volume

The deal is for a 10-year period beginning from 2028.

ADNOC Gas will supply 0.5 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of LNG to HPCL as per the agreement.

Deepening India-UAE Strategic Partnership

India has become the UAE's largest LNG customer, highlighting a shift in energy trade dynamics and strengthening bilateral ties beyond traditional oil imports.

ADNOC Gas & UAE's Energy Diplomacy

ADNOC Gas is a subsidiary of the UAE's Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), focused on natural gas value chains including LNG exports. The UAE is diversifying energy partnerships beyond oil to strengthen geopolitical and economic ties, particularly with Asia's fast-growing markets like India.

India-Germany Telecom Cooperation Pact

Why in News?

India and Germany signed a Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) on Telecommunications Cooperation, marking a key development in bilateral digital cooperation.

India-Germany Strategic Partnership

India and Germany share a Strategic Partnership since 2000, encompassing cooperation in political, economic, technological, and security domains. Germany is one of India's major European trading partners with bilateral trade exceeding USD 50 billion. Over 2,000 German companies operate in India, reflecting long-standing economic ties.

Telecommunications & ICT: Policy Relevance

Telecommunications is crucial for digital infrastructure, economic growth, and governance reforms like Digital India. ICT cooperation supports innovation in 5G/6G technologies, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and digital

inclusion—key areas for global tech leadership. International cooperation frameworks like JDI help align regulatory standards, promote ease of doing business, and enhance technology transfer.

India–Israel Sign Joint Declaration to Boost Cooperation in Fisheries and Aquaculture

Why in News?

India and Israel sign a Joint Ministerial Declaration to strengthen bilateral cooperation in fisheries and aquaculture, advancing research, technology, sustainability and the Blue Economy.

What Happened?

India and Israel signed a Joint Ministerial Declaration of Intent to enhance cooperation in fisheries and aquaculture.

Why It Matters

- Recognises the strategic partnership between India and Israel in science, technology and sustainable development.
- Highlights the critical role of fisheries and aquaculture for food security, livelihoods and economic growth.
- Supports India's ongoing agenda to strengthen the Blue Economy and expand sustainable marine resources practices.

Nepal and India Agree to Expand Cooperation in the Agriculture Sector

Why in News?

Nepal and India have agreed to deepen agricultural cooperation and jointly formulate and implement a biennial action plan within the next three months to turn existing agreements into tangible outcomes. This decision was taken during the 9th meeting of the Nepal-India Joint Agriculture Working Group in Kathmandu.

India–Nepal Relations:

India and Nepal share a unique bilateral relationship based on the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship, cultural links, and open border movement. Nepal is strategically important to India's South Asian policy, and cooperation spans trade, security, infrastructure, energy, and agriculture. India follows a Neighbourhood First policy, prioritising cooperation with neighbouring countries including Nepal.

Agricultural Cooperation:

- Agriculture employs a large share of the population in both India and Nepal and is key to food security and rural livelihoods.
- ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research) is India's premier body for agricultural research and education.
- NARC (Nepal Agricultural Research Council) is Nepal's leading agricultural research organisation.
- Joint cooperation can help develop climate-resilient crops, improved seeds, modern farming techniques, and livestock improvements.
- Digital agriculture, such as precision farming technologies, can significantly increase productivity and sustainability.

Geopolitical Context:

- India and Nepal collaborate in regional forums like SAARC and BIMSTEC, enhancing cooperation across sectors including agriculture.
- Cross-border cooperation promotes regional stability, economic integration, and shared development goals.

Defence & Security

Donald Trump and Greenland

Why in news?

Former US President Donald Trump's renewed push to acquire Greenland has become a major geopolitical talking point in early 2026. Greenland—a vast Arctic island and an autonomous territory of Denmark—sits at the heart of global strategic competition, drawing interest from the United States, Russia, China, and European powers. Trump's insistence that the US needs Greenland "very badly" has sparked debate and diplomatic pushback, especially from Greenlandic and Danish leaders.

Where Greenland Is and Why Location Matters

Greenland's importance stems largely from its unique geographic position:

- It lies between North America and Europe, controlling access to the Arctic and North Atlantic.
- Its terrain oversees crucial sea lanes and the GIUK Gap (Greenland–Iceland–United Kingdom), a key naval and submarine monitoring corridor.
- It is positioned along Arctic flight paths and potential new shipping routes opened as sea ice melts due to climate change.
- Sitting above the Arctic Circle, it offers strategic advantage for early warning systems and missile defense.
- This geography makes Greenland valuable not just for defence, but also for global influence in the Arctic, which is becoming an increasingly contested region as new routes and resource access emerge.

National Security and Military Strategic Interests

A core part of Trump's argument revolves around national security:

- The United States already operates the Pituffik Space Base (formerly Thule Air Base) in northern Greenland, which supports missile warning systems, missile defence, and space surveillance.
- Trump has asserted that owning Greenland would allow the US to expand early-warning radar installation and defence infrastructure, especially to monitor potential threats from Russia and China.
- He has claimed that Greenland is essential for the US to maintain strategic superiority in the Arctic.
- Experts, however, note that while the island is important for defence, Russian or Chinese military presence near Greenland remains limited—and Trump's rhetoric exaggerates perceived threats.

Economic and Resource Potential

Greenland is believed to hold significant natural resources, making it economically attractive:

- Large deposits of rare earth minerals, which are critical for technologies like electric vehicles, renewable energy systems, and military hardware.
- Potential quantities of oil, gas, uranium, and other critical resources have also been estimated, although much lies under ice and requires costly extraction.
- Reducing dependency on foreign rare earth suppliers, especially China, is viewed by some analysts as strategically valuable.
- Though resource extraction remains technically challenging and environmentally sensitive, the long-term promise of materials essential to technology and defence infrastructure adds to Greenland's appeal.

Political Response and Sovereignty Issues

- Greenlandic leaders have firmly rejected any notion of becoming part of the United States, emphasising their choice to remain linked with Denmark, NATO, and the EU.
- Denmark, a NATO member, also opposes any forced acquisition, warning that such an act could strain or even dismantle the alliance.

- Greenland itself exercises extensive self-government, and any change in sovereignty would require consent from Greenlanders and Denmark.

Conclusion: Strategy, Not Sale

Trump's push for Greenland reflects a mix of geopolitical strategy, national security priorities, and economic interests, rather than any formal legal or diplomatic pathway toward acquisition. While Greenland remains critical for Arctic influence, its future—whether as a strong self-governing territory within Denmark or part of broader international strategic frameworks—will be determined by international law, diplomacy, and the choices of its own people.

Pralay Missiles

Why in News?

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the salvo launch of two indigenously developed Pralay missiles in rapid succession from the same launcher off the Odisha coast as part of user evaluation trials. Both missiles precisely followed their intended trajectories and achieved all mission objectives, demonstrating high accuracy, reliability, and operational readiness of the missile system.

About Pralay Missile

- Category: Quasi-ballistic missile
- Propulsion: Solid propellant
- Range: Approximately 150–500 km (payload-dependent)
- Launch Platform: Road-mobile launcher
- Warhead Capability: Can carry different types of conventional warheads
- Guidance System: Advanced navigation and guidance for high precision

Pinaka Rocket

Why in News?

India has successfully conducted the maiden flight test of the 120-km range Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR-120) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, Odisha, marking a major milestone in indigenous artillery capability.

Development & Institutions Involved:

- Developed by Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE).
- Supported by High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL), Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL) and Research Centre Imarat (RCI).
- Demonstrates successful collaboration among multiple DRDO laboratories.

Additional Key Facts:

- Pinaka is an indigenous multi-barrel rocket launcher (MBRL) system developed by DRDO.
- It can fire salvos of rockets within seconds, saturating enemy targets.
- Pinaka Mk-I has a range of about 40 km.
- Pinaka Mk-II extends the range to around 90 km.
- Guided Pinaka variants improve accuracy using navigation and control systems.
- Pinaka was first inducted into the Indian Army in the late 1990s.
- It was operationally used during the Kargil War (1999).
- The system is mounted on high-mobility vehicles, enabling rapid deployment and shoot-and-scoot capability.

News in Shorts

CQB Carbines and Heavyweight Torpedoes

Why in News?

The Ministry of Defence signed contracts worth Rs 4,666 crore for the procurement of Close Quarter Battle (CQB) Carbines and Heavyweight Torpedoes to enhance the combat capabilities of the Indian Army and Indian Navy. Over 4.25 lakh CQB Carbines with accessories, valued at Rs 2,770 crore, will be supplied to the Indian Army and Indian Navy by Indian private companies. A contract worth Rs 1,896 crore was signed for 48 Heavyweight Torpedoes and associated equipment for the Indian Navy's Kalvari-class submarines under Project-75. The contracts will replace legacy systems and boost indigenous defence manufacturing, strengthening India's self-reliance in defence production.

Close Quarter Battle (CQB) Carbines

- CQB Carbines are compact, lightweight firearms designed for close-combat operations, such as urban warfare, counter-terrorism, and counter-insurgency. They provide high manoeuvrability and rapid firepower, improving infantry effectiveness in close-range combat. Their procurement involves Indian private defence companies, supporting the government's initiative to increase domestic defence production.

Heavyweight Torpedoes

- Heavyweight Torpedoes are advanced underwater weapons used by submarines to destroy enemy vessels and submarines, enhancing naval offensive capability. These torpedoes will be deployed on Kalvari-class submarines under Project-75. Delivery is scheduled to begin in April 2028 and conclude by early 2030, strengthening India's submarine fleet.

President's Police Colour Award

Why in News?

The Sikkim Police has been conferred with the President's Police Colour Award for outstanding service and professionalism. This is one of the highest and rarest honours for police forces in India, given in recognition of distinguished and long-term service.

What the Award Symbolises

- The award is also called the "Nishaan."
- It represents bravery, discipline, and dedication of the police force.
- The insignia is worn on the left sleeve of the police uniform as a mark of pride.

Historical Significance

- Since India's independence, only 14 state police forces had received this honour.
- With this award, Sikkim has become the 15th state police force to be honoured.
- In the Northeast region, Sikkim is the third state to receive it, after Assam and Tripura.

How the Award Is Officially Given

The honour was decided and conveyed by the Ministry of Home Affairs after approval by the President of India. A Colour Presentation Parade will formally present the flag and insignia to the Sikkim Police later.

Why This Matters

The President's Police Colours are not given every year and only go to forces with exemplary and sustained service over many years. The award celebrates the professional integrity, courage, discipline, and public service commitment of the Sikkim Police.

Collective Recognition

- Both current and retired personnel of the Sikkim Police are considered part of this achievement.
- The award reflects the efforts of the entire force, from senior officers to ground-level staff.
- What national honour has the Sikkim Police recently received? President's Police Colour Award

Gallantry Awards in India

Introduction

Gallantry awards are among the highest honours given by the Government of India to recognise extraordinary bravery, courage, and self-sacrifice shown by members of the Armed Forces and other security personnel. These awards reflect the nation's gratitude towards those who risk their lives to protect India's sovereignty, security, and citizens. Announced on occasions like Republic Day and Independence Day, gallantry awards inspire patriotism and uphold the values of duty and honour.

What Are Gallantry Awards?

Gallantry awards are given for acts of bravery performed during war and peacetime operations. In peacetime, these awards recognise courage displayed in counter-terrorism operations, rescue missions, disaster response, and other high-risk duties.

The three main peacetime gallantry awards are:

1. Ashoka Chakra – Highest peacetime gallantry award
 2. Kirti Chakra – Second highest peacetime gallantry award
 3. Shaurya Chakra – Third highest peacetime gallantry award
- These awards acknowledge exceptional courage and dedication beyond the call of duty.

Importance of Gallantry Awards

- Gallantry awards play a crucial role in:
- Honouring bravery and supreme sacrifice made by security personnel
- Boosting morale of the Armed Forces and security agencies
- Inspiring youth to serve the nation with courage and discipline
- Strengthening national pride and respect for uniformed services
- They ensure that acts of heroism are remembered and celebrated by the nation.

Gallantry Awards on Republic Day 2026

On the occasion of Republic Day 2026, the President of India approved the conferment of 70 gallantry awards to personnel of the Armed Forces.

Break-up of Awards

- 1 Ashoka Chakra
 - 3 Kirti Chakras
 - 13 Shaurya Chakras
- Several awards were conferred posthumously, honouring supreme sacrifice.

This Year's Notable Awardees

Ashoka Chakra:

Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla (Indian Air Force) for exceptional courage and distinguished service.

Kirti Chakra Awardees include:

- Major Arshdeep Singh
- Naib Subedar Doleshwar Subba
- Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair

Shaurya Chakra Awardees include:

Lieutenant Colonel Ghatage Aditya Shrikumar and other brave personnel who showed conspicuous gallantry during operations.

These awardees represent the highest standards of courage, leadership, and devotion to duty.

Conclusion

Gallantry awards are powerful symbols of India's respect for bravery and sacrifice. By honouring courageous individuals, the nation not only acknowledges their heroism but also reinforces values of patriotism, selflessness, and service. The Republic Day 2026 gallantry awardees stand as shining examples of courage, reminding citizens that the nation's freedom and security are safeguarded by extraordinary individuals who serve with honour and fearlessness.

Defence Exercise of the Month
Desert Cyclone-II

The second edition of the India-UAE joint military exercise "Desert Cyclone-II" successfully concluded at Al-Hamra Training City in Abu Dhabi, after nearly two weeks of intensive training. The exercise emphasized strengthening defence cooperation between India and the United Arab Emirates and showcased their commitment to regional peace, security, and stability.

Focus on Urban and Sub-Conventional Operations

Urban combat training simulates operations in densely populated built-up areas. Sub-conventional operations include peacekeeping, counter-terrorism, and stability missions. Such training ensures preparedness for modern security challenges.

Key Training Components

- Classroom Training: Mission planning, tactical discussions, and strategy formulation.
- Field Drills: Building clearance, patrols, and urban assault exercises.
- Casualty Evacuation & First Aid: Enhances battlefield survival.
- Special Operations: Heliborne operations, air assault drills, and platoon-level joint exercises.

Other India-UAE Exercises:
1. Desert Eagle

- Type: Bilateral air force exercise
- Focus: Air combat, interception, and tactical operations
- Objective: Enhance air force interoperability and strategic air defence coordination
- Frequency: Periodic, alternating between India and UAE

2. Naseem Al-Bahr / Seaborne Exercises

- Type: Naval exercises (sometimes called Indo-UAE Naval Exercise)
- Focus: Maritime security, anti-piracy operations, search-and-rescue, and coastal defence
- Objective: Strengthen maritime cooperation and interoperability
- Significance: Supports Indian Ocean security and regional stability

3. Desert Knight / Desert Shield (Planned / Conceptual)

- Type: Joint army exercises (land forces)
- Focus: Counter-terrorism, mechanised operations, and desert warfare
- Objective: Enhance combat readiness in desert/arid environments
- Status: Limited editions, often under specific army cooperation frameworks

Environment & Ecology

Aravalli Redefinition Controversy

What Is the Aravalli Redefinition Controversy?

The Aravalli hills — one of the oldest mountain systems in the world stretching from Delhi through Haryana and Rajasthan to Gujarat — are at the centre of a heated environmental and legal dispute in India. The controversy began after a new definition of the Aravalli range was accepted by the Supreme Court in late 2025, based on recommendations from a government committee. Critics say the shift weakens protection for the fragile ecosystem and could pave the way for increased mining and development in previously safeguarded areas.

The New Definition: What Changed?

Under the newly accepted criteria:

- A hill must rise at least 100 metres above its surrounding ground level to be legally classified as part of the Aravalli range.
- Two or more such hills within 500 metres of each other constitute an Aravalli range.
- This replaced earlier and more complex norms that used multiple criteria like slope, elevation, and proximity.

Why This Matters: Environmental Concerns

- Critics — including environmentalists, scientists, activists, and political leaders — argue that the new definition:
- Excludes more than 90% of the traditional Aravalli hills, which are lower than 100 metres but ecologically significant.
- Leaves these areas vulnerable to mining, construction, and land conversion.
- Threatens groundwater recharge, biodiversity, air quality, and resistance to desertification in northwest India, especially around Delhi-NCR.
- According to the Forest Survey of India (FSI), only about 8.7% of the hills meet the new height criterion, indicating that the bulk of the range could lose its protected status.

Political and Public Backlash

The redefinition has drawn sharp criticism from political figures and state leaders:

- Congress leaders claim the move will open the Aravallis to exploitation by mining and real estate interests. They call the definition “fatally flawed” and accuse the government of misleading the public.
- Former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot described the change as a “red carpet” for illegal mining and warned of long-term ecological damage.

Government’s Position

The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and environment minister Bhupender Yadav have defended the definition by saying:

- It applies only to mining, not to other development activities like real estate.
- A complete ban on new mining leases has been directed across the Aravalli range until a comprehensive management plan is finalised.
- The definition was intended to bring clarity and enforceability to protection laws.
- The Centre also insists that nearly 90% of the Aravalli landscape will remain protected, countering claims that protections have been rolled back.

Judicial Response and Ongoing Legal Review

Due to mounting concerns, the Supreme Court took suo motu cognisance of the issue in December 2025. The court is reviewing whether the new definition inadvertently creates gaps in ecological protection by excluding lower hills — which scientists say are crucial to the range's environmental functions.

Why the Aravallis Matter

- The Aravalli hills play multiple vital ecological roles:
- Groundwater recharge: Their rocky terrain helps rainwater percolate into aquifers.
- Air quality: They act as natural barriers against dust storms and pollutant spread.
- Biodiversity: Support unique flora and fauna.
- Climate stability: Help regulate local weather and prevent desertification.

Conclusion

The Aravalli redefinition controversy highlights a clash between environmental conservation and development pressures. While the government argues for a clearer legal framework, critics warn that shrinking the protected zone could have irreversible ecological consequences. With public outcry and judicial scrutiny intensifying, the debate over the Aravallis continues to be one of India's most important environmental issues of 2025–26.

Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary (Rajasthan)

Why in News?

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has issued an official notification declaring the area from 0 to 1 kilometre around Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary in the Aravalli mountain range (Rajasthan) as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ). This decision aims to protect the fragile Aravalli ecosystem and biodiversity by regulating human activities in the surrounding area.

Key Features of the Declaration

Protected Area and Extent

- The new ESZ covers approximately 243 square kilometres around the sanctuary boundary.
- The ESZ includes parts of Udaipur, Pali, and Rajsamand districts of Rajasthan.
- About 94 villages fall within the newly notified ESZ.

Biodiversity Importance

Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary is rich in flora and fauna and home to species such as:

- Leopard
- Striped hyena
- Jungle cat
- Indian pangolin
- Blue bull (Nilgai)
- Chinkara
- Painted francolin (bird species)

Restrictions within the ESZ

- Under the ESZ notification, several environmentally harmful activities are either prohibited or regulated:
- Ban on mining, stone quarrying, and expansion of polluting industries.
- Construction of new hotels, resorts, and brick kilns is prohibited.
- Conversion of forests, agricultural lands, parks, ornithological zones into commercial or residential use is restricted.
- Hydroelectric projects and new windmill erection may also be restricted.

Community-Centred Development Initiatives

Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav highlighted that the ESZ will also promote:

- Eco-friendly and sustainable practices such as organic farming and agroforestry.
- Skill development programmes for local communities to ensure sustainable livelihoods.

Regulatory Oversight

A government-appointed ESZ monitoring committee will oversee compliance with the ESZ guidelines and restrictions.

What is an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ)?

- ESZs are buffer zones around protected areas (like national parks and wildlife sanctuaries) meant to minimise adverse effects of human activities on sensitive ecosystems.
- The framework for ESZ notification is provided under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and its rules.
- Activities within an ESZ are categorised as prohibited, regulated, or permitted, based on their potential ecological impact.

Aravalli Range — Ecological Significance

- The Aravalli Range is one of the oldest mountain systems in the world and stretches across Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Delhi.
- It plays a critical role in groundwater recharge, controlling desertification, and sustaining biodiversity in North India.
- The region also serves as a natural barrier against dust storms and soil erosion.
- Note: There has been ongoing debate and legal scrutiny about the definition and protection of various parts of the Aravalli Range in recent years.

Protected Area Status

Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary was declared a protected area to conserve critical wildlife and plant species and preserve the ecological integrity of the region.

Aralam Butterfly Sanctuary

Why in news?

The Kerala government officially renamed the Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary as the Aralam Butterfly Sanctuary to highlight its ecological importance and to protect butterfly biodiversity. The decision was based on the recommendation of the State Board for Wildlife, and the renaming was notified on December 26, 2025. The sanctuary now reflects its unique butterfly habitat status and supports focused conservation and awareness activities.

Location & Ecological Importance

The sanctuary is located in Kannur district, Kerala, on the Western Ghats, a global biodiversity hotspot recognised under UNESCO World Natural Heritage criteria. Originally established in 1984 as a wildlife sanctuary, it covers about 55 km² of tropical and semi-evergreen forests.

Butterfly Diversity & Migration

Aralam hosts over 266 species of butterflies, accounting for more than 80 % of butterfly species recorded in Kerala. Some species found here are endemic to the Western Ghats and some are endangered, adding to the sanctuary's conservation value.

Broader Context

1. Western Ghats — Global Biodiversity Hotspot

The Western Ghats is one of the eight “hottest” biodiversity hotspots in the world, with exceptionally high levels of endemism in plants and animals. Protecting habitats like Aralam contributes to India’s commitments under Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). (General ecology context)

2. Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

Sanctuaries like Aralam are protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, which provides legal framework for the protection of flora and fauna, and governs wildlife conservation and management in India. (Legal framework)

India’s largest integrated inland rainbow trout farm

Why in News?

