

CDS Monthly Compendium

August 2026

Compiled from in-window PIB press releases · 93 items



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How to use this digest

- Each entry is a **ready-to-revise note**: the **headline fact** a CDS examiner would pin, with the static context (full form, year, ministry/body, related facts) built around it.
- **Bold** marks the load-bearing detail to memorise.
- Tap any **PIB** link at the foot of an entry to open the original press release and verify or go deeper.
- Entries are grouped by theme; every figure is drawn from in-window PIB press releases.

Schemes (8)

• PM-VBRY — employment-linked incentives for formal jobs

Body: Ministry of Labour & Employment / EPFO

Detail: The Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana is an employment-linked incentive scheme delivered through the EPFO framework, rewarding first-time employees and incentivising employers who create new formal jobs; over 80% of India's workforce is informal, without contract or social security

Exam hook: Contrast with MGNREGA/VB-G RAM G, a rights-based legal guarantee of 100 days of rural wage employment; allied schemes PMKVY (skilling), PM Vishwakarma (artisans), Mudra (self-employment credit) and the National Career Service

• SVAMITVA & rural property rights

Scheme: Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas; launched **24 April 2020** on National Panchayati Raj Day

Body: Ministry of Panchayati Raj (nodal) + **Survey of India** (technology) + State Revenue Departments

Detail: Maps **abadi** (inhabited) land, historically unsurveyed, using **drones** + **CORS** for centimetre accuracy; output is a **Property Card / Record of Rights**. **3.30 lakh villages** surveyed, **3.24 crore cards** prepared, ~2.72 crore distributed

Exam hook: de Soto's "dead capital"; India uses **presumptive, not conclusive, titling**. eGramSwaraj is a separate Panchayat planning/accounting platform

• GOBARDHAN & India's compressed biogas push

Scheme: GOBARDHAN National Circular Bioenergy Scheme, Cabinet approval **6 Aug 2026**, **Rs 23,731 crore**, FY 2026-27 to FY 2035-36 — targets a near **ten-fold** rise in CBG output via assured offtake, stable pricing, capital assistance, pipeline connectivity and credit

Detail: Biogas = 55-65% **methane** + 35-45% CO₂ by **anaerobic digestion** (hydrolysis → acidogenesis → acetogenesis → **methanogenesis**); upgraded beyond **90% methane** it becomes CBG, equivalent to CNG. By-product: fermented organic manure

Lineage: SATAT (2018, MoPNG); original GOBAR-Dhan (2018) under SBM-Grameen

Exam hook: India imports ~85% of **crude** and ~50% of **gas**; **methane** is ~25x CO₂ as a greenhouse gas

• CBDC-based DBT under PMGKAY

Detail: Launched **14 Aug 2026** in Chandigarh and Dadra & Nagar Haveli — food subsidy credited to a **Digital Rupee wallet** instead of a bank account, **purpose-bound** to foodgrains at **empanelled merchants**; **QR code** for smartphones, **OTP** for feature phones. Slogan "**Har Dana, Har Rupya, Har Adhikar**"

Detail: CBDC is **money** — an **RBI liability** and **legal tender**; **UPI** is a **rail moving commercial bank deposits**; **crypto** has no issuer and is not legal tender; **e-RUPI** is a **prepaid voucher**. RBI pilots **CBDC-W** and **CBDC-R** from 2022

Detail: **Programmability** attaches conditions to the **money itself** — which cash and bank transfers cannot do

Exam hook: DBT savings **over Rs 4 lakh crore**; **ASHA** AI feedback **20 lakh calls**. **NFSA 2013** covers **75% rural** + **50% urban** ≈ **80 crore**; **AAY 35 kg/household/month**, **PHH 5 kg/person/month**; free grain under **PMGKAY** from **1 Jan 2023**

• Sapt Dhara and Viksit Bharat 2047

Detail: In the **80th Independence Day** address the PM set out the **Sapt Dhara** — **manufacturing** · **agriculture and food production** · **technology and innovation** · **Gati Shakti** · **defence power** · **green and blue economy** · **soft power**

Detail: Announcements — AI skilling of **1 crore youth**, a **Rs 1 lakh crore Innovation Fund**, a talent hunt for the **2036 Olympics**, free online coaching over **DPI**, and a call for **one or two Indian pharma firms** to **enter the world's top five** under **Heal in India**

Detail: Social security **25 crore over five to seven decades** → **100 crore in one decade**; **Ayushman Bharat** covers **70+** up to **Rs 5 lakh**; **25 crore** moved out of poverty; India from the **Fragile Five** to the **fastest-growing major economy**

Exam hook: Twelve-year multipliers — digital transactions **100x**, mobile phones **35x**, railway coaches **21x**, electronics **7x**, khadi **5x**, defence production/internet users/patents **4x**. FTAs with **nearly 40 countries** since 2014; **urea Rs 300**, **DAP Rs 1,350**; **Vande Mataram** at the Red Fort for the **first time since Independence**, in its **150th year**

• PM-AASHA and the four instruments behind the price floor

Body: PIB backgrounder; allocation **■7,200 crore** for **2026-27**, up from **■6,941.36 crore** (2025-26)

Detail: The four instruments — **PSS** (physical purchase at MSP: pulses, oilseeds, copra) · **PDPS** (no procurement; pays the MSP-minus-market gap, capped at **15%** of MSP value) · **PSF** (buffer stocks for **consumers**, run by Consumer Affairs) · **MIS** (perishables with **no MSP** — tomato, onion, potato — triggered at a **10%** price fall)

Detail: **CACP** was set up in **January 1965** as the Agricultural Prices Commission, renamed **March 1985**; it is **advisory only** and the **CCEA** decides. **22 mandated crops** — **14 kharif**, **6 rabi**, **2 commercial** — plus **FRP for sugarcane**

Lineage: Buyers are **NAFED (1958)** and **NCCF (1965)** through **PACS** and **FPOs**; **FCI (1965)** handles wheat and rice, not pulses

Exam hook: The cost-concept trap — **A2** (paid-out) · **A2+FL** (plus imputed family labour) · **C2** (plus imputed land rent and capital interest). The **2018-19 Budget's 1.5x cost** promise was applied to **A2+FL**, while **Swaminathan** had recommended **C2 + 50%**

• Regenerative agriculture and the repair of Indian soils

Body: PIB research backgrounder, "Rebuilding Farming Systems", consolidating Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare schemes

Detail: The definition that gets tested — **sustainable = maintain**; **regenerative = improve**. Six principles: minimum soil disturbance, living roots, soil cover, livestock integration, limited chemical inputs, biodiversity

Detail: Four words, four different things — **organic** is an **input standard** (NPOP for export, PGS-India domestic) · **natural farming** is a **method** (Beejamrit, Jeevamrit, Ghanjeevamrit) · **regenerative** is an **uncertified outcome claim** · **sustainable** is intent to hold the line

Lineage: **NMNF 2024** (■4,000/acre/year for 2 years) · **PKVY 2015** (■31,500/ha over 3 years) · **PDMC 2015-16** (55%/45% micro-irrigation subsidy) · **RAD 2014-15** · **Soil Health Card 19 February 2015**

Exam hook: **8.80 lakh hectares** and **18.19 lakh farmers** under natural farming; **109 lakh hectares** under **PDMC**; **25.89 crore** Soil Health Cards. The card assesses **12 parameters**, reissued every **2 years** — not 6 parameters, not annually. Soil organic carbon has fallen from about **1%** to **0.3%** in seventy years

• Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana completes a decade

Body: Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare

Detail: Kharif 2016 – Rabi 2025-26: **92.46 crore** farmer applications insured, **26.33 crore** paid claims, claims above **₹2.06 lakh crore** — roughly **28%** of insured applications received a payout. **Budget 2026-27: ₹12,200 crore**

Detail: Farmer premium is capped at **2% (Kharif food/oilseed) · 1.5% (Rabi food/oilseed) · 5% (annual commercial/horticultural)** of sum insured; the **balance of the actuarial premium is shared by Centre and state**

Lineage: Launched **18 February 2016**. Cover runs from **prevented/failed sowing**, through mid-season adversity and **localised calamities assessed at the individual land parcel**, to specified **post-harvest losses**

Exam hook: Private crop insurance fails on **covariate risk** — a drought hits every farmer at once. **Non-loanee farmers enrol voluntarily and have averaged ~50% of enrolments**. **YES-TECH** does remote-sensing yield estimation; **WINDS** densifies weather stations — density is what makes index insurance honest

Welfare (12)

• Nasha Mukh Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan

Body: PMO / Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment

Detail: Launched **2 August 2026** with over one crore young participants from more than **28,000 locations**, framing addiction as a medical and family issue rather than a matter of shame; supply reduction sits with the MHA under the NDPS Act, 1985 and the Narcotics Control Bureau (1986), demand reduction with Social Justice & Empowerment through the NAPDDR and the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (15 August 2020, 272 districts, nationwide from August 2023)

Exam hook: The 2019 AIIMS-NDDTC survey found alcohol the most used substance (about 16 crore), then cannabis (3.1 crore) and opioids (2.26 crore); India lies between the Golden Crescent and the Golden Triangle; helpline 14446

• PM-AJAY Adarsh Gram — 47,328 villages selected

Body: Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment

Detail: The Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana, launched in FY 2021-22, merged the Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana, Special Central Assistance to the SC Sub Plan and the Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana into one scheme with three components — Adarsh Gram, grants-in-aid and hostels; the Adarsh Gram component seeks saturation of 50 monitorable indicators across 10 sectors through convergence; **47,328 villages selected**, **3.28 lakh works** and over **1.1 crore beneficiaries identified**

Exam hook: Constitutional backdrop — Article 341 (SC list notified by the President, alterable only by Parliament), Article 17, Article 338 (NCSC), Article 46

• Indian Organ Donation Day & the THOTA framework

Law: Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act, **1994** (in force 4 Feb 1995; amended 2011 to cover tissues) — regulates transplantation, **bans organ trade**

Detail: **Brain-stem death** is legal death, certified by a board of **4 doctors**; near-relative route vs Authorisation Committee route; **swap transplantation** permitted

Body: Three tiers — **NOTTO** (apex, MoHFW) → **ROTTTO** (regional) → **SOTTO** (State)

Exam hook: 16th Indian Organ Donation Day, 3 Aug 2026; **20,138 transplants in 2025**, India **3rd overall and 1st in living-donor** transplants

• Chandipura virus & outbreak response machinery

Detail: Genus **Vesiculovirus**, family **Rhabdoviridae** (like rabies) — bullet-shaped, enveloped, single-stranded **negative-sense RNA**; first isolated **1965** at Chandipura village, Nagpur district, Maharashtra

Detail: Vector is the **phlebotomine sandfly**, which also spreads **kala-azar**; causes **Acute Encephalitis Syndrome** mainly in under-15s, high case fatality, **no specific antiviral or licensed vaccine**

Body: Response via **NJORT** (NCDC + ICMR + DAHD), **IDSP** surveillance (2004, through IHIP), NCDC **PHEOC** activated; **NIV Pune** is the reference virology lab

Exam hook: ICMR founded **1911**; **One Health** links human, animal and environmental health

