THE CAVALIER

SSB Weekly

No. 04

Week of 24 – 30 August 2026 · Current affairs for your SSB board

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THE WEEK

Five stories the board may ask about

1 DEFENCE · EXPORTS

India rewrites its defence export rulebook

On 28 Aug the Department of Defence Production simplified the rules for selling defence goods abroad. The **Open General Export Licence (OGEL)**, one permit for many consignments, now runs three years, not two, and covers all countries except sensitive ones and those under **UN sanctions or arms embargoes**, up from 41. Non-lethal items and trade-show exhibits skip extra consultation.

WHY IT MATTERS

Exports lengthen production runs, cut costs for our own forces and keep factories busy between Indian orders. Every buyer also depends on us for spares and training for decades.

YOUR BALANCED VIEW

Selling arms is strategy, not just trade. Lighter paperwork is welcome, as long as end-use checks stay tight.

IO MAY ASK

Should India sell weapons abroad when its own forces still import so much?

Source: PIB, MoD, 28 Aug

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2 SECURITY · NSG

The NSG starts its first commando course for women

On 27 Aug the first **Mahila Commando Conversion Course** began at the NSG Training Academy, **Manesar**. Women from state police and the Central Armed Police Forces will train in weapons, hostage rescue and counter-terrorism. The **National Security Guard** (the 'Black Cats', raised 1984) is under the Home Ministry; every commando comes on deputation from the Army, CAPFs or police.

WHY IT MATTERS

Women have served in police uniform for decades; this opens the elite intervention role itself. Rescues and searches involving women and children need women operators.

YOUR BALANCED VIEW

One standard for all, and let merit decide. The real test is whether trained women commandos are sent on real operations.

IO MAY ASK

Should special forces keep exactly the same standards for men and women?

Source: PIB, MWCD, 27 Aug

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3 INTERNATIONAL · GULF

India and Kuwait open a joint defence committee

The first **India–Kuwait Joint Defence Committee** met in New Delhi on 28 Aug. The two sides agreed to cooperate on training, exercises, military medicine, staff talks, defence industry and research. The committee puts into practice the defence MoU signed in **December 2024**, when the PM's visit made Kuwait a **Strategic Partner**.

WHY IT MATTERS

The Gulf means oil, jobs and remittances, and a large Indian community lives in Kuwait. After Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, India airlifted over a hundred thousand citizens home.

YOUR BALANCED VIEW

Gulf ties are no longer only oil and jobs. Security links protect our people and our energy routes.

IO MAY ASK

What are India's real interests in the Gulf, and how should it protect its workers there?

Source: PIB, MoD, 28 Aug

4 NATIONAL · ECONOMY

UPI turns ten and carries half the world's real-time payments

On 25 Aug the PM marked ten years of the **Unified Payments Interface**, opened to the public on 25 Aug 2016. Yearly transactions rose from 1.78 cr (2016-17) to over 24,162 cr (2025-26). UPI now carries about 84% of India's digital payments and roughly **49% of the world's real-time payments**, on a not-for-profit rail run by **NPCI**.

WHY IT MATTERS

Any app can pay any bank, and most merchants pay no fee, so even the tea seller went digital. UPI is the payments layer of India's digital public infrastructure.

YOUR BALANCED VIEW

A real public-rail success. The next jobs are beating fraud and deciding who pays to run a system that is free to use.

IO MAY ASK

Digital payments are booming. Who still gets left out, and how would you bring them in?

Source: PIB, PMO, 25 Aug

5 SPORT · NATIONAL SPORTS DAY

National Sports Day: one hour on the playing field

India marked **National Sports Day** on 29 Aug, the 121st birth anniversary of **Major Dhyan Chand**. This year's call, **'Ek Ghanta Khel Ke Maidan Mein'**, asked citizens, especially the young, to give at least an hour to sport. Dhyan Chand joined the Army as a sepoy, rose to Major and won Olympic hockey gold in 1928, 1932 and 1936.

WHY IT MATTERS

He learned his hockey in the Army, so the day belongs to the services too. Fit India, Khelo India and TOPS aim to build athletes for a possible 2036 Olympics.

YOUR BALANCED VIEW

Medals follow mass participation. Get children onto playgrounds first; the podium comes later.