The Government of India, through Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh, inaugurated the country’s largest integrated inland rainbow trout farm in Kandukur Mandal, Ranga Reddy district, Telangana. The facility was developed by SmartGreen Aquaculture (SGA) with an initial investment of about \$6 million (around ₹50–54 crore). This is India’s first integrated inland trout farm where cold-water rainbow trout will be grown in a warm, inland region using advanced technology. The farm uses Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS) technology, enabling year-round trout production with controlled water, temperature, and biosecurity systems. The facility has a planned production capacity of 1,200 metric tonnes annually and includes a hatchery, grow-out tanks, processing plant and cold-chain infrastructure. The project is expected to create around 200 jobs (direct and indirect).

Aquaculture and RAS Technology

Aquaculture refers to the farming of fish, crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic organisms, contributing significantly to global food security and nutrition. The Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS) is an advanced closed-loop farming technology where water from fish tanks is continuously filtered, treated, and recycled, maintaining ideal conditions for sensitive or cold-water species even in warm climates. RAS technology reduces water usage, minimises environmental discharge, and improves biosecurity and growth conditions compared with conventional open-water or pond systems.

Rainbow Trout and Fisheries in India

Rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) is a cold-water fish native to the Pacific Ocean tributaries and a valued high-protein, nutritious food fish. Historically in India, trout farming was limited to Himalayan states such as Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim due to natural cold-water availability. India is among the largest fish producers in the world, with aquaculture contributing over 50 % of total fish production. The aquaculture sector supports livelihoods of millions in rural and coastal communities and plays a key role in nutrition, income generation and export earnings.

Government Fisheries Initiatives

The Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) is a flagship scheme to enhance fish production, modernise infrastructure, increase exports, and support fish farmers. The Union Government promotes technology-based aquaculture, skill training, and startup innovation to diversify production and ensure sustainable growth of the fisheries sector.

News in Shorts

Gujarat Regains ‘Tiger State’ Status

Why in News?

The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has officially recognised Gujarat as a ‘tiger-present state’ after more than three decades, following confirmed evidence of a tiger’s sustained presence in the Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary in Dahod district. This inclusion places Gujarat back on India’s tiger map for the All-India Tiger Estimation (AITE) 2026.

Background & Significance

- Historical extinction: Tigers disappeared from Gujarat by the early 1990s due to habitat loss, reduced prey, and human-wildlife conflict.
- A transient tiger sighting in 2019 was short-lived, highlighting the need for robust habitat support.
- The current resident tiger’s long stay indicates favourable habitat and ecological conditions, marking a positive shift in wildlife conservation outcomes for the region.
- National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA): Established in 2005 under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, it oversees tiger conservation and provides legal, scientific, and administrative support to states.
- All-India Tiger Estimation (AITE): Conducted every four years using camera traps, pugmarks, and statistical modelling to estimate tiger populations across India.
- Tiger Reserves: Designated under Project Tiger (1973) to protect critical tiger habitats through focused conservation planning; Ratanmahal could become a future Tiger Reserve.
- Big Cat Ecology: Tigers, lions, and leopards occupy different ecological niches — tigers prefer dense forests, lions thrive in grasslands, and leopards adapt across varied terrains.

SKOCH Award 2025

Why in News?

The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) has been awarded the SKOCH Award-2025 for its Cell Broadcast Solution (CBS) at the 104th SKOCH Summit themed “Resourcing Viksit Bharat”.

What is the Cell Broadcast Solution (CBS)?

- Definition: The CBS is an indigenous disaster and emergency alert platform developed by C-DOT for rapid dissemination of emergency alerts on mobile phones through cell broadcast technology.
- Function: Enables near-real-time delivery of warnings for natural disasters (like cyclones, floods, tsunamis) and emergencies by broadcasting alerts to mobile phones in specified geographic areas without overloading networks.
- Integration: Connects key disaster alert agencies such as the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Central Water Commission (CWC), Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), and others with mobile operators, NDMA and SDMA for coordinated alert dissemination.

About the SKOCH Award

The SKOCH Award recognises excellence in governance and development and is conferred on individuals, institutions, projects and innovations that significantly impact society across sectors such as technology, public service, health, education and finance. It highlights transformative initiatives contributing to improved public services and governance outcomes.

Significance of the CBS Platform

- Geo-targeted Alerts: Broadcasts alerts to specific areas affected by emergencies, increasing relevance and reducing unnecessary panic.
- Multilingual Support: Supports multiple Indian languages, ensuring messages are understood by diverse linguistic groups nationwide.
- Network Efficiency: Unlike SMS, cell broadcast can send messages to millions simultaneously without causing network congestion, crucial during disasters.

- Indigenous Technology: Developed by India's telecom R&D centre, strengthening the Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) initiative in critical communications technology.

Tyler Prize

Why in News?

American evolutionary biologist Dr. Toby Kiers has been awarded the prestigious Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement for her pioneering work in illuminating the role of underground fungal networks — particularly mycorrhizal fungi — in carbon cycling, biodiversity and ecosystem health. Her research has helped quantify how these networks draw down over 13 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide annually, playing a significant role in climate regulation and soil ecology. Dr. Kiers is the youngest female recipient in the history of the award, which carries a US \$250,000 prize and is often referred to as the “Nobel Prize for the environment.”

About Mycorrhizal Fungal Networks

- Mycorrhizae are symbiotic associations between fungi and plant roots that enhance nutrient uptake (such as phosphorus and nitrogen) in exchange for carbon from plants, forming vast underground networks crucial for plant health and soil ecosystems.
- These networks are emerging as key natural systems in carbon sequestration — capturing greenhouse gases and helping mitigate climate change.
- Mycorrhizal fungi contribute to soil fertility, nutrient cycling and water retention, making them vital for sustainable agriculture and ecosystem resilience.

Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement

- The Tyler Prize, established in 1973 and administered by the University of Southern California (USC), recognises individuals who have made transformative contributions to environmental science and sustainability.
- Often described as the “Nobel Prize for the environment,” it has been awarded to global environmental leaders, including Jane Goodall, Michael Mann, and Gretchen Daily.
- Winners are chosen for scientific excellence, global impact and actionable contributions to environmental protection and policy.

Best Institute for OAS/IAS

“Everything you've ever wanted is on the other side of fear.”



George Addair

Honestly

Social Issues & Schemes

Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojana

What Is the Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna?

- The Punjab government has launched a new health insurance scheme called Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna.
- It offers free cashless medical treatment up to ₹10 lakh per family per year.

Who Launched the Scheme?

- The programme was launched by Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann.
- Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal was also present at the launch event.

Who Will Benefit?

- All 65 lakh families in the state of Punjab are eligible.
- This covers about three crore people across the state.
- Any Punjab resident with Aadhaar card and voter ID can join the scheme.

What Does the Scheme Cover?

- The scheme covers free and cashless hospital treatment for illnesses and injuries.
- It includes more than 2,500 medical procedures.

Where Can Patients Get Treatment?

- Treatment will be available in government hospitals and empanelled private hospitals in Punjab and Chandigarh.
- About 850 hospitals have been included so far, and more will be added.

No Income Limit or Conditions

- There is no income limit to avail the scheme — everyone in the state gets coverage.
- This makes it one of the most inclusive health programmes in India.

Why This Matters

- The new scheme ensures that high medical bills do not become a burden on families.
- It is seen as a move toward universal healthcare in Punjab.
- It also ties into broader health improvements, building on existing clinics and services.

Punjab

- Capital: Chandigarh
- Governor: Gulab Chand Kataria
- Chief Minister: Bhagwant Mann (AAP)
- High Court: Punjab and Haryana High Court

REPM Scheme

Why in News?

The Government of India has approved the Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM) to establish India's first integrated domestic manufacturing ecosystem for high-value rare earth magnets. The scheme seeks to develop end-to-end capabilities across the value chain—from rare-earth oxides to

finished permanent magnets—thereby strengthening India's self-reliance in strategic materials. India possesses significant rare-earth mineral reserves across coastal beach sands, red sands and inland alluvial deposits in states such as Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Under the REPM scheme, financial outlay exceeding ₹7,000 crore has been approved to support extraction, processing and manufacturing. The scheme targets the creation of 6,000 metric tonnes per annum (MTPA) manufacturing capacity of sintered rare earth permanent magnets, which are critical inputs for high-growth and strategic sectors including electric vehicles (EVs), renewable energy (wind turbines), electronics, aerospace and defence. The initiative also complements India's international mineral diplomacy, with the Ministry of Mines entering into bilateral cooperation agreements with mineral-rich countries such as Australia, Argentina and Zambia to secure supply chains and access to critical minerals.

Rare Earth Elements (REEs):

A group of 17 elements including lanthanides, scandium and yttrium. Essential for high-performance magnets, batteries, semiconductors and clean energy technologies. Sintered REPMs (like Neodymium-Iron-Boron magnets) offer high magnetic strength and thermal stability.

LIC across rural and semi-urban India

Why in News?

The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has entered into a strategic collaboration with Sahaj Insurance Services Private Limited to widen the reach of life insurance products across rural and semi-urban India, where awareness and coverage have traditionally been low.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC):

India's largest life insurer and a state-owned public sector undertaking, crucial for the country's financial security architecture.

- Founded: 1 September 1956
- Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
- CEO & MD: R. Doraiswamy
- MD: Ratnakar Patnaik
- MD: Dinesh Pant

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI):

The statutory body that regulates and licenses insurance companies and corporate agents, ensuring fair practices and consumer protection.

- Formation: 1999
- Headquarters: Hyderabad
- Chairperson: Ajay Seth

"The most profound words will remain unread unless you can keep the learner engaged."

- James Bates

Science & Technology

PSLV-C62 Mission

Why in News?

On January 12, 2026, India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle PSLV-C62 lifted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, carrying the advanced Earth observation satellite EOS-N1 and 15 co-passenger satellites from Indian startups and international partners. Widely regarded as ISRO's most reliable launch vehicle, PSLV was expected to deliver yet another flawless mission. Instead, an unexpected anomaly turned the launch into one of India's most closely analysed space setbacks in recent years.

Mission Overview

- Launch date: January 12, 2026
- Launch vehicle: PSLV-XL variant
- Primary payload: EOS-N1 Earth observation satellite
- Co-passengers: 15 small satellites from India and abroad
- Target orbit: Sun-synchronous orbit at ~650 km

The mission symbolised India's growing strength in commercial space launches, especially under the government's push to support private space startups and global collaborations.

What Went Wrong During the Launch

- Initial phases of the launch proceeded normally.
- First and second stages performed as expected.
- Payload fairing separation was successful.
- The anomaly occurred during the third stage (PS3) burn.

According to ISRO, abnormal roll rates and a drop in chamber pressure were detected near the end of the solid-fuel third-stage operation. This led to a deviation in the rocket's trajectory, preventing proper ignition of the fourth stage and resulting in mission failure.

Impact on Payloads

- EOS-N1, a key Earth observation satellite, was lost.
- 15 co-passenger satellites failed to reach orbit.

A notable exception was Spain's Kestrel Initial Demonstrator (KID) satellite, which briefly separated and transmitted data for about three minutes before re-entry, highlighting partial system functionality.

Why the PSLV Failure Matters

- PSLV has a long success record, with only a few failures since 1993.
- The incident follows a similar third-stage issue during PSLV-C61 in May 2025, raising concerns over potential systemic issues in the PS3 stage.
- Possible causes under review include:
 - Manufacturing defects in solid propellant
 - Thrust vector control anomalies
 - Quality assurance and testing gaps

ISRO has formed an Anomaly Resolution Committee to investigate using telemetry, radar data, and simulations.

- Broader Impact on India's Space Ecosystem

- Financial losses estimated in hundreds of crores, though largely insured.
- Delays for Indian startups relying on space-based validation.
- Short-term impact on India's commercial launch credibility.
- Increased scrutiny from international clients and insurers.
- However, the failure also provides critical data that can strengthen future missions and improve system robustness.

The Road Ahead for ISRO

- PSLV-C63 is expected after enhanced quality checks.
- ISRO remains focused on major missions like Gaganyaan, SSLV expansion, and international collaborations.
- Historically, ISRO has demonstrated strong recoveries after setbacks, turning failures into learning milestones.
- Major Conspiracy Claims Circulating Online
- "Intentional Sabotage by Foreign Powers"

Claim:

- Some YouTubers allege that hostile nations sabotaged PSLV-C62 to:
- Damage India's commercial launch credibility
- Undermine Indian startups entering global space markets

Reality Check:

- Rocket sabotage is extraordinarily difficult due to layered checks
- No evidence of cyber intrusion or physical tampering has surfaced
- ISRO's systems are air-gapped and redundantly verified
- This theory thrives on geopolitics but lacks technical proof.

"Hidden Military Payload Theory"

Claim:

- EOS-N1 is alleged to be a classified military surveillance satellite, and the failure was either:
- A cover-up for a secret test
- Or intentional destruction to prevent data capture

Reality Check:

- Earth-observation satellites routinely serve dual civilian-military roles
- No credible evidence suggests intentional mission termination
- A failed launch destroys assets, not protects secrets
- This theory misunderstands how military space operations actually work.

"Private Space Lobby Sabotage"

Claim:

- ISRO allegedly allowed failure—or was pressured—to:
- Promote private launch firms
- Justify faster privatisation of Indian space

Reality Check:

- ISRO and private firms are complementary, not competitors
- PSLV remains essential for heavy and precision payloads
- A failure weakens ISRO's negotiating power—it doesn't help it
- This is more political narrative than technical reality.

"Cover-Up of Manufacturing Negligence"

Claim:

- ISRO is allegedly hiding:

- Poor quality control
- Outsourcing failures
- Supply-chain shortcuts

Reality Check:

- This is partially plausible but not conspiratorial:
- Manufacturing defects are a known risk in solid stages
- ISRO has acknowledged third-stage anomalies
- Investigation reports are often delayed, not hidden
- This is an engineering issue, not a secret plot.

Conclusion

- The PSLV-C62 failure is a reminder that spaceflight operates on razor-thin margins. While the setback is significant, it is unlikely to derail India's long-term space ambitions. Instead, it reinforces the importance of transparency, rigorous testing, and continuous improvement—principles that have long defined ISRO's journey from Sriharikota to the stars.

Kashiwazaki–Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant
Why in News?

Japan has restarted a nuclear reactor at the Kashiwazaki–Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant, the world's largest nuclear power station by capacity. The reactor restart was carried out by Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings (TEPCO). This marks TEPCO's first reactor restart since the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster. The plant is located in Niigata Prefecture, along the Sea of Japan coast. The restart reflects Japan's renewed push towards nuclear energy for energy security and carbon reduction.

About Kashiwazaki–Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant

Recognised as the largest nuclear power plant in the world. Consists of 7 nuclear reactors.

- Total installed capacity: Approximately 8,200 MW (8.2 GW).
- Operated by TEPCO, Japan's largest electric utility company.
- Was shut down after the 2011 Fukushima disaster for safety and regulatory reviews.

Background: Fukushima Nuclear Disaster (2011)

Occurred on 11 March 2011 due to a massive earthquake and tsunami. Led to core meltdowns at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Considered the worst nuclear accident since Chernobyl (1986). After the disaster, all nuclear reactors in Japan were shut down for safety checks. Resulted in the creation of stricter safety norms under Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority (NRA).

Why the Restart is Important

Japan is energy-import dependent, especially on fossil fuels.

Nuclear power helps Japan:

- Reduce energy import bills
- Ensure stable electricity supply
- Meet climate change and decarbonisation targets
- Restart supports Japan's plan to increase the share of nuclear energy in its power mix.

Safety & Regulatory Aspects

Restart approved after stringent safety inspections.

New safety measures include:

- Enhanced earthquake and tsunami protections
- Improved emergency response systems
- Approval involved consent from local authorities and regulators.
- Despite approval, the restart has faced local opposition and public safety concerns.

Japan's Nuclear Energy Policy

- Japan follows a gradual nuclear restart policy post-Fukushima.
- Several reactors across Japan have been restarted after meeting new safety standards.
- Nuclear energy is seen as a bridge fuel towards a low-carbon economy.
- Aligns with Japan's long-term goal of carbon neutrality.

Artemis II Mission

Why in News?

NASA's mega moon rocket for the Artemis II mission has been successfully rolled out to Launch Pad 39B at the Kennedy Space Center, Florida after an approximately 12-hour, 4-mile journey from the Vehicle Assembly Building.

- **Historic Context:** Artemis II is the first crewed lunar mission in over 50 years, marking the return of humans beyond low Earth orbit since the Apollo 17 mission in 1972.
- **Launch Vehicle:** The mission is powered by NASA's Space Launch System (SLS) — one of the most powerful rockets ever built — with the Orion spacecraft mounted on top to carry the astronauts.
- **Mission Type:** Artemis II is a crewed lunar fly-around mission (not a landing), designed to test life support, navigation, and deep-space systems with humans aboard.
- **Crew:** The mission will carry four astronauts — three from NASA and one Canadian astronaut — representing international cooperation in space exploration.
- **Objective:** The key objectives include validating spacecraft systems in deep space, assessing human performance on long-duration lunar missions, and paving the way for future lunar surface landings and eventual missions to Mars.
- **Pre-Launch Preparations:** After reaching the pad, NASA engineers will conduct a wet dress rehearsal and other tests to simulate fueling and countdown procedures before the final launch sequence.
- **Launch Window:** The mission is currently targeted for lift-off as early as February 6, 2026, with additional windows in March and April 2026 based on technical readiness and orbital conditions.

About the Artemis Program

- **Artemis Program Goal:** To establish a sustainable human presence on the Moon and serve as a stepping stone for human exploration of Mars.
- **Artemis I:** An uncrewed test flight that validated the SLS and Orion systems before Artemis II.
- **Artemis III:** Planned to land astronauts near the lunar south pole and include the first woman and next man on the Moon.

PARAM Rudra Supercomputer

Why in News?

PARAM Rudra supercomputing facility (3 PetaFLOPS) inaugurated at IIT Bombay under the National Supercomputing Mission to boost research and indigenous high-performance computing in India.

What is PARAM Rudra?

- Indigenous high-performance supercomputer

- Computing capacity of 3 PetaFLOPS
- Can perform 3 quadrillion calculations per second
- Supports advanced scientific and engineering research

Location & Inauguration

- Installed at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay
- Developed by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)
- Inaugurated by Secretary, Department of Science & Technology (DST)

National Supercomputing Mission (NSM)

- Joint initiative of MeitY and DST
- Implemented by C-DAC and IISc Bengaluru
- Objective: Develop indigenous supercomputing capability
- Strengthen India's high-performance computing ecosystem

Indigenous Technology & Make in India

- Built using indigenously designed Rudra servers
- Uses Indian software stack
- Promotes Atmanirbhar Bharat
- Reduces dependency on foreign supercomputing systems

Advanced Technical Features

- Uses Direct Contact Liquid Cooling (DCLC) technology
- Enhances energy efficiency
- Improves sustained high-performance computing

India's Supercomputing Capacity

- PARAM Rudra is part of 38 supercomputers under NSM
- Total installed capacity under NSM: 44 PetaFLOPS
- Strengthens India's global HPC presence

Four Pillars of NSM

1. Supercomputing infrastructure
2. Application development
3. Research and development
4. Human resource development

Additional Facts

- 1 PetaFLOP = 10^{15} calculations per second
- Supercomputers are used for:
 - Weather and climate forecasting
 - Drug discovery and genomics
 - Space and defence research
- India is moving towards exascale computing capability

India's Space Milestones

India's space programme is set to reach new heights with major achievements in 2025 and a landmark human spaceflight mission planned for 2026, highlighting the country's growing capabilities in human spaceflight, satellite technology, and private sector participation.

Human Spaceflight Developments

Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla became the first Indian to visit the International Space Station (ISS) in 2025. This marks India's return to human spaceflight milestones after Rakesh Sharma's 1984 mission. The mission strengthened India's preparedness for long-duration human space missions. Indian astronauts conducted microgravity experiments, contributing to space medicine and material science research.

Major Space Achievements in 2025

India successfully demonstrated space docking capability, placing it among a select group of nations with this advanced technology. ISRO completed its 100th launch from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. Launch of new-generation navigation satellites enhanced India's regional navigation system.

The Union Government approved a Third Launch Pad at Sriharikota to support higher launch frequency and future human missions. India's private space sector expanded, with startups launching earth-observation and space-situational-awareness satellites.

Gaganyaan Mission – Focus on 2026

Gaganyaan is India's first indigenous human spaceflight programme. The first uncrewed Gaganyaan mission (G1) is planned as a precursor to crewed missions.

Key objectives include:

- Testing crew module, re-entry systems, and parachute-based recovery.
- Validation of life-support and safety systems for astronauts
- Gaganyaan will place India among an elite group of countries capable of independent human spaceflight.

Policy & Budgetary Support

The space sector received enhanced budgetary allocation in the Union Budget to strengthen R&D and indigenous manufacturing. Customs duty exemptions on key space components aim to boost domestic production. Policy reforms encourage private participation, positioning India as a global commercial space hub.

Strategic & Scientific Significance

Human spaceflight enhances national prestige, technological self-reliance, and strategic capability.

Space docking technology is critical for:

- Space stations
- On-orbit servicing
- Deep-space missions

India's space economy is projected to grow rapidly, with increasing global market share. Data from missions like solar observatories strengthen India's role in space-based climate and space-weather research.

News in Shorts**Mpemba effect****Why in News?**

Indian scientists have developed the first supercomputer-powered simulation that successfully captures the Mpemba effect — the counter-intuitive phenomenon in which hot water can freeze faster than cold water under certain conditions. The research, published in the Journal of Communication Physics, also shows that the Mpemba effect can occur during fluid-to-solid phase transitions in systems other than water. The findings help explain that when a liquid cools, it can pass through intermediate molecular states before actual solidification, and in some cases, higher starting temperatures can lead to faster freezing by reaching key nucleation stages sooner.

What is the Mpemba Effect?