• National Framework for strengthening ITDAs and ITDPs

Detail: Released **15 Aug 2026** by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, launched by **Jual Oram** with **Dr R. Balasubramaniam** (NITI Aayog). Note the release carries **two figures** — the framework covers **217 ITDAs/ITDPs across 19 States/UTs**, from an exercise **initiated April 2026 with 214 across 17**

Detail: An **ITDP** is an ***area*** of concentrated ST population; an **ITDA** is the ***agency*** running it under a **Project Officer**. Both originate in the **Tribal Sub-Plan of the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79)**

Detail: The reform imports **ranking, real-time monitoring and convergence** from the **Aspirational Districts** model, making ITDAs the vehicle for **saturation of entitlements**

Exam hook: **Article 244; Fifth Schedule** (States other than Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram — **Governor** may modify laws; **Tribes Advisory Council**); **Sixth Schedule** (those four States, **Autonomous District Councils**); **Article 275(1), 342, 338A (NCST)**. **PESA 1996, FRA 2006, PM-JANMAN** for the 75 PVTGs

• SEED scheme and the De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic communities

Body: Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, through the **DWBDNC**

Detail: The **Criminal Tribes Act, 1871** notified entire communities as criminal by **birth and descent**, with registration, movement restrictions and settlement confinement. Repealed after independence; communities **de-notified in 1952** — hence 'De-notified Tribes'. **31 August = Vimukta Jatis Diwas**

Detail: De-notification removed the **label, not the consequence** — State **Habitual Offenders** laws reproduced parts of the apparatus

Lineage: **National Commission for DNT/NT/SNT** constituted **January 2015**, reported **December 2017** — the **Idate Commission** → **DWBDNC** constituted **February 2019** → implements **SEED**

Exam hook: **DNT/NT/SNT is not a fourth category** beside SC, ST and OBC — some fall in one, **some in none**, making them administratively invisible. SEED's four components: **education (coaching, not scholarships) · healthcare · community-level livelihoods · housing**

• DBT rewires the SC and OBC scholarship pipeline

Body: Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment; **₹30.81 crore** released in 2025-26 to SC and OBC students in **East Godavari**

Detail: Breakdown — **₹20.80 crore** post-matric SC · **₹2.38 crore** pre-matric SC and Others · **₹6.83 crore** post-matric OBC · **₹0.80 crore** pre-matric OBC

Detail: Post-matric SC traces to **1944**; restructured **December 2020**, outlay **₹59,048 crore**, Centre's share **₹35,534 crore**, pattern **60:40 (90:10** for NE and Himalayan States), income ceiling **₹2.5 lakh**

Lineage: **Article 46 (DPSP)** is the justification; **Article 338 (NCSC)** the machinery — **65th Amendment 1990** made it multi-member, **89th Amendment 2003** split off **NCST (338A)**; **Article 338(9)** requires consultation on major SC policy. DBT began **1 January 2013** in 43 districts; **NSP launched 1 July 2015**

Exam hook: The data trap — beneficiary counts **44,746** and **32,813** are **three-district** figures while the money is **one district**, so never compute a per-student average from them

• Chlorpheniramine-phenylephrine cold combinations restricted for under-fours

Body: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; mandatory warning that the **FDC 'shall not be used in children below four years of age'** on label, insert and promotional literature

Detail: The power is **Section 26A of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**, which lets the Centre **regulate** → **restrict** → **prohibit**. This notification uses the **middle rung** — **it is a restriction, not a ban**

Detail: Advice ran from an Expert Committee and the **DTAB** — the highest statutory technical body, chaired by the **Director General of Health Services**. The **DCC** is chaired by the **DCGI** and handles centre-state uniformity; **CDSO** sits under **DGHS**

Lineage: The **FDC chain** — **344 prohibited (March 2016)** → quashed by the **Delhi High Court (December 2016)** for lack of **DTAB/DCC** consultation → **Supreme Court (December 2017)** → **328 prohibited (September 2018)** → **156 more (August 2024)**

Exam hook: Do not merge the two failure modes — **diethylene glycol deaths are a manufacturing-quality failure**, answered by inspection and raw-material testing; **this FDC restriction is a rational-use failure**, answered by Section 26A. The **US FDA panel's 2023 finding** on oral phenylephrine was about **efficacy, not toxicity**

• Mission Zero: ending fatalities in sanitation work

Body: Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment; national workshop at Bhubaneswar, with Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi; NAMASTE extended to 2031, delivered through ERSUs
Detail: The 1993 Act covered dry latrines; the 2013 Act adds **septic tanks, sewers and railway tracks**. Section 5 bans insanitary latrines and engaging manual scavengers, Section 6 voids such contracts, Section 7 bans hazardous cleaning — penalties rise to **2 years / ₹2,00,000** under Section 7
Detail: Safai Karamchari Andolan (2014) set **₹10 lakh** compensation for deaths since 1993; Dr Balram Singh (20 October 2023) raised it to **₹30 lakh** for death, **₹20 lakh** permanent disability and **₹10 lakh** other disability, with **14 directions**
Lineage: NAMASTE (2023) — MoSJE with MoHUA, nodal agency NSKFDC, about **₹498.73 crore** to 2030-31; financing limb NAMASTE-SUY lends up to **₹15 lakh** individual and **₹50 lakh** group. About **90,000** sanitation workers profiled, **87,037** PPE kits
Exam hook: Two traps — GARIMA is an Odisha state scheme, not central; and the NCSK is **non-statutory** since 2004, unlike the constitutional NCSC and NCST. NCSK records **1,313** deaths from 1993 to June 2025

• e-Shram portal completes five years

Body: Ministry of Labour and Employment; built by NIC
Detail: Launched **26 August 2021**; created India's first Aadhaar-seeded National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW), with a **12-digit Universal Account Number** per worker. Over **31.89 crore** registrations
Detail: The One-Stop Solution (21 October 2024) integrates **15 schemes** — PM-SYM (**₹3,000/month** pension from 60), PMSBY (**₹2 lakh** accidental death/permanent disability, **₹1 lakh** partial), PMJJBY (**₹2 lakh** life cover), NSAP, ONORC, PMAY-G — plus NCS, Skill India Digital Hub and myScheme. **22 languages** via BHASHINI from 2025
Lineage: Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008, now subsumed into the Code on Social Security, 2020, which defines gig and platform workers in statute
Exam hook: An 'unorganised worker' includes an organised-sector worker who is not an EPFO/ESIC member — the test is social-security membership. Do not confuse the e-Shram UAN with the EPFO UAN

• PM Jan Dhan Yojana completes twelve years

Body: Department of Financial Services
Detail: Accounts **14.72 crore** (2015) → **59.09 crore** (19 Aug 2026), of which **32.92 crore** are women's — more than 55%
Detail: The account is a Basic Savings Bank Deposit Account (BSBDA) — **no minimum balance**, no upper age limit, opened at a branch or Business Correspondent/Bank Mitra. RuPay accident cover **₹1 lakh**, raised to **₹2 lakh** for accounts opened after August 2018, no premium from the beneficiary
Lineage: Launched 2014 for 'every household'; from 2018 the unit became 'every unbanked adult' — the change that drove the female share up, since a banked household can contain unbanked adults
Exam hook: RBI's Financial Inclusion Index 53.9 (2018) → 67 (2026). JAM = Jan Dhan + Aadhaar + Mobile enabling DBT. Honest limit: dormant accounts — PMJDY solved access decisively, usage partially

• Higher education: a decade of AISHE data

Body: Ministry of Education, All India Survey on Higher Education
Detail: 2014-15 → 2023-24: universities **760** → **1,289** (+69.6%), colleges **38,498** → **48,246**, enrolment **3.42** → **4.50 crore** (+31.5%), out-turn **88.28 lakh** → over **1.09 crore**
Detail: GER **23.7%** (2014-15) → **29.5%** (2022-23) → **30%** (2023-24), against NEP 2020's 50% by 2035. Growth is fastest at the top — integrated +301%, PhD +193% — and slowest at undergraduate level, so the system is **deepening faster than widening**
Lineage: Female GER **31.2%** against male **28.9%** — ahead for the seventh consecutive year; female enrolment +42.2%, outpacing the total
Exam hook: GER counts students of any age against the 18-23 population, so it can exceed 100%; the Net Enrolment Ratio cannot. The puzzle worth stating: women lead in higher education while female labour force participation stays low — the bottleneck is after graduation. SDG 4

• Seven years since the abrogation of Article 370

Law: Article 370 sat in Part XXI (Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions), drafted by N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, rooted in the Instrument of Accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh on 26 Oct 1947 (defence, external affairs, communications)
Detail: Article 35A was inserted by the Presidential Order of 1954. Abrogated 5 Aug 2019 via Constitutional Orders 272 and 273
Detail: J&K Reorganisation Act 2019, effective 31 Oct 2019 (National Unity Day) — J&K UT with a legislature, Ladakh UT without one; the first conversion of a State into UTs
Exam hook: Upheld by a five-judge Constitution Bench on 11 Dec 2023, which held Article 370 temporary and directed restoration of statehood; Assembly set at 90 seats

• The Forest Rights Act & Community Forest Rights

Law: Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006; nodal ministry Tribal Affairs, implemented by States/UTs; cut-off 13 December 2005; OTFDs need 75 years / three generations
Detail: Rights = Individual Forest Rights (max 4 hectares, heritable but not alienable, joint in both spouses' names), Community Rights (grazing, minor forest produce incl. bamboo), Community Forest Resource rights, and development rights (13 categories)
Detail: Process — Gram Sabha + Forest Rights Committee → Sub-Divisional Level Committee → District Level Committee (final); no statutory time limit for disposal
Exam hook: Pair with PESA 1996, Indian Forest Act 1927, Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 (renamed Van Adhiniyam 2023), Articles 342 and 338A

• How India investigates an air incident

Body: DGCA = regulator (licensing, airworthiness, rules); AAIB = independent investigator of accidents and serious incidents, set up 2012; BCAS = aviation security; AAI = airports and air navigation services
Detail: ICAO — UN specialised agency, HQ Montreal, from the Chicago Convention 1944, with Annex 13 on investigation
Detail: Accident = death, serious injury or substantial damage; incident = affects or could affect safety; serious incident = an accident nearly occurred
Exam hook: The black box is FDR + CVR, painted orange, with an underwater locator beacon. Clear-air turbulence occurs near jet streams, is invisible to radar, and causes most in-flight injuries

• e-FIR and Section 173 of the BNSS

Law: Section 173, BNSS 2023 — information on a cognizable offence may be given orally or electronically, irrespective of the area where the offence was committed; electronic information is taken on record only on being signed by the informant within three days
Detail: That 'area' clause gives statutory force to the Zero FIR. Section 173(3) allows a preliminary enquiry within 14 days, with permission of an officer not below DySP, for offences punishable with 3 years or more but less than 7
Lineage: Succeeds Section 154 CrPC 1973. The three new laws, all in force 1 July 2024 — BNS (replaces IPC 1860), BNSS (CrPC 1973), BSA (Evidence Act 1872)
Exam hook: *Lalita Kumari* (2013) made FIR registration mandatory for a cognizable offence. Public order and police = State List Entries 1 and 2; criminal law and procedure = Concurrent List Entries 1 and 2

