

Polity/Bodies (3)

• Law Commission Conference on Cooperative Federalism

Body: The event: 23rd Law Commission's national conference on "Co-operative Federalism and Law Reforms", Vigyan Bhawan, 22 October 2026; inaugurated by the Vice-President.
Proposals: citizen friction test (time, cost, procedural burden); common law-reform docket, joint studies, post-enactment review; first joint issue papers in about six months.
Law Commission: non-constitutional, non-statutory; constituted by executive notification (Ministry of Law and Justice), usually for three years; advisory.
23rd Commission: constituted September 2024 (term to August 2027); Chairperson Justice (Retd.) Dinesh Maheshwari (from April 2025).
History: first 1834 (Charter Act 1833, Macaulay) to IPC 1860; first after independence 1955, M.C. Setalvad.
Article 1: "India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States" — not an agreement; no right to secede.
Seventh Schedule (Art. 246): original 97 / 66 / 47; 42nd Amendment (1976) moved five subjects to the Concurrent List.
Residuary power: Art. 248, with Parliament (Canadian model).
Repugnancy: Art. 254 — Union law prevails unless the State law got the President's assent.
Bodies: Inter-State Council (Art. 263, set up 1990); five Zonal Councils (States Reorganisation Act 1956, chaired by Home Minister); GST Council (Art. 279A, 101st Amendment); NITI Governing Council.
Commissions: Sarkaria (1983-88), Punchhi (2007-10). S.R. Bommai (1994): federalism is basic structure.
Jan Vishwas Act 2023: 183 provisions, 42 Central Acts decriminalised.
Exam hook: Asked as the nature of body — Law Commission and NITI Aayog (executive), Finance Commission (constitutional, Art. 280), Zonal Councils (statutory), Inter-State Council (constitutional provision, executive creation); subject-list questions with the 42nd Amendment transfers (education to Concurrent); residuary power with the Union (idea from Canada); Sarkaria, Punchhi, S.R. Bommai.

• RPF and GRP: Who Polices India's Railways

Body: The event: 8th All India Conference of GRP Chiefs, convened by the RPF, concluded in New Delhi on 23 October 2026; theme: intelligence-led policing and RPF-GRP-State police coordination.
GRP: wing of the State police; law and order on trains and premises; registers and investigates crime; cost traditionally shared 50:50 by Railways and the State.
RPF: armed force of the Union under the Ministry of Railways; RPF Act, 1957; armed force of the Union by the 1985 amendment; passenger areas and passengers added by the 2003 amendment (effective 2004).
Constitution: State List Entry 2 — "Police (including railway and village police)"; Entry 1 — public order; railways are a Union subject.
Trap: the RPF is not a CAPF; the seven CAPFs (AR, BSF, CISF, CRPF, ITBP, NSG, SSB) are under the MHA.
Initiatives: GRP on RailMadad (via CRIS); Pink Patrol (South Central Railway, drones + women-led teams); Project DISHA (Pune division); action on stone-pelting; festival crowd management.
Exam hook: Asked as the list question — State List Entry 2, 'Police (including railway and village police)', not Concurrent; the ministry — the RPF is under the Ministry of Railways, not the MHA; the RPF is not a CAPF; scenario items — which force handles theft of railway property, a crime against a passenger, a sabotage case.