- The Mpemba effect refers to the observation that hot liquids (including water) can sometimes freeze faster than colder ones under similar conditions — a long-standing scientific paradox that has intrigued researchers.
- It is named after Erasto Mpemba, a Tanzanian student who observed the effect in the 1960s while making ice cream; his observation was later validated experimentally by scientists including Denis Osborne.
- Theoretical and experimental work on the Mpemba effect spans nonequilibrium physics, fluid dynamics, and phase change phenomena, with implications for understanding thermal processes more broadly.

PathGennie Software

The Ministry of Science and Technology has developed an open-source software called PathGennie to fast-track drug discovery by accurately predicting how potential drug molecules detach from their protein targets. PathGennie overcomes limitations of traditional computational methods by avoiding artificial forces, enabling more reliable simulation of rare events in drug-target interactions. The software can accelerate computer-aided drug discovery and improve understanding of a drug's "residence time," which is crucial for therapeutic effectiveness.



Culture & History

Archaeological Discovery in Maharashtra

Why in News?

India's largest circular stone labyrinth has been unearthed in the Boramani grasslands of Solapur district, Maharashtra, highlighting advanced spatial design and possible cultural-trade links during the early historic period in the Deccan.

Location & Discovery

Discovered in the Boramani grasslands, a semi-arid ecological zone in Solapur district, Maharashtra. The structure was identified during ecological surveys, showing the close link between environmental conservation and archaeological discoveries. The grasslands are known for rich biodiversity and pastoral activity.

Structural Features

The labyrinth is the largest of its kind in India. Measures approximately 50 feet × 50 feet. Composed of 15 concentric circular stone circuits leading to a central point. Built using locally available stone, indicating indigenous engineering skills. The circular and spiral geometry reflects advanced planning and symbolic architecture.

Historical Context

The structure is estimated to be around 2,000 years old.

Linked to the Satavahana period (1st–3rd century CE), an important Deccan dynasty. The Satavahanas played a key role in connecting inland India with western coastal trade routes.

Cultural & Trade Significance

Labyrinth patterns resemble motifs found in the Mediterranean world, suggesting Indo-Roman cultural interactions.

May have functioned as:

- A ritual or ceremonial structure
- A navigational or way-finding marker
- A symbolic landmark along ancient trade routes
- Reflects exchange of ideas beyond just material trade.

Archaeological Importance

- Highlights non-urban and non-religious architectural traditions of ancient India.
- Shows that complex symbolic structures existed beyond cities and temples.
- Enhances understanding of landscape-based archaeology in the Deccan region.

Conservation Significance

Located within a grassland ecosystem, emphasizing the need for integrated heritage and ecological conservation. Raises awareness about protecting archaeological sites outside protected monuments. Demonstrates how development, biodiversity, and heritage must be managed together.

Satavahana Dynasty:

Promoted trade, Prakrit language, and early Buddhist establishments. Acted as a bridge between northern and southern India.

Indo-Roman Trade:

Flourished between the 1st century BCE and 3rd century CE. Involved spices, textiles, beads, and precious stones.

Labyrinth Symbolism:

Represents journey, protection, cosmology, and ritual movement in many ancient cultures. Comparable to concepts like Chakravayuha in Indian tradition.

150 Years of Vande Mataram**Why in News?**

The Ministry of Culture announced that at the 77th Republic Day Parade 2026 in New Delhi, it will present a tableau themed “150 Years of Vande Mataram” to commemorate the historic journey and enduring significance of India’s national song, Vande Mataram. The tableau will symbolically reflect Vande Mataram’s historical origins, cultural resonance and contribution to India’s freedom movement, portraying the song as a living expression of India’s civilisational memory and collective consciousness.

Vande Mataram – Historical and Cultural Importance

Vande Mataram was composed in 1875 by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in his novel Anandamath and became a symbol of resistance against British colonial rule. The song played a significant role in uniting Indians during the freedom movement and was adopted in truncated form as the national song of India on January 24, 1950 by the Constituent Assembly. Vande Mataram’s theme evokes devotion to the motherland, expressing India as a divine and nurturing entity.

Theme of Republic Day 2026

The central theme of the Republic Day Parade 2026 is “150 years of Vande Mataram”, integrating this narrative into tables, cultural performances, band marches and decorative elements along Kartavya Path.

Alongside the Culture Ministry’s tableau, other tableaux and performances highlight sub-themes like “Swatantrata ka Mantra – Vande Mataram” and “Samridhhi ka Mantra – Atmanirbhar Bharat”.

Republic Day Parade – Overview

- The Republic Day Parade is held annually on January 26 in New Delhi to celebrate the adoption of the Constitution of India (1950).
- The event features military contingents, cultural tableaux, marching bands, honoured chief guests and award presentations such as the Padma Awards and Gallantry awards.
- Tableaux from States/UTs, central ministries and departments showcase India’s cultural diversity, heritage and achievements.

Role of IGNCA and Cultural Presentation

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) assists the Ministry of Culture in conceptualising and executing Republic Day tableaux that reflect philosophical and historical themes. The tableau’s narrative often connects history with present values, reinforcing national unity through visual storytelling.

Special Cultural Elements for 2026 Parade

In addition to visuals, special components like new musical compositions for the 150th anniversary of Vande Mataram are being incorporated — for instance, a new rendition by Oscar-winning composer M.M. Keeravani to be showcased during celebrations.

Performances linked to the theme include pan-India band marches by the Armed Forces and paramilitary units.

SVAMITVA Scheme at 77th Republic Day**Why in News?**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj's tableau at the 77th Republic Day Parade will depict the SVAMITVA Scheme, highlighting rural property ownership, enhanced Panchayati Raj institutions, access to credit, and strengthened dispute resolution, thereby contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

Key Points:

- Name of Scheme: SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas).
- Launched by: Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April 2020.
- Purpose: To provide property rights to rural citizens by issuing Property Cards using drone-based surveys.

Impact Highlighted:

- Secure housing and ownership.
- Easier access to bank loans/credit using property as an asset.
- Reduced property disputes through official documentation.
- Strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions via better governance.
- Relevance to Republic Day Parade: Showcases the scheme's transformational impact and supports the theme of self-reliant villages under the larger idea of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

Additional Facts:

- Under SVAMITVA, drone surveys help prepare a digital map of inhabited villages.
- Property Cards issued under the scheme are integrated with the government's e-Gram Swaraj portal for better transparency.

India's Storytelling Traditions and Vision of WAVES
Why in News?

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's tableau at the Republic Day Parade will exhibit India's storytelling legacy from ancient oral narratives to modern media, under the theme "Bharat Gatha: Shruti, Kriti, Drishti", aligning with India's cultural ethos and the WAVES vision.

Key Points:

- Title of Tableau: "Bharat Gatha: Shruti, Kriti, Drishti."
- Ministry: Information and Broadcasting (I&B).
- Themes Explained:
 - Shruti: Represents India's rich oral traditions (e.g., sages and disciples, Vedic chanting).
 - Kriti: Depicts evolution of written expression (e.g., manuscripts, early literature).
 - Drishti: Shows progression of visual and mass media — print, cinema, television, digital era.
- Vision of WAVES: Highlights India's emergence as a global centre for Audio-Visual and Entertainment content.

Additional Facts:

- The tableau incorporates elements like vintage TV sets (Doordarshan logo), film reels, film marquee signs, and references to AI and modern media.
- The World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) was held in Mumbai in 2025, symbolising India's growing creative economy.
- Republic Day tableaux often reflect cultural heritage, technological progress, and policy achievements of the government.

Contextual Facts on Republic Day Parade :

- Republic Day is celebrated on 26 January to honour the date when the Indian Constitution came into effect (1950).
- The parade is held on Kartavya Path (formerly Rajpath) in New Delhi.
- Tableaux by States, Union Territories, and Central Ministries showcase India's diversity, culture, innovation, and developmental achievements.
- Themes for 2026: 'Swatantrata ka Mantra: Vande Mataram' (150 years of national song) and 'Samriddhi ka Mantra: Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.

News in Shorts

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize

Why in News?

Graça Machel, a rights activist from Mozambique, has been chosen for the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize for 2025.

What Is the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize?

- It is a prestigious award given every year by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.
- The prize recognises outstanding work for peace, disarmament, development, and social welfare.

Why Was Graça Machel Chosen?

- Graça Machel received the award because of her lifetime contributions to:
- Education and improving school access.
- Health and nutrition programmes.
- Empowering women and communities economically.
- Humanitarian work in difficult situations.

Her Work and Impact

- Machel has spent decades working to protect human rights and help vulnerable groups.
- She founded the Graça Machel Trust in 2010 to support women's empowerment, food security, and good governance.
- She also chairs initiatives focusing on children's protection and education.

11th Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival

Why in News?

Legendary Indian music composer Ilaiyaraaja has been selected for the prestigious Padmapani Award at the 11th Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival (AIFF) 2026. The award recognises his exceptional contribution to Indian cinema music spanning over five decades.

About the Padmapani Award

The Padmapani Award is a lifetime achievement recognition conferred on eminent personalities in cinema and related arts. Award components include a Padmapani memento, a citation certificate, and a cash prize of ₹2 lakh. Selection is made by a committee of renowned experts, including film critics and filmmakers. Past recipients include celebrated figures like lyricist Javed Akhtar, director Sai Paranjpye, and actor Om Puri.

Who Is Ilaiyaraaja?

- Full Name: Ilaiyaraaja is one of India's most celebrated music composers, often called "Isaignani" (Musical Sage).

- Civilian Honours: He received the Padma Bhushan in 2010 and the Padma Vibhushan in 2018, India's third and second highest civilian awards respectively.
- Parliamentary Role: In 2022, he was nominated to the Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Parliament) by the President of India.
- National Awards: He has won five National Film Awards (three for Best Music Direction and two for Best Background Score) for his contributions to film music.
- Musical Output: Ilaiyaraaja has composed music for over 1,500 films and more than 7,000 songs across multiple Indian languages, including Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Hindi, and Marathi.

About the Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival (AIFF)

AIFF is an annual film festival celebrating cinematic excellence from India and around the world, featuring film screenings, discussions and awards. Named after the UNESCO-World Heritage Ajanta and Ellora Caves in Maharashtra, the festival highlights culture, history and arts through global cinema narratives. It is supported by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, the Department of Cultural Affairs, Government of Maharashtra, and co-presented by bodies like the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC).

Padma Awards in India

Every year, the Government of India confers the Padma Awards to individuals whose work has made a deep and lasting impact on society. Instituted in 1954, these civilian honours recognise exceptional achievements in various fields including arts, literature, science, public service, social work, sports, and more. The Awards are announced around Republic Day and presented by the President of India at a ceremonial event, symbolising the nation's gratitude towards those who have served the country and humanity with distinction.

Why Padma Awards Matter

National Recognition of Excellence

The Padma Awards are among India's highest civilian honours, placed after the Bharat Ratna. They serve as a national acknowledgment of extraordinary contributions that have enriched Indian society and culture. Recipients are admired not only for their individual achievements but also for the inspiration they provide to future generations.

Encouraging Diverse Contributions

The awards reflect India's diversity by honouring achievers from varied domains—from cinema legends and sports icons to grassroots social workers and scientists whose work transforms lives. Recognition across such varied fields underscores the idea that excellence isn't limited to one arena and that every contribution counts.

Promoting Service and Innovation

Padma Awards highlight the importance of service beyond self-interest and encourage citizens to pursue work that benefits society. Whether advancing healthcare, preserving cultural heritage, or enhancing scientific understanding, awardees display a commitment to national progress and global good.

Padma Awards 2026: Celebrating Achievers

On the eve of Republic Day 2026, the Government of India announced a total of 131 Padma Awards, comprising five Padma Vibhushan, 13 Padma Bhushan, and 113 Padma Shri honours.

Padma Vibhushan (Class of 2026)

The Padma Vibhushan is the second-highest civilian award in India, given for exceptional and distinguished service.

1. Dharmendra Singh Deol (posthumous) – Iconic actor whose legacy shaped Indian cinema.
2. K T Thomas – Eminent jurist.
3. N Rajam – Celebrated classical musician.
4. P Narayanan – Scholar in literature and education.

5. V S Achuthanandan (posthumous) – Veteran political leader and social reformer.

Padma Bhushan Honourees

Awarded for distinguished service of high order:

- Alka Yagnik (music)
- Bhagat Singh Koshyari (public affairs)
- Mammootty (cinema)
- Uday Kotak (business)
- Vijay Amritraj (sports) and others.

Padma Shri Recognitions

The Padma Shri honours significant contributions across disciplines. This year's list includes doctors, artists, scientists, cultural preservers, and "unsung heroes" such as:

- Anke Gowda – Set up the world's largest free-access library.
- Armida Fernandez – Paediatrician and innovator in neonatal care.
- Nilesh Mandlewala – Organ donation advocate.
- Bhikya Ladakya Dhinda – Tribal musician preserving traditional art forms.

Conclusion

The Padma Awards continue to be a beacon of excellence, uniting India in celebration of individuals whose work uplifts communities, preserves culture, and advances human knowledge. The 2026 list brings together legends and grassroots change-makers, reminding the nation that every act of service and creativity deepens India's social and cultural fabric.

PADMA AWARDS 2026

8 FROM NE HONOURED WITH PADMA SHRI

Under Unsung Heroes Category



ASSAM'S
JOGESH DEURI



ASSAM'S
NURUDDIN AHMED



ASSAM'S
POKHILA LEKTHEPI



MANIPUR'S
YUMNAM JATRA SINGH



ARUNACHAL'S
TECHI GUBIN



MEGHALAYA'S
HALLY WAR



NAGALAND'S
SANGYUSANG S PONGENER



TRIPURA'S
NARESH CHANDRA
DEBBARMA

Persons in News

Appointments of the Month

Sr. No	Person Name	Appointed For / Post	Department / Organisation	Brief Description
1	Praveen Vashista	Vigilance Commissioner	Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)	Former IPS officer with over 30 years of experience; earlier served as Special Secretary (Internal Security) in the Ministry of Home Affairs.
2	Shaya Mohsen Zindani	Prime Minister	Government of Yemen	Former Foreign Minister appointed PM after resignation of Salem bin Breik; tasked with forming a new cabinet.
3	A.K. Balasubrahmanian	Chairman	Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB)	Veteran nuclear engineer with nearly 40 years of experience; succeeded Dr. D. K. Shukla.
4	Ida Liu	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	HSBC Private Bank	Former Global Head of Citi Private Bank; appointed to drive global wealth and private banking growth.
5	Sadanand Vasant Date	Director General of Police (DGP)	Maharashtra Police	1990-batch IPS officer; succeeded Rashmi Shukla as Maharashtra DGP.
6	Delcy Rodríguez	Interim President	Government of Venezuela	Appointed by Supreme Court to ensure administrative continuity after President Nicolás Maduro's forced absence.
7	Justice A. Muhamed Mustaque	Chief Justice	Sikkim High Court	Former judge of Kerala High Court; appointed on recommendation of Supreme Court Collegium.
8	Sjoerd Marijne	Chief Coach	Indian Women's Hockey Team	Former coach of the team; guided India to 4th place at Tokyo Olympics 2020.
9	Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor	Vice Chief of the Air Staff	Indian Air Force	Senior IAF officer; second-highest rank assisting the Chief of Air Staff.
10	Lt Gen Harpal Singh	Director General	Border Roads Organisation (BRO)	Leads strategic border infrastructure development under the Ministry of Defence.
11	Justice Soumen Sen	Chief Justice	Kerala High Court	Transferred from Meghalaya High Court following Collegium recommendation.
12	Justice Sangam Kumar Sahoo	Chief Justice	Patna High Court	Senior Orissa High Court judge appointed as Chief Justice of Patna HC.
13	Justice Revati Prashant Mohite Dere	Chief Justice	Meghalaya High Court	Bombay High Court judge appointed as Meghalaya HC Chief Justice.
14	B. Sairam	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Coal India Limited	First CEO of Coal India; also serving as Chairman-cum-Managing Director.

Sr. No	Person Name	Appointed For / Post	Department / Organisation	Brief Description
15	Saleem Ahmad	Chairman & Managing Director (CMD)	Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL)	Took charge of Navratna PSU under Ministry of Railways; experienced in infrastructure projects.
16	Albinder Dhindsa	Group Chief Executive Officer	Eternal Group	Founder of Blinkit; appointed CEO after Deepinder Goyal stepped down.
17	Sunita Williams	Retired Astronaut	NASA	Veteran astronaut with 27 years at NASA; known for record spacewalks and ISS missions.

Obituaries of the Month

Sr. No.	Person Name	Field Related	Description
1	Valentino Garavani	Fashion & Design	Legendary Italian fashion designer known for luxury couture and the iconic "Valentino Red"; founder of the Valentino fashion house.
2	Prolay Chaki	Music & Politics	Veteran Bangladeshi singer and senior Awami League leader; known for contributions to Bengali music and cultural activism.
3	Davinder Singh Garcha	Sports (Hockey)	Former Indian hockey player; member of India's gold medal-winning team at the 1980 Moscow Olympics.
4	Madhav Gadgil	Environment & Ecology	Renowned Indian ecologist; founder of IISc's Centre for Ecological Sciences and chairman of the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel.
5	Kabindra Purkayastha	Politics	Former Union Minister and senior BJP leader; key figure in strengthening BJP in Assam and the Northeast.
6	Suresh Kalmadi	Politics & Sports Administration	Former Union Minister and long-serving President of the Indian Olympic Association; played a major role in hosting international sports events.
7	Manoj Kothari	Sports (Billiards)	Former world billiards champion; IBSF World Champion and chief coach of India's national billiards team.
8	Khaleda Zia	Politics	Former Prime Minister of Bangladesh and BNP chairperson; first woman PM of the country and major democratic leader.
9	Brigitte Bardot	Cinema & Activism	Iconic French actor and singer; later became a global animal rights activist and founder of the Brigitte Bardot Foundation.
10	Hugh Morris	Sports (Cricket)	Former England cricketer and Chief Executive of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

Sports

Scotland Set to Replace Bangladesh in ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026

Scotland to Play in T20 World Cup 2026

- Scotland's national cricket team is set to replace Bangladesh in the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026.
- This change comes shortly before the tournament, which begins on February 7, 2026, hosted by India and Sri Lanka.

Why Bangladesh Is Being Replaced

- The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) insisted not to travel to India for the World Cup matches due to security concerns.
- Although Bangladesh asked for their matches to be moved to Sri Lanka, the ICC confirmed that the event will go ahead in India as planned.
- The ICC gave Bangladesh a 24-hour deadline to decide on playing, but BCB stuck to its stand.

Why Scotland Was Chosen

- Scotland is the highest-ranked team not already qualified for the tournament.
- Because of this and the sudden vacancy, the ICC has chosen Scotland to take Bangladesh's place in World Cup Group C.

India's Badminton Icon Saina Nehwal Confirms Retirement After Long Injury Battle

Legendary Indian badminton player Saina Nehwal has officially confirmed her retirement from competitive badminton after nearly two decades in the sport, citing chronic knee injury and physical limitations.

Career Achievements

- First Olympic Medallist in Badminton for India: Saina won the bronze medal in women's singles at the 2012 London Olympics, marking India's first Olympic medal in badminton.
- World No. 1 Ranking: She became world number one, the first Indian woman to achieve this feat in badminton.

International Medals & Titles:

- World Championships: Silver (2015) and Bronze (2017) in women's singles.
- Commonwealth Games: Multiple gold medals (2010 Delhi, 2018 Gold Coast).
- Uber Cup: Led India to historic bronze medals.
- Claimed 24+ international titles, including 10 BWF Super Series titles.

Additional Facts:

- Birthplace & Early Life: Born on 17 March 1990 in Hisar, Haryana, Saina started playing badminton at a young age before training at the Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy in Hyderabad.
- Awards & Honours: Saina Nehwal has been conferred with top national honours such as Padma Bhushan (2016), Padma Shri (2010), Arjuna Award (2009) and the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award (2010) for her contributions to Indian sports.
- Last Competitive Appearance: Her final professional tournament was the 2023 Singapore Open, though she had unofficially stopped competing well before her public confirmation of retirement.

BCCI Secures ₹270 Crore Sponsorship Deal with Google's Gemini Ahead of IPL 2026

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has entered into a sponsorship partnership worth ₹270 crore with Google's artificial intelligence platform Gemini ahead of the 2026 Indian Premier League (IPL) season.

The deal is structured as a three-year agreement, covering the IPL seasons 2026, 2027 and 2028. The partnership reflects growing interest of technology and AI platforms in Indian sports marketing, particularly cricket — India's most widely watched sport. This sponsorship comes in the broader context of shifts in the IPL commercial landscape

after the government ban on real-money gaming advertisement, which led to major fantasy gaming sponsors exiting and prompted new categories of sponsors to step in.

Regulatory Background

A government ban on advertisements by real-money gaming platforms under recent regulatory frameworks affected traditional sponsorship in Indian sport, creating both challenges and opportunities for new sponsor categories, including tech firms.

BCCI & Commercial Revenue

- The BCCI generates revenue through media rights (broadcast and digital), team sponsorships, franchise fees, merchandising and event hosting.
- Strategic commercial partnerships like the Gemini deal help maintain the financial momentum of the IPL despite shifts in sponsorship dynamics.

Aaryan Varshney Becomes India's 92nd Chess Grandmaster After Earning Final GM Norm

21-year-old Aaryan Varshney has become India's 92nd Chess Grandmaster after securing his final norm at the Andranik Margaryan Memorial Tournament in Armenia. He clinched the title by scoring 6. 5/8 points and became the eighth Grandmaster from Delhi with this achievement.

About the Grandmaster Title

- The Grandmaster (GM) title is the highest title awarded by FIDE (Fédération Internationale des Échecs / International Chess Federation), and once achieved, it is held for life.
- To become a GM, a player must achieve three GM norms and reach a FIDE Elo rating of 2500 or more at any point in their career.
- A GM norm is earned by a player performing at a requisite level in an internationally rated tournament — typically facing other titled players including existing GMs — under FIDE-approved conditions.