• The Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026

Law: Repeals the Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021 and establishes a judiciary-led National Tribunals Commission, giving effect to *Madras Bar Association v. Union of India*, (2026) 2 SCC 1
Detail: NTC = a Chairperson (former SC Judge or HC Chief Justice), two Judicial Members, two Technical Members (25 years' experience); appointed by the Centre after consulting the CJI. Functions — selections, performance monitoring, complaint inquiries, the National Tribunals Data Grid
Detail: Tenure — NTC members 5 years or age 70; tribunal members 5 years or age 67. Recommendations communicated within 3 days, appointment within 3 months
Exam hook: Part XIV-A, inserted by the 42nd Amendment, 1976. Article 323A — Parliament only; Article 323B — Parliament and State Legislatures. *L. Chandra Kumar* (1997) — judicial review under Articles 226, 227 and 32 is basic structure

Polity/Bodies (12)

• Monsoon Session 2026 adjourned sine die

Detail: 20 July → 13 August 2026; 19 sittings over 25 days; the 8th Session of the 18th Lok Sabha and 271st of the Rajya Sabha. 11 Bills introduced in LS and 2 in RS; 12 passed by both Houses. Productivity ~19% (LS) and 39% (RS)

Detail: Two Bills replaced ordinances — Supreme Court (Number of Judges) and Income-Tax — reflecting Article 123 (an ordinance lapses six weeks after reassembly). Excess Grants for 2022-23 passed LS 4 Aug, returned by RS 6 Aug (Article 115, regularised after the PAC)

Detail: Bills included Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment, Prevention of Insults to National Honour Amendment (Vande Mataram into Section 3 of the 1971 Act), Kerala (Alteration of Name) → Keralam under Article 3

Exam hook: Adjournment and sine die by the presiding officer; prorogation by the President; dissolution only for the Lok Sabha (RS permanent under Article 83, one-third retiring every two years). Article 85 — not more than six months between sessions

• Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Punya Tithi

Detail: Born 25 December 1924, Gwalior; died 16 August 2018. Padma Vibhushan 1992, Bharat Ratna 27 March 2015; 25 December is Good Governance Day; memorial Sadaiv Atal

Detail: Three tenures — 13 days (1996), 13 months (1998-99, fell by one vote), and a full term (1999-2004), making him the first non-Congress PM to complete five years. Earlier, External Affairs Minister 1977-79 and the first Indian to address the UNGA in Hindi (1977)

Detail: Pokhran-II, 11 and 13 May 1998, codename Operation Shakti → No First Use, credible minimum deterrence. Lahore Declaration Feb 1999 → Kargil (Operation Vijay), May-July 1999, India did not cross the LoC → Agra Summit, July 2001

Exam hook: Amendments of his term — 86th (2002) inserted Article 21A; 91st (2003) capped ministers at 15% and deleted the 'split' exemption from the Tenth Schedule; 84th (2001) and 87th (2003) froze delimitation until the first census after 2026. Three States created in 2000; NHDP/Golden Quadrilateral, PMGSY (25 Dec 2000), SSA 2001, FRBM 2003

• UIDAI completes two crore mandatory biometric updates in schools

Body: UIDAI, a statutory authority under the Aadhaar Act, 2016, functioning under MeitY

Detail: Over 2 crore Mandatory Biometric Updates across more than 1.56 lakh schools, from September 2025, enabled by integration with UDISE+ and delivered through school-level camps

Detail: For children below five, Aadhaar captures demographics and a photograph only — fingerprints and iris are still developing — so updates are mandatory at age 5 and again at age 15

Lineage: A stale template means authentication fails, which the person experiences as a denial — blocking scheme benefits or registration for NEET, JEE and CUET. Exclusion error matters more than inclusion error in welfare design

Exam hook: *K.S. Puttaswamy* (2017), nine judges — privacy is a fundamental right under Article 21; the 2018 Aadhaar judgment, five judges, upheld the Act but read down Section 57. MBU is free for ages 5–17 until 30 September 2026

• Cabinet approves a High Court bench for Ladakh

Body: Union Cabinet; welcomed by Home Minister Amit Shah citing access to justice and constitutional safeguards

Detail: Article 214 — a High Court for each State · 226 writ jurisdiction, wider than Article 32 because it extends to 'any other purpose' · 227 superintendence · 230 Parliament may extend a High Court's jurisdiction to a UT · 231 Parliament may create a common High Court

Detail: Ladakh is a UT without a legislature, created by the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, effective 31 October 2019; the court is the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, with two seats — Srinagar and Jammu

Lineage: Three words, three meanings — seat (where the court is located) · permanent bench (standing, away from the seat, as at Lucknow or Madurai) · circuit bench (sits periodically, as Calcutta's at Port Blair). The Jaswant Singh Commission (1981) set the criteria

Exam hook: Ladakh gets a bench of an existing High Court, not its own High Court — Delhi is the only UT with its own. Access to justice is read into Article 21; Article 39A (42nd Amendment) mandates free legal aid through NALSA

• Bhu-Aadhaar: 40.58 crore land parcels get an identifier

Body: Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development); an African Union, six-nation and UNDP delegation studied the system

Detail: Over 40.58 crore parcels assigned a 14-digit ULPIN (Bhu-Aadhaar), with near-universal computerisation of records.

Components: DILRMP (umbrella), ULPIN, NGDRS (registration software), NAKSHA (urban mapping, drone-based)

Detail: The economic argument is dead capital — land that exists physically but not legally cannot be pledged, so it cannot become credit or investment

Lineage: Companion scheme SVAMITVA drone-maps rural *abadi* areas and issues property cards. Vision framed as the Bharat Land Stack

Exam hook: India follows presumptive, not conclusive, titling — a record is evidence, not a state guarantee. Digitisation improves the evidence; it does not make title conclusive. ULPIN is 14 digits; Aadhaar is 12

• High-Powered Task Force on public examination reform

Body: Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (DoPT) — not Education

Detail: Chaired by Shri Nandan Nilekani; remit covers the conduct, security, design and governance of public examinations including NTA's. Public suggestions invited to 13 September 2026, in English, Hindi and regional languages

Detail: Ten areas include secure Computer-Based Testing, examination infrastructure, inclusion across social, economic, regional and linguistic groups, grievance redressal and student well-being

Lineage: NTA established 2017; the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 criminalises paper leakage, unauthorised answer-key access and network tampering, with enhanced punishment for organised crime — it targets organisers, not principally candidates

Exam hook: The weakest point is the question-paper supply chain, not the hall. CBT improves integrity via randomised delivery from a large bank but needs centres with power and connectivity — security and inclusion pull against each other. UPSC: Article 315; removal 317; report to President 323

• Bihar–Jharkhand MoU on Sone river water sharing

Body: Signed before Union Home Minister Amit Shah, with CMs Hemant Soren (Jharkhand) and Samrat Choudhary (Bihar) and Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil; settles a roughly 25-year dispute, the fourth inter-state water agreement this year via the Inter-State Council

Detail: Dispute dates to the carving of Jharkhand out of Bihar in November 2000 — a boundary drawn across a basin. Benefits districts including Bhojpur and Buxar

Detail: The Sone rises at Amarkantak (as do the Narmada and Johilla); it is the largest right-bank tributary of the Ganga after the Yamuna and joins near Patna. Indrapuri (Dehri) Barrage anchors the Sone canal system

Detail: Article 262(1) — Parliament may provide for adjudication of inter-State river water disputes; 262(2) — Parliament may bar the Supreme Court and all other courts

Detail: Water = Entry 17, State List, expressly subject to Entry 56, Union List. Two 1956 Acts — Inter-State River Water Disputes Act (tribunal awards carry the force of a Supreme Court decree) and the River Boards Act (largely unused)

Economy (28)

• Near-universal banking coverage & financial inclusion

Detail: 99.92% of inhabited villages (6,00,868 of 6,01,328) within 5 km of a banking outlet; an outlet = branch, Business Correspondent or IPPB centre — 1.81 lakh branches, 17.36 lakh BCs, 1.65 lakh IPPB centres

Scheme: PMJDY, launched 28 Aug 2014 — 58.77 crore accounts, Rs 3,12,414 crore; tracked on the Jan Dhan Darshak app

Exam hook: Payments banks cannot lend or issue credit cards; Small Finance Banks can — the standard trap. JAM = Jan Dhan + Aadhaar + Mobile → DBT; RBI publishes the Financial Inclusion Index

• Shipbuilding finance & the Maritime Development Fund

Scheme: SBFAS Rs 24,736 crore (extends SBFAP, guidelines 26 Dec 2025) offsets the shipyard cost disadvantage

Scheme: Maritime Development Fund Rs 25,000 crore = MIF Rs 20,000 cr (49% GoI, equity) + **IIF Rs 5,000 cr** (cheaper debt); SBI Ventures fund manager from 26 May 2026

Detail: ~95% of India's trade by volume and ~70% by value moves by sea; global shipbuilding is dominated by China, South Korea and Japan — India ~1%

Exam hook: **Cabotage** = coastal trade reserved for the Indian flag; **12 major ports** under the Major Port Authorities Act 2021; INS Vikrant built at Cochin Shipyard

• GeM at ten: public procurement and Rs 20 lakh crore

Body: Government e Marketplace, launched August 2016 under the Department of Commerce; completed **ten years on 9 Aug 2026**

Detail: Cumulative GMV **over Rs 20 lakh crore** across **3.78 crore+** orders; annual GMV **Rs 422 crore (FY17) → over Rs 5 lakh crore (FY25/FY26)**. The first Rs 10 lakh crore took **8+ years**, the next **under 2** **Detail:** Sellers **3,339 → 25.45 lakh**; buyers **1,707 → 1.37 lakh**; IIT Delhi estimates **Rs 1.76 lakh crore** net social savings

Exam hook: Tools — direct purchase, **L1 bidding**, e-bidding, **reverse auction**; **Womaniya** for women sellers; Public Procurement Policy for MSEs (2012) with SC/ST and women sub-quotas

• UPI, MDR and who pays for digital payments

Detail: **MDR = Merchant Discount Rate**, paid by the **merchant, never the consumer**, split between the issuing bank (**interchange**), the acquiring bank and the network

Detail: **Zero-MDR** on UPI and RuPay debit from **January 2020**. The **8 Aug 2026** clarification — **no consumer charges**, **P2P free**, any MDR only on limited merchant transactions above a threshold at nominal rates

Law: Enabling amendment to the **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007**

Exam hook: **NPCI** — founded **2008**, a **not-for-profit Section 8 company** promoted by **RBI and IBA**; runs UPI, RuPay, IMPS, AePS, NACH, NETC/FASTag. **NIPL** takes UPI abroad (Singapore PayNow, Nepal, UAE, France)

• Urban cooperative banks & the NUCFDC umbrella

Body: **NUCFDC** — the RBI-recognised umbrella organisation for ~1,400 **UCBs**, providing shared technology, training, compliance and **MuleHunter** software; **'Bank in a Box'** bundles core banking, digital payments, cloud and compliance

Detail: Cooperative principle = **one member, one vote**. UCBs are urban; rural credit runs **State Cooperative Bank → DCCB → PACS**, with **NABARD (1982) refinancing, not lending directly**