IO MAY ASK

Why does a country as large as India win so few Olympic medals, and what would you change first?

Source: PIB, MYAS, 29 Aug

QUICK-FIRE

Know these cold

Future Warfare Course (4th)	Tri-service · Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi · ended 30 Aug · AI, cyber, cognitive and grey-zone warfare
NJ-05 / 50 / 100	CSIR-NAL's home-built micro gas-turbine engines · 5, 50, 100 kg thrust · for UAVs, drone interceptors, small missiles

Nipun	Second Nistar-class diving support vessel · built by Hindustan Shipyard, Visakhapatnam
INS Sudarshini	Sail training ship · Lokayan 26 voyage · Lisbon port call ended 25 Aug
Tank overhaul line	₹472 cr · Vehicle Factory Jabalpur (AVNL) · 80 T-series tanks a year · 27 Aug
PM to Central Asia	Left 29 Aug · Tashkent state visit, then 26th SCO Summit, Bishkek · SCO turns 25
NSS Conference (9th)	National Security Strategies Conference · New Delhi, 24 Aug · 850+ officials
Narcotics (CBN)	Op Black Hawk: 18.64 kg heroin near Lucknow · Op Vajra 2.0: about 66.8 lakh psychotropic tablets
Goa liberation	Redeveloped Hutatma Smruti Smarak, Patradevi, opened 26 Aug · honours 1955 satyagrahis
UNCCD COP17	Ulaanbaatar · India: 21.76 million ha brought under restoration, 2011–2020

TALKING POINT

Arms that now sell abroad, a payments system the world studies, a new defence partner in the Gulf, and an Army major still the face of Indian sport: that is **comprehensive national power**, built well beyond the battlefield.

PRACTICE

Speak it

LECTURETTE OF THE WEEK

Cyber and Information Warfare

Why now: This week the fourth Tri-Services Future Warfare Course ended at the Manekshaw Centre (30 Aug). Its syllabus put cyber, cognitive and information warfare, and grey-zone operations, alongside land, sea, air and space.

OPEN · 30S

"The next war may begin on your phone, long before the first shot is fired." Today I will speak on cyber and information warfare.

POINT 1 · 40S

What it is. Cyber war attacks networks: power grids, banks, command systems. Information and cognitive war target minds: morale, trust and how leaders decide. Both live in the *grey zone*, below open war and hard to trace.

POINT 2 · 40S

India's response. A Defence Cyber Agency, joint planning under HQ Integrated Defence Staff, and courses like this one that teach officers to think across services, with industry and academia in the room.

POINT 3 · 40S

The citizen's part. A forwarded rumour can be a weapon. Checking before sharing, strong passwords and care with personal data are national security at home.

CLOSE · 30S

Tomorrow's battlefield has no front line. A nation that guards its networks and its minds as carefully as its borders will not be taken by surprise.

Explain 'grey zone' in one plain sentence and give one everyday example, such as a fake video. Practise aloud against a 3-minute timer.

How to give a lecturette → 110 lecturette topics →

GROUP DISCUSSION OF THE WEEK

"Computer-based testing is the answer to paper leaks in public examinations"

On 28 Aug the high-powered task force on exam reform, chaired by **Nandan Nilekani** under the Personnel Ministry, invited public suggestions until **13 Sep**. Its ten areas include exam security, malpractice and **secure computer-based testing**. The **Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024** already punishes paper leaks and organised cheating.

FOR

- A large question bank with shuffled papers means one leak cannot sink the whole exam.
- No printed paper means no press, truck or strongroom to break into.
- Faster, cleaner results and fewer re-tests for honest candidates.
- Leak gangs feed on the paper supply chain; remove the paper and the business shrinks.

AGAINST

- Centres need steady power and internet; rural and poor candidates may lose out.
- Servers can be hacked too. The 2024 Act already lists network tampering as an offence.
- Leaks are a governance failure; without accountable agencies, any format can be broken.
- Paper is still fairer for candidates who rarely use a computer.

HOW TO CONCLUDE

Technology is a tool, not a cure. Use secure computer tests where centres are ready, keep paper where they are not, and punish the organisers hard. Integrity comes from accountable people.

GD guide for the SSB →

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