• Empowering City Governments: The 74th Amendment Revisited

Body: The event: 2nd National Urban Conclave (MoHUA), concluded in Bhubaneswar, 25 October 2026. NITI's Rajiv Gauba: "We cannot run cities from our state capitals."
Recommendations (NITI-MoHUA report Moving Towards Effective City Governance): directly elected mayors, five-year terms, Mayor-in-Council, timely elections, devolution of all 18 functions.
Scale: population to stabilise at about 165 crore around 2060; urban population ~50 crore to 85 crore by 2050.
Funds: Urban Challenge Fund Rs 1 lakh crore (Budget 2025-26; growth hubs, creative redevelopment, water and sanitation; partial funding, rest from markets); Rs 5,000 crore each for 7 City Economic Regions.
74th Amendment: 1992, in force 1 June 1993; Part IXA, Arts 243P-243ZG; Twelfth Schedule, 18 functions (Art 243W — States may devolve).
Bodies: Nagar Panchayat / Municipal Council / Municipal Corporation; 5-year term; one-third seats for women; State Election Commission; State Finance Commission; DPC (243ZD), MPC (243ZE, 10 lakh+); Ward Committees at 3 lakh+.
73rd vs 74th: Part IX / IXA; Eleventh (29) / Twelfth (18).
Exam hook: Asked as amendment pairs — 73rd: panchayats, Part IX, Eleventh Schedule (29 subjects); 74th: municipalities, Part IXA, Twelfth Schedule (18 functions); bodies — the State Election Commission conducts and the State Finance Commission reviews (not central bodies); Nagar Panchayat vs Municipal Council vs Corporation. **Trap:** devolving Twelfth Schedule functions is not mandatory ('may').

IR/Diplomacy (1)

• SCO Council of Heads of Government Meets in Dushanbe

Body: The event: 25th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the SCO, at Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on 20 October 2026; India represented by the Raksha Mantri.
Two councils: the Council of Heads of State (CHS) is the supreme organ, meeting annually at summit level and taking major political decisions; the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) is the second council, handling the economic and budgetary agenda.
The 2026 summit was at Bishkek in the August-September period, attended by the Prime Minister. Dushanbe is the working council that follows.
India's three propositions: no justification, no double standards and no safe havens for those who finance, support or shelter terrorism; connectivity must respect sovereignty and territorial integrity; and more institutions do not mean more achievement — new mechanisms should avoid duplication.
The organisation: established as the SCO in 2001 from the Shanghai Five; India and Pakistan joined as full members in 2017; working languages Russian and Chinese.
Permanent bodies: Secretariat at Beijing; Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) at Tashkent, addressing the SCO's "three evils" of terrorism, separatism and extremism.
Why India participates: it is the principal multilateral setting giving India structured access to Central Asia, a region to which India has no land connectivity through friendly territory.
Exam hook: Asked as the organ distinction — the Council of Heads of Government (economic) is not the SCO summit (Council of Heads of State); Secretariat Beijing, RATS Tashkent (often reversed); India and Pakistan joined in 2017, the SCO was founded in 2001 from the Shanghai Five; the 'three evils' — terrorism, separatism, extremism.

Defence (8)

• AUSTRAHIND 2026: India–Australia Joint Military Exercise

Body: AUSTRAHIND 2026: 5th edition, 19 October to 01 November 2026, at the **Foreign Training Node, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**; about 120 personnel from each army; Indian troops from the **Garhwal Rifles**, Australian troops from **13 Brigade**.

Theme: "Joint Sub-Conventional Operations in Island and Coastal Environment under Chapter VII of the UN Mandate."

UN Charter distinction: Chapter VI is Pacific Settlement of Disputes — consent-based, associated with classical peacekeeping. Chapter VII is Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace — Article 41 for measures short of force, Article 42 for air, sea and land action; no requirement of party consent; this is **peace enforcement**.

Sub-conventional operations: below the threshold of conventional interstate war — insurgency, terrorism and irregular adversaries, where intelligence leads and restraint is an operational requirement.

First: an **observer delegation from New Zealand** participates for the first time.

Series history: instituted 2022 (Mahajan, Rajasthan); 2023 Perth; 2024 Pune; 2025 Irwin Barracks, Perth; 2026 Thiruvananthapuram. Held **alternately in India and Australia**.

TTPs = tactics, techniques and procedures. **Jointmanship** = the ability of different services to operate as one force.

Exam hook: Asked as **exercise–partner** pairs (AUSTRAHIND–Australia, not Austria; Konkan and Ajeya Warrior–UK, Varuna–France, INDRA–Russia, Yudh Abhyas–USA, Dharma Guardian–Japan, Mitra Shakti–Sri Lanka); **UN Charter Chapter VI vs Chapter VII** and Articles 41–42; alternating venues; jointmanship, interoperability, TTPs.