Detail: **Dual control** — **RBI** for banking under the Banking Regulation Act 1949, **Registrar of Cooperative Societies** for management; the **BR (Amendment) Act 2020** strengthened RBI powers after **PMC Bank**

Exam hook: **DICGC** insures deposits up to **Rs 5 lakh**; **97th Amendment (2011)** — Article **19(1)(c)**, Article **43B**, **Part IXB**; Ministry of Cooperation created **2021**

• PLFS Quarterly Bulletin, April-June 2026

Detail: For persons **15+ on Current Weekly Status** — **LFPR 54.6%** (prev. 55.5%), rural 56.9%, urban unchanged **50.2%**, urban male **75.3%**, female **33.2%**; **WPR 51.7%**, urban 46.8%

Detail: **Unemployment** — urban **6.7%**, rural **4.8%**, urban female **8.7%**. Regular wage/salaried share **16.1% rural, 49.3% urban**; rural agriculture down to **52.9%**, urban tertiary **62.0%**

Detail: About **56.6 crore** employed (40.2 cr male, 16.4 cr female), from a sample of **5,59,673** persons

Exam hook: **LFPR** and **WPR** are measured against population; the **Unemployment Rate against the labour force**. **CWS = 7-day, Usual Status = 365-day**. **PLFS** launched **2017** on the NSC's recommendation; redesigned from **January 2025** for monthly estimates

• The MSMED (Amendment) Bill, 2026

Detail: Passed **August 2026** to reduce payment constraints, make dispute resolution time-bound and simplify compliance. Per Economic Survey 2025-26, **MSMEs are 31.1% of GDP, 35.4% of manufacturing output, 48.58% of exports; 9.16 crore on Udyam**, employing **40 crore+**

Detail: Classification on **investment AND turnover** (both), from **1 April 2025** — Micro **Rs 2.5 cr / Rs 10 cr**, Small **Rs 25 cr / Rs 100 cr**, Medium **Rs 125 cr / Rs 500 cr**

Detail: Mediation **within 90 days** of first appearance → arbitration referral **within 30 days** → award **within 90 days** of pleadings. Setting aside still needs a **75% deposit**; courts **must release at least 50%** if pending beyond six months

Exam hook: **Section 15** — payment within **45 days**; **Section 16** — compound interest at **three times the RBI bank rate**. **CPSEs** must settle via **TReDS**

• India becomes the world's leading ship recycling nation

Detail: Per **UNCTAD**, India led globally in **2025** — market share **30.1%** → **35.4%**, volume **1.86 → 2.99 million GT**, nearly **60% growth**, meeting the **Maritime India Vision 2030** target **five years early**

Detail: **Alang-Sosiya** (Gujarat) is the **world's largest hub** — ~98% of India's activity, capacity ~**6 million GT**, ~**3.50 MMT of steel** a year; its **Safety Training and Labour Welfare Institute** has trained **over 1.5 lakh workers**

Law: **Recycling of Ships Act 2019** (DG Shipping the National Authority), **Ship Recycling Rules 2021**, **Regulations 2026**

Exam hook: The **Hong Kong International Convention (IMO)** entered into force **26 June 2025**; **India acceded 2019**. The **Inventory of Hazardous Materials** is the core compliance document

• CPI for July 2026 on the new 2024=100 base

Detail: Headline **4.45%** combined (June 4.38%), rural **4.84%**, urban **3.96%**; index **108.34 rural / 107.45 urban / 107.94 combined**; **CFPI 5.52%** combined; highest item **silver jewellery +109.84%**, lowest **potato -16.56%**

Detail: The new series from **January 2026** replaces the **2012** base — weights from the **HCES 2023-24**, groups **6 → 12** under **COICOP 2018**, basket **299 → 358** items, and the **food weight substantially reduced**, consistent with **Engel's Law**

Detail: **CPI** — **NSO** under **MoSPI**, covers **goods and services**. **WPI** — Office of the Economic Adviser, **DPIIT**, **goods only**, base **2022-23**

Exam hook: Combined **CPI** has anchored monetary policy since **2014** (**Urjit Patel Committee**); **flexible inflation targeting** from **2016** — target **4% ± 2%**, six-member **MPC**, Governor holds a **casting vote**; failure = outside **2-6% for three consecutive quarters**

• The MMDR Amendment Bill, 2026

Law: Amends the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957** — extends Union regulation to **mineral-bearing lands** and inserts **Section 9D: no State tax, cess or levy on mineral rights or mineral-bearing lands** except as prescribed by the Centre; **Section 13** gives the rule-making power

Detail: Levies **not paid before commencement** are **invalid**; amounts **already recovered** are **not refundable**

Detail: Entries — **Union List 54** (mines, to the extent declared by Parliament), **State List 23** (subject to it), **49** (taxes on lands and buildings), **50** (taxes on mineral rights, expressly subject to **Parliament's limitations**)

Exam hook: ***Mineral Area Development Authority v. SAIL***, **25 July 2024**, **nine judges, 8:1**, **Nagarathna J. dissenting** — held **royalty is not a tax but contractual consideration**, upheld States' taxing power, and confirmed **Parliament may restrict it**. Earlier amendments: **2015** (auctions, DMF, PMKKKY, NMET), **2021, 2023 (24 critical minerals)**

• WPI, Output PPI and the shift to a Producer Price Index

Detail: Released **14 Aug 2026** by the **Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT**, on the **new 2022-23 base** — **WPI inflation 9.78%** (June 9.87%), index **110.0**; Primary Articles **8.52%**, Fuel & Power **20.05%**, Manufactured Products **8.29%**, **WPI Food 6.65%**

Detail: Weights — Manufactured Products **63.13%**, Primary Articles **22.76%**, Fuel & Power **14.11%**

Detail: Wholesale **9.78%** sits far above retail **4.45%** because **WPI excludes services**, is dominated by manufactured goods and commodities, and is measured **near the point of production**

Exam hook: **WPI is being replaced by a Producer Price Index** measuring **factory-gate prices received by producers**, excluding indirect taxes and margins — avoiding **multiple counting** and allowing **services** to be covered. **WPI** runs **five years in parallel** before discontinuation, per **IMF** recommendation

• **DRI uncovers a Rs 2,500 crore SAFTA origin fraud**

Detail: DRI dismantled a syndicate importing South-East Asian areca nuts declared as **Bangladeshi origin** to claim SAFTA exemption — revenue loss **over Rs 2,500 crore, 9 arrested, Rs 75 lakh cash and 160 MT seized**; searches at **Kolkata and Visakhapatnam**; a **Customs Broker's licence suspended**
Detail: The incentive: areca nut **BCD is 100%**, while eligible **SAFTA imports from Bangladesh are fully exempt**. The method: source from **Indonesia/Thailand/Malaysia** → route through an **EPZ in Bangladesh** → **merely change containers and bags** → **fraudulently obtain SAFTA Certificates of Origin** → launder via **hawala** and dummy entities
Detail: SAFTA signed at the **12th SAARC Summit, Islamabad, January 2004**, in force **1 January 2006**, succeeding **SAPTA**; each member keeps a **Sensitive List**
Exam hook: **CAROTAR 2020**, in force **21 September 2020** under **Section 28DA** of the Customs Act 1962 (inserted by the **Finance Act 2020**) — a **Certificate of Origin alone is not enough**; the importer must exercise **reasonable care** and hold origin information

• **PosTransfer powered by UPI: the Qatar-India remittance corridor**

Body: Ministry of Communications; live in Qatar from **15 August 2026** through **Qatar Post**, with **India Post**, the **UPU Interconnection Platform** and **NPCI International (NIPL)**
Detail: Sender gives the **recipient's UPI ID** at a **Qatar Post** counter; the **recipient must first activate foreign inward remittance** in their UPI app — the counter-intuitive step — then credit is instant
Detail: **QAR 10–4,000** per transaction, capped at **₹1,00,000** equivalent, **flat fee QAR 15** — a flat fee is **regressive for small transfers** (under 0.4% on QAR 4,000, but 15% on QAR 100)
Lineage: India is the **world's largest recipient of inward remittances**; they are **counter-cyclical** and **stable**, going directly to households
Exam hook: Remittances sit in the **current account under secondary income** — **not** the capital account. **SDG target 10.c** seeks costs below 3%. UPI removes the **domestic last mile**, not cross-border **FX and compliance** costs

• **EU CBAM awareness session for Indian exporters**

Body: Department of Commerce with **NABCB** and **EEPC**, at **Vaniya Bhawan, New Delhi**
Detail: CBAM exists to stop **carbon leakage** — production shifting to weaker-regulation jurisdictions, which relocates emissions rather than cutting them. It charges imports a carbon price equivalent to what an EU producer pays under the **Emissions Trading System**
Detail: Six covered sectors — **cement, iron and steel, aluminium, fertilisers, electricity, hydrogen**. **Transitional phase 1 October 2023 – 31 December 2025** (reporting only) → **definitive regime from 1 January 2026**; expected to extend to all EU ETS sectors by **2030**
Lineage: India's exposure is concentrated in **iron and steel and aluminium**, where production is heavily **coal-based**. The harder problem is **data**, not the tax — compliance needs emissions figures from suppliers across the chain, falling hardest on **MSMEs**
Exam hook: India's fairness argument rests on **CBDR-RC** under the **UNFCCC**; the WTO dimension turns on **MFN, National Treatment** and the **GATT Article XX** exceptions. **Embedded emissions** is the quantity charged

• **The MMDR Amendment Act, 2026 and who may tax a mine**

Body: PIB Backgrounder, Ministries of **Mines and Coal**
Detail: The new **Section 9D** does three things — a **prospective bar** on State taxes on mineral rights and mineral-bearing lands, **uncollected levies deemed invalid at all material times** (overriding any court order), and **no refund** of amounts already paid
Detail: It responds to **Mineral Area Development Authority v. SAIL, nine judges, 25 July 2024, 8:1** (Nagarathna J dissenting), which held **royalty is not a tax** and States are competent under **Entry 50**, overruling **India Cement (1990)**. A follow-up order allowed recovery from **1 April 2005**, staggered over **12 years from 1 April 2026**
Lineage: **Entry 54 List I** (regulation of mines) · **Entry 23 List II** (subject to it) · **Entry 50 List II** (taxes on mineral rights, **subject to parliamentary limitation**) · **Entry 49 List II** (taxes on lands and buildings, **with no such rider**) — which is why the Union is on firmer ground on **Entry 50** than **Entry 49**
Exam hook: **Minor minerals are untouched** — about 50, including sand, gravel, granite and marble. States get about **90%** of sector revenue; **656 DMFs** spend through **PMKKKY**