Jakub Mensik clinched the men's singles title at the 2026 ASB Classic (Auckland ATP 250)

Czech tennis player Jakub Mensik clinched the men's singles title at the 2026 ASB Classic (Auckland ATP 250) by defeating Argentina's Sebastián Báez 6-3, 7-6(7) in the final. The 20-year-old saved three consecutive set points in the second-set tiebreak to secure victory at the hard-court tournament in Auckland, New Zealand. Mensik's triumph ended Báez's previously seven-match winning streak in the 2026 season, and made him the youngest Auckland champion since Juan Martín del Potro in 2009. Mensik will rise to No. 17 in the ATP rankings following this win.

2026 ASB Classic

- Edition: 39th (women) & 48th (men)
- Location: Auckland, New Zealand

Champions:

- Men's singles: Jakub Menšík (Czech Republic)
- Women's singles: Elina Svitolina (Ukraine)
- Men's doubles: Théo Arribagé / Albano Olivetti (France)
- Women's doubles: Guo Hanyu / Kristina Mladenovic

Venus Williams to become the oldest female player in the Australian Open main draw at age 45 in 2026

Venus Williams has been granted a wild-card entry into the 2026 Australian Open, starting 18 January 2026 in Melbourne, Australia. At 45 years old, she will become the oldest woman to compete in the main draw of the tournament.

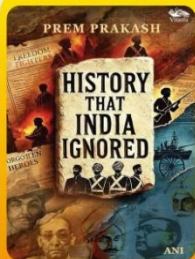
Record Broken:

She will surpass the previous record held by Japan's Kimiko Date, who competed at age 44 in 2015.

Important Days for Exams

Day	Observed/Celebrated As	Theme/Importance
01-Feb	Indian Coast Guard Day	To mark the inception of interim Indian Coast guard on 1 February 1977
02-Feb	World Wetlands Day	Wetlands and traditional knowledge: Celebrating cultural heritage
04-Feb	World Cancer Day	United by Unique
06-Feb	International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation	Step up the Pace
10-Feb	National De-worming Day	Eliminate STH: Invest in a healthier future for children
11-Feb	International Day of Women and Girls in Science	To recognize the critical role women and girls play in science and technology
13-Feb	National Women's Day	To mark the birth anniversary of India's first women governor Sarojini Naidu.
13-Feb	World Radio Day	Radio and Artificial Intelligence
20-Feb	World Day of Social Justice	To promote efforts to tackle issues such as poverty, exclusion and unemployment
21-Feb	International Mother Language Day	To promote the awareness of language and cultural diversity all across the world
24-Feb	Central Excise Day	To mark the establishment of the Central Excise and Salt Act on 24th of February in the year 1944.
27-Feb	World NGO Day	To celebrate, commemorate and collaborate with the various NGOs around the world.
28-Feb	National Science Day	Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science & Innovation for Viksit Bharat

Books & Authors



Book: History That India Ignored

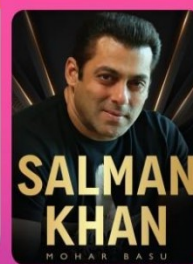
Author: Prem Prakash

About: This book revisits India's freedom struggle from lesser-known perspectives, challenging conventional historical narratives.

Book: Salman Khan: The Sultan of Bollywood

Author: Mohar Basu

About: This book explores the actor's journey through his iconic screen personas, memorable dialogues, chart topping songs, and box office defining films.



Book: Once Elephants Lived Here

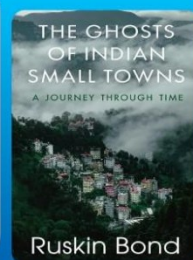
Author: Geetanjali Shree

About: A simple, emotional story about people, elephants, and how development destroys forests, memories, and peaceful coexistence.

Book: The Ghosts of Indian Small Towns: A Journey Through Time

Author: Ruskin Bond

About: Ruskin Bond shares gentle memories and stories of Indian small towns, capturing their past, people, and slowly disappearing charm.

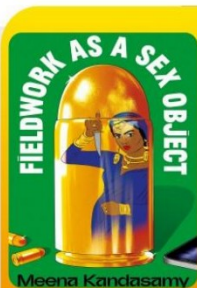


Book: Make It Up as You Go Along: A Sort-of Memoir

Author: Shefali Shah

About: Shefali Shah reflects on her life, career, struggles, and growth, sharing honest experiences, lessons, and self-discovery from her personal journey.

Books & Authors



Book: Fieldwork as a Sex Object

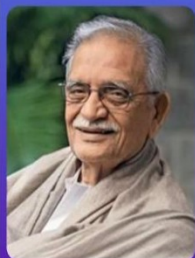
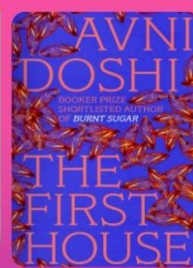
Author: Meena Kandasamy

About: Meena Kandasamy shares her experiences as a woman researcher, exposing sexism, power imbalance, and challenges faced by women in academic spaces.

Book: The First House

Author: Avni Doshi

About: A thoughtful story about memory, family relationships, aging, and emotional bonds, exploring how the past shapes identity and personal connections.



Book: Aamchi Mumbai: My City in Stories and Poems

Author: Gulzar

About: Gulzar presents Mumbai through poems and stories, capturing its people, emotions, struggles, beauty, and everyday life with deep affection.

Book: Begum Samru Biography

Author: Ira Mukhoty

About: A fascinating biography of Begum Samru, a powerful woman who rose from humble origins to rule and shape Mughal-era politics.



Book: Red Alert

Author: Sunil Gupta and Samanwaya Rautray

About: An investigative account exposing corruption, crime, and political links in India, revealing hidden power networks and threats to national security.

Question Bank for Practice

Statement- Based

1. Prime Minister Inaugurates Rashtra Prerna Sthal in Lucknow on Atal Bihari Vajpayee's 101st Birth Anniversary.
 Consider the following statements regarding Rashtra Prerna Sthal and leaders associated with it:

(1) Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birth anniversary is observed as Good Governance Day, and he was awarded both Padma Vibhushan and Bharat Ratna.

(2) Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay propounded Integral Humanism, with Antyodaya as its core principle, and his birth anniversary is observed as Antyodaya Diwas.

(3) Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee was the founder of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and strongly supported Article 370.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (B)

Exp: Statement 1:

This statement is correct. Atal Bihari Vajpayee served as Prime Minister of India three times and made significant contributions to governance and foreign policy. His birth anniversary on 25 December is observed as Good Governance Day to promote accountability in public administration. He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan (1994) and the Bharat Ratna (2015) for his distinguished public service.

Statement 2:

This statement is correct. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay propounded the philosophy of Integral Humanism, which emphasizes balanced development of society and self-reliance. Antyodaya, meaning upliftment of the weakest section of society, is the core of his thought. His birth anniversary on 25 September is observed as Antyodaya Diwas.

Statement 3:

This statement is incorrect. Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee was the founder of the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, not the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). He was a strong critic of Article 370 and opposed the special status given to Jammu and

Kashmir. His views emphasized national integration and constitutional unity.

2. India Successfully Conducts Maiden Flight Test of Pinaka LRGR-120, Boosting Army's Precision Artillery Capability.

Consider the following statements regarding the Guided Pinaka Missile System:

(1) The Pinaka Missile System is an indigenously developed multi-barrel rocket launcher by DRDO's ARDE, designed for high-precision strikes.

(2) Pinaka Mark-I has a strike range of about 70–80 km, while Pinaka Mark-II is limited to 40 km.

(3) The system is capable of firing 12 rockets in a single salvo from upgraded launchers with high mobility and rapid deployment.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (A)

Exp: Statement 1:

This statement is correct. The Pinaka Missile System is an indigenously developed multi-barrel rocket launcher designed by the Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE) under DRDO. It is intended to deliver high-precision, long-range artillery fire, enhancing the strike capability of the Indian Army.

Statement 2:

This statement is incorrect. Pinaka Mark-I has an operational range of about 40 km, while Pinaka Mark-II is the upgraded version with an extended range of 70–80 km, which is further expandable in future variants. The ranges mentioned in the statement are reversed.

Statement 3:

This statement is correct. The Pinaka system can fire 12 rockets in a single salvo from upgraded launchers within a short time span. Its high mobility and rapid deployment enable quick concentration of firepower, making it effective for saturation attacks and precision strikes.

3. Union Home Minister Inaugurates Redeveloped Batadrava Than, Birthplace of Saint Srimanta Sankardeva in Assam.

Consider the following statements regarding Srimanta Sankardeva:

(1) He founded the Neo-Vaishnava Bhakti movement in 15th-century Assam and propagated the eka-sarana-nama-dharma, emphasizing devotion to a single deity, Vishnu (Krishna).

(2) He established Namghars and Satras, promoting social equality, congregational worship, and cultural activities accessible only to the upper castes.

(3) He translated eight books of the Bhagavata Purana into Brajavali to make sacred texts accessible to the Assamese society, and composed devotional songs called Borgeets.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans:

Exp: Statement 1:

This statement is correct. Srimanta Sankardeva founded the Neo-Vaishnava Bhakti movement in 15th-century Assam, emphasizing devotion to a single deity, Vishnu (Krishna). He propagated the philosophy of eka-sarana-nama-dharma, which focuses on seeking refuge in one God through devotion, particularly via hearing (Sravana) and chanting (Kirtana).

Statement 2:

This statement is incorrect. While Sankardeva did establish Namghars (community prayer halls) and Satras (Vaishnava monasteries) to promote congregational worship, moral discipline, and cultural activities, these institutions were inclusive, allowing participation of all castes and communities, not restricted to the upper castes. They were instrumental in promoting social equality.

Statement 3:

This statement is correct. Sankardeva translated eight of the twelve books of the Bhagavata Purana into Brajavali, a language accessible to the Assamese people, making sacred texts widely understandable. He also composed devotional songs known as Borgeets, which played a significant role in Assamese religious and cultural life.

4. Indian textile industry opposes proposed anti-dumping duty on MEG.

Consider the following statements regarding Textiles industry in India -

(1) India is the world's second-largest producer of silk.

(2) India is the world's largest producer of cotton and jute.

(3) India is the world's largest exporter of textiles and clothing.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans:

Exp:

Value Addition is the process where we enhance the salability of the product by adding some incentives to it.

The textile industry continues to be the second-largest employment-generating sector in India. India is the world's second-largest exporter of textiles and clothing.

India is also the world's second-largest producer of silk.

India is the world's largest producer of cotton and jute.

5. Recently, a study revealed that nanoplastics derived from single-use plastic bottles (SUPBs) contribute to the spread of antibiotic resistance (AR).

Consider the following statements about Nanoplastics -

(1) Nanoplastics are solid particles of synthetic or modified natural polymers, ranging in size between 1 nm and 1000 nm.

(2) Secondary nanoplastics are intentionally produced for specific industrial applications.

(3) Nanoplastics can cause disruptions in marine ecosystems and bio-accumulate in the food chain.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans:

Exp:

Nanoplastics are solid particles of synthetic or heavily modified natural polymers with sizes ranging between 1 nm and 1000 nm.

Primary Nanoplastics: These are intentionally produced nanoplastics, typically for specific applications.

Secondary Nanoplastics: The majority of nanoplastics in the environment are secondary, meaning they result from the fragmentation of larger plastic items released unintentionally into the environment.

Environmental Presence: Disrupts marine food chains and ecosystems.

Bioaccumulation: Harmful effects on health.

Toxicity: Inflammation, and disruptions in normal cellular processes.

Gut Microbiome Disruption: Digestive problems, immune dysfunction, or an increased risk of infections.

6. UN Security Council Extends AU Support Mission in Somalia Till December 2026.

Consider the following statements regarding African Union –

(1) In 1963, the Organization of African Unity was founded by the independent states of Africa.

(2) The 1980 Lagos Plan of Action was adopted by the Organization of African Unity.

(3) In 2002, the Organization of African Unity was succeeded by the African Union.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (2) (B) Only (2) and (3)

(C) Only (3) and (1) (D) All are correct

Ans: (D)

Exp: In 1963, the Organization of African Unity was founded by the independent states of Africa. The organization aimed to promote cooperation between African states. The 1980 Lagos Plan of Action was adopted by the Organization of African Unity. The plan suggested that Africa should minimize reliance upon the West by promoting intra-African trade. In 2002, the Organization of African Unity was succeeded by the African Union, which had as one of its goals to accelerate the "economic integration of the continent".

7. RBI Announces Dual Liquidity Infusion via OMO Purchases and Dollar–Rupee Swap Auction.

Consider the following statements regarding Government Securities in India:

(1) G-Sec are tradable instruments issued by the Central and State Governments to acknowledge public debt.

(2) Treasury Bills are long-term securities with original maturity exceeding one year.

(3) State Governments in India issue only dated securities known as State Development Loans (SDLs).

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (A)

Exp: Statement 1:

This statement is correct. Government Securities (G-Secs) are tradable debt instruments issued by the Central and State Governments to raise funds and formally acknowledge their borrowing obligations.

Statement 2:

This statement is incorrect. Treasury Bills (T-Bills) are short-term instruments with original maturities of 91 days, 182 days, or 364 days, that is, less than one year.

Statement 3:

This statement is correct. In India, State Governments issue only long-term dated securities, known as State Development Loans (SDLs), and do not issue Treasury Bills.

8. India Accounts for One-Third of Global Rabies Deaths, Study Highlights Preventable Crisis.

Regarding the nature of rabies, consider the following statements:

(1) Rabies is an acute viral disease of animals that can spread to humans.

(2) Rabies affects the central nervous system.

(3) Rabies is best described as a bacterial infection in humans and animals.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (B)

Exp: Statement 1:

Correct. Rabies is an acute viral disease primarily affecting animals, especially mammals, and can spread to humans through bites or scratches from infected animals.

Statement 2:

Correct. The rabies virus is neurotropic, meaning it specifically attacks the central nervous system (CNS), causing inflammation of the brain (encephalitis) and spinal cord.

Statement 3:

Incorrect. Rabies is not a bacterial infection; it is caused by a virus belonging to the Lyssavirus genus of the Rhabdoviridae family.

9. Brazil Hosts UNFCCC COP30 in Amazon, Highlights Nature-Based Solutions to Combat Climate Change.

With reference to the Amazon Rainforest, consider the following statements:

- (1) The Amazon Rainforest is a tropical rainforest (moist broadleaf) in South America.
- (2) It lies to the east of the Amazon Basin and borders the Atlantic Ocean.
- (3) The Amazon is home to bird species such as Macaws and Toucans.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (A)

Exp: Statement 1:

Correct. The Amazon Rainforest is classified as a tropical rainforest (moist broadleaf), located in South America, primarily in Brazil, and is characterized by dense vegetation, high rainfall, and rich biodiversity.

Statement 2:

Incorrect. While the Amazon Basin drains into the Atlantic Ocean, the rainforest itself does not lie along the entire eastern edge of the basin. Most of the forest is inland within the basin, not directly bordering the ocean.

Statement 3:

Correct. The Amazon hosts a variety of bird species, including Macaws, Toucans, Harpy Eagles, and many others, reflecting its high avian biodiversity.

10. EDB and IRENA join efforts to develop renewable energy in Central Asia.

Consider the following statements regarding IRENA -

- (1) It is an intergovernmental organisation, it was officially founded in Bonn, Germany, in January 2009.
 - (2) Currently it has 167 members, India is the 77th Founding Member of IRENA.
 - (3) It has its headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.
- Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (B)

Exp: IRENA is an intergovernmental organisation, it was officially founded in Bonn, Germany, in January 2009.

Currently it has 167 members, India is the 77th Founding Member of IRENA.

It has its headquarters in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

Major Functions:

It supports countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future, and serves as the principal platform for international cooperation, a centre of excellence, and a repository of policy, technology, resource and financial knowledge on renewable energy.

11. Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Donates Entire Ancestral Property to PM Relief Fund. Consider the following statements regarding PMNRF -

- (1) PMNRF was instituted in 1975 by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
- (2) The fund consists entirely of public contributions and does not get any budgetary support.
- (3) The fund is currently used to provide support to people affected by natural and man-made disasters.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans:

Exp:

PMNRF was instituted in 1948 by then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, to assist displaced persons from Pakistan. The fund is currently used to provide support to people affected by natural and man-made disasters.

This includes natural disasters like floods, cyclones, and earthquakes, and man-made disasters like major accidents, acid attacks, and riots.

The fund consists entirely of public contributions and does not get any budgetary support.

The corpus of the fund is invested with banks in fixed deposits. Disbursements are made with the approval of the Prime Minister.

All donations towards the PMNRF are notified for 100% deduction from taxable income under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

12. India to Host Global Big Cats Summit 2026 in New Delhi.

Consider the following statements regarding Snow Leopard -

(1) Scientific name of Snow Leopard is Panthera uncia.

(2) India is a part to the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection (GSLEP) Programme since 2000.

(3) In 2019, First National Protocol was also launched on Snow Leopard Population Assessment.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (A)

Exp: Snow Leopard

Scientific Name: Panthera uncia

They have a vast but fragmented distribution across the mountainous landscape of central Asia.

The Government of India has identified the snow leopard as a flagship species for the high-altitude Himalayas.

India is also party to the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection (GSLEP) Programme since 2013.

HimalSanrakshak: It is a community volunteer programme, to protect snow leopards, launched in October 2020.

In 2019, First National Protocol was also launched on Snow Leopard Population Assessment which has been very useful for monitoring populations.

13. Prime Minister Pays Tribute to Social Reformer Mannathu Padmanabhan on His Birth Anniversary.

With reference to Mannathu Padmanabhan, consider the following statements:

(1) He founded the Nair Service Society (NSS) to institutionalise social reform through education and organised community action.

(2) He led the Savarnajatha Satyagraha, which opposed the Temple Entry Proclamation issued in Travancore.

(3) He was deeply influenced by Gandhian philosophy and actively used Satyagraha as a tool against caste discrimination.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (A)

Exp: Statement 1

Mannathu Padmanabhan founded the Nair Service Society (NSS) in 1914 with the objective

of promoting social reform, education, discipline, and collective upliftment. The NSS transformed reform into an organised, institutional movement rather than individual effort, ensuring continuity and long-term impact.

Statement 2

The Savarnajatha Satyagraha, led by Mannathu Padmanabhan, supported temple entry for oppressed communities. It contributed to the moral and political pressure that eventually resulted in the Temple Entry Proclamation (1936). It did not oppose the proclamation; rather, it strengthened the movement for social equality.

Statement 3

Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, Mannathu Padmanabhan adopted Satyagraha as a non-violent method to challenge caste barriers. His leadership in Vaikom (1924) and Guruvayoor (1931) Satyagrahas placed him at the forefront of India's anti-untouchability movement.

14. NATGRID Integrated with NPR to Enable Real-Time Demographic Access for Authorised Agencies.

With reference to the National Population Register (NPR), consider the following statements:

(1) NPR contains demographic as well as family-wise details of residents living in India.

(2) NPR is prepared under the provisions of the Citizenship Act, 1955 and the Citizenship Rules, 2003.

(3) Registration in the NPR is voluntary and applies only to Indian citizens.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (B)

Exp: Statement 1

The National Population Register (NPR) is a comprehensive database that records demographic details (such as name, age, sex, address) along with family-related information (family relationships). It covers all usual residents of India, irrespective of citizenship status, making it broader than a citizen-only register.

Statement 2

The NPR is prepared under the legal framework of the Citizenship Act, 1955, and the Citizenship

(Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003. These rules empower the Central Government to create and maintain population and citizenship-related registers.

Statement 3

Registration in the NPR is mandatory, not voluntary, for every usual resident of India. Further, it applies to both citizens and non-citizens residing in India. This is a key distinction often tested in examinations to differentiate NPR from NRC.

15. DRDO Successfully Conducts Salvo Launch of Indigenous Pralay Missiles off Odisha Coast. With reference to the Pralay missile, consider the following statements:

(1) Pralay is a solid-propellant, surface-to-surface missile with a strike range between 150 km and 500 km.

(2) Pralay is an intercontinental ballistic missile designed exclusively for nuclear warheads.

(3) Pralay can carry payloads ranging from 500 kg to 1000 kg and be launched from a mobile platform.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans:

Exp:

Statement 1

The Pralay missile is an indigenously developed solid-fuelled surface-to-surface missile with a short-range capability of approximately 150–500 km. Solid propulsion ensures quick launch readiness, higher reliability, and easier storage, which are critical for tactical battlefield deployment.

Statement 2

Pralay is not an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). It falls under the short-range, quasi-ballistic missile category and is primarily designed for conventional precision strike roles. It is capable of carrying multiple types of warheads, not exclusively nuclear, making it suitable for tactical and theatre-level operations.

Statement 3

The missile has a payload capacity of about 500–1000 kg, allowing flexibility in warhead configuration. Its mobile launcher-based deployment enhances operational mobility, survivability, and rapid repositioning, providing

a significant advantage in dynamic combat scenarios.

16.

Scientists Probe Tajikistan Ice Cores to Decode Pamir–Karakoram Glacier Anomaly Amid Global Warming.

Consider the following statements regarding the Karakoram Range:

(1) The Karakoram Range forms a geographical link between the Hindu Kush, Pamirs, Kunlun Mountains, and the Himalayas.

(2) K2, located in the Karakoram Range, is the highest peak in Asia.

(3) The Karakoram Range extends across India, Pakistan, China, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans:

Exp:

Statement 1:

Explanation: Correct. The Karakoram lies at the center of a complex Asian mountain system. To the west lies the Hindu Kush, northwest the Pamirs, northeast the Kunlun Mountains, and southeast the Himalayas. It acts as a geographical bridge, connecting these major mountain ranges.

Statement 2:

Explanation: Incorrect. While K2 (8,611 meters) is the second-highest mountain in the world, the highest peak in Asia is Mount Everest (8,849 meters), located in the Himalayas. K2 is the highest peak in the Karakoram but not in all of Asia.