• IAF Night Casualty Evacuation from Leh by C-130J

Body: The mission: an IAF C-130J flew a **short-notice casualty evacuation** late on 18 October 2026, carrying a **critically ill 30-year-old civilian** from **Leh to Palam**, in darkness and challenging weather; the patient was then moved to **AIIMS**.

Density altitude: the altitude at which the standard atmosphere would have the air density actually being experienced. It rises with both **height** and **temperature**.

Consequences of thin air: less lift, less thrust, longer take-off and landing runs, reduced payload. **Leh** lies above **10,000 feet**.

Why fixed-wing over helicopter: helicopter performance degrades faster with altitude; the distance is long; a **pressurised cabin** protects a critically ill patient from hypoxic stress; and a transport has better night and weather options.

C-130J Super Hercules: four-engine turboprop; short-field performance with useful load; IAF fleet associated with the **Veiled Vipers**; used for special operations, transport and HADR. An IAF C-130J-30 landed at **Daulat Beg Oldie** (about **16,614 feet**, the world's highest airfield) on **20 August 2013**.

CASEVAC vs MEDEVAC: CASEVAC is evacuation by whatever transport is available, often without guaranteed en-route care; MEDEVAC uses a dedicated, equipped platform with medical personnel aboard.

Aid to civil authority: the patient was a civilian — an illustration of the armed forces as the national reserve of emergency capability.

Exam hook: Asked as **physics** — thin, hot air means lower **density**, so less lift and thrust and a longer take-off run; **aircraft identification** — the C-130J is a four-engine **turboprop**, the C-17 and IL-76 are jets; **Daulat Beg Oldie** and the **2013 C-130J landing**; **CASEVAC vs MEDEVAC**.

• IBSAMAR IX: India–Brazil–South Africa Naval Exercise

Body: The event: IBSAMAR IX concluded at **Simon's Town, South Africa**, on **20 October 2026**, after **ten days** (harbour and sea phases).

India: **INS Tarkash** — **Talwar-class** frigate (modified **Krivak III**), built at **Yantar, Kaliningrad**, commissioned **9 November 2012**; also in IBSAMAR VI and VII.

Brazil: corvette **BNS Barroso**. **South Africa:** frigate **SAS Amatola**, two Warrior-class patrol vessels, submarine **SAS Manthatisi**, **SAAF Gripens**.

Training: surface, anti-air and **anti-submarine** warfare; interdiction; anti-piracy; SAR.

Editions: first **2008**; roughly biennial; **V (2016) at Goa** is the edition held in India; most in South Africa.

Simon's Town: principal South African naval base, **False Bay**; the Atlantic-Indian Ocean boundary is conventionally at **Cape Agulhas**, not the Cape of Good Hope.

IBSA: Brasilia Declaration, 6 June 2003; three democracies on three continents; **no HQ or permanent secretariat**; **IBSA Fund** managed by **UNOSSC**.

Interoperability = ability of different nations' forces to operate together.

Exam hook: Asked as the **partner** set — India, **Brazil**, **South Africa**, with one country swapped in the distractors; exercise–partner grids with Varuna, KONKAN and SLINEX; the **IBSA** forum — **Brasilia Declaration, 2003**, **no permanent secretariat**; **Cape Agulhas**, not the Cape of Good Hope, as Africa's southernmost point where the Atlantic meets the Indian Ocean.

• Police Commemoration Day and the Hot Springs Ambush of 1959

Body: **Police Commemoration Day: 21 October**, marking the **Hot Springs** ambush of **21 October 1959** in the **Chang Chenmo valley**, Ladakh, near **Kongka La**.

The incident: a search party of about 20 led by **Karam Singh (IB)**; **10 policemen killed**; several captured; bodies returned **mid-November 1959**.

Who they were: mainly **CRPF personnel serving with the IB**, which then manned the Ladakh frontier posts.

Consequence: the **Army took over** the sector's posts from about **1 November 1959**; **ITBP** raised **24 October 1962** (ITBPF Act 1992), guarding **3,488 km** from **Karakoram Pass to Jachep La**.

Sequence to 1962: Aksai Chin road (1957–58) to Dalai Lama's flight (March 1959) to **Longju** (August 1959, east) to **Hot Springs** (October 1959, west).