• **Makhana: production, prices and the export concentration problem**

Body: PIB Backgrounder, *India's Makhana Sector*
Detail: **Euryale ferox**, an aquatic crop of the **chaurs** — the waterlogged depressions of the **Kosi basin** (Supaul, Saharsa, Madhepura). **Bihar ≈ three-fourths** of Indian output and **80–85% of global supply**
Detail: Production **63,910 MT (2024-25) → 80,590 MT (2025-26)**. Prices rose from about **₹500/kg (2020-22)** to nearly **₹1,250/kg (2025)** while volumes grew only **4–5%** — the signature of **low short-run supply elasticity**
Lineage: **GI tag for Mithila Makhana, 2022** · **National Makhana Board** launched at **Purnea, 15 September 2025** · **Central Sector Scheme (100% Union-funded)** of **₹476.03 crore** for 2025-26 to 2030-31
Exam hook: Before 2025 there was **no product-specific export data**; **DGFT created a separate HSN code**. Exports **7,264.89 MT** worth **₹192.96 crore** — but the **US (40%)**, **Canada (20%)** and **UAE (17%)** take **77% at the lowest unit prices**, while Germany pays **\$26/kg**. **The biggest markets pay the least**

• **Index of Core Industries grows 5.4% in July**

Body: Office of the Economic Adviser, **DPIIT**, Ministry of Commerce and Industry; released around the **20th**
Detail: **ICI +5.4%** in July 2026 against **+6.0%** in June; cumulative **April–July +4.3%** against **1.5%** a year earlier. Gainers — **iron ore +29.5%** · **cement +13.1%** · **electricity +9.0%** · **coal +7.6%** · **steel +2.9%**; **natural gas, crude oil and fertilisers** contracted
Detail: Weights on the **2022-23** base — **electricity 30.932** · **refinery products 22.572** · **steel 17.584** · **crude oil 7.430** · **coal 5.596** · **iron ore 4.905** · **cement 4.410** · **natural gas 3.841** · **fertilisers 2.731**. The top three are about **71%** of the index
Lineage: The name says **eight** but the current composition lists **nine** — **iron ore was added** with the 2022-23 base revision
Exam hook: **Iron ore +29.5%** against **steel +2.9%** is the divergence to notice. The core industries are about **40% of IIP weight**, making **ICI a lead indicator**. Crude and gas declines are **structural** — ageing fields, import dependence above **85%**

• **₹62,500 crore Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme notified**

Body: **MeitY**; announced by **Ashwini Vaishnaw**, with a target of India's **first strong indigenous mobile brand by mid-2027**
Detail: Outlay **₹62,500 crore** over **five years (FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31)**; projected cumulative production about **₹39 lakh crore** and around **60,000 direct jobs**
Detail: **TS1** — manufacturing at scale, incentive **2.25–5%**, entry turnover **₹10,000 crore**. **TS2** — Indian brands, **5% plus 3%** for Indian design and R&D, entry turnover **₹1,000 crore**. Both get up to **1.5%** more for domestic sourcing. An **Indian Brand** needs **IP and trademark held in India**, Indian management control and **more than 51%** Indian shareholding
Lineage: Successor to **PLI-LSEM** (notified **1 April 2020**, ~**₹41,000 crore**, ended **31 March 2026**), under which India became the **2nd-largest** maker by volume, **99.2%** of phones used here are made here, and smartphones became the **largest export category in 2025** at about **USD 30 billion**
Exam hook: **CBU → SKD → CKD** with duty rising with completeness — the logic of the **Phased Manufacturing Programme (2016)**. **DVA** has moved from ~15% to **22-23%**, target **35-40%**. Electronics still ran a sectoral deficit near **USD 68 billion** in **FY 2025-26**

• **India's first non-GMO high-expansion popcorn maize hybrid**

Body: Launched by Vice-President **C. P. Radhakrishnan** at **Musunuru, Eluru district, Andhra Pradesh**; developer **Gourmet Popcornica** with **ICAR-IIMR, Ludhiana**
Detail: Popcorn is ***Zea mays*** var. ***everta*** — hard pericarp, corneous endosperm, **13–14% moisture**, rupturing near **180°C**. The trait that matters is **expansion volume (cc/g)**, not yield
Detail: **ICAR** release standard — popping rate **≥85%**, expansion volume **15 ml/ml**, yield gain **≥5%**
Lineage: Conventional hybrids are notified under the **Seeds Act, 1966**; transgenics go to **GEAC** under the **1989 Rules** framed under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986** — Environment Ministry, never Agriculture
Exam hook: **No GM popcorn exists commercially anywhere**, so 'non-GMO' is a trade signal, not a breakthrough. Output **50,000 t → 1.30 lakh t (2025-26)**, target **1.80 lakh t by 2030**; forex saving ~**₹810 crore**

• RBI's USD-INR swap facility raises \$73 billion

Body: Ministry of Finance / RBI

Detail: Special USD-INR swap for FCNR(B) + OFCB + ECB raised \$73 billion as on 21 Aug 2026 — FCNR(B) alone \$65.40 bn — in under 11 weeks from launch on 8 June 2026; FCNR(B) window closure advanced to 31 August 2026

Detail: RBI absorbs the hedging cost of about 280–300 bps on 3–5 year money, letting banks quote 5.5–7.1% on dollar deposits. Buy/sell injects rupee liquidity; sell/buy absorbs it

Lineage: September 2013, Governor Raghuram Rajan — swap at a fixed 3.5% raised \$34 bn, of which FCNR(B) was \$26 bn. Earlier: **Resurgent India Bonds 1998** (\$4.2 bn), **India Millennium Deposits 2000** (\$5.5 bn) **Exam hook:** FCNR(B) from 15 May 1993; FCNR(A) closed Aug 1994 because the RBI bore the exchange risk under it. Reserves \$716.907 bn (week ended 14 Aug 2026). The comparison is \$73 bn vs \$34 bn, not vs \$26 bn

• UPI completes a decade

Body: NPCI, under RBI regulation

Detail: Piloted 11 April 2016 by Governor Raghuram Rajan with 21 banks; public launch 25 August 2016. Volume 1.78 crore (FY 2016-17) → 24,162 crore (FY 2025-26) ≈ 13,000×; value ₹0.07 lakh crore → ₹314 lakh crore ≈ 4,000×

Detail: Volume grew ~3× faster than value, so average ticket size collapsed — evidence UPI captured everyday low-value retail, not already-electronic payments

Lineage: NPCI set up 2008 as an umbrella retail-payments body under RBI and IBA guidance, under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007; not-for-profit (Sec 8), which is why zero MDR was possible **Exam hook:** ~49% of global real-time payment volumes (IMF) and ~84% of India's digital payments; ~66 crore transactions a day. RTGS and NEFT are RBI-operated, not NPCI

• Regional Rural Banks post record ₹10,176 crore profit

Body: Department of Financial Services review with NABARD, all 28 RRB chairpersons, sponsor banks, RBI and SIDBI

Detail: Net profit ₹10,176 crore in FY 2025-26 (from ₹6,820 crore) — up ~49%. 22,273 branches, 26 States + 3 UTs, ~700 districts, total business above ₹13.5 lakh crore

Detail: GNPA 5.3% and NNPA 2.1% — both all-time lows — while the credit-deposit ratio hit 75.2%, an all-time high. NPAs falling *while* lending rose is the harder achievement

Lineage: Narasimham Working Group → Ordinance 26 Sep 1975 → first five RRBs 2 Oct 1975 → RRB Act, 1976. Consolidation 196 → 43 → 28 under One State One RRB

Exam hook: Shareholding Centre 50% · Sponsor Bank 35% · State 15%. RBI regulates, NABARD supervises. PSL requirement 75% of ANBC against 40% for commercial banks. 54.98 lakh new PMJDY accounts opened

• Sugar sector: FRP ₹365 and a 15.6% one-month price rise

Body: PIB Backgrounder, *India's Sugar Industry*

Detail: Retail sugar ₹48.18/kg (20 July) → ₹55.70/kg (20 Aug 2026), +15.6% in a month, against a trend of only ~3% a year since Aug 2024. Output ~306 LMT against an estimated 343 LMT

Detail: FRP for 2026-27 is ₹365/quintal at 10.25% basic recovery, against ₹230 at 9.5% in 2016-17. Recovery = percentage of sugar obtained from cane, making FRP a rare quality-linked farm price

Lineage: FRP is set by the Union Government on CACP's recommendation under the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966; the State Advised Price (SAP) is a state announcement, usually higher — arrears build in that gap

Exam hook: Sugarcane has an FRP, not an MSP. India is the second-largest cane producer; production 500 MMT; ethanol diversion fell from ~12% (2022-23) to ~9% (2025-26), and ~three-fourths of ethanol now comes from grain, mainly maize

• Onion buffer release and the Kanda Express

Body: Department of Consumer Affairs, with NAFED and NCCF

Detail: Calibrated release began with the first Kanda Express from Nashik to Delhi NCR; retail sale at ₹35/kg. Production 307.37 LMT (2025-26) against 307.67 LMT — so this is a seasonal and expectational problem, not a shortage

Detail: Kanda Express scaled from 14 rakes / ~12,000 MT / 5 cities (2024-25) to 86 rakes / ~88,000 MT / 16 cities (2025-26)

Lineage: The buffer sits under the Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) — distinct from the FCI foodgrain buffer, which serves the PDS. CWC engaged as storage agency for the first time in 2026-27; target 2.00 LMT, ~1.21 LMT procured

Exam hook: A buffer release works physically (more supply) and expectationally (traders unload once intervention looks credible) — the second channel fires only if the response is visibly fast. Prices of 41 commodities are tracked across 579 centres

• IIP up 6.7% in July on the new 2022-23 series

Body: MoSPI / National Statistical Office; released the 28th of each month

Detail: IIP +6.7% y-o-y in July 2026 (June: 7.3%); index 124.8 against 117.0. Mining & Quarrying -0.9% · Manufacturing +7.3% · Electricity & Gas Supply +8.7% · Water Supply, Sewerage & Waste Management +7.4%

Detail: The 2022-23 base series has FOUR sectors, not the three of the 2011-12 series — water supply, sewerage and waste management is new. Items 839 → 1,042; item groups 407 → 463; rare earths, renewables and gas supply tracked for the first time; PPI used to convert value to volume

Lineage: Top manufacturing contributors — electrical equipment +28.3% · motor vehicles +22.2% · machinery n.e.c. +12.1% — all capital and durable goods, pointing to investment demand

Exam hook: ICI (+5.4%, DPIIT, ~20th) versus IIP (+6.7%, NSO, 28th); core industries are ~40% of IIP weight. ICI below IIP means the non-core portion grew faster. Answering 'three sectors' is now out of date

• Compressed Biogas repriced at ₹2,110 per MMBtu

Body: Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, under GOBARdhan

Detail: Producer price moves from ~₹1,478/MMBtu (the old formula of 85% of the CNG retail price) to ₹2,110/MMBtu, +43%. Government affordability support of ₹10/kg ≈ ₹215/MMBtu cuts the recovered cost to ~₹1,895, an effective +28%

Detail: CBG is not sold at procurement price to CGD entities — it is pooled with domestic gas. Previously spread only over APM gas for CNG-transport and domestic PNG; now over a base 2.5–3× larger, so the per-consumer effect is small

Lineage: SATAT (2018, MoPNG) commits oil marketing companies to offtake. CBG comes from anaerobic digestion — biogas at 55–65% methane, purified to 90–95% and compressed; chemically close to CNG

Exam hook: Producer price ≠ consumer price, separated by subsidy and pooling — the same reasoning applies to electricity and fertiliser. Honest limits: the ₹215 support is a fiscal cost, and 'negligible' holds only at current CBG volumes

