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Thursday, 13 August 2026

1. Recently, which country became the first country in the Middle East to formally abolish the death penalty?

- (A) Jordan (B) Lebanon
(C) Djibouti (D) Türkiye

2. Recently, Dr. Srinivasa Kumar Tummala was appointed as the Secretary of which Union Ministry?

- (A) Ministry of Earth Sciences
(B) Ministry of Environment
(C) Ministry of Home Affairs
(D) Ministry of Mines

3. Recently, Acanthosaura syrax, a newly described species of mountain horned dragon, was reported from which country?

- (A) India (B) Vietnam
(C) Myanmar (D) Thailand

4. Recently, the new NSP-DBT scholarship initiative was launched for which students?

- (A) Medical students (B) Agriculture students
(C) Law students (D) Engineering students

5. At which place was the 23rd International Linguistics Olympiad 2026, where India won one gold and three bronze medals, held?

- (A) Vienna (B) Warsaw
(C) Bucharest (D) Prague

6. Recently, Indian physicist Deepak Dhar was selected for which prestigious

international award?

- (A) Dirac Medal (B) Boltzmann Medal
(C) Wolf Prize (D) Feynman Prize

7. Recently, the Gujarat Forest Department launched a ₹2.94 crore project around which Ramsar site?

- (A) Thol Lake (B) Wadhvana
(C) Khijadiya (D) Nalsarovar

8. In August 2026, after adding 11 new entry ports, the total number of international ports designated for foreign nationals holding an Indian e-Visa reached to how much?

- (A) 78 (B) 82
(C) 85 (D) 88

9. Which Indian major port became the first to achieve Scope-2 Emission-Free status in August 2026?

- (A) Deendayal Port
(B) Paradip Port
(C) V.O. Chidambaranar Port
(D) Kamarajar Port

10. Which colonial-era legislation, recently replaced by a new law, was enacted in 1891 to govern the use of banking records as evidence in courts?

- (A) Bankers' Book Evidence Act, 1891
(B) Banking Regulation Act, 1949
(C) Indian Evidence Act, 1872
(D) Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934

1-{B} - 2-{A} - 3-{D} - 4-{B} - 5-{C} - 6-{A} - 7-{D} - 8-{D} - 9-{C} - 10-{A}

Thursday, 13 August 2026



PRIME MINISTERS AND RAJYA SABHA: KEY FACTS (UPSC PERSPECTIVE)



CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION

- **Article 75(5):** A person who is not a member of either House of Parliament at the time of his appointment as Prime Minister shall be a member of either House within **6 months** from the date on which he enters office, otherwise he shall cease to be a Minister.

PRIME MINISTERS AND THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH RAJYA SABHA

Prime Minister	Tenure (Year)	Status at the Time of Becoming Prime Minister	Connection with Rajya Sabha	Key Facts
Indira Gandhi	1966	Member of Rajya Sabha after the demise of Lal Bahadur Shastri (Gulzarilal Nanda (Acting))	- Became PM in 1966 as a Rajya Sabha member. - Won Lok Sabha election from Rae Bareilly in 1967.	First became PM as a member of Rajya Sabha ; later became Lok Sabha member.
H. D. Deve Gowda	1996	Chief Minister of Karnataka; not a member of either House of Parliament	- Appointed PM in 1996. - Joined Rajya Sabha within 6 months in accordance with Article 75(5).	A direct example of Article 75(5) provision.
I. K. Gujral	1997	Already a member of Rajya Sabha	Remained a Rajya Sabha member throughout his short tenure.	Served his entire tenure as a member of Rajya Sabha .
Dr. Manmohan Singh	2004, 2009	Member of Rajya Sabha from Assam	- Became PM in 2004 and 2009. - Never a member of Lok Sabha in his entire political career.	Most noteworthy example; remained Rajya Sabha member while serving 10 years as PM.