National Police Memorial: Chanakyapuri, dedicated **21 October 2018**; **30-ft granite** central sculpture; **Wall of Valour** (34,844 names in 2018 to **36,852** cited in 2026); museum.

Constitution: Police = **Entry 2**, **Public order** = **Entry 1**, **State List**; Union forces in aid of civil power = **Union List Entry 2A**.

Reform: Prakash Singh (2006) — seven directives (State Security Commission, two-year DGP tenure, Police Establishment Board, Complaints Authority, separate investigation).

2026 claims (MHA): Naxal-free **31 March 2026**; drug-free target **31 December 2029**.

Exam hook: Asked as **date and event** — **21 October** marks the **1959 Hot Springs** ambush (Galwan, Longju and Nathu La are the distractors); **Police** is in the **State List**, not Concurrent; **odd-one-out CAPF** — the Territorial Army, Coast Guard and Rashtriya Rifles are MoD, the CAPFs are MHA; the 1959 sequence — **Longju** (August), **Hot Springs** (October), the ITBP raised in **October 1962**.

• SIMBEX 2026: India–Singapore Naval Exercise at Visakhapatnam

Body: The event: SIMBEX-2026, 33rd edition, Visakhapatnam, 21-26 October 2026; harbour phase 21-23 Oct, sea phase 24-26 Oct in the Bay of Bengal.

Ships: RSN RSS Supreme; Indian Navy INS Nilgiri and INS Kamorta; hosted by the Eastern Naval Command.

Origin: began February 1994 as Exercise Lion King in the Andaman Sea, focused on anti-submarine warfare.

Renamed: SIMBEX in 2005, when it was first held in the South China Sea; first RSN submarine participation the same year.

Milestones: 2003 — RSS Valiant's exercise torpedo firing against a target simulated by INS Vela; 2018 — silver jubilee edition, about 30 assets.

RSS Supreme: sixth and last Formidable-class frigate (derived from France's La Fayette class), commissioned 2009.

INS Nilgiri: lead ship of Project 17A, commissioned January 2025. **INS Kamorta:** lead ship of Project 28 ASW corvettes, GRSE, commissioned 2014.

Geography: Singapore at the southern end of the Strait of Malacca; Six Degree Channel between Great Nicobar and Sumatra.

Other India-Singapore exercises: SITMEX (trilateral with Thailand), Bold Kurukshetra, Agni Warrior.

Exam hook: Asked as the partner question — Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles as S-distractors); grids with SLINEX, Varuna and Malabar; SITMEX is the trilateral (with Thailand), Bold Kurukshetra and Agni Warrior the army exercises; channels — Six Degree (Great Nicobar–Sumatra), Ten Degree (Andaman–Nicobar), Nine Degree (Lakshadweep).

• Civil Defence Network: Army to Train Master Trainers in 12 States

Body: The event: MHA announced, 23 October 2026, a first-of-its-kind joint training initiative with the Indian Army to build a "vibrant Civil Defence network".

Origin: the PM's Independence Day address, 15 August 2026.

Agency: DG Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guards (DGFSCDHG), MHA.

Phase 1: 600 Master Trainers (50 × 12 States/UTs), three-day course at Army establishments, by the second week of November 2026; each trains 100 to 60,000 volunteers.

States/UTs: J&K, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Delhi, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Assam, UP, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu.

Curriculum: threat awareness (hybrid warfare, drones, air raids); protection and response (critical infrastructure, fire, CBRN, casualties, SAR); communication and coordination (cyber hygiene, civil-military coordination, incident command).

Law: Civil Defence Act, 1968; Home Guards first raised 1946 (Bombay).

Operation Abhyaas: nationwide mock drill, 7 May 2025, 244 districts — largest since 1971.

Civil defence vs disaster management: hostile attack (1968 Act) vs disasters (DM Act 2005, NDMA chaired by the PM, NDRF 2006).

Exam hook: Asked as the law pair — Civil Defence Act, 1968 vs Disaster Management Act, 2005; the ministry — civil defence, fire services and Home Guards are under the MHA, not the MoD; the NDMA is chaired by the PM, State authorities by Chief Ministers; trainer numbers and first-phase States from this announcement.