• Q1 FY 2026-27 GDP estimates — 7.8% real growth

Body: MoSPI; Quarterly Estimates of GDP for Q1 (April–June) FY 2026-27, with National Accounts Statistics 2026

Detail: Real GDP ₹81.36 lakh crore, +7.8%; nominal GDP ₹88.27 lakh crore, +10.3%; real GVA ₹73.82 lakh crore, +8.2%; nominal GVA ₹80.53 lakh crore, +11.5%

Detail: Identity — GDP (market prices) = GVA (basic prices) + product taxes – product subsidies. GVA is the producer side at prices received; GDP the expenditure side at prices paid

Detail: Real GVA grew faster than real GDP, so net product taxes grew more slowly than underlying value added

Detail: Use GVA for sectoral performance (undistorted by tax/subsidy changes), GDP for economy size and international comparison. Constant-price base 2022-23; the nominal-minus-real gap is the implicit deflator (~2.5 pp for GDP)

• Semicon 2.0 — notifications for all six pillars

Body: MeitY; Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced notifications for all six pillars of Semicon 2.0, covering 10 categories, building on the first Semicon India Programme

Detail: Claims cited — 85,000 semiconductor engineers trained in four years against a ten-year target; students from Tier-II and Tier-III cities have designed more than 250 chips

Detail: The six pillars — 1 Design (including a Deployment-Linked Incentive) · 2 Machines and Materials · 3 Fabs (silicon wafer, compound semiconductors/photronics/sensors, display) · 4 ATMP/OSAT · 5 R&D · 6 Talent Development

Detail: Value chain — Design (a design-only firm is fabless) → Fabrication in a fab (front end) → ATMP/OSAT, Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging (back end). Fabs are extraordinarily capital-intensive; ATMP is less capital-intensive, so countries usually enter at the back end

Detail: India has long been strong in design with almost no fabrication. Compound semiconductors — gallium nitride, silicon carbide — suit power electronics, RF and high-temperature use, hence EVs, telecom and defence

IR/Diplomacy (7)

• Extradition, INTERPOL notices & BHARATPOL

Detail: 274 fugitives brought back from 36 countries (2019-2026); 401 Red Corner Notices in three years; BHARATPOL links 1,400+ agencies, cutting sharing to 3-10 days

Law: Extradition Act 1962, MEA nodal. Extradition ≠ deportation — deportation is unilateral, under immigration law

Detail: Limits — dual criminality, rule of speciality, political-offence exception, human-rights bar

Exam hook: INTERPOL founded 1923, HQ Lyon, 190+ members, no arrest powers; India's NCB is the CBI. Notices: Red (arrest for extradition), Blue, Green, Yellow, Black, Orange, Purple, UNSC Special

• India-SACU Preferential Trade Agreement talks

Detail: Terms of Reference signed at Vaniya Bhawan, 12 Aug 2026 — India's first ToR signing with the African region

Detail: SACU, established 1910, is the world's oldest existing customs union — Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa; HQ Windhoek; operates a common external tariff and a shared revenue pool

Detail: Eight chapters — goods and market access, rules of origin, customs procedures, trade remedies with a bilateral safeguard, SPS, TBT, dispute settlement, legal and horizontal provisions

Exam hook: The ladder — PTA → FTA → Customs Union (common external tariff) → Common Market (free factor movement) → Economic Union. Rules of origin prevent trade deflection and are unnecessary within a customs union. Permitted under GATT Article XXIV and the Enabling Clause, 1979

• India hosts the BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting

Detail: 17-18 August 2026 at Bharat Mandapam — Senior Officers' Meeting on 17th, the 12th BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting on 18th, presided over by Bhupender Yadav; Chairship theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability"

Detail: India's four EWG priorities — I. Promoting Sustainable Lifestyles, II. Afforestation, Forest Fire Management and Disaster Resilience, III. Circular Economy (Extended Producer Responsibility), IV. Adaptation (community-led, built on traditional knowledge). Mitigation targets are notably absent

Detail: BRIC from 2006, first summit 2009; South Africa 2010; 2024 expansion added Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, UAE; Indonesia 2025 → ten full members. Saudi Arabia was invited but has not formalised membership

Exam hook: EWG established 2015 (first Ministers' Meeting, Moscow); Contact Group on Climate Change 2024. New Development Bank — Fortaleza 2014, HQ Shanghai; the Contingent Reserve Arrangement is a currency-swap facility, not a bank. India chairs in 2026 — its fourth time

• BRICS Chennai Declaration on science, technology and innovation

Body: 14th BRICS STI Ministerial, Chennai, chaired by India; Chennai Declaration adopted unanimously; announced by Dr Jitendra Singh. Next ministerial under China's chairship, 2027

Detail: The framing phrase — a 'people-centred and humanity-first' approach, with frontier technology to be accessible, affordable and responsible

Detail: Contents include BRICS GRAIN (Global Research Advanced Infrastructure Network) with an Action Plan and Task Force ToR, a BRICS Science and Research Repository as a digital public good, the Young Scientist Forum, Young Innovator Prize, an STI Entrepreneurship Partnership and a Youth Startup Platform. The declaration counts 14 working groups, 11 Young Scientist Forums and 9 STI Framework Programme calls

Lineage: Founding four 2009 · South Africa 2010 · Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, UAE from 1 January 2024 · Indonesia 2025 · partner tier from October 2024

Exam hook: Saudi Arabia's membership is contested — invited at Johannesburg 2023, never formally confirmed, which is why counts of both 10 and 11 circulate. India's chairship theme spells B-R-I-C-S; the 18th Summit is in New Delhi, 12–13 September 2026

• India's largest business delegation to Japan

Body: Piyush Goyal in Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka with 200+ representatives assembled by FICCI, CII and ASSOCHAM; round-table with Keidanren; counterpart Akazawa Ryosei of METI

Detail: The relationship ladder — Treaty of Peace 1952 → Global Partnership 2000 → Strategic and Global Partnership 2006 → Special Strategic and Global Partnership 2014, with annual summits since 2006

Detail: CEPA signed 16 February 2011, in force 1 August 2011, abolishing tariffs on over 94% of traded items over ten years, with marine products, dairy and cereals on India's exclusion list

Lineage: Trade about USD 27.5 billion; Japan is India's 5th largest FDI source, cumulative above USD 47.59 billion; about 1,400 Japanese companies operate here. Investment target raised to ¥10 trillion by 2035

Exam hook: CEPA did not reverse the deficit — India's exports stayed roughly flat while imports nearly doubled, because the binding constraints were standards and conformity assessment, not tariffs. Companion structures: SCRI (India, Japan, Australia, 2021), the Quad, the 2+2 Ministerial and the Act East Forum

• India-Seychelles fisheries and blue-economy talks

Body: Department of Fisheries (MoFAH&D); Seychelles led by Minister Wallace Cosgrow, India by Secretary Dr Abhilaksh Likh

Detail: India's fish production has reached 19.7 million tonnes; seafood exports USD 8.46 billion

Detail: Agenda — mariculture, hatcheries, tuna fisheries, stock assessment, post-harvest engineering, marine conservation, fisheries data systems and MCS (Monitoring, Control and Surveillance), the direct answer to IUU fishing

Lineage: Seychelles — ~115 islands, western Indian Ocean, capital Victoria on Mahé; a SIDS whose 200 nm EEZ exceeds a million sq km with minimal enforcement capacity

Exam hook: SAGAR (2015), with MAHASAGAR as the newer framing; IORA established 1997, secretariat Mauritius; IOTC manages tuna. Building a partner's MCS is development aid and maritime domain awareness at once

• PM's Central Asia visit and the 26th SCO Summit

Body: PMO — Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, 29 August–1 September 2026; state visit to Tashkent, then Bishkek for the 26th SCO Summit, marking 25 years

Detail: India's stated approach — 'Security, Connectivity and Opportunity'. Agenda with Uzbekistan: trade and investment, digital connectivity, defence, energy. Also the Shastri Memorial, the Mahatma Gandhi Centre and the 6th World Nomad Games

Detail: SCO founded 15 June 2001, Shanghai, from the Shanghai Five; India and Pakistan 2017 · Iran 2023 · Belarus 2024 = ten members. Secretariat Beijing; RATS Executive Committee Tashkent — two cities, two bodies

Lineage: The Tashkent Declaration, 1966 — Lal Bahadur Shastri died hours after signing the agreement ending the 1965 war

Exam hook: India has no land access to Central Asia — Pakistan lies between. Hence Chabahar, the INSTC (conceived 2000 by India, Iran and Russia) and the Ashgabat Agreement (joined 2018). These routes are real but under-utilised

Environment (10)

• Ujh Multipurpose Project and the Indus Waters Treaty

Body: Ministry of Jal Shakti / WAPCOS

Detail: Planned on the Ujh, a tributary of the Ravi, in Kathua district, Jammu & Kashmir; will irrigate about 90,000 hectares across Kathua and Samba (J&K) and Pathankot and Gurdaspur (Punjab), supply drinking water to Kathua and generate power; complements the Shahpurkandi project in using India's full Ravi entitlement

Exam hook: Under the Indus Waters Treaty, 1960 (Karachi, Nehru-Ayub Khan, World Bank-brokered), the eastern rivers Ravi, Beas and Sutlej are for India's unrestricted use, the western Indus, Jhelum and Chenab largely Pakistan's, with India limited to non-consumptive use; disputes go to the Permanent Indus Commission, then a Neutral Expert or Court of Arbitration

• India crosses 300 GW non-fossil power capacity

Detail: 300.50 GW non-fossil installed capacity as on 31 July 2026 — Solar 164.59, Wind 58.14, Hydro 57.24, Bio 11.75, Nuclear 8.78 GW; total capacity ~552 GW, non-fossil share over 54%

Detail: Capacity ≠ generation — CUF is ~20-25% for solar and ~25-30% for wind against 60-70% for coal, so coal still supplies the bulk of units generated. This is the single most-missed point on the topic

Detail: Intermittency needs BESS, pumped storage, grid flexibility (One Nation One Grid, unified 31 Dec 2013), green hydrogen and nuclear base load

Exam hook: Panchamrit (COP26 Glasgow 2021) — 500 GW non-fossil, 50% renewables, 1 bn-tonne cut, 45% emission-intensity cut by 2030, net-zero by 2070. ISA is headquartered at Gurugram

• Asiatic lion population reaches 891

Detail: Population series — 411 (2010) → 523 (2015) → 674 (2020) → 891 (2025)

Detail: The 16th Lion Population Estimation, 10-13 May 2025, across ~35,000 sq km in 11 Saurashtra districts — 196 adult males, 330 adult females, 140 sub-adults, 225 cubs

Detail: Lions outside notified forest areas rose 340 → 507; Barda WLS near Porbandar recorded 17 lions, the first since 1879, after natural recolonisation in 2023

Exam hook: *Panthera leo persica* — wild only in Gujarat; IUCN Endangered, CITES Appendix I, WPA 1972 Schedule I. Project Lion announced 15 Aug 2020. The SC's 2013 Kuno translocation order was never implemented; Kuno now hosts Project Cheetah