Statement 3:

Explanation: Correct. The Karakoram stretches across five countries:

India (Ladakh region)

Pakistan (Gilgit-Baltistan)

China (Xinjiang region)

Afghanistan (northern regions)

Tajikistan (eastern Pamirs connecting to Karakoram)

17.

Union Home Minister Pays Tribute to Freedom Fighters, Extends Wishes on Goa Liberation Day.

Consider the following statements regarding the Goa Liberation Movement:

(1) The Goa National Congress was founded in 1928 by Tristão de Bragança Cunha during the Calcutta session.

(2) Operation Vijay (1961) was launched to annex Goa, Daman, and Diu after diplomatic efforts with Portugal failed.

(3) Goa attained statehood immediately after its annexation by India in 1961.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (B)

Exp: Statement 1:

Explanation: Correct. The Goa National Congress (GNC) was established to lead the anti-colonial struggle in Goa, inspired by India's freedom movement. Tristão de Bragança Cunha, a Goan nationalist, founded it during the 1928 Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress. The GNC coordinated civil resistance, political mobilization, and advocacy for integration with India.

Statement 2:

Explanation: Correct. After India's independence in 1947, several diplomatic negotiations with Portugal to end colonial rule in Goa failed. India launched Operation Vijay on 18–19 December 1961, a military operation to annex Goa, Daman, and Diu, effectively ending 451 years of Portuguese rule. This marked the successful culmination of the Goa liberation movement.

Statement 3:

Explanation: Incorrect. After annexation, Goa, along with Daman and Diu, became a Union Territory. It did not gain statehood immediately. Only on 30 May 1987, Goa was granted full statehood, becoming the 25th state of India, while Daman and Diu continued as a separate Union Territory.

18. Union Home Minister Pays Tribute to Freedom Fighters on Balidaan Diwas, Honoring Kakori Martyrs.

Consider the following statements regarding the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) and Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA):

(1) The assassination of JP Saunders in 1928 was carried out by HRA members to protest the Simon Commission.

(2) The HRA was founded in 1924 in Kanpur by leaders including Ram Prasad Bismil and Sachindra Nath Sanyal.

(3) The HRA was reorganized as the HSRA in 1928 under Bhagat Singh, officially adopting socialism as a goal.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (C)

Exp: Statement 1:

Explanation: Incorrect. The assassination of JP Saunders on 17 December 1928 was carried out by HRA/HSRA members including Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru, and Chandrashekhar Azad to avenge the death of Lala Lajpat Rai, who was fatally injured during a police lathi charge while protesting the Simon Commission. The purpose was retribution, not a direct protest against the Commission itself.

Statement 2:

Explanation: Correct. The Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) was founded in October 1924 in Kanpur by revolutionaries such as Ram Prasad Bismil, Sachindra Nath Sanyal, Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee, and Shiv Verma. Its goal was to organize an armed uprising against British rule and establish a federal republic in India.

Statement 3:

Explanation: Correct. In 1928, under the leadership of Chandrashekhar Azad, the HRA was reorganized and renamed the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). The organization formally adopted socialism as its guiding ideology, influenced by global revolutionary movements, including the Russian Revolution of 1917, and sought to combine armed resistance with socio-economic reform.

19. Supreme Court Reasserts Federalism, Limits Governor's Discretion in State–Centre Relations.

Which of the following are the discretionary powers given to the Governor of a State?

- (1) Sending a report to the President of India for imposing the President's rule
 (2) Appointing the Ministers
 (3) Reserving certain bills passed by the State Legislature for consideration of the President of India

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (A)

Exp: The Governor performs the same duties as the President, but for the State.

He/She can withhold his assent to a bill and send it to the President for his approval. He/She can reserve certain bills passed by the State Legislature for consideration of the President of India.

He/She can override the advice of the council of ministers if specifically permitted by the President during emergency rule per Article 353. Article 356 also states that the President can invoke President rule in a state on the report of the governor.

20. Government Boosts Ease of Doing Business for MSMEs Nationwide.

Consider the following statements about the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs):

(1) The MSMEs comprise a dynamic sector of the Indian economy providing large employment opportunities.

(2) MSMEs require low capital cost and help industrialization of backward regions.

(3) MSMEs contribute enormously to socio-economic development.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) (D) All of the above

Ans: (D)

Exp: MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise) term was introduced by the Government of India in agreement with the Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006. MSMEs employ about 12 crore people, making them the second-largest source of jobs after agriculture.

MSMEs are an important sector of the Indian economy and have contributed immensely to the country's socio-economic development.

MSMEs not only play a crucial role in providing large employment opportunities at comparatively lower capital cost than large industries but also help in industrialization of rural & backward areas.

It helps in reducing regional imbalances, assuring more equitable distribution of national income and wealth.

Recently, the Government of India highlighted the substantial strides made by ISRO in integrating AI and Machine Learning.

Consider the following statements regarding ISRO's Future Endeavors -

(1) Bharatiya Antariksh Station (India's Space Station): The first module, capable of conducting experiments with robots, will launch by 2028.

(2) Gaganyaan: Gaganyaan mission aims to send humans to space and return them safely to Earth.

(3) SPADEX Experiment: It is a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) observatory being jointly developed by NASA and ISRO.

Which of the above is/are correct?

(A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)

(C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (B)

Exp:

ISRO's Future Endeavors:

Chandrayaan-4 Mission: Planned by ISRO to bring back samples from the Moon within four years.

Bharatiya Antariksh Station (India's Space Station): The first module, capable of conducting experiments with robots, will launch by 2028.

SPADEX Experiment: Demonstrates autonomous docking capability between two spacecraft.

Involves launching connected satellites that separate, travel a distance, and then reconnect.

NISAR: NASA-ISRO SAR (NISAR) is a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) observatory being jointly developed by NASA and ISRO.

Gaganyaan: Gaganyaan mission aims to send humans to space and return them safely to Earth.

The mission will consist of two unmanned flights and one manned flight, using the GSLV Mk III launch vehicle and a human-rated orbital module.

22.

Moldova signs ISA Framework Agreement, joins global efforts for clean energy & sustainability.

Consider the following statements regarding Moldova -

(1) Moldova is a landlocked country bordering Ukraine and Romania.

(2) Moldova get independence from Soviet Union in 2010.

(3) Moldova was previously known as Bessarabia.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (A)

Exp: Moldova:

India and Moldova established diplomatic relations in 1992 following Moldova's independence after the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991.

Moldova (Previous name: Bessarabia) is a landlocked country bordering Ukraine and Romania.

It is in the northeastern corner of the Balkan Peninsula.

Most of Moldova lies between the great meandering Prut and Dniester rivers.

Transnistria is a tiny breakaway region of Moldova to the east of river Dniester.

23. Lok Sabha passes Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha Bill 2025.

Consider the following statements regarding insurance -

(1) The Life Insurance Corporation of India Act was passed by the Parliament in the year 1956.

(2) Dr. John Mathai had founded the Hindusthan Insurance Society, which later became Life Insurance Corporation.

(3) The Oriental Life Insurance Company is the first company in India, established in Kolkata in 1818.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (A)

Exp: The Life Insurance Corporation of India Act was passed by the Parliament in the year 1956.

The Life Insurance Corporation of India was founded when the Parliament of India passed the Life Insurance of India Act that nationalized the insurance industry in India.

Life Insurance Corporation of India is an Indian state-owned insurance group and investment corporation owned by the Government of India. The Oriental Life Insurance Company, the first company in India offering life insurance coverage, was established in Kolkata in 1818.

Surendranath Tagore had founded the Hindusthan Insurance Society, which later became Life Insurance Corporation.

Bulgaria, Romania Race to Avoid Impact of US Sanctions on Russia's Lukoil.

Consider the following statements regarding Bulgaria and Romania -

(1) Bulgaria is located in the Balkans in South-eastern Europe, borders Black Sea.

(2) Romania, Semi-Presidential Republic, is bounded by Black Sea to the southeast.

(3) Bulgaria's capital is Bucharest and Romania's capital is Sofia.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (B)

Exp: Bulgaria:

Capital: Sofia.

Geography: Bulgaria is located in the Balkans in Southeastern Europe. It borders the Black Sea and lies between Romania and Turkey.

Bulgaria is bounded by Romania to the north, Turkey and Greece to the south, North Macedonia to the southwest, and Serbia to the west.

Political System: Parliamentary Republic.

Foreign Relations: Bulgaria is a member of the United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union, and the Schengen Area.

Romania:

Capital: Bucharest.

Geography: Romania is bounded by Ukraine to the north, Moldova to the northeast, the Black Sea to the southeast, Bulgaria to the south, Serbia to the southwest, and Hungary to the west.

Political System: Semi-Presidential Republic.

Foreign Relations: Romania is a member of the UN, NATO, EU, Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

25. India's National Quantum Mission (NQM) aims to launch a quantum satellite in 2-3 years.

Consider the following statements -

(1) Micius is the world's first quantum communications satellite, launched by USA in 2023.

(2) Sputnik was the first artificial Earth satellite launched by the Soviet Union on 4th October 1957.

(3) National Quantum Mission launched in 2023 with a Rs. 60,000 crore investment from 2023-24 to 2030-31.

Which of the above is/are correct?

- (A) Only (1) and (3) (B) Only (1) and (2)
 (C) Only (2) and (3) (D) None of the above

Ans: (C)

Exp: Micius is the world's first quantum communications satellite, launched by China in 2016.

The satellite serves as the source of pairs of entangled photons.

Sputnik was the first artificial Earth satellite launched by the Soviet Union into an elliptical low Earth orbit on 4th October 1957.

The NQM, launched in 2023 with a Rs. 60,000 crore investment from 2023-24 to 2030-31, aims to advance Quantum Technologies in India and position India as a global leader in Quantum Technologies and Applications (QTA).

26. Consider the following statements:

1. In 1917, Mahatma Gandhi organised a satyagraha to support the peasants of the Kheda district of Gujarat.

2. Sanchi Stupa was built by Ashoka.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) 1 only (B) 2 only
 (C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (B)

Exp: The Kheda Satyagraha of 1918, in the Kheda district of Gujarat, India during the period of the British Raj, was a Satyagraha movement organised by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

27. Consider the following statements:

1. Mahatma Gandhi raised the slogan "Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it".

2. Rana Sanga has built the Vijay Stambha (Tower of Victory) in Chittorgarh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) 1 only (B) 2 only
 (C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (D)

Exp: The slogan 'Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it' was given by Bal Gangadhar Tilak. The Vijaya Stambha is an imposing victory monument located within Chittor Fort in Chittorgarh, Rajasthan, India. The tower was

constructed by the Mewar king, Rana Kumbha, in 1448 to commemorate his victory over the combined armies of Malwa and Gujarat led by Mahmud Khilji.

Consider the following statements:

1. The founder of Satyashodhak Samaj was Jyotiba Phule.

2. Vedanta Sabha was founded by Swami Vivekananda.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) 1 only (B) 2 only
 (C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (A)

Exp:

Vedanta Sabha was founded by Raja Ram Mohan Ray in 1816 at Kolkata.

Consider the following statements:

1. In 1798 AD, East India Company started production of coffee experimentally.

2. Business production of coffee commences from India in 1820 AD.

Which of the statements given above is/are NOT correct?

- (A) 1 only (B) 2 only
 (C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (D)

Exp:

In India, coffee commercial plantations started after 1820 in the south of the country with British enterprise and investment.

30.

Consider the following statements:

1. The Mars planet's satellite is Phobos and Demos.

2. On Mars, the highest mountain in the Solar System is Nix Olympia.

3. Nix Olympia is three times higher than the Everest.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) Only 1 (B) 1 and 2 only
 (C) 1 and 3 only (D) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (D)

Exp:

Deimos (fear and terror), which were discovered by the American astronomer Asaph Hall in 1877. The highest mountain on Mars is also the highest mountain and volcano in the entire solar system. It is called Olympus Mons (formerly Nix Olympica) and is 16 miles (24 kilometers) high

which makes it about three times higher than Mt. Everest.

31. Consider the following statements:
1. India has about 2.45 percent of the world's surface area and 4 percent of water resources.
 2. About 16 percent of world population is found in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) 1 only
 (B) 2 only
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (C)

Exp: India accounts for about 2.45 per cent of world's surface area, 4 per cent of the world's water resources and about 16 per cent of world's population. The total water available from precipitation in the country in a year is about 4,000 cubic km.

32. Consider the following statements:
1. The parliamentary government is also called the cabinet government or responsible government or government of Westminster.
 2. It is popular in UK, Japan, and Canada etc.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) 1 only (B) 2 only
 (C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (C)

Exp: The Parliamentary Government is also known as cabinet government or Responsible Government responsible and Westminster forms of government and is prevalent in Britain, Japan Canada, India and other countries.

33. Consider the following statements:
1. Length of 1-degree latitude is 110.569 km on Equator.
 2. This length is 111.7 km on the poles.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) 1 only (B) 2 only
 (C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (C)

Exp: Each degree of latitude is approximately 69 miles (111 kilometers) apart. The range varies (due to the earth's slightly ellipsoid shape) from

68.703 miles (110.567 km) at the equator to 69.407 (111.699 km) at the poles.

34. Consider the following statements:

1. Earth rotates 15 degrees in one hour.
2. Earth revolves from west to east.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) 1 only (B) 2 only
 (C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (C)

Exp: 360 degrees in a full rotation, divided by 24 hours is 15 degrees an hour. 60 minutes in an hour divided by fifteen degrees an hour is four minutes.

When viewed above the North Pole, the Earth rotates counter clockwise, from west to east. This is also called a prograde rotation. Because of this direction of rotation, we see the sun rising every day in the east and setting in the west.

35. Which of the following statements is true?

- I. In monopoly market form, a market or an industry is dominated by a single seller.
- II. Employment is a measure of employment and labor utilization in the economy.

Select the correct option.

- (A) Only I (B) Only II
 (C) Both I & II (D) Neither I nor II

Ans: (A)

Exp: A monopoly refers to when a company and its product offerings dominate a sector or industry. Monopolies can be considered an extreme result of free-market capitalism in that absent any restriction or restraints, a single company or group becomes large enough to own all or nearly all of the market (goods, supplies, commodities, infrastructure, and assets) for a particular type of product or service. The term monopoly is often used to describe an entity that has total or near-total control of a market.

Underemployment is a measure of employment and labor utilization in the economy that looks at how well the labor force is being utilized in terms of skills, experience and availability to work. Labor that falls under the underemployment classification includes those workers who are highly skilled but working in low paying or low skill jobs and part-time workers who would prefer to be full-time.

36. Which of the following statements is true?
 I. The free market is an economic system based on supply and demand with little or no government control.
 II. Seasonal unemployment is the result of employment transitions within an economy.
 Select the correct option.

(A) Only I (B) Only II
 (C) Both I & II (D) Neither I nor II

Ans.

Exp:

The free market is an economic system based on supply and demand with little or no government control. It is a summary description of all voluntary exchanges that take place in a given economic environment. Free markets are characterized by a spontaneous and decentralized order of arrangements through which individuals make economic decisions. Based on its political and legal rules, a country's free market economy may range between very large or entirely black market. Frictional unemployment is the result of employment transitions within an economy. Frictional unemployment naturally occurs even in a growing, stable economy. Workers leaving their jobs or new workers entering the workforce both add to frictional unemployment. Frictional unemployment is the result of employment transitions within an economy. Frictional unemployment naturally occurs even in a growing, stable economy.

37. Which of the following statements is true?
 I. Current account can be regarded as one of the primary components of the balance of payments of a nation.
 II. The current account represents a country's imports and exports of goods and services
 Select the correct option

(A) Only I (B) Only II
 (C) Both I & II (D) Neither I nor II

Ans.

Exp:

The current account represents a country's imports and exports of goods and services, payments made to foreign investors, and transfers such as foreign aid. The current account may be positive (a surplus) or negative (a deficit); positive means the country is a net exporter and negative means it is a net importer of goods and services.

A country's current account balance, whether positive or negative, will be equal but opposite to its capital account balance.

A capital account deficit shows that more money is flowing out of the economy along with increase in its ownership of foreign assets and vice-versa in case of a surplus. The balance of payments contains the current account (which provides a summary of the trade of goods and services) in addition to the capital account which records all capital transactions.

38.

Consider the following statements.

1. The best and the poorest conductors of heat are respectively silver and gold.
2. Tungsten has the highest melting point of 3,410 ° C (6,170 ° F) over all metals.

Which is/are correct statement?

(A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
 (C) 1 and 2 (D) None of these

Ans.

Exp:

Lead has less metallic character, so it is a poor conductor of heat. Silver is the best conductor of both heat and electricity among metals with a thermal conduction value of about 430 W/(mK). Tungsten has the highest melting point of any metal, and at temperatures over 3410°C (6170°F), also has the highest tensile strength. It has excellent corrosion resistance and is only attacked slightly by most mineral acids. Tungsten is extremely environmentally friendly.

39.

Consider the following statements:

1. Ministry of Women and Child Development set up the Justice Rajesh Bindal Committee to presented its report on 'Inter Country Parental Child Removal Disputes Resolution Authority'.
2. Judiciary interprets the constitution.

Which of the statements given above is/are NOT correct?

(A) 1 only
 (B) 2 only
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans.

Exp:

The review power extends to the laws passed by State legislatures also. Together, the writ powers and the review power of the Court make judiciary very powerful. In particular, the review power means that the judiciary can interpret the Constitution and the laws passed by the legislature.

40. Consider the following statements:
1. Since Independence, three times National Emergency has been declared in India.
 2. There is no financial emergency declared till now in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) 1 only (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. (C)

Exp: In the history of independent India, a state of emergency has been declared thrice. The first instance was between 26 October 1962 to 10 January 1968 during the India-China war, when "the security of India" was declared as being "threatened by external aggression". The second instance was between 3 December 1971 to 21 March 1977, which was originally proclaimed during the Indo-Pakistan war. It was later extended along with the third proclamation between 25 June 1975 to 21 March 1977 under controversial circumstances of political instability under Indira Gandhi's prime ministership.

Financial emergency has never been declared. A state of financial emergency remains in force indefinitely until revoked by the president. The president can reduce the salaries of all government officials, including judges of the supreme court and high courts, in cases of a financial emergency.

41. Which of the following statements is true?
- I. A credit rating is a quantified assessment of the creditworthiness of a borrower.
 - II. Default is the failure to repay a debt including interest or principal on a loan or security.

Select the correct option.

- (A) Only I (B) Only II
(C) Both I & II (D) Neither I nor II

Ans. (C)

Exp: A credit rating is a quantified assessment of the creditworthiness of a borrower in general terms or with respect to a particular debt or financial obligation. A credit rating can be assigned to any entity that seeks to borrow money—an individual, corporation, state or provincial authority, or sovereign government.

Default is the failure to repay a debt including interest or principal on a loan or security. A default can occur when a borrower is unable to make timely payments, misses payments, or

avoids or stops making payments. Individuals, businesses, and even countries can fall prey to default if they cannot keep up their debt obligations. Default risks are often calculated well in advance by creditors.

42. Which of the following statements is true?

I. Imperfect competition refers to any economic market that does not meet the rigorous standards of a hypothetical perfectly or purely competitive market.

II. Macroeconomics is the social science that studies the implications of human action.

Select the correct option.

- (A) Only I (B) Only II
(C) Both I & II (D) Neither I nor II

Ans. (C)

Exp: Imperfect competition refers to any economic market that does not meet the rigorous standards of a hypothetical perfectly or purely competitive market. In this environment, companies sell different products and services, set their own individual prices, fight for market share and are often protected by barriers to entry and exit. Imperfect competition is common and can be found in the following types of market structures: monopolies, oligopolies, monopolistic competition, monopsonies, and oligopsonies. Microeconomics is the social science that studies the implications of human action, specifically about how those decisions affect the utilization and distribution of scarce resources. Microeconomics shows how and why different goods have different values, how individuals make more efficient or more productive decisions, and how individual's best coordinate and cooperate with one another. Generally speaking, microeconomics is considered a more complete, advanced, and settled science than macroeconomics.

43. Which of the following statements is true?

I. Budget Line is the name given to the graph that shows all the combinations of two commodities that a consumer can afford at given market prices and within the particular income level in economic terms.

II. Intermediate goods, producer goods or semi-finished products are goods.

Select the correct option.

- (A) Only I (B) Only II

(C) Both I & II (D) Neither I nor II

Ans. (C)

Exp: Budget line is to the graph that shows all the combinations of two commodities that a consumer can afford at given market prices and within the particular income level in economic terms. It is also called Budget constraint. Intermediate goods, producer goods or semi-finished products are goods, such as partly finished goods, used as inputs in the production of other goods including final goods. A firm may make and then use intermediate goods, or make and then sell, or buy then use them. In the production process, intermediate goods either become part of the final product, or are changed beyond recognition in the process. This means intermediate goods are resold among industries.

44. Consider the following minerals:

1. Calcium 2. Iron 3. Sodium

There is/are a need for the contraction of muscles in the human body from the above mentioned minerals?

(A) 1 only (B) 1 and 2 only
(C) 1 and 3 only (D) 1, 2 and 3

Ans. (C)

Exp: Calcium Important for healthy bones and teeth, helps muscles relax and contract, important in nerve functioning, blood clotting, blood pressure regulation.

Sodium Needed for proper fluid balance, nerve transmission, and muscle contraction.

45. Consider the following statements:

1. The process of becoming sperm in the male is called spermatogenesis.

2. The process of making ovum in the female is called oogenesis.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(A) 1 only (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. (C)

Exp: Spermatogenesis is the process by which haploid spermatozoa develop from germ cells in the seminiferous tubules of the testis.

Oogenesis is the process by which the female gametes, or ova, are created. The female gamete is called an ovum.

46. Consider the following statements.

1. An electric heater coil is made of tungsten.

2. The material used for making fuse element has a low melting point such as tin, lead, or zinc.

3. An ammeter (from Ampere Meter) is used to measure the current in a circuit.

Which is/are correct statement?