• Exercise INDRA 2026: India and Russia Conclude Naval Drills

Body: The event: INDRA 2026 concluded; INS Sahyadri left Vladivostok on 20 October 2026.

Phases: harbour (leaders' talks, cross-deck visits, SMEEs, sport, culture) and sea (manoeuvres, integrated communications, helicopter operations, medical evacuation drills).

Previous edition: INDRA 2025, the 14th, off Chennai (28 March–2 April 2025) — INS Rana, INS Kuthar, P-8I; included live firings and anti-air serials.

History: began 2003; name = INDIA + Russia; first tri-service edition 2017 at Vladivostok, second 2019 in India; air forces exercise as AVIAINDRA.

INS Sahyadri: third ship of Project 17 (Shivalik class), Mazagon Dock, commissioned 2012; P17 to P17A (Nilgiri class); named after the Western Ghats.

Vladivostok: HQ of Russia's Pacific Fleet, on the Sea of Japan; eastern end of the Trans-Siberian Railway; Chennai-Vladivostok maritime corridor (agreed 2019).

Relationship: "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership" (2010);

Vikramaditya, Talwar class (INS Tamal, 2025), Su-30MKI, T-90,

BrahMos (Brahmaputra + Moskva), S-400.

Exam hook: Asked as the partner question — INDRA = INDIA + Russia (Israel, Indonesia, Iran as distractors); the service — INDRA has been naval, army and tri-service, while AVIAINDRA is the air-force exercise; ship classes — P-17 Shivalik (INS Sahyadri), P-17A Nilgiri, P-15B Visakhapatnam, P-28 Kamorta; Vladivostok and its fleet.

• Indigenous AIP for Kalvari Submarines Reaches Phase-2 Trials

Body: The event: Setting to Work Phase-2 of DRDO's AIP energy module inaugurated at L&T Hazira, Gujarat, 24 October 2026.

Developer: Naval Materials Research Laboratory (NMRL), DRDO, Ambernath (Maharashtra); land-based prototype tested March 2021 in endurance and maximum-power modes.

Next: module energised and tested to Navy protocols to handed to Mazagon Dock to integration on a Kalvari-class submarine in early 2027.

Why AIP: diesel-electric boats must snorkel to charge batteries (about 2-4 days on batteries); AIP lets them stay submerged for weeks; DRDO aims for about 14 days. Nuclear submarines do not need AIP.

AIP types: fuel cell (German Type 212/214), Stirling (Swedish Gotland), MESMA (French, offered for Scorpene), closed-cycle diesel.

India's design: phosphoric acid fuel cell; hydrogen generated on board from sodium borohydride + water; liquid oxygen carried.

Kalvari class: Project 75, six Scorpene-design boats, Mazagon Dock, with France's Naval Group; INS Kalvari (2017) to INS Vagsheer (2025); AIP fitted as a hull "plug" during refit. Project 75(I) = new boats with AIP built in.

Exam hook: Asked as the definition — Air Independent Propulsion lets a conventional submarine stay submerged longer (nuclear boats do not need it); class and origin — Kalvari = Scorpene design (France), Project 75, built at Mazagon Dock; Arihant = nuclear ballistic-missile boats; a hydrogen fuel cell's by-product is water; the lab is DRDO's NMRL.

Environment (1)

• AATAL: Delhi's New Lab to Trace the Sources of Air Pollution

Body: The event: AATAL — Integrated Atmospheric Chemistry and Aerosol Toxicity Analysis Laboratory — opened at IITM's Delhi branch, 24 October 2026, under Mission Mausam; described by the Ministry as a "world's first-of-its-kind" integrated facility.

Functions: chemical analysis of gases and aerosols (PM2.5, metals, toxic elements); **real-time source apportionment**; forecasting and decision support (with AIRWISE); supports CAQM.

Sources separated: vehicles, industry, biomass/crop-residue burning, construction and road dust, transported pollution; example — transport about 25% at AQI about 180.