• NBA releases Rs 15.52 crore in access and benefit sharing

Detail: Released 13 Aug 2026 from M/s Pioneer Overseas Corporation, which developed ten commercial mustard (*Brassica juncea*) hybrids using Indian biological resources; distributed to 26 State Biodiversity Boards and 3 UT Councils by area under mustard — Rajasthan Rs 6.43 cr (~42% of area), UP Rs 2.28 cr, MP Rs 1.86 cr

Detail: Because parental lines came from the open market, with no identifiable community, an NBA Expert Committee ruled that resources accessed from intermediaries are shared among the Boards/Councils where the resource is cultivated

Law: Funds used under Section 32 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 — People's Biodiversity Registers, in-situ/ex-situ conservation,

Biodiversity Heritage Sites, BMC capacity. Cumulative ABS Rs 182.5 crore

Exam hook: NBA is statutory, at Chennai; three tiers NBA → SBB → BMC. CBD 1992 (three objectives) · Cartagena Protocol 2000 (LMOs) · Nagoya Protocol 2010, in force 2014, India ratified 2012 · Target 13, Kunming-Montreal GBF 2022

• India's first Guide to Grasslands and Open Natural Ecosystems

Body: MoEFCC, launched at UNCCD COP17, Ulaanbaatar; published by ATREE with IUCN, CoE-SLM, ICFRE and SAC, ISRO; video message by Bhupender Yadav

Detail: The core argument — grasslands, scrublands and ravines have 'for too long been judged by the absence of trees'. ONEs are ancient, not degraded, maintained by grazing, fire and seasonal drought

Detail: The 'wasteland' label made them administratively available for conversion; planting a forest on a savanna is conversion, not restoration

Lineage: India's ONEs — Himalayan and Terai grasslands, the Thar and Banni, Deccan savannas, rocky plateaus, ravines, scrublands.

Traditional commons: oran (Rajasthan) and gauchar

Exam hook: Grasslands store most carbon below ground, so they look carbon-poor to a satellite counting canopy while being a more fire-resistant store than forest. Species: Great Indian Bustard, Indian wolf, blackbuck, caracal, lesser florican

• CAQM Direction No. 102 on light goods vehicles in Delhi-NCR

Body: Commission for Air Quality Management, 29th Full Commission meeting, chaired by Rajesh Verma

Detail: The justifying statistic — LGVs are ~1.2% of the active vehicle stock but ~3.3% of fleet PM emissions, a near-threefold disproportion. N1 = goods vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes; N2 = 3.5 to 12 tonnes

Detail: New N1 registration (diesel/petrol/CNG) restricted in Delhi from 1 January 2027, the five High Vehicle Density districts (Gurugram, Faridabad, Sonapat, Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar) from 1 July 2027, remaining NCR from 1 January 2028; N2 follows from 1 January 2028

Lineage: CAQM is statutory, under the CAQM in NCR and Adjoining Areas Act, 2021, replacing the court-supervised EPCA; jurisdiction covers NCR and adjoining areas of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh because an airshed crosses state lines

Exam hook: GRAP: I Poor 201–300 · II Very Poor 301–400 · III Severe 401–450 · IV Severe+ above 450. Note that CNG now appears on a restriction list — a shift from the 1998-era assumption. ■61.85 crore EC on six thermal plants for missing biomass co-firing targets

• CMLRE's national report on deep-sea fishery resources of the Indian EEZ

Body: CMLRE (Kochi), Ministry of Earth Sciences, marking its Silver Jubilee

Detail: Compiles nearly four decades of research and more than 400 oceanographic cruises since the early 1990s under the Marine Living Resources Programme, aboard FORV Sagar Sampada, across India's 2.37 million sq km EEZ

Detail: The mesopelagic 'twilight' zone, 200–1,000 m, holds lanternfishes (myctophids), deep-sea shrimps and cephalopods whose nightly vertical migration drives the biological carbon pump — so exploiting it at scale would weaken a climate-regulating service

Lineage: Maritime zones — territorial sea 12 nm (sovereignty) · contiguous zone 24 nm · EEZ 200 nm (sovereign rights over resources, not sovereignty) · continental shelf up to 350 nm. UNCLOS adopted 1982, in force 1994, India ratified 1995; domestic law the Maritime Zones Act, 1976

Exam hook: Demersal = on or near the seabed; pelagic = open water column. Underexploited demersal stocks beyond 200 m include deep-sea shrimps, perches, scombroids, flatfishes and eels. MATSYA-6000 under Samudrayaan is rated to 6,000 m

• UNCCD COP17 and India's land-restoration finance pitch

Body: MoEFCC; Bhupender Yadav at UNCCD COP17, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia (17–28 Aug 2026, theme *Restoring Land. Restoring Hope.*)

Detail: 21.76 million hectares brought under restoration 2011–2020, generating 1.22 billion person-days — from India's Second Progress Report on the Bonn Challenge

Detail: UNCCD adopted Paris, 17 June 1994, in force 26 Dec 1996, HQ Bonn, 197 Parties; India hosted COP14 (2019)

Lineage: Bonn Challenge launched 2011 (Germany + IUCN); India pledged 21 mn ha (2015) → raised to 26 mn ha by 2030 at COP14

Exam hook: LDN sits in SDG 15.3; indicator 15.3.1 combines land cover + land productivity + soil organic carbon on a one-out, all-out rule. India's degraded land: 97.85 mn ha = 29.77% of TGA. 'Brought under restoration' ≠ 'restored'

• Snow leopard science at the Moscow roundtable

Body: MoEFCC with the **Wildlife Institute of India**, at the **A.N. Severtsov Institute**, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow
Detail: India presented **population estimation, radio telemetry and genetic analysis**. Held under a partnership between the association '**Irbis**' (Russian for snow leopard) and the **International Big Cat Alliance**, signed **December 2025**
Detail: Counting relies on **unique rosette patterns** in paired camera traps analysed by **spatially explicit capture-recapture** (which estimates **density**, not a raw count), scat DNA for individual ID and **connectivity**, and collars for behaviour
Lineage: **SPAI** gave India's first robust national estimate — about **718**, **Ladakh** holding the largest share. **GSEEP** launched **2013** at **Bishkek**; **Project Snow Leopard 2009**; **IBCA 2023**, seven big cats, India-headquartered
Exam hook: **IUCN Vulnerable** (down from Endangered in **2017** — better data, not recovery), **Schedule I** of the **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**, **CITES Appendix I**; **12 range countries**. A rising treeline **squeezes** its habitat against the summit

• NBA disburses **₹5.68 crore** in Access and Benefit-Sharing funds

Body: **National Biodiversity Authority** (Chennai, est. **2003**), MoEFCC
Detail: **₹5.68 crore** disbursed to State Biodiversity Boards, UT Biodiversity Councils and CSIR-NCL; cumulative ABS disbursement now above **₹191 crore**. Largest component **okra** (**Abelmoschus esculentus**) — **139 varieties**, **28 hybrids**, **₹3.51 crore** to 32 boards; also **watermelon** (662 varieties) and **cucumber** (1,009 varieties)
Detail: Because the resources came **from markets and traders**, they cannot be traced to a farmer or community — so the share is distributed among **States and UTs where the resource is cultivated**, a pragmatic **second best**
Lineage: **Biological Diversity Act, 2002** (amended 2023) creates the three tiers — **NBA · State Biodiversity Boards · Biodiversity Management Committees**. Funds are used under **Section 32**, including **People's Biodiversity Registers**
Exam hook: **CBD** from the **1992 Rio Earth Summit**, three objectives — conservation, sustainable use, **fair and equitable benefit-sharing**; the **Nagoya Protocol (2010, CoP10)** operationalises the third. A PBR's function is **defensive** — documentation establishes **prior art**. Biopiracy cases: **turmeric, neem, basmati**

Sci/Tech (2)

• Nuclear programme after the SHANTI Act, 2025

Body: Two PIB backgrounders, Department of Atomic Energy
Detail: **24 reactors** at seven sites, **8.78 GW** installed; **nine under construction** (7.5 GW); **10 PHWRs** approved in fleet mode; pre-project work on **two 500 MW Fast Breeder Reactors**. Target **100 GW by 2047**; **₹20,000 crore** for **Small Modular Reactors** in Budget 2025-26
Detail: The **SHANTI Act, 2025** repeals both the **Atomic Energy Act, 1962** and the **Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010**; permits **private Indian companies** to build, own and operate plants, ending NPCIL's operating monopoly. **Enrichment, heavy water and off-site spent fuel stay with the Centre**; **FDI in atomic energy remains prohibited**
Lineage: Three-stage programme — **I PHWR on natural uranium** → **Pu-239 · II Fast Breeder with a thorium blanket** → **U-233 · III thorium reactors**. Thorium is fertile, not fissile
Exam hook: Per GW installed in FY 2025-26, **CO₂-equivalent avoided: nuclear 5.4 Mt · hydro 2.7 · wind 1.6 · solar 0.9** — nuclear leads largely on **capacity factor**. **Tarapur (1969)** was the first station

• Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2026

Body: Department of Consumer Affairs; notified **27 August 2026**, in force **180 days** after gazette publication
Detail: Makes **IST the common time reference** for legal, administrative, commercial and official purposes — converting a **convention** into an **obligation**. Underpins time-stamping in banking and digital payments, telecom, railways, power and legal records
Detail: Provides for **NavIC** and other **approved Indian timing sources**, reducing dependence on foreign satellite constellations. A **White Rabbit** fibre-based dissemination network was commissioned at **RRSL Bengaluru** in **July 2026**, with secure dissemination demonstrated to **NSE Chennai**
Lineage: **IST** is based on **82°30'E**, near **Mirzapur**; **1° = 4 minutes**, so **82.5 × 4 = 330 minutes = UTC+5:30**. **CSIR-NPL** realises the national standard; the **second** is defined by the **caesium-133** transition
Exam hook: A satellite navigation receiver is physically a **time receiver** — position is computed from signal arrival times. India spans **~29° of longitude**; the two-time-zone debate persists, but the government position is **one time zone**

Infra (5)

• Namu Bharat RRTS & regional rapid transit

Detail: Design speed **180 km/h**, stations **5-10 km** apart — distinct from **metro** (~80 km/h, ~1 km spacing) and from intercity rail
Detail: India's first corridor **Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut, 82.15 km** including 23 km of Meerut metro on the same infrastructure, fully operational **February 2026**; 3.8 crore+ riders, 99%+ punctuality
Body: Implemented by **NCRTC**, a Centre-State joint venture with Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and UP; Phase-I corridors — **Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut**, **Delhi-Gurugram-Alwar**, **Delhi-Panipat**
Exam hook: **Kolkata Metro (1984)** was India's first; **Metro Rail Policy 2017** requires last-mile connectivity and **TOD**; **PM Gati Shakti (2021)** for multi-modal planning