(A) Only 1
(B) both 1 and 2
(C) both 1 and 3
(D) All of these above

Ans. (C)

Exp: A tungsten wire not used in an electric heater. The wire used in heating elements is typically an alloy of nickel and chromium called nichrome. It resists heat and oxidation and serves as a heating element in products such as toasters and hair dryers.

47. Consider the following statements.

1. Lead chloride (HgCl_2) is a highly toxic compound that volatilizes used as an antiseptic and disinfectant.

2. lead (tetraethyl lead) is used as an antiknock agent in gasoline and jet fuels.

Which is/are correct statement?

(A) Only I (B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2 (D) None of these

Ans. (B)

Exp: Mercury chloride (HgCl_2) is a highly toxic compound. It is corrosive to mucous membranes and used as an antiseptic and disinfectant.

48. Consider the following statements:

1. Huxley said that Protoplasm is the physical basis of life.

2. In the year 1940, Purkinje first used the word protoplasm.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(A) 1 only (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. (C)

Exp: Huxley in 1868, has called it as physical basis of life because all the properties of life reside in the protoplasm.

In the year 1940, Purkinje first used the word protoplasm.

49. Consider the following statements:

1. The term plastid was first used by Schimper.

2. The functional unit of Photosynthesis is Chloroplast.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (A) 1 only (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. (C)

Exp: The plastid is a membrane-bound organelle found in the cells of plants, algae, and some other eukaryotic organisms. Plastids were discovered and named by Ernst Haeckel, but A. F. W. Schimper was the first to provide a clear definition.

Chloroplasts are organelles that conduct photosynthesis, where the photosynthetic pigment chlorophyll captures the energy from sunlight, converts it, and stores it in the energy-storage molecules ATP and NADPH.

Consider the following statements:

1. Chromoplasts are yellow, red and orange colours.
2. Centrosome was discovered by T. Boveri in 1888.

Which of the statements given above is/are NOT correct?

- (A) 1 only (B) 2 only
(C) Both 1 and 2 (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. (D)

Exp: Chromoplasts are plastids that, due to their high carotenoid content, are colored red, orange, or yellow.

The centrosome was discovered by Edouard Van Beneden in 1883, and was described and named in 1888 by Theodor Boveri.

Match The Following

1. Match the following -

Vedas	Description/Feature
(A) Rigveda	1- Collection of melodies and chants
(b) Samaveda	2- Contains spells, charms, and knowledge of everyday life
(c) Yajurveda	3- Hymns and praises to various deities
(d) Atharvaveda	4- Prose mantras for rituals and sacrifices

Options:

- (A) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4
(B) a-3, b-1, c-4, d-2
(C) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: (B)

Exp: Rigveda (A): It consists mainly of hymns and praises to various deities and is considered the oldest and most important of the four Vedas. These hymns were composed for recitation during rituals.

Samaveda (b): Primarily a collection of melodies and chants, the Samaveda sets the hymns of the Rigveda to musical notes and is used in the performance of sacred chants during sacrifices.

Yajurveda (c): This Veda contains prose mantras and formulas used in the rituals and sacrifices, serving as a guide for priests performing the ceremonies.

Atharvaveda (d): Unlike the other three Vedas, the Atharvaveda includes spells, charms, and practical knowledge related to daily life, healing, and protection, reflecting a more diverse set of contents.

2. Match the following -

Ancient Village/Site	Key Archaeological Significance
(a) Chandraketugarh	1- Early evidence of cotton cultivation and advanced crafts
(b) Kausambi	2- Ancient dockyard and evidence of maritime trade
(c) Mehrgarh	3- Fortified urban settlement with Mauryan period artifacts
(d) Lothal	4- Terracotta artifacts and evidence of ancient trade links

Options:

- (A) a-3, b-4, c-2, d-1
(B) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4
(C) a-4, b-3, c-1, d-2
(D) a-2, b-1, c-4, d-3
(C)

Ans:

Exp: Chandraketugarh (a-4):

Located in West Bengal, Chandraketugarh is famous for its terracotta artifacts and evidence of ancient trade links with Southeast Asia. It was

an important trading center during the early historic period.

Kausambi (b-3):

Kausambi was a significant fortified urban settlement during the Mauryan period. Excavations have revealed artifacts and structures from the Mauryan era, indicating its political and strategic importance in ancient India.

Mehrgarh (c-1):

Mehrgarh, in present-day Pakistan, is one of the earliest sites with evidence of cotton cultivation and advanced crafts such as bead-making and pottery during the Neolithic period, marking the transition from hunter-gatherer to agricultural societies.

Lothal (d-2):

Lothal, part of the Indus Valley Civilization in Gujarat, is renowned for its ancient dockyard, showing sophisticated knowledge of maritime trade and urban planning.

3. Match the following dance forms in India -

(a) West Bengal	1- Jatra
(b) Uttar Pradesh	2- Chholiya
(c) Uttarakhand	3- Nautanki
(d) Tripura	4- Hojagiri

Options-

(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4

(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: (D)

Exp: West Bengal - Jatra

Uttar Pradesh - Nautanki

Uttarakhand - Chholiya

Tripura - Hojagiri

4. Match the following dams in India -

(a) Kadana dam	1- Mahi River
(b) Dantiwada Dam	2- Banas River
(c) Pandoh Dam	3- Beas River

Options

(A) a-1, b-2, c-3

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1

(C) a-3, b-2, c-1

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: (A)

Exp: Kadana dam - Mahi River

Dantiwada Dam - Banas River

Pandoh Dam - Beas River

5.

Match the following committees with their recommendations -

(a) SS Nadkarni Committee	1- public sector banks trading
(b) Urjit Patel Committee	2- Examining the monetary framework
(c) Vaghul Committee	3- Matters of Indirect Taxes
(d) Rekhi Committee	4- India's money market

Options-

(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4

(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

(C)

Ans:

Exp:

SS Nadkarni Committee - public sector banks trading

Urjit Patel Committee - Examining the monetary framework

Vaghul Committee - India's money market

Rekhi Committee - Matters of Indirect Taxes

6.

Match the following maritime exercises with name of the country -

(a) IMCOR	1- Malaysia
(b) Indra	2- Russia
(c) SIMBEX	3- Singapore

Options

(A) a-1, b-2, c-3

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1

(C) a-3, b-2, c-1

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: (A)

Exp:

IMCOR Malaysia

Indra Russia

SIMBEX Singapore

7.

Match the following Folk Dances of India -

(a) Assam	1- Bagurumba
(b) Bihar	2- Panwariya
(c) Gujarat	3- Gugga
(d) Haryana	4- Bhavai

Options-

(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4

(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: (C)

Exp: Assam – Bagurumba
Bihar – Panwariya
Gujarat – Bhavai
Haryana – Gugga

8. Match the following Bird Sanctuary of India -

(a) Haryana	1- Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary
(b) Karnataka	2- Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary
(c) Maharashtra	3- Mayani Bird Sanctuary

Options

- (A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: (A)

Exp: Haryana - Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary
Karnataka - Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary
Maharashtra - Mayani Bird Sanctuary

9. Match the following Waterfalls in the World -

(a) Iguazu Falls	1- Largest waterfall system in the world.
(b) Niagara Falls	2- Situated in South Africa on the Zambezi river
(c) Victoria Falls	3- Lie in the states of New York
(d) Angel Falls	4- World's highest uninterrupted waterfalls

Options-

- (A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: (D)

Exp: Iguazu Falls - Largest waterfall system in the world.

Niagara Falls - Lie in the states of New York

Victoria Falls - Situated in South Africa on the Zambezi River

Angel Falls - World's highest uninterrupted waterfalls

10. Match the following committees and their recommendations -

(a) Tandon Committee	1- Following up for credit
(b) R V Gupta Committee	2- For Small Savings

(c) Raja Chelliah Committee	3- Reforms in Tax
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Options

- (A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: (A)

Exp: Tandon Committee - Following up for credit
R V Gupta Committee - For Small Savings
Raja Chelliah Committee - Reforms in Tax

11. Match the following:

Event / Leader / Organization	Detail / Year / Region
(a) HSRA formation	1- Planned by HRA in 1925 to fund armed struggle
(b) Malabar Rebellion	2- 1922, led Gandhi to suspend Non-Cooperation Movement
(c) Kakori Conspiracy	3- 1921, Mappila uprising in Kerala influenced by Khilafat Movement
(d) Chauri Chaura Incident	4- 1928, Chandrashekhar Azad reorganized HRA adopting socialism

Options:

- (A) a-4, b-3, c-1, d-2
(B) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4
(C) a-3, b-1, c-2, d-4
(D) a-2, b-4, c-1, d-3

Ans: (A)

Exp: HSRA formation → 1928 (d-4)
Malabar Rebellion → 1921 (b-3)
Kakori Conspiracy → 1925 (c-1)
Chauri Chaura Incident → 1922 (d-2)

12. Match the following:

Mountain Range	Detail / Feature
(a) Aravalli Hills	1- Highest peak: Kanchenjunga; part of Himalayas
(b) Western Ghats	2- Oldest fold mountains; runs across Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat
(c) Eastern Ghats	3- Runs parallel to eastern coast; lower elevation than Western Ghats
(d) Himalayas	4- Runs parallel to western coast; UNESCO World

	Heritage Site; biodiversity hotspot
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Options:

(A) a-2, b-4, c-3, d-1

(B) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

(C) a-2, b-3, c-4, d-1

(D) a-3, b-4, c-2, d-1

Ans: (A)

Exp: Aravalli Hills: Oldest fold mountains, extending across Rajasthan, Haryana, and Gujarat.

Western Ghats: Parallel to western coast, rich biodiversity, UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Eastern Ghats: Parallel to eastern coast, lower elevation, discontinuous range.

Himalayas: Highest mountain range, Kanchenjunga is the highest peak in India, part of the greater Himalayas.

13. Match the following -

(a) Gujarat	1- Saputara Lake, Bor talav, Dharoi Dam
(b) Haryana	2- Futala Lake, Tansa Lake, Tulsi Lake
(c) Maharashtra	3- Damdama Lake, Karna Lake, Sannihit Sarovar
(d) Puducherry	4- Bahour Lake, Ousteri Lake, Velrampet Lake

Options-

(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4

(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: (D)

Exp: Gujarat - Saputara Lake, Bor talav, Dharoi Dam
Haryana - Damdama Lake, Karna Lake, Sannihit Sarovar

Maharashtra - Futala Lake, Tansa Lake, Tulsi Lake

Puducherry - Bahour Lake, Ousteri Lake, Velrampet Lake

14. Match the following UNESCO World Heritage Sites -

(a) Humayun's Tomb	1- 1993
(b) Western Ghats	2- 2012
(c) Dholavira	3- 2021

Options

(A) a-1, b-2, c-3

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1

(C) a-3, b-2, c-1

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: (A)

Exp: Humayun's Tomb - 1993

Western Ghats - 2012

Dholavira - 2021

15. Match the following ISRO Chairmen with their significant achievements:

Chairman	Significant Achievement
A. Vikram Sarabhai	1. Father of Indian Space Program
B. Satish Dhawan	2. Led the development of PSLV
C. K. Kasturirangan	3. Initiated the Mars Orbiter Mission
D. K. Sivan	4. Spearheaded the Chandrayaan-2 mission

Options:

(A) A-1, B-2, C-3, D-4

(B) A-3, B-2, C-1, D-4

(C) A-2, B-3, C-4, D-1

(D) A-1, B-4, C-2, D-3

Ans: (A)

Exp: A. Vikram Sarabhai is recognized as the Father of the Indian Space Program.

B. Satish Dhawan was pivotal in the development of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).

C. K. Kasturirangan was behind the Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan).

D. K. Sivan led the Chandrayaan-2 mission to explore the Moon.

16. Match the following Constitutional Provisions Regarding the Vice-President:

Provision	Details
(a) Election of the Vice-President	1- Article 66
(b) Term of office of Vice-President	2- Article 67
(c) Disqualification of Vice-President	3- Article 68
(d) Vacancy of office of Vice-President	4- Article 69

Options:

(A) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4

(B) a-2, b-3, c-4, d-1

(C) a-1, b-3, c-4, d-2

(D) a-1, b-4, c-2, d-3

Ans: (A)

Exp: Article 66 deals with the election of the Vice-President, specifying the method of election by an electoral college.

Article 67 defines the term of office of the Vice-President, which is five years.

Article 68 explains the disqualification of the Vice-President, including provisions for a person not to be qualified for election.

Article 69 addresses the vacancy in the office of the Vice-President and the procedure for filling the vacancy.

17. Match the following -

Provision	Details
(a) Saudi Arabia	1- Largest economy in the Gulf
(b) UAE	2- Known for Burj Khalifa
(c) Qatar	3- Hosts FIFA World Cup 2022
(d) Oman	4- Famous for Frankincense production

Options:

(A) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

(B) a-4, b-2, c-3, d-1

(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3

(D) a-3, b-1, c-2, d-4

Ans: (A)

Exp: Saudi Arabia is the largest economy in the Gulf due to its oil wealth.

UAE is known for its iconic skyscraper, Burj Khalifa.

Qatar hosted the FIFA World Cup in 2022.

Oman is famous for its production of Frankincense, a historically valued resin.

18. Match the following -

Animal	Scientific Name
(a) Red Fox	1- <i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
(b) Koala	2- <i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i>
(c) Platypus	3- <i>Ornithorhynchus anatinus</i>
(d) Bald Eagle	4- <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>

Options:

(A) a-3, b-2, c-4, d-1

(B) a-1, b-4, c-2, d-3

(C) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4

(D) a-1, b-3, c-4, d-2

Ans: (A)

Exp: The scientific name of the Red Fox is *Vulpes vulpes*.

The scientific name of the Koala is *Phascolarctos cinereus*.

The scientific name of the Platypus is *Ornithorhynchus anatinus*.

The scientific name of the Bald Eagle is *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*.

19. Match the Following on Scientists and Their Theories -

Scientist	Theory/Contribution
(a) Albert Einstein	1- Laws of Motion
(b) Isaac Newton	2- Theory of Relativity
(c) Charles Darwin	3- Germ Theory of Disease
(d) Nicolaus Copernicus	4- Theory of Evolution
(e) Louis Pasteur	5- Heliocentric Model of the Solar System

Options:

(A) a-2, b-1, c-4, d-5, e-3

(B) a-1, b-2, c-5, d-4, e-3

(C) a-3, b-1, c-4, d-2, e-5

(D) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4, e-5

Ans: (A)

Exp: Albert Einstein contributed the Theory of Relativity (a-2).

Isaac Newton is known for the Laws of Motion (b-1).

Charles Darwin proposed the Theory of Evolution (c-4).

Nicolaus Copernicus developed the Heliocentric Model of the Solar System (d-5).

Louis Pasteur formulated the Germ Theory of Disease (e-3).

20. Match the Following on River Interlinking Projects

River Interlinking Project	Details/Objective
(a) Ken-Betwa Link Project	1- Linking Godavari and Krishna Rivers
(b) Par-Tapi-Narmada Link	2- Water transfer from Himalayan rivers to Peninsular rivers
(c) Godavari-Krishna Link	3- Diverting surplus water to drought-prone Bundelkhand region
(d) Manas-Sankosh-Tista-Ganga	4- Linking Rivers in Gujarat and Maharashtra
(e) Damanganga-Pinjal Link	5- Providing water supply to Mumbai

Options:

(A) a-3, b-4, c-1, d-2, e-5

- (B) a-1, b-3, c-5, d-2, e-4
(C) a-2, b-4, c-3, d-5, e-1
(D) a-4, b-1, c-3, d-2, e-5

Ans: (A)

Exp: Ken-Betwa Link Project: Aimed at transferring surplus water to the drought-prone Bundelkhand region (a-3).

Par-Tapi-Narmada Link: Focuses on linking rivers in Gujarat and Maharashtra (b-4).

Godavari-Krishna Link: Facilitates water transfer between the Godavari and Krishna rivers (c-1).

Manas-Sankosh-Tista-Ganga: Proposed Himalayan project for water transfer to Peninsular rivers (d-2).

Damanganga-Pinjal Link: Aims to provide water supply to Mumbai (e-5).

21. Match the following:

Virus / Feature	Characteristic / Disease
(a) Hepatitis D virus	1- Causes hemorrhagic fever, transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes
(b) Ebola virus	2- Requires Hepatitis B virus to replicate
(c) Influenza A virus	3- RNA virus with segmented genome, causes respiratory infection
(d) Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	4- DNA virus associated with cervical cancer
(e) Zika virus	5- Causes severe hemorrhagic fever, high mortality

Options:

- (A) a-2, b-5, c-3, d-4, e-1
(B) a-4, b-2, c-5, d-3, e-1
(C) a-2, b-4, c-3, d-5, e-1
(D) a-3, b-5, c-2, d-4, e-1

Ans: (A)

Exp: Hepatitis D virus → Needs Hepatitis B to replicate (a-2)

Ebola virus → Causes severe hemorrhagic fever (b-5)

Influenza A → Segmented RNA virus causing respiratory illness (c-3)

HPV → DNA virus linked to cervical cancer (d-4)

Zika virus → Mosquito-borne, causes fever and microcephaly (e-1)

22. Match the following:

Virus / Disease	Key Feature / Transmission
(a) Hantavirus	1- Causes hemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome, transmitted by rodents
(b) Chikungunya virus	2- Mosquito-borne virus causing high fever and joint pain
(c) Marburg virus	3- Filovirus causing severe hemorrhagic fever
(d) Rotavirus	4- Leading cause of severe diarrhea in infants and young children
(e) Lassa virus	5- Rodent-borne virus causing hemorrhagic fever, endemic in West Africa

Options:

- (A) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4, e-5
(B) a-5, b-1, c-2, d-4, e-3
(C) a-1, b-3, c-5, d-2, e-4
(D) a-2, b-4, c-3, d-1, e-5

Ans: (A)

Exp: Hantavirus → Hemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome, rodent-borne (a-1)

Chikungunya virus → Mosquito-borne fever with severe joint pain (b-2)

Marburg virus → Filovirus causing severe hemorrhagic fever (c-3)

Rotavirus → Leading cause of severe diarrhea in children (d-4)

Lassa virus → Rodent-borne hemorrhagic fever, endemic to West Africa (e-5)

23. Match the following states with their tiger reserves: -

(a) Andhra Pradesh	1- Srisailem Tiger Reserve
(b) Bihar	2- Achanakmar Tiger Reserve
(c) Chhattisgarh	3- Valmiki National Park
(d) Jharkhand	4- Palamau Tiger Reserve

Options-

- (A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: (D)

Exp: Andhra Pradesh - Srisailem Tiger Reserve
Bihar - Valmiki National Park
Chhattisgarh - Achanakmar Tiger Reserve
Jharkhand - Palamau Tiger Reserve

24. Match the following temples with their locations:-

(a) Brihadeeswara Temple	1- Tamil Nadu
(b) Chennakesava Temple	2- Karnataka
(c) Durgiana Temple	3- Punjab

Options

(A) a-1, b-2, c-3

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1

(C) a-3, b-2, c-1

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: (A)

Exp: Brihadeeswara Temple - Tamil Nadu
Chennakesava Temple - Karnataka
Durgiana Temple - Punjab

25. Match the following Dams in India and their associated rivers -

(a) Indira Sagar Dam	1- Narmada
(b) Nagarjuna Sagar Dam	2- Bhagirathi
(c) Hirakud Dam	3- Mahanadi
(d) Tehri Dam	4- Krishna

Options-

(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4

(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: (A)

Exp: Indira Sagar Dam - Narmada
Nagarjuna Sagar Dam - Krishna
Hirakud Dam - Mahanadi
Tehri Dam - Bhagirathi

26. Match the following Government Schemes in India -

(a) Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS)	1- April 1, 2021
(b) Ayushman Sahakar Scheme	2- October 19, 2020
(c) NIRVIK Scheme (Niryat Rin Vikas Yojana)	3- February 1, 2020

Options

(A) a-1, b-2, c-3

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1

(C) a-3, b-2, c-1

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: (A)

Exp: Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) - April 1, 2021
Ayushman Sahakar Scheme - October 19, 2020
NIRVIK Scheme (Niryat Rin Vikas Yojana) - February 1, 2020

27. Match the Following: Important Hindu Pilgrimage Sites

Column A (Pilgrimage Site)	Column B (Associated Location/Feature)
(a) Somnath	1. Temple of Lord Shiva on the banks of the Kaveri
(b) Rameswaram	2. One of the 12 Jyotirlingas in Gujarat
(c) Kedarnath	3. Char Dham site in the Himalayas
(d) Tiruvannamalai	4. Arunachala Hill Shrine of Lord Shiva in Tamil Nadu
	5. Temple connected with Ram's journey in the Ramayana

Options:

(A) a-2, b-5, c-3, d-4

(B) a-1, b-5, c-2, d-4

(C) a-3, b-5, c-4, d-1

(D) a-2, b-4, c-3, d-5

Ans: (A)

Exp: Somnath (a-2): First among the 12 Jyotirlingas, located in Gujarat on the Arabian Sea coast.
Rameswaram (b-5): Linked to Lord Rama's journey in the Ramayana and one of the Char Dham sites in the south.
Kedarnath (c-3): One of the Char Dham pilgrimage sites located in the Uttarakhand Himalayas.
Tiruvannamalai (d-4): Famous temple of Lord Shiva (Arunachaleswarar) at Arunachala Hill in Tamil Nadu.