AQI (2014): 8 pollutants (PM10, PM2.5, NO2, SO2, CO, O3, NH3, Pb); six bands from Good (0-50) to Severe (401-500).

PM sizes: PM10 up to 10 µm, PM2.5 up to 2.5 µm; PM2.5 reaches deep into the lungs and bloodstream.

Source apportionment: bottom-up emission inventories vs top-down receptor modelling using chemical fingerprints (crustal elements = dust; potassium = biomass burning).

Secondary aerosols: sulphates, nitrates and ammonium salts formed in the air from SO2, NOx and NH3.

Institutions: CAQM (GRAP), NCAP, IITM Pune (MoES; SAFAR, 2010 Commonwealth Games).

Exam hook: Asked as **particle size** — PM2.5 does more damage than PM10 (the smaller number is worse); **AQI** pollutants, launch and bands (101–200 = moderately polluted); **secondary pollutants** such as ground-level ozone, and SO2 and NOx for acid rain; institutions — CAQM, GRAP, IITM, SAFAR.

• Asian Para Games 2026: India's Record 114 Medals

Body: The result: 114 medals — 30 gold, 35 silver, 49 bronze — India's best ever; 4th on the table.

The Games: 2026 Asian Para Games, Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, 18–24 October 2026, under the Asian Paralympic Committee.

Top of the table: China 435 (207 gold), Japan 186 (hosts), Uzbekistan 145, India 114, South Korea about 100 (29 gold).

Ranking rule: by gold medals first, then silver, then bronze — not by total. India is 4th over South Korea by one gold.

History: 2010 Guangzhou 14 (1 gold, 15th) to 2018 Jakarta 72 (15 gold) to 2022 Hangzhou 111 (29 gold, 5th) to 2026 114 (30 gold, 4th).

Athletics: 65 medals, 22 golds; **men's javelin sweep** — Sumit (gold), Mahendra Gurjar (silver, Games record), Sandip Sanjay Sargar (bronze, Games record).

Records are per sport class — which is how silver and bronze medallists can set records.

Systems: TOPS (2014), Khelo India Para Games (first held Dec 2023); Paralympics Tokyo 2020: 19, Paris 2024: 29 medals.

Exam hook: Asked as the tally — 114 medals, 30 gold, 4th (traps: the previous edition's 111, athletics' 65); the venue pair — Aichi-Nagoya 2026, Hangzhou 2022 (held in 2023); athlete items with an Olympian as the distractor (Neeraj Chopra against Sumit Antil); medal tables rank by golds, not total.

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Culture/Sport (2)

• Asian Para Games 2026: Classification Codes and a 25-Medal Day

Body: The Games: Asian Para Games, Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, 18–24 October 2026, organised by the Asian Paralympic Committee, held every four years following the Asian Games in the same host region.

20 October: the Prime Minister congratulated Indian medallists in at least 25 events, including five golds — Nishad Kumar, Devender Kumar, Pranav Soorma, Simran and Deepthi Jeevanji.

Classification exists so that results are decided by skill, fitness, training and tactics, not by degree of impairment. It is the equivalent of weight categories.

Three steps: an eligible impairment from a defined list; minimum impairment criteria set per sport; and sport class allocation by a panel of classifiers.

Reading codes: the letter is the event group — T for track and jumps, F for field throws, S / SB / SM for swimming strokes. The number is the sport class.

Number bands: 11–13 vision impairment (11 most severe, blindfolded, guide runners permitted); 20 intellectual impairment; 31–38 coordination impairments; 40–47 short stature, limb deficiency and muscle power or range limitations; 51–57 seated and wheelchair classes. Lower number means greater activity limitation.

The controversy: classification determines who competes against whom and therefore who wins; federations are moving towards evidence-based classification.

Context: India's best-ever haul came at the previous edition in Hangzhou, reported at 111 medals, with counts varying across sources.

Exam hook: Asked as host and edition (Aichi-Nagoya 2026, Hangzhou before it); organising bodies — Asian Paralympic Committee (Asian Para Games), Olympic Council of Asia (Asian Games), IPC (Paralympics); classification codes — the letter is the event group, the number the class, and lower numbers mean greater limitation; athlete–discipline pairs.