THE CAVALIER

SSB Weekly

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Week of 10 – 16 August 2026 · Current affairs for your SSB board

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THE WEEK

Five stories the board may ask about

1 DEFENCE · POLICY

Red Fort: drones, hypersonics, civil defence

In his **80th Independence Day** address (15 Aug), the PM named defence power, **Raksha Shakti**, as one of seven 'streams of strength' for Viksit Bharat 2047. He said there is no alternative to self-reliance in defence, stressed drones and counter-drones, hypersonics and cybersecurity, called for a vibrant **civil defence** network, and said Mission Sudarshan Chakra is moving fast.

WHY IT MATTERS

Modern war does not stay at the border. Drones, missiles and cyber attacks can hit cities and power grids far from the front, so civilians must be ready too.

YOUR BALANCED VIEW

Self-reliance is right, but it is judged by what reaches the soldier on time. Reviving civil defence is overdue and cheap.

IO MAY ASK

Why should an ordinary citizen train for war when India has large armed forces?

Source: PIB, MoD & MHA, 15 Aug

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2 DEFENCE · ARMY

₹1,577 cr of 'kamikaze drones' for the Artillery

On 14 Aug the Defence Ministry signed about ₹1,577 cr of contracts with Tata Advanced Systems and NIBE for **Loiter Munition Systems** for the Army's **Artillery Regiments** (Buy-Indian, Fast Track). A loitering munition is launched before a target is confirmed, circles while its operator searches, then dives onto the target and explodes: a 'kamikaze drone'.

WHY IT MATTERS

Sensor and shooter sit in one airframe, so a fleeting target is hit in minutes. The operator can call off an attack if civilians appear; a shell cannot be recalled.

YOUR BALANCED VIEW

Cheap, precise and Indian-made is the right mix. But every army is buying them, so our counter-drone shield must keep pace.

IO MAY ASK

If a drone can do the artillery's job, does the Army still need guns and gunners?

Source: PIB, MoD, 14 Aug

3 INTERNATIONAL · INDIAN OCEAN

New Navy Chief's first call: Mauritius

Admiral **Krishna Swaminathan**, Navy Chief since 31 May, visited Mauritius (10–13 Aug) for talks on maritime security and capacity building. The two navies share training, joint EEZ surveillance, port visits and hydrographic surveys. The visit was framed under **MAHASAGAR** (2025) which, like **SAGAR** (2015), was announced from Mauritius.

WHY IT MATTERS

Mauritius has an EEZ of about 2.3 million sq km but a small coast guard. Nearly 70% of its people are of Indian origin, and it sits near key sea lanes.

YOUR BALANCED VIEW

India's bet is to be the useful partner, not the dominant one. That works only if promised ships and projects arrive on time.

IO MAY ASK

What does India gain by helping a small island nation guard its seas?

Source: PIB, MoD, 10 Aug

4 NATIONAL · BORDER AREAS

Border villages: India's 'first villages'

On 12 Aug the Home Ministry updated Parliament on the **Vibrant Villages Programme**. Phase I (2023, ₹4,800 cr, northern border) has 2,906 projects sanctioned and ₹959.66 cr released. **VVP-II** (2025, ₹6,839 cr till 2028-29) covers 1,954 villages in 17 States/UTs

on the other land borders. A **Cabinet Secretary**-led panel can relax other schemes' rules for them.

WHY IT MATTERS

An empty frontier is easy to infiltrate. Residents are the first layer of surveillance, and a road or mobile tower serves villagers and soldiers alike.

YOUR BALANCED VIEW

Roads alone will not stop young people leaving; jobs, schools and clinics will. Slow spending in Phase I is the real worry.

IO MAY ASK

How does a school in a border village help defend the border?

Source: PIB, MHA, 12 Aug

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5 SPORT · ARMY

Soldiers win 18 of India's 39 Glasgow medals

On 14 Aug the Defence Minister met the Army team that won **16 medals (8 gold)** at the **Glasgow Commonwealth Games**; the Navy won two more. Army boxers took 6 of India's record 7 boxing golds, four by women. Firsts: India's first CWG judo gold (Hav Harsh) and first high-jump silver (Nb Sub Sarvesh Kushare).

WHY IT MATTERS

The Army's **Mission Olympic Wing** shows what steady coaching and sports science can do. On 15 Aug the PM announced a talent hunt for children aged 5–15, eyeing the 2036 Olympics.

YOUR BALANCED VIEW

Medals grow from a wide base, not a few stars. The Army model works; schools and states should copy it.

IO MAY ASK

Should the Army spend time and money on sport rather than on soldiering?