28. Match the Following: Important Doctrines

Column A (Doctrine)	Column B (Description)
(a) Monroe Doctrine	1. Focuses on non-alignment and maintaining sovereign independence
(b) Truman Doctrine	2. Advocates containment of communism

(c) Bush Doctrine	3. Right to pre-emptive action against perceived threats
(d) Brezhnev Doctrine	4. USSR's policy to intervene if socialism threatened in satellite states
	5. Encourages Western Hemisphere as US sphere of influence

Options:

- (A) a-5, b-2, c-3, d-4
(B) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-5
(C) a-5, b-3, c-2, d-1
(D) a-4, b-1, c-3, d-2

Ans: (A)

Exp: Monroe Doctrine (a-5): US policy (1823) declaring the Western Hemisphere as its sphere of influence, opposing European colonialism.
Truman Doctrine (b-2): US Cold War policy aiming to contain communism by supporting nations resisting Soviet influence.
Bush Doctrine (c-3): Post-9/11 US foreign policy allowing pre-emptive action against perceived threats.
Brezhnev Doctrine (d-4): Soviet policy to intervene in socialist countries when socialism was threatened.

29. Match the following World Organisations and Their Headquarters -

(a) World Health Organisation	1- Geneva
(b) International Monetary Fund	2- London
(c) Commonwealth	3- Washington
(d) World Trade Organisation	4- Geneva

Options-

- (A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: (D)

Exp: World Health Organisation - Geneva
International Monetary Fund - Washington
Commonwealth - London
World Trade Organisation - Geneva

30. Match the following Inventions and Their Inventors -

(a) Microphone	1- David Hughes
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(b) Safety Lamp	2- Sir Humphrey
(c) Tank	3- Sir Ernest Swington

Options

- (A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: (A)

Exp: Microphone - David Hughes
Safety Lamp - Sir Humphrey
Tank - Sir Ernest Swington

31. Match the following -

Literary Award	Country/Field
(a) Booker Prize	1- Journalism and literature (USA)
(b) Jnanpith Award	2- English language fiction
(c) Pulitzer Prize	3- Children's literature (Denmark)
(d) Hans Christian Andersen	4- Indian literature

Options:

- (A) a-2, b-4, c-1, d-3
(B) a-1, b-3, c-4, d-2
(C) a-4, b-1, c-3, d-2
(D) a-3, b-2, c-4, d-1
(A)

Ans: (A)

Exp: Booker Prize (a-2) – The Booker Prize is one of the most prestigious literary awards, given annually for English-language fiction. It is awarded to the best novel written in English and published in the UK or Ireland.

Jnanpith Award (b-4) – The Jnanpith Award is India's highest literary honor, awarded annually to an author for outstanding contributions to Indian literature in any recognized language.

Pulitzer Prize (c-1) – The Pulitzer Prize is a prestigious award in the USA for achievements in journalism, literature, and music composition. It is awarded annually in various categories.

Hans Christian Andersen Award (d-3) – This international award, often called the "Nobel Prize for children's literature," is awarded by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) in Denmark. It honors authors and illustrators who have made significant contributions to children's literature.

32. Match the Following Battles in Indian History -

Battle	Year / Outcome
--------	----------------

(a) First Battle of Tarain	1- 1527 – Babur defeated Rana Sanga
(b) Battle of Khanwa	2- 1576 – Akbar's forces defeated Maharana Pratap
(c) Battle of Haldighati	3- 1764 – British defeated Shuja-ud-Daula, Mir Qasim, and Shah Alam II
(d) Battle of Buxar	4- 1192 – Defeat of Prithviraj Chauhan by Muhammad Ghori

Options:

- (A) a-4, b-1, c-2, d-3
(B) a-1, b-3, c-4, d-2
(C) a-3, b-4, c-1, d-2
(D) a-2, b-4, c-3, d-1

Ans:

Exp:

First Battle of Tarain (1192) – Defeat of Prithviraj Chauhan by Muhammad Ghori

The Second Battle of Tarain (1192) was fought between Prithviraj Chauhan and Muhammad Ghori.

Prithviraj had won the First Battle of Tarain in 1191, but in the second battle, Ghori defeated and captured him, marking the beginning of Turkish rule in India.

Battle of Khanwa (1527) – Babur defeated Rana Sanga

This battle was fought between Babur and Rana Sanga of Mewar.

Babur used gunpowder and artillery, a technique that was new to Indian warfare.

The victory at Khanwa consolidated Mughal rule in India.

Battle of Haldighati (1576) – Akbar's forces defeated Maharana Pratap

This battle was fought between Maharana Pratap and the Mughal army led by Man Singh I under Emperor Akbar.

Maharana Pratap's army was outnumbered, leading to a Mughal victory, though Pratap continued his resistance.

Battle of Buxar (1764) – British defeated Shuja-ud-Daula, Mir Qasim, and Shah Alam II

The British East India Company defeated the combined forces of Nawab of Bengal (Mir Qasim), Nawab of Awadh (Shuja-ud-Daula), and Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II.

33.

This battle established British dominance in India and led to the Diwani rights of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa being given to the British.

Match the following Scientific Names of Animals -

(a) Sea Horse	1- Hippocampus syngnathidae
(b) Squirrel	2- Panthera tigris
(c) Tiger	3- Rodentia sciurus
(d) Zebra	4- Equidae burcheli

Options-

- (A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans:

Exp:

Sea Horse - Hippocampus syngnathidae

Squirrel - Rodentia sciurus

Tiger - Panthera tigris

Zebra - Equidae burcheli

34.

Match the following Organisation of United Nations -

Agency	Established Year
(a) Food and Agriculture Organization 1	1946
(b) International Atomic Energy Agency 2	1957
(c) International Civil Aviation Organization 3	1947

Options

- (A) a-1, b-2, c-3
(B) a-2, b-3, c-1
(C) a-3, b-2, c-1
(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans:

Exp:

Agency - Established Year

Food and Agriculture Organization - 1946

International Atomic Energy Agency - 1957

International Civil Aviation Organization - 1947

35.

Match the Following MCQ: Major Types of Hybrid Mutual Funds

Type of Fund	Description
(a) Equity Savings Fund	1- Allocates 40–60% each to equity and debt to balance growth and stability
(b) Balanced Hybrid Fund	2- Shifts between equity and debt based on

	market conditions and valuations
(c) Aggressive Hybrid Fund	3- Invests 65–80% in equity and the rest in debt for higher growth and risk
(d) Dynamic Asset Allocation / Balanced Advantage Fund	4- Invests a small portion in equity (10–25%) and the rest in debt and arbitrage for stable returns
(e) Multi-Asset Allocation Fund	5- Invests in at least three asset classes such as equity, debt, and gold

Options:

(A) a-4, b-1, c-3, d-2, e-5

(B) a-1, b-4, c-2, d-3, e-5

(C) a-4, b-2, c-3, d-1, e-5

(D) a-3, b-1, c-4, d-2, e-5

Ans:

Exp: Equity Savings Fund: Mostly debt with small equity exposure for stability.

Balanced Hybrid Fund: Equal allocation to equity and debt for moderate growth.

Aggressive Hybrid Fund: Higher equity portion for growth with more risk.

Dynamic Asset Allocation / Balanced Advantage Fund: Adjusts allocation based on market conditions.

Multi-Asset Allocation Fund: Diversifies across at least three asset classes for risk management.

36. Match the Following: Countries and Their Border Countries

Country	Border Countries
(a) Lithuania	1- Poland, Germany, Czech Republic
(b) Nepal	2- India, China
(c) Germany	3- Latvia, Belarus, Poland, Russia
(d) Switzerland	4- France, Germany, Italy, Austria
(e) Poland	5- Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Slovakia, Czech Republic

Options:

(A) a-5, b-3, c-4, d-2, e-1

(B) a-5, b-2, c-4, d-1, e-3

(C) a-3, b-5, c-1, d-4, e-2

(D) a-3, b-2, c-1, d-4, e-5

Ans:

(D)

Exp: Lithuania: Borders Latvia, Belarus, Poland, Russia (Kaliningrad).

Nepal: Borders India and China.

Germany: Borders Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark. For simplicity in this exercise, we matched main neighbors.

Switzerland: Borders France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Liechtenstein.

Poland: Borders Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Germany, Russia (Kaliningrad).

37.

Match the following:

Column 1 (Farming Term)	Column 2 (Description)
1. Agroforestry	A. Use of multiple crops on the same field
2. Mixed farming	B. Growing crops alongside trees for mutual benefit
3. Monoculture	C. Focusing on a single crop in a large area
4. Crop rotation	D. Alternating different crops in a field to maintain soil fertility
5. Intercropping	E. Growing two or more crops in proximity for better resource utilization

(A) 1-B, 2-E, 3-C, 4-D, 5-A

(B) 1-A, 2-B, 3-C, 4-D, 5-E

(C) 1-B, 2-D, 3-A, 4-C, 5-E

(D) 1-B, 2-E, 3-D, 4-C, 5-A

Ans:

Exp:

Agroforestry is the practice of integrating trees with crops to provide mutual benefits.

Mixed farming involves growing multiple crops and raising animals on the same farm.

Monoculture focuses on cultivating a single crop over a large area.

Crop rotation involves rotating different crops in the same field to help maintain soil fertility.

Intercropping refers to planting two or more crops in proximity to utilize resources efficiently.

38.

Match the following:

Column 1 (Freedom Fighter) Column 2 (Contribution)

1. Subhas Chandra Bose A. Led the Indian National Army
 2. Bhagat Singh B. Led the Salt March
 3. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel C. Integrated princely states after independence
 4. Mahatma Gandhi D. Executed for revolutionary activities
 5. Lala Lajpat Rai E. Died due to police brutality during protests
- (A) 1-B, 2-D, 3-A, 4-C, 5-E
 (B) 1-A, 2-D, 3-E, 4-B, 5-C
 (C) 1-C, 2-E, 3-A, 4-B, 5-D
 (D) 1-A, 2-D, 3-C, 4-B, 5-E

Ans: (D)

Exp: Subhas Chandra Bose led the Indian National Army.
 Bhagat Singh was executed for revolutionary activities.
 Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel integrated princely states.
 Mahatma Gandhi led the Salt March.
 Lala Lajpat Rai died due to police brutality.

39. Match the following:

Committee	Recommendation / Key Feature
(a) Tendulkar Committee (2009)	1- Initiated official poverty assessment based on calorie intake and consumption expenditure
(b) Alagh Committee (1979)	2- Focused on consumption expenditure and calorie norms
(c) Rangarajan Committee (2014)	3- Refined methodology using household consumption data and calorie norms
(d) Planning Commission (1962)	4- Shifted from calorie-based norms, recommended uniform all-India Poverty Line Basket (PLB), and used Mixed Reference Period (MRP) data
(e) Lakdawala Committee (1993)	5- Recommended separate rural and urban PLBs: Rs 972 (rural) and Rs 1,407 (urban) per month

Options:

(A) a-4, b-2, c-5, d-1, e-3

- (B) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4, e-5
 (C) a-5, b-3, c-1, d-4, e-2
 (D) a-2, b-4, c-5, d-1, e-3
 (A)

Ans:

Exp:

Tendulkar Committee (2009) → 4

The Tendulkar Committee shifted from calorie-based poverty norms and recommended a uniform all-India Poverty Line Basket (PLB). It also introduced Mixed Reference Period (MRP) consumption data to better estimate household consumption patterns.

Alagh Committee (1979) → 2

The Alagh Committee focused on refining poverty measurement using household consumption expenditure and maintaining calorie norms as a basis for identifying poverty.

Rangarajan Committee (2014) → 5

Rangarajan recommended separate rural and urban PLBs, estimating Rs 972 for rural and Rs 1,407 for urban populations. The government, however, did not adopt these recommendations officially.

Planning Commission (1962) → 1

The Planning Commission started India's first official poverty assessment, using calorie intake and consumption expenditure as the primary benchmark.

Lakdawala Committee (1993) → 3

Lakdawala further refined methodology by using household consumption data while retaining calorie norms, improving the accuracy of poverty estimates.

40.

Match the following:

Leader	Unique Contribution
(a) Subhas Chandra Bose	1- Father of Indian Renaissance; founded Brahmo Samaj to promote social reform
(b) Raja Rammohan Roy	2- Wrote Vande Mataram, inspiring the nationalist movement
(c) Aurobindo Ghosh	3- Led the Indian National Army (INA) against British rule
(d) Bankim Chatterjee	4- Prominent leader in Non-Cooperation Movement; defended nationalist leaders legally

(e) Chittaranjan Das	5- Early extremist leader; promoted revolutionary nationalism and secret societies
----------------------	--

Options:

- (A) a-2, b-1, c-4, d-3, e-5
(B) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4, e-5
(C) a-5, b-4, c-3, d-2, e-1
(D) a-3, b-1, c-5, d-2, e-4

Ans: (D)

Exp: Subhas Chandra Bose → 3

Organized and led the Indian National Army (INA) to fight the British.

Raja Rammohan Roy → 1

Father of Indian Renaissance; founded Brahmo Samaj for social reforms.

Aurobindo Ghosh → 5

Early extremist leader, promoted revolutionary nationalism, and established secret revolutionary societies.

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay → 2

Wrote patriotic Vande Mataram, inspiring the nationalist movement.

Chittaranjan Das → 4

Prominent in Non-Cooperation Movement; defended nationalist leaders legally.

41.

Match the following:

GI Product	Unique Information
(a) Darjeeling Tea	1- Handwoven textile from Tamil Nadu
(b) Kanchipuram Silk	2- Famous for its aromatic flavor and grown in West Bengal
(c) Alphonso Mango	3- Traditional khadi fabric from Andhra Pradesh
(d) Ponduru Khadi	4- Premium mango variety from Maharashtra
(e) Banarasi Saree	5- Woven with gold/silver zari threads in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

Options:

- (A) a-2, b-1, c-4, d-3, e-5
(B) a-4, b-2, c-5, d-3, e-1
(C) a-2, b-5, c-4, d-3, e-1
(D) a-3, b-5, c-2, d-1, e-4

Ans: (A)

Exp: Darjeeling Tea – Grown in Darjeeling, West Bengal, known for its aroma and flavor.

Kanchipuram Silk – Traditional silk fabric from Tamil Nadu, used in sarees.

Alphonso Mango – Premium mango from Maharashtra, famous for sweetness.

Ponduru Khadi – Handwoven khadi fabric from Andhra Pradesh.

Banarasi Saree – Famous saree from Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, woven with gold/silver zari.

42.

Match the following:

Provision	Feature/Objective
(a) Article 39(a)	1- Protection of minorities and weaker sections
(b) Article 41	2- Right to work, education, and public assistance in certain cases
(c) Article 46	3- Equal pay for equal work
(d) Article 15(3)	4- Promoting educational and economic interests of weaker sections
(e) Article 39(d)	5- Ensuring equal pay for equal work

Options:

- (A) a-3, b-2, c-4, d-1, e-5
(B) a-5, b-3, c-1, d-4, e-2
(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-5, e-3
(D) a-4, b-2, c-1, d-5, e-3

Ans: (A)

Exp:

Article 39(a) – Directs the State to ensure equal pay for equal work.

Article 41 – Provides for right to work, education, and public assistance.

Article 46 – Promotes educational and economic interests of weaker sections, especially Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other marginalized groups.

Article 15(3) – Allows special provisions for women and children.

Article 39(d) – Ensures equal pay for equal work.

43.

Match the Following

Column A (Feature/Term)	Column B (Description/Function)
(a) Pneumatophores	1- Roots providing stability in soft, waterlogged soil
(b) Prop roots	2- Roots growing upwards to facilitate respiration in anaerobic soil
(c) Vivipary	3- Seeds germinate on the parent tree before falling

(d) Salt-secreting glands	4- Excrete excess salt to survive in saline conditions
(e) Mangrove buffer zone	5- Protected 50-metre zone around mangroves under Environment Act

Options:

(A) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3, e-5

(B) a-2, b-1, c-3, d-4, e-5

(C) a-3, b-1, c-2, d-4, e-5

(D) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-5, e-4

Ans:

Exp:

Pneumatophores (a) grow upwards to allow respiration in low-oxygen soils.

Prop roots (b) provide stability in soft, silty, waterlogged substrates.

Vivipary (c) ensures seeds germinate on the tree, aiding survival in tidal zones.

Salt-secreting glands (d) help excrete excess salt, allowing mangroves to thrive in saline environments.

Mangrove buffer zone (e) protects mangrove ecosystems under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

44.

Match the Following

Column A (Chemical Compound)	Column B (Use/Function)
(a) Sodium bicarbonate (NaHCO_3)	1- Fertilizer, soil nutrient
(b) Sulfuric acid (H_2SO_4)	2- Fire extinguisher, antacid
(c) Calcium carbonate (CaCO_3)	3- Car battery acid, industrial chemical
(d) Ammonium nitrate (NH_4NO_3)	4- Agricultural fertilizer
(e) Ethanol ($\text{C}_2\text{H}_5\text{OH}$)	5- Solvent, alcoholic beverages

Options:

(A) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4, e-5

(B) a-2, b-3, c-4, d-1, e-5

(C) a-5, b-4, c-2, d-3, e-1

(D) a-3, b-2, c-5, d-4, e-1

Ans:

Exp:

Sodium bicarbonate (a) is used as an antacid and in fire extinguishers.

Sulfuric acid (b) is used in car batteries and industrial chemical production.

Calcium carbonate (c) is used as a soil nutrient and in construction materials.

Ammonium nitrate (d) is primarily an agricultural fertilizer.

Ethanol (e) is used as a solvent and in alcoholic beverages.

45.

Match the following:

Judgment / Case	Significance / Key Principle
(a) Maru Ram v. Union of India (1981)	1- President's clemency powers are exercised with aid and advice of Council of Ministers
(b) Kehar Singh v. Union of India (1988)	2- Death penalty is subject to limited judicial review for procedural fairness
(c) Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978)	3- Expanded the interpretation of Article 21 and right to life
(d) Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation (1985)	4- Right to livelihood is part of the right to life under Article 21

Options:

(A) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4

(B) a-2, b-1, c-4, d-3

(C) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

(D) a-3, b-2, c-1, d-4

Ans:

Exp:

Maru Ram v. Union of India (1981): Clarified the executive nature of clemency powers.

Kehar Singh v. Union of India (1988): Affirmed limited judicial review of death penalty.

Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978): Expanded Article 21 – Right to Life and Personal Liberty.

Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation (1985): Recognized right to livelihood as part of Article 21.

46.

Match the following:

Amendment	Significance / Key Provision
(a) 24th Amendment Act, 1971	1- Affirmed the parliament's power to amend the Constitution, including Fundamental Rights
(b) 52nd Amendment Act, 1985	2- Laid down "Tenure of Lok Sabha and State Assemblies as 5 years" and included the Anti-Defection Law
(c) 80th Amendment Act, 2000	3- Extended reservation of seats for SC/ST in legislatures for 10 more years
(d) 99th Amendment Act, 2014	4- Granted constitutional status to the National Judicial Appointments Commission

	(NJAC) (later struck down by Supreme Court)
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Options:

(A) a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4

(B) a-2, b-1, c-4, d-3

(C) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

(D) a-3, b-2, c-1, d-4

Ans: (A)

Exp: 24th Amendment (1971): Reinforced parliament's power to amend the Constitution, even Fundamental Rights.

52nd Amendment (1985): Introduced the Anti-Defection Law and fixed the term of legislatures to 5 years.

80th Amendment (2000): Extended SC/ST reservation in legislatures for another 10 years.

99th Amendment (2014): Created the NJAC, giving constitutional status to judicial appointments (later struck down by Supreme Court).

47. Match the following -

(a) Andhra Pradesh	1- Bhamakalpam
(b) Assam	2- Daph
(c) Bihar	3- Panwariya
(d) Haryana	4- Bagurumba

Options-

(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4

(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: (A)

Exp: Andhra Pradesh - Bhamakalpam

Assam - Bagurumba

Bihar - Panwariya

Haryana - Daph

48. Match the following waterfalls -

(a) Kynrem Falls	1- Meghalaya
(b) Meenmutty Falls	2- Kerala
(c) Thalaiyar Falls	3- Tamil Nadu

Options

(A) a-1, b-2, c-3

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1

(C) a-3, b-2, c-1

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2

Ans: (A)

Exp: Kynrem Falls - Meghalaya

Meenmutty Falls - Kerala

Thalaiyar Falls - Tamil Nadu

49. Match the Following: Financial Bonds in India:

Bond Type	Description
(a) Government Bonds	1- Short-term zero-coupon securities issued at a discount

(b) Treasury Bills (T-bills)	2- Long-term securities with fixed or floating interest paid half-yearly
(c) Corporate Bonds	3- Issued by private or public companies to raise capital
(d) Cash Management Bills (CMBs)	4- Very short-term government instruments to manage temporary cash flow

Options:

(A) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3

(B) a-2, b-1, c-3, d-4

(C) a-3, b-4, c-2, d-1

(D) a-2, b-4, c-3, d-1

Ans: (B)

Exp:

(a) Government Bonds → 2- Long-term securities with fixed or floating interest paid half-yearly

(b) Treasury Bills (T-bills) → 1- Short-term zero-coupon securities issued at a discount

(c) Corporate Bonds → 3- Issued by private or public companies to raise capital

(d) Cash Management Bills (CMBs) → 4- Very short-term government instruments to manage temporary cash flow

50.

Match the following computer hardware with their functions -

(a) Input devices	1- For raw data input.
(b) Processing devices	2- For data and information retention.
(c) Output devices	3- To disseminate data and information.
(d) Storage devices	4- To process raw data instructions into information.

Options-

(A) a-1, b-4, c-3, d-2

(B) a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4

(C) a-1, b-2, c-4, d-3

(D) a-1, b-3, c-2, d-4

Ans: (A)

Exp:

Input devices For raw data input.

Processing devices To process raw data instructions into information.

Output devices To disseminate data and information.

Storage devices For data and information retention.