• USBRL & the Chenab Bridge

Detail: **Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link, 272 km**, commissioned — through Udhampur, Reasi, Ramban, Srinagar, Anantnag, Pulwama, Budgam, Baramulla
Detail: **Chenab Bridge** (Reasi) is the **world's highest railway bridge** — **1,315 m** long, arch span **467 m**, **359 m** above the riverbed (**taller than the Eiffel Tower**), steel arch, **Zone-V** seismic design
Detail: **Anji Khad** is **India's first cable-stayed railway bridge**, ~473 m, single pylon
Exam hook: **Cable-stayed** = cables run to the tower; **suspension** = hangers off a main cable. Built through the **young fold Himalaya** in **Seismic Zone V**

• E-Samudra & seafarer welfare

Detail: Launched **8 Aug 2026** by **MoPSW** at Mumbai — a single-window digital platform for seafarers, shipping companies and ports, with **24×7 grievance redressal**
Body: **DG Shipping** (Mumbai) is the apex merchant-shipping regulator under MoPSW; the **Merchant Shipping Act** is the parent law; **Indian Maritime University** (2008, Chennai)
Detail: **IMO** — UN specialised agency, founded **1948**, operational **1959**, HQ **London**
Exam hook: The four conventions — **SOLAS 1974** (safety, post-Titanic), **MARPOL 1973/78** (pollution), **STCW** (training), **MLC 2006** (seafarers' rights). **UNCLOS 1982** — 12/24/200 nm

• Interlinking of rivers: status of the National Perspective Plan

Detail: **NPP for Inter-Basin Water Transfer, 1980** — identified **30 links**, **16 Peninsular** and **14 Himalayan**; **NWDA** established **1982** prepares feasibility studies and DPRs
Detail: **Ken-Betwa** is the **only priority link under implementation** — **Rs 44,605 crore**, irrigation **11.88 lakh ha**, drinking water to **62 lakh** people, **103 MW hydro + 27 MW solar**; foundation stone **Khajuraho, 25 Dec 2024**; both rivers are **tributaries of the Yamuna**
Detail: **Polavaram** (Godavari) incorporates the **Godavari-Krishna link** — **7.2 lakh acres** irrigated, **80 TMC** diverted, **960 MW**, central assistance **Rs 20,658 crore**
Exam hook: **Water is Entry 17 of the State List**, subject to **Entry 56 of the Union List**; **Article 262** enables the **Inter-State River Water Disputes Act 1956**

• Digital Bharat Nidhi signs **₹3,942 crore BharatNet deal for Chhattisgarh**

Body: Digital Bharat Nidhi under DoT, with the Government of Chhattisgarh, CSBIL, BSNL and CHiPS, under the **State-led model**
Detail: **₹3,942 crore** · **11,682 Gram Panchayats** — **4,048** Phase I GPs upgraded **linear** → **ring topology**, **5,964** Phase II, **1,670** newly created · **8,328 villages** on demand · over **3 lakh** rural home fibre connections expected
Detail: **Linear** chains nodes on one path, so a **single cut disconnects everything downstream**; a **ring** gives every node **two routes** — the upgrade is a shift from **coverage to reliability**
Lineage: DBN was the **Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)**, established under the **Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2003** w.e.f. **1 April 2002**, renamed by the **Telecommunications Act, 2023**, which replaced the **1885** and **1933** Acts. **NOFN (2011)** was renamed **BharatNet (2015)**
Exam hook: Funded by a **Universal Service Levy** on **Adjusted Gross Revenue**; proceeds go first to the **Consolidated Fund of India**, because **Article 266(3)** permits withdrawal only by **appropriation made by law**

Culture/Sport (9)

• Swami Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Mission

Body: PMO / Ministry of Culture
Detail: Born Narendranath Datta on **12 January 1863** (observed as National Youth Day) and died in **1902**; disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa; delivered his celebrated address at the Parliament of the World's Religions, Chicago, in **1893**, opening 'Sisters and Brothers of America'; founded the Ramakrishna Mission in **1897**, headquartered at Belur Math, West Bengal
Exam hook: Taught the four yogas — Karma, Bhakti, Raja and Jnana; the call 'Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached'; service to the poor as Daridra Narayana

• National Handloom Day and India's handloom sector

Body: Ministry of Textiles
Detail: Observed on **7 August** since **2015**, marking the launch of the Swadeshi Movement at Calcutta Town Hall on **7 August 1905** after the Partition of Bengal; about **35 lakh** handloom workers, over **70%** of them women and about **88%** of weaver households rural, per the Fourth All India Handloom Census (2019-20); India's largest cottage industry
Exam hook: GI-tagged weaves — Banarasi, Kanjeevaram, Pochampally, Chanderi, Muga (Assam), Pashmina; GI of Goods Act, **1999**; Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, **1985**

• Gyan Bharatam Mission & manuscript heritage

Body: Ministry of Culture
Detail: Announced in Union Budget **2025-26**, **Rs 491.66 crore** for **2025-2031**; National Manuscript Survey launched **March 2026** in all States/UTs; covers digitisation, survey, cataloguing, conservation and a National Digital Repository
Detail: A **manuscript** is handwritten, usually **75+ years** old — an **inscription is carved, so not a manuscript**; materials include palm leaf, birch bark (bhurja patra), handmade paper, cloth
Lineage: Succeeds the National Mission for Manuscripts (**2003**); allied bodies IGNC, ASI (**1861**), National Archives (**1891**)
Exam hook: UNESCO Memory of the World Register lists the **Rigveda** and **Gilgit** manuscripts

• Intangible cultural heritage & the UNESCO 2003 Convention

Detail: The **2003 Convention** covers **intangible/living** heritage; the **1972 Convention** covers **tangible World Heritage** — the distinction most often confused
Detail: **20.COM** hosted by India at the **Red Fort**, New Delhi, **8-13 Dec 2025** — India's first time — ~**1,200** delegates from ~**130** countries
Detail: India has **16 inscribed elements**. **Kutiyattam** (Kerala Sanskrit theatre) was the **first**; **Yoga 2016**, **Kumbh Mela 2017**, **Durga Puja of Kolkata 2021**, **Garba of Gujarat 2023**
Exam hook: Nodal agency is the **Sangeet Natak Akademi**; three lists — **Representative**, **Urgent Safeguarding**, **Good Safeguarding Practices**

• Quit India at 84

Detail: AICC resolution passed at **Gowalia Tank, Bombay, 8 Aug 1942**; Gandhi's "**Do or Die**" (**Karo ya Maro**) the same night; leaders arrested **pre-dawn 9 Aug 1942** under the **Defence of India Rules**
Detail: Gandhi held at **Aga Khan Palace, Poona** (where **Kasturba** and **Mahadev Desai** died); others at **Ahmednagar Fort**, where Nehru wrote **The Discovery of India**
Detail: **Aruna Asaf Ali** hoisted the flag on **9 Aug** — hence **August Kranti Maidan** and **August Kranti Diwas**. Trigger: failure of the **Cripps Mission (1942)** — "a post-dated cheque on a crashing bank"
Exam hook: Parallel governments at **Ballia** (Chittu Pandey), **Tamluk** (Tamlalita Jatiya Sarkar, Matangini Hazra) and **Satara** (Nana Patil); **Usha Mehta** ran the underground **Congress Radio**; the Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha and CPI stayed out

• Commonwealth Games 2026 & India's sporting ecosystem

Detail: Quadrennial; first held **1930** at **Hamilton, Canada** as the **British Empire Games**; run by the **Commonwealth Games Federation**, with **para events integrated** into the main programme. India hosted **Delhi 2010**; the **2026** edition was at **Glasgow**
Detail: Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is nodal, but **sport is a State subject (Entry 33)**
Body: **Khelo India (2018)** for grassroots and talent identification; **SAI (1984)**, founded after the **1982 Asian Games**; **TOPS** for elite funding via the Mission Olympic Cell; **NADA** and the **National Anti-Doping Act 2022** align with **WADA**
Exam hook: Awards — **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna** (highest), **Arjuna** (performance), **Dronacharya** (coaches), **Dhyan Chand** (lifetime)

• Partition Horrors Remembrance Day

Detail: Observed **14 August**, announced **14 August 2021**
Detail: The sequence — **Lahore Resolution 1940** → **Cripps Mission 1942** fails → **Direct Action Day, 16 Aug 1946** → **Cabinet Mission Plan 1946** (three-tier, groupings) collapses → **Mountbatten / 3 June Plan 1947**, dividing **Punjab and Bengal**, with referendums in **NWFP and Sylhet**
Law: **Indian Independence Act 1947** — royal assent **18 July 1947**; **two dominions from 15 August 1947**; a Governor-General for each; Constituent Assemblies became **sovereign legislatures**; **British paramountcy lapsed**
Exam hook: The **Radcliffe Line** was drawn by **Sir Cyril Radcliffe**, who had **never visited India**, in ~**five weeks**, and was **published 17 August 1947** — **two days after independence**. Displacement **10-15 million**. **J&K** acceded **26 October 1947**

• Sri Aurobindo at 154

Detail: Born **15 August 1872**, Calcutta — India became independent on his **75th birthday**; died **5 December 1950**, Pondicherry. Educated at **St Paul's, London** and **King's College, Cambridge**; passed the **ICS examination but did not join**; served the **Gaekwad of Baroda**
Detail: Drawn in by the **Partition of Bengal, 1905**; a leading **Extremist** alongside **Lal-Bal-Pal**; edited **Bande Mataram**, later **Karmayogin** and **Dharma**; argued for **complete Swaraj** and **passive resistance**; principal of the **Bengal National College**
Detail: Principal accused in the **Alipore Bomb Case (1908-09)**, defended by **Chittaranjan Das**, **acquitted 6 May 1909**; delivered the **Uttarpara Speech on 30 May 1909**. Moved to **Pondicherry in 1910**; developed **Integral Yoga** and the **Supermind**; the **Ashram** organised **1926** under **Mirra Alfassa, The Mother**; **Auroville 1968**
Exam hook: Works — **The Life Divine**, **Savitri** (~**24,000** lines), **The Synthesis of Yoga**, **Essays on the Gita**. His **15 August 1947** message set out **five dreams**

• National Conclave on Tribal Languages and Museums, Mysuru

Body: Ministry of Tribal Affairs, **Mysuru**, inaugurated by MoS **Durgadas Uikey**

Detail: Launches — **Adi Vaani** (iOS app plus five new languages; the beta had four: **Santali, Bhili, Mundari, Gondi**) · the **Tribot** chatbot ·

Karnataka Primers · an **MoU with CIIL** · a **Declaration on Tribal Languages**

Detail: The counting facts — Census 2011 took **19,569** raw returns →

1,369 rationalised mother tongues → **121** languages (**22 scheduled + 99 non-scheduled**), with a **10,000-speaker** cut-off. The **People's Linguistic Survey** (Ganesh Devy, 2010) counted about **780**

Lineage: The Eighth Schedule went from **14 to 22** — Sindhi (**21st Amendment, 1967**), Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali (**71st, 1992**), Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santali (**92nd, 2003**). Only **Santali and Bodo** are tribal languages on it

Exam hook: The **Eighth Schedule is not a list of official languages** — **Article 343** does that; the Schedule feeds **Articles 344 and 351**, and **no article lays down criteria for inclusion**. Carry **29(1) · 350 · 350A · 350B** (the last two from the **7th Amendment, 1956**). ST population **10.43 crore** = **8.6%**, **705** notified groups, **75 PVTGs**



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