COMPARATIVE AND RELATED CASES

- **Charan Singh (1979):** Was a Lok Sabha member when he became PM. However, he never faced the confidence vote in Lok Sabha and resigned before the motion of confidence. Important for understanding the principle of **parliamentary accountability**.
- **Atal Bihari Vajpayee (1996, 1998, 1999):** Was a Lok Sabha member on all three occasions when he became PM. He had previously been a **Rajya Sabha** member in 1962 and 1986 during his long political career.
- **P. V. Narasimha Rao (1991):** Was not a member of either House when he became PM, similar to Deve Gowda later. However, he won the by-election from **Nandyal** (Andhra Pradesh) and became a **Lok Sabha** member, whereas Deve Gowda joined **Rajya Sabha**.

KEY TAKEAWAYS (FOR EXAMINATION)

- ✓ Article 75(5) allows a non-member to become PM, but he must join either House within 6 months.
- ✓ Rajya Sabha membership has been an important route for several Prime Ministers.
- ✓ Dr. Manmohan Singh is the only PM who never became a Lok Sabha member.
- ✓ Parliamentary accountability is fundamental in assessing cases like Charan Singh (1979).

IMPORTANT FACTS

- Rajya Sabha is the Council of States, a permanent House.
- Members are elected by the State Legislatures (except 12 nominated by the President).
- Maximum strength: 250 (Current strength: 245)
- One-third of its members retire every two years.

QUICK SUMMARY

- 4 PMs (Indira Gandhi, H. D. Deve Gowda, I. K. Gujral, Dr. Manmohan Singh) had a close association with Rajya Sabha.
- Article 75(5) ensures continuity and flexibility in executive formation.
- Rajya Sabha has played a significant role in India's political history.
- UPSC often asks examples and provisions related to Article 75(5) and parliamentary membership.



NOTE: A person must be a member of Parliament (either House) within 6 months of becoming Prime Minister, otherwise he ceases to hold office as per **Article 75(5)**.

DAILY GENERAL AWARENESS QUIZ

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Thursday, 13 August 2026

1. States' Tax Share Rises, but Shrinking Divisible Pool Limits Fiscal Gains. In context to "Cess" tell us, which of the following best describes the nature of a cess in the Indian taxation system?

- (A) Temporary (B) Purpose-specific
(C) General (D) Indirect

2. Jim Lovell, Apollo 13 Commander Who Guided Safe Return, Dies at 97. In context to the same tell us, In which year was the Apollo 13 mission launched?

- (A) 1968 (B) 1969
(C) 1970 (D) 1971

3. SWR commissions Vande Bharat sleeper trains, set to launch on Bengaluru-Mumbai route. In context to the same tell us, where are the Vande Bharat trains manufactured?

- (A) Integral Coach Factory, Chennai
(B) Chittaranjan Locomotive Works
(C) Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala
(D) Diesel Locomotive Works, Varanasi

4. World Lion Day is observed annually on August 10th. In context to the same tell us, which of the following wildlife sanctuaries is part of the Asiatic Lion Conservation Project?

- (A) Jim Corbett National Park
(B) Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary
(C) Sariska Tiger Reserve
(D) Kuno-Palpur Wildlife Sanctuary

5. Sikkim CM Launches 'Nari Adalat' for Local Women-Led Justice. In context to the same tell us, who was the first woman judge appointed to a High Court in India?

- (A) Ruma Pal (B) Fathima Beevi
(C) Leila Seth (D) Anna Chandy

6. Biofortification Can Shift Indian Agriculture from Yield-Centric Farming Towards Nutrition-Sensitive

Food Production.

With reference to bio-fortified crops, consider the following statements:

- (1) Iron-biofortified pearl millet was developed by the ICRISAT.
(2) Golden Rice contains beta-carotene to combat Vitamin A deficiency.
(3) Zinc-biofortified rice varieties have been commercially released in India.

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

7. National Consultation Strengthens India's One Health Strategy for Prevention and Control of Zoonotic Diseases.

With reference to zoonotic diseases, consider the following statements:

- (1) Zoonotic diseases are infections transmitted between animals and humans.
(2) Deforestation and urban expansion increase human exposure to zoonotic pathogens.
(3) Vector-borne transmission is not a recognized mode of zoonotic disease spread.