Source: PIB, MoD, 14 Aug

QUICK-FIRE

Know these cold

Gallantry awards	78 approved (13 posthumous), incl. 9 Kirti Chakra (7 posthumous) and 19 Shaurya Chakra · 89 Mention-in-Despatches · 14 Aug
NGOPV 'Shruti'	Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel launched at GRSE, Kolkata, 11 Aug · 11 NGOPVs ordered (7 at Goa Shipyard, 4 at GRSE)
Lokayan 2026	Sail training ship INS Sudarshini reached Ponta Delgada (Azores, Portugal), 13 Aug, after a 19-day Atlantic crossing from Boston
GARUD binoculars	India Optel (DPSU) takes its military binocular to the civil market, 13 Aug · made at Ordnance Factory, Dehradun
VIHAAN chip	Networking chip on the indigenous VEGA processor works first time, 15 Aug · Chennai start-up, Design Linked Incentive scheme
Quantum Mission	₹6,003.65 cr, 2023-24 to 2030-31 · 4 thematic hubs, 17 start-ups (update to Lok Sabha, 12 Aug)
Asiatic lions	891 in 2025, up from 523 in 2015 · only wild population in Gir, Gujarat · World Lion Day, 10 Aug

Youth jobs	PM Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana launched 15 Aug · ₹1 lakh cr · ₹15,000 to youth who get a private-sector job
Who's who	CNS Adm Krishna Swaminathan (27th Navy Chief, since 31 May 2026) · COAS Gen Dhiraj Seth
Dates	10 Aug World Lion Day · 12 Aug World Elephant Day · 14 Aug Partition Horrors Remembrance Day · 15 Aug 80th Independence Day

TALKING POINT

Soldier-athletes in Glasgow, families in border villages, the civil-defence volunteer the PM asked for: this week said **national security is people, not just weapons**.

PRACTICE

Speak it

LECTURETTE OF THE WEEK

Civil Defence: Every Citizen's Duty

Why now: In his 15 Aug Red Fort address the PM announced a vibrant civil defence network. He said war may no longer stay on the battlefield or the border, and that citizens will be given modern equipment and training.

OPEN · 30S

"The next front line may be your own street." Today I will speak on civil defence, every citizen's duty.

POINT 1 · 40S

What it is. Civil defence protects people and vital services such as power, water and communications in war or disaster. In India it rests on the Civil Defence Act, 1968, with Home Guards alongside, but for decades it was a low-priority, largely ceremonial job.

POINT 2 · 40S

Why now. Missiles, drones and cyber attacks can hit cities and power grids far from any border. The PM called cyber threats a challenge that reaches every household. Civil defence covers disasters too, such as this monsoon's cloudbursts in Himachal.

POINT 3 · 40S

What it needs. Modern equipment and methods, as promised; trained volunteers in every district; regular drills in schools, colleges and offices; and citizens who know first aid, fire safety and basic cyber hygiene.

CLOSE · 30S

Soldiers guard the border; prepared citizens guard everything behind it. A country where every street can look after itself is far harder to break.

Quote the PM's point that war may not stay on the battlefield, and give one example (a power grid). Practise aloud against a 3-minute timer.

How to give a lecturette → 110 lecturette topics →

GROUP DISCUSSION OF THE WEEK

“India should bid to host the 2036 Olympics”

On 15 Aug the PM said India is a strong contender to host the **2036 Olympics**, announced a talent hunt for children aged 5–15, and noted that India does not take part in nearly two-thirds of Olympic events. India hosts the **2030 Commonwealth Games**. A day earlier, soldier-athletes were honoured for 16 medals at Glasgow.

FOR

- A home Games forces investment in stadiums, coaches and sports science that may otherwise never come.
- It can inspire millions of children, which is what the talent hunt needs.
- Soft power: the Games showcase a confident, well-run India.
- Metro lines, roads and housing outlive the Games.

AGAINST

- Costs overrun almost everywhere; many hosts are left with debt and empty stadiums.
- Delhi 2010 is still remembered for delays and cost overruns.
- Medals come from the grassroots; the same money could build school playgrounds and train coaches.
- We skip two-thirds of the events. Hosting before competing widely is the cart before the horse.

HOW TO CONCLUDE

Bid, but earn it. Build the base first through school sport and the talent hunt, and treat the Games as a deadline for reform, not a showpiece.

GD guide for the SSB →

OUR SSB FACULTY

Train with officers who sat on the board



Col Manoj Batra (Retd)



Col Vijayant Thakur (Retd)

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Facts from PIB press releases of the week. Views are framed for discussion practice.