Quick Bytes

- RBI Grants Final PA-CB Authorisation to BRISKPE
- India Overtakes Japan to Become World's 4th Largest Economy at USD 4.18 Trillion
- Air India & airBaltic Sign Codeshare Agreement to Strengthen Travel Between India and Baltic region
- Kaamya Karthikeyan Becomes the Youngest Indian to Ski to South Pole
- British-Indian Comedian, Author Meera Syal Awarded Damehood in King's New Year Honours
- ACC Appoints Lav Aggarwal as DG of DGFT; Rabindra Kumar Agarwal to Head FCI
- ISRO Successfully Conducted Static Test of 3rd Stage of SSLV in Sriharikota, AP
- Assam Becomes First State to Constitute 8th State Pay Commission
- Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor Appointed as Vice Chief of the Air Staff
- Air Marshal S. Shrinivas Takes Charge as Chief of IAF Training Command
- Air Marshal Tejinder Singh Takes Charge of South Western Air Command
- India-UAE Desert Cyclone II Military Exercise Concludes
- MoSPI Launches New Logo and Mascot 'Sankhyiki' to Modernize Institutional Identity
- Bulgaria Adopts Euro as its Currency from January 1, 2026
- Canara Bank Appoints Hardeep Singh Ahluwalia as Interim MD & CEO
- India Develops 3D-Printed Weather Stations Under Mission Mausam
- Karnataka Records First-Ever 'Sandalwood Leopard'
- FDA Approves First Oral Pill for Thalassemia Anaemia
- Haryana's Sex Ratio Rises Sharply to 923 in 2025
- Amazonian Stingless Bees Gain World's First Legal Rights
- Indian Army Signs ₹293 Cr Deal for Suryastra Rocket System
- Pakistan Tests Taimoor Air-Launched Cruise Missile
- Malayalam Actor Punnapra Appachan Passes Away at 77
- Delcy Rodríguez Becomes Interim President of Venezuela
- Telangana Scraps Two-Child Norm in Local Body Polls
- PS Girisha Appointed Director (Finance) at Central Silk Board
- Niraj Verma Given Additional Charge as Parliamentary Affairs Secretary
- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited signed an MoU with National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation to support Eklavya Model Residential Schools through CSR funding.
- IFFCO Sahitya Samman 2025 Awarded to Maitreyi Pushpa
- India's First Govt AI Clinic Launched at GIMS Noida
- Indian Army Creates Modern Warfare Force 'Bhairav' with Over 1 Lakh Drone Operatives
- India's Growth Seen at 6.9% in FY27 Despite Global Pressures: Ind-Ra
- Ramesh Kumar Juneja Takes Charge as Chairman of Council for Leather Exports
- GI Council Appoints S Prakash as CEO for Health Insurance Ecosystem
- India Becomes First Country to Commercially Produce Bio-Bitumen
- UN Declares 2026 International Year for Rangelands and Pastoralists
- A.K. Balasubrahmanian Appointed AERB Chairman: Nuclear Safety Leadership
- Goa CM Launches 'History That India Ignored': Second Edition of Important Historical Work
- HSBC Private Bank Appoints Ida Liu as New CEO: Global Banking Leadership
- Renowned Ecologist Madhav Gadgil Passes Away at 82
- Manoj Kothari: Former World Billiards Champion Passes Away at 67
- Australia Shatters 134-Year-Old Ashes Record With Historic Batting Feat
- Ramesh Kumar Juneja appointed CLE Chairman
- A Muhamed Mustaque sworn in as Sikkim HC Chief Justice
- Veteran BJP leader Kabindra Purkayastha passes away at 94.
- India's first hydrogen-powered train to run in Haryana
- India-Bhutan sign MoU for judicial exchange of law clerks
- Indian Railways becomes world's largest electrified rail network

- Skydo Receives RBI Authorization as Payment Aggregator-Cross Border
- Justice Manoj Kumar Gupta Appointed Chief Justice of Uttarakhand High Court
- SBI Projects India's GDP Growth at 7.5% for FY 2025-26
- Kamala Hydroelectric Project Approved for Arunachal Pradesh
- PANKHUDI Digital Portal Launched for Women and Child Development.
- Gulf Shield 2026 Joint Military Exercise Launched by GCC Nations
- A K Balasubrahmanian Appointed AERB Chairman
- RBI Proposes Raising Bank Dividend Payout Cap to 75%
- Posts-Agriculture MoU to Enable Pan-India Farm Input Testing
- Centre Allocates Rs 37,952 Cr Fertiliser Subsidy for Rabi Season
- PANKHUDI Portal Launched to Strengthen CSR for WCD
- UIDAI Launches Aadhaar Mascot 'Udai' for Public Outreach
- AYUSH Gets Trade Pact Recognition From Oman and New Zealand
- India's first fully paperless district court inaugurated in Kerala
- General Insurance Council appoints S Prakash as CEO.
- Veteran BJP Leader Kabindra Purkayastha Passes Away.
- Hubble Discovers Starless Dark Matter Cloud 'Cloud-9'
- Mission Sudarshan Chakra Launched for Drone Defence
- Fatima Al Awadhi Becomes Youngest Arab to Summit Mount Vinson
- Chhattisgarh Leads Big States in APAAR ID Creation for Students
- India and Germany Strengthen Ties in Postal and Logistics Services
- Ola Electric Enters Home Energy Space with 'Shakti' Battery System
- Meta Names Former Trump Adviser Dina Powell McCormick as President and Vice Chairman
- Nissan Strengthens India Leadership, Appoints Thierry Sabbagh as President
- Zoubeir Jlassi wins \$1M AI Film Award for Lily
- Justice Revati Mohite Dere was sworn in as the first woman Chief Justice of the Meghalaya High Court.
- Aralam Declared Kerala's First Butterfly Sanctuary
- Indian Army Major Swathi Shantha Kumar Wins UN Secretary-General's Award 2025
- Kotak Mahindra Bank Appoints Anup Kumar Saha as Whole-Time Director
- ISRO's Successfully Lift Off Anomaly in PS3 Stage of PSLV-C62/EOS-N1 Mission
- Jon Cooper became 2nd-fastest National Hockey League coach to 600 wins
- Olympic snowboard pioneer Ueli Kestenholz dies at 50
- Tripura Gramin Bank rolls out India's first solar ATM van
- Rajasthan's Bamanwas Kankar becomes first fully organic panchayat
- Karnataka Bank Bags IBA Award for Best Fintech & DPI Adoption
- World Bank Raises India's GDP Growth Forecast to 7.2% for FY26
- Centre Appoints Shatrueet Singh Kapoor as ITBP Chief; Praveen Kumar to Head BSF
- Centre Appoints Rakesh Aggarwal as New Director General of NIA
- Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu Lead NITI Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2024
- Israel Withdraws from Seven UN Agencies Over Alleged Bias
- Pawan Kalyan Becomes First Indian to Receive Rare Samurai Martial Arts Honour
- India Ranks 80th in World's Strongest Passport Index
- Alyssa Healy Announces Retirement After India Series
- Indian Mountaineer Aritra Roy Conquers Mount Aconcagua in Argentina
- Dilbert Creator Scott Adams Dies at 68, Leaving Behind a Complex Legacy
- Major Swathi Wins UN Secretary General's Award for Gender Parity
- RBI has recognised the Foreign Exchange Dealers' Association of India as a self-regulatory organisation for all authorised dealers.
- Bharat Electronics Ltd and Garuda Aerospace signed an MoU to jointly supply indigenous Unmanned Aerial Systems to India's defence forces.
- Shatrueet Kapoor appointed ITBP DG; Praveen Kumar to lead BSF
- Himachal Pradesh cadre IPS officer Rakesh Aggarwal has been appointed Director General of the National Investigation Agency.

- The US FDA approved Zycubo (copper histidine) as 1st treatment for children with Menkes disease, a rare genetic disorder.
- India registered the Karan Fries synthetic cow breed developed by NDRI Karnal by crossbreeding Holstein Friesian with Tharparkar cattle.
- Finke River Recognised as the World's Oldest Flowing River
- Shri Praveen Vashista Appointed Vigilance Commissioner in Central Vigilance Commission
- Aaryan Varshney Becomes India's 92nd Chess Grandmaster
- US Freezes Immigrant Visa Processing for 75 Countries Under Trump Administration
- Biologist Toby Kiers Wins Tyler Prize for Uncovering the Hidden Power of Fungal Networks
- Mitchell Starc Wins ICC Men's Player of the Month for December 2025
- Laura Wolvaardt Named ICC Women's Player of the Month for December 2025
- Steel tycoon Lakshmi Mittal's father Mohan Lal Mittal dies
- Union Minister Jitendra Singh Launches India's First Open-Sea Marine Fish Farming Project in A & N Islands
- India, Sri Lanka, and Maldives Conducts 17th Trilateral Coast Guard Exercise 'DOSTI 17' in Maldives
- World Bank Approves USD286 Million for West Bengal Healthcare
- IGGEFIL Sanctions First International Green Loan for Zambia Solar Project
- BSNL & Viasat Collaborate for Indian Navy's SatCom Upgrade
- Shaea Muhssin Mohammed Al-Zindani Appointed as PM of Yemen
- President Droupadi Murmu Appoints Praveen Vashista as Vigilance Commissioner in CVC
- ICICI Bank Re-appointed Sandeep Bakshi as MD & CEO till 2028
- RBI Recognises FEDAI as Self-Regulatory Organisation for Authorised Dealers
- Canara Bank Partners with NBSL to Integrate UPI into its Payment App Canara aiPe
- IMF Raises India's Economic Growth Forecast to 7.3% in FY26
- Yoweri Museveni Re-elected as President of Uganda for Seventh Term
- India's Olympic Medallist Vijender Singh Appointed as Member of ABCO
- Numbeo Safety Index 2026: Mangaluru Ranked Safest City in India; Qingdao Tops Globally
- Indian-Origin NASA Astronaut Sunita Williams Retires After 27 Years of Service
- Moody's Projects India's FY26 GDP Growth at 7.3%, Supporting Rise in Household Incomes
- American Biologist Toby Kiers Won 2026 Tyler Prize for Shedding Light on Hidden Fungal Network
- Brand Finance Global 500 2026 Report: India's Infosys Ranks Third; Accenture Topped;
- Padma Awardee Saina Nehwal Announced Retirement from Competitive Badminton
- Vidarbha Clinches its Maiden Vijay Hazare Trophy 2025-26 Champions
- Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan Releases Book 'Chalice of Ambrosia: Ram Janmabhoomi-Challenge and Response'
- India Ranks Sixth in Asia Manufacturing Index 2026
- WEF's Global Risks Report 2026: Geoeconomic Confrontation Emerges as the Biggest Global Threat
- Deepinder Goyal Resigns as CEO of Eternal Group; Albinder Dhindsa to Take Over
- Tata Communications Appoints Ganesh Lakshminarayanan as MD & CEO
- Assam Govt Announces 'Atal Vichal Agragami Assam Scheme' for Research Scholars
- Russia Plans to Build Nuclear Power Plant on the Moon by 2036
- RBI Postponed Implementation of Phase-II of Cheque Truncation System
- Goldman Sachs Projects India's GDP Growth at 6.7% for 2026 and 6.8% for 2027
- ICG Inducts India's First Indigenously Designed & Built PCV 'Samudra Pratap'
- TASL Hands Over First WhAP 8x8 Vehicles to Royal Moroccan Army
- Alpine SG Pipers Wins Tech Mahindra Global Chess League 2025 Title
- VP C.P. Radhakrishnan Released Book 'Economic Empowerment of Bharat in the Modi Era'
- Delhi CM Rekha Gupta Launches 'Atal Canteen Scheme' to Offer Meals at Rs.5 at 100 Locations
- MoCA Grants NOCs to AI Hind Air, FlyExpress, and Shankh Air
- Zoho-Backed VoxelGrids Builds India's First Indigenous MRI Scanner
- India Unveils First 'Organised Crime Network Database' to Track Organised Criminals and Terror Links
- India to Assume Chairpersonship of Kimberley Process from January 01, 2026

- PV Sindhu Elected Chair of BWF Athletes' Commission for 2026-2029
- India Successfully Test Fires 'K-4' Missile with 3,500 km Range from INS Arighaat
- ZSI Scientists Discover New Soil-dwelling Micro-arthropod Species 'Neelus Sikkimensis'
- Odisha Government Appoints Anu Garg as First Woman Chief Secretary
- Aryaman Finance Receives CoR from RBI to Operate as NBFC
- Singapore Changi Airport Awarded Best International Airport in 2025 by Travel+Leisure
- RBI Approves Re-Appointment of Ratan Kumar Kesh as ED of Bandhan Bank
- Supercomputer PARAM Rudra Unveiled at IIT-Patna in Bihar
- Tripura Assembly Speaker Biswa Bandhu Sen Passed Away
- GoI Declares Parvati-Argha Bird Sanctuary in UP as ESZ
- IAF's SDI Signs MoU with IIT-Madras to Develop Indigenous Airborne Communication System
- India Ranks 3rd in Rare Earth Reserves with 6.9 million tonnes REO, China Tops the List
- Indian Origin Jayshree Ullal Ranks First on Hurun India Rich List 2025
- Russia Launches 'Soyuz-2.1b' Rocket from Vostochny Spaceport with 52 Satellites
- Union Minister Piyush Goyal Announces Zero-Duty on 100% Australian Tariff Lines from January 01, 2026
- Rediff.com India Secures NPCI Approval for TPAP Licence
- MHA Appoints IPS Officer Rakesh Agarwal as Interim DG of NIA
- DRDO Conducts Maiden Flight Test of 120-km Range Pinaka LRGR 120 in Odisha
- Union Minister Ram Mohan Naidu Inaugurates HAL's Dhruv-NG Helicopter in Bengaluru
- Former Bangladesh PM Begum Khaleda Zia Passed Away



INDIA'S

Republic Day

26 JAN

Importance:
To mark the adoption of the constitution as it was on 26 January 1930 when the Declaration of Indian Independence was proclaimed by the Indian National Congress.

Note:

- The adoption of the constitution marked the transition to full independence from Britain as it ended Lord Mountbatten's role as governor-general of India.
- The constitution gave India's citizens the power to govern themselves by choosing their own government.

Award distribution

- On the eve of Republic Day, the President of India distributes Padma Awards to the civilians of India every year.
- These are the second highest civilian awards in India after Bharat Ratna.
- These awards are given in three categories, viz. Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.



INTERNATIONAL

Holocaust Remembrance Day

27 JAN

Inception:
1 November 2005 (By UNGA)

Importance:
To commemorate the tragedy of the Holocaust (सर्व-नाश/प्रलय) that occurred during the Second World War. It commemorates the genocide that resulted in the deaths of 6 million Jews and 11 million others, by the Nazi regime and its collaborators.

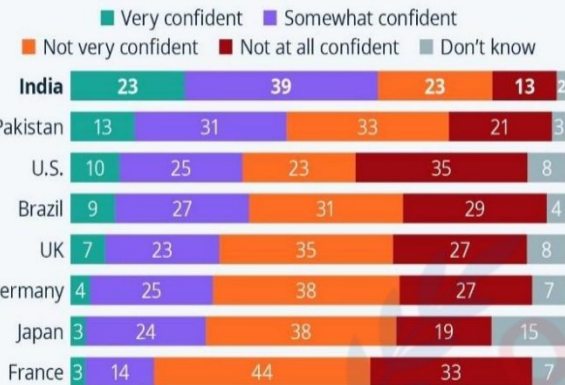
Note:
The Holocaust Remembrance Day is also a national event in the United Kingdom and in Italy.

Why 27 Jan?
Because on 27 January 1945, Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi concentration and death camp, was liberated by the Red Army.

Infographics

Indians Trust Climate Change Response More Than Most

Share of respondents who are confident/not confident in political leaders' response to climate change

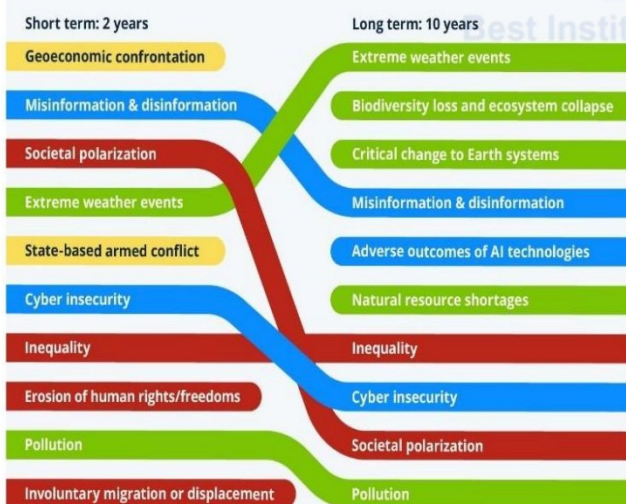


1,000+ adults surveyed per country Sep.-Oct. 2025; figures may not add up to 100 due to rounding
Source: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

The Largest Risks Faced by the World

Experts' assessments of the most severe global risks over the next two and ten years

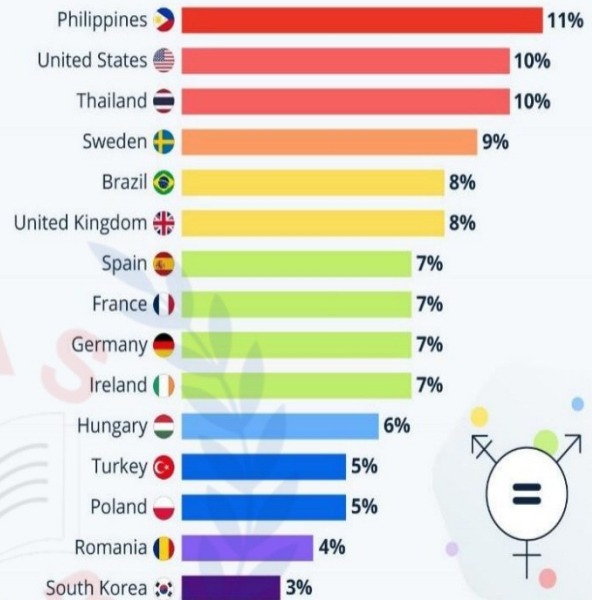
Environmental Geopolitical Societal Technological



Based on risk evaluation by over 900 experts across academia, business, government, international organization and civil society collected Aug.-Sep. 2025
Source: World Economic Forum

Where It's Most & Least Common to Be LGBT+

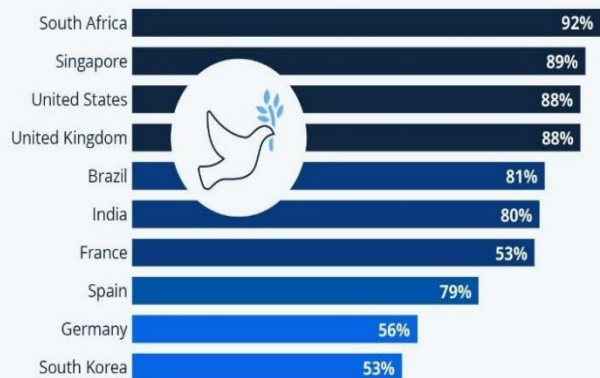
Share of respondents who identify as LGBT+, by country



2,000-60,200 respondents (18-64 y/o) surveyed per selected country Jan.-Dec. 2025
Source: Statista Consumer Insights

South Africa Leads in Religious Tolerance

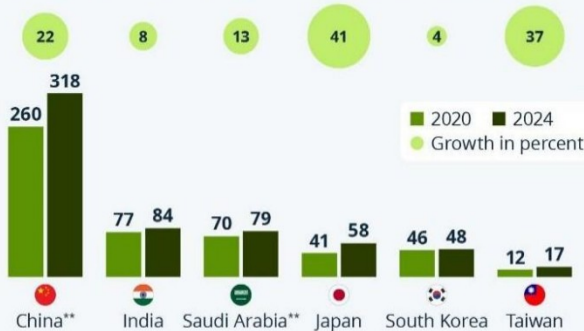
Share of adults in selected countries who feel comfortable around people with different religious beliefs



500+ online adults (18-75 y/o) surveyed per country Jan. 20, 2023-Feb. 3, 2023
Source: Ipsos

Military Spending Is on the Rise in Asia

Annual military spending in a selection of Asian countries/territories, by year (in billion U.S. dollars)*



* constant 2023 prices and exchange rates ** SIPRI estimates
Source: SIPRI

The Most Popular Wikipedia Articles in 2025

Wikipedia English-language articles with the most visits* in 2025 (in millions)



As of Dec. 2, 2025
Source: Wikimedia Foundation

The Fastest Growing G20 Economies in 2026

Year-over-year GDP growth projections for 2025 and 2026, by country (in percent)



Forecasts published in December 2025
Source: OECD Economic Outlook

Who's Investing in Their Health?

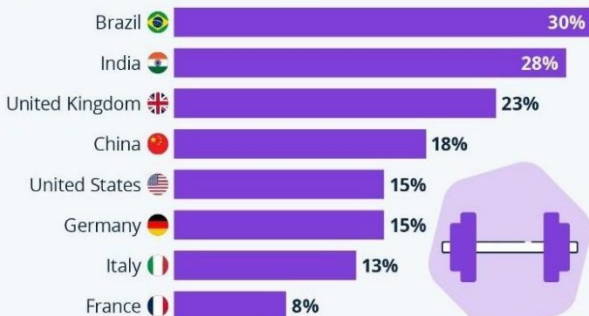
Share of respondents who have used a health & fitness service* in the past year (in percent)



1,800-9,000 respondents (18-64 y/o) surveyed per country Oct. 2024-Sep. 2025
* e.g. gym membership, fitness app, massage
Source: Statista Consumer Insights

Where Going to the Gym is Most (Un)Popular

Share of respondents who spent money on a gym membership in the past 12 months



1,800-9,000 respondents (18-64 y/o) surveyed per selected country Oct. 2024-Sep. 2025
Source: Statista Consumer Insights

U.S. Accounts for Nearly Half of the Global Pharma Market

Largest pharmaceutical markets in 2024, by estimated sales (in billion U.S. dollars)



Sales from manufacturer to wholesaler or direct to pharmacies
* Hospital market only
Sources: IQVIA, World Bank



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