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

8. Maharashtra Govt to set up medical cyclotron project in Nagpur to elevate cancer research.

Consider the following statements about radioisotopes:

- (1) Radioisotopes have unstable atomic nuclei that emit ionizing radiation to achieve stability.
(2) Isotopes differ in the number of protons but have the same number of neutrons.
(3) Carbon-14 is a commonly used radioisotope in archaeological dating.

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

1-{B} - 2-{C} - 3-{A} - 4-{D} - 5-{D} - 6-{B} - 7-{B} 8-{A}

TOPIC OF THE DAY

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Thursday, 13 August 2026

Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY)

Why in News?

The **Union Cabinet** has approved the **Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY)** with the objective of strengthening India's **renewable energy capacity** and **energy security**. The scheme focuses on developing **Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV)** projects integrated with **Energy Storage Systems (ESS)**.

Expository: -

India's Solar Energy Sector: Capacity Expansion-

- India's **solar energy capacity** has increased from around **3 GW in 2014 to 162.15 GW as of 30 June 2026**.
- This rapid growth has made **solar energy** one of the strongest pillars of India's **renewable energy sector**.
- The expansion of solar energy has been supported by **policy support, infrastructure development, competitive bidding, rooftop solar, the use of solar energy in agriculture, and domestic manufacturing**.

Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY): -

Approval-

- The scheme was approved on **31 July 2026**.
- It is a **Central Sector Scheme**.

Main Objective-

- To promote the development of **Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV)** projects integrated with **Energy Storage Systems (ESS)**.
- To increase **renewable energy capacity** by utilizing **inland water bodies** without requiring additional land.

Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV)-

- In **FSPV projects**, solar panels are installed on **floating platforms** on the surface of reservoirs and other water bodies.
- This reduces pressure on **scarce land resources** and enables water bodies to be utilized for **energy generation**.

Total Outlay and Target-

- A financial allocation of **₹5,070 crore** has been made for the scheme.
- This amount will be utilized between **FY 2026-27 and 2030-31**.
- The scheme aims to develop **5,000 MW of FSPV capacity**.

India's Floating Solar Potential-

- According to the assessment of the **National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE)**, India has approximately **102.18 GW of floating solar potential** in reservoirs and inland water bodies.
- At present, the installed **floating solar capacity** is around **700 MW**.

Mandatory Energy Storage-

- To ensure **grid stability and reliability**, the inclusion of **co-located Energy Storage Systems (ESS)** in projects is mandatory.
- Each project must have at least **2 hours of energy storage capacity**.
- Under the entire scheme, a total energy storage capacity of approximately **10,000 MWh** will be developed.

Solar Energy for Households and Farmers-

- PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana**
- Launched on **13 February 2024**, **PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana** is one of the world's largest **domestic rooftop solar programmes**.

Key Features-

- Total Expenditure:** A total expenditure of **₹75,021 crore** has been allocated for the **PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana**.



MAP OF THE DAY - BHARAT

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Thursday, 13 August 2026

VIZHINJAM INTERNATIONAL PORT

India's First Deep-Water Transshipment Port



LOCATION & GEOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

- Vizhinjam International Port is located on the southwest coast of India in **Thiruvananthapuram** district, Kerala.
- It is strategically positioned on the east-west sea route and near major international shipping lanes, making it a significant geopolitical location.
- Geographic Coordinates: **8°23'N, 76°57'E**



SIGNIFICANCE

- It is India's first deep-water transshipment port, which will **reduce transshipment** of containers currently handled at major foreign ports.
- It will play a key role in making India's **transshipment cost competitive** globally (e.g., Singapore, Colombo, Dubai).
- It will strengthen India's maritime trade links and logistics network.
- It will boost the **economic development, employment generation, and industrialization** of Kerala as well as southern India.
- It will promote **economic growth, export promotion, and foreign investment** in Kerala and southern India.



KEY FEATURES

- Draft (Depth):** 20 meters – capable of handling very large container vessels
- Capacity:** Initial capacity 1 million TEU per year (TEU – Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit)
- Length of Breakwater:** 3,000 meters
- Berths:** 3 berths in the first phase, with an annual handling capacity of 3 million TEU
- Operation:** Fully automated, equipped with the latest technology
- Key Stakeholders:** Adani Ports, DP World, Government of Kerala, Government of India



OTHER MAJOR PORTS (IN INDIA)

PORT	STATE	FEATURE
Jawaharlal Nehru Port (Nhava Sheva)	Maharashtra	India's largest container port
Mundra Port	Gujarat	India's largest private port
Kandla Port	Gujarat	Major commercial port of India
Kolkata Port (Haldia)	West Bengal	One of the oldest ports of India
Chennai Port	Tamil Nadu	Major port in southern India
Cochin Port	Kerala	Major commercial port, now at Vizhinjam
Paradip Port	Odisha	Major port for bulk cargo and minerals
V.O. Chidambaranar Port	Tamil Nadu	Major port in southern India



EXAM IMPORTANT POINTS

- ☒ Vizhinjam International Port is India's first deep-water transshipment port.
- ☒ It is located in Thiruvananthapuram district, Kerala.
- ☒ It is strategically positioned on the east-west sea route.
- ☒ It will reduce our dependence on foreign ports and SEZ-linked costs.
- ☒ Project cost: ₹8,867 crore (initial phase).
- ☒ Construction started: July 2020 (Adani Group).
- ☒ Draft: 20 meters
- ☒ Initial capacity: 3 million TEU per year
- ☒ It will strengthen maritime trade and boost India's economy.
- ☒ It is a key part of the 'Sagarmala Project'.



GENERAL KNOWLEDGE FACTS

- India's coastline: 7,517 km
- Major Seas: Arabian Sea (West), Bay of Bengal (East)
- Major Ports of India: 12 (Jawaharlal Nehru, Mundra, Kolkata, Chennai, Cochin, Paradip, Visakhapatnam, Kandla, Tuticorin, etc.)
- Sagarmala Program: To modernize ports and strengthen India's maritime connectivity

MAP OF THE DAY - WORLD

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Thursday, 13 August 2026

COLOMBIA: KEY FACTS



LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY

- Located in north-western South America.
- The Equator crosses its southern region.
- The only South American country with coastlines on both the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea.



NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

- **East** — Venezuela
- **South-east** — Brazil
- **South** — Peru and Ecuador
- **North-west** — Panama



CAPITAL & CURRENCY

- **Capital** — Bogotá
- Bogotá lies in the Andes at about 2,640 metres.
- **Currency** — Colombian Peso



MOUNTAINS & VOLCANOES

- The Andes divide into the Western, Central and Eastern Cordilleras.
- Colombia lies within the Pacific Ring of Fire.

MAJOR ACTIVE VOLCANOES

- 1 **Nevado del Ruiz** — 1985 Armero tragedy
- 2 **Galeras** — among South America's most active volcanoes
- 3 **Nevado del Huila** — Colombia's highest active volcano



Nevado del Ruiz



Galeras



Nevado del Huila



WHY IN THE NEWS?

- A powerful magnitude **7.4 earthquake** struck western Colombia.
- **100+ deaths**; a **national emergency** was declared.



CURRENT PRESIDENT

Abelardo de la Espriella

President since 7 August 2026



OTHER IMPORTANT FACTS

- **Area:** about 1,141,748 sq km
- **Population:** about 52 million
- **Official language:** Spanish
- **Government:** Presidential republic

- **Resources:** oil, coal, emeralds, gold and nickel
- **Crops:** coffee, flowers, bananas, sugarcane, maize and rice

- **Major cities:** Medellín, Cali, Barranquilla and Cartagena
- **UN member** since 1945



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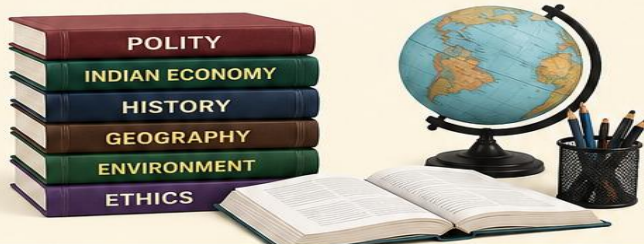
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