



Current Affairs • 21 October 2026

12 min

READING TIME

5

KEY STORIES

0

IN BRIEF

5 + 1

MCQS + MAINS

GS2 • 2

GS3 • 3

PAPER MIX

01 — TODAY IN 2 MINUTES

The 5 stories you can't skip

1

IIT Madras centre creates 3D maps of 100 human brains

Why it matters: Neuroscience and biotechnology: a GS3 case study on high-resolution mapping for precision medicine.

GS3 • SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

P

M

2

ECI faces scrutiny over missing names in Bihar draft roll

Why it matters: Electoral roll maintenance and grievance redressal: a GS2 topic on inclusive democracy and administrative transparency.

GS2 • POLITY & CONSTITUTION

P

M

3

Rubio urges India to purchase American systems and process Venezuelan crude

Why it matters: Energy security and strategic autonomy: a key GS2 angle on India's trade diplomacy and geopolitical alignment.

GS2 • INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

P

M

4

Kerala Revenue Department earns ₹1,606 crore from paddy land regularisation

Why it matters: Land use conversion vs ecological preservation: a GS3 case study on regulatory arbitrage and administrative oversight.

GS3 • AGRICULTURE

P

M

5

Google and Amazon launch open-source projects to challenge Nvidia dominance

Why it matters: Hardware-agnostic software and open-source initiatives: a key GS3 Science & Technology and Economy angle.

GS3 • SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

P

NUMBER OF THE DAY

65 lakh names

missing from the August 2025 Bihar draft roll due to deaths, migration, and duplicates.

CONNECT TO STATIC

Kerala Conservation of Paddy Land and Wetland Act (KCPWA)

enacted in 2008 to protect wetlands and paddy fields. *In the news:* Kerala Revenue Department earns ₹1,606 crore from paddy land regularisation.

What to know, in 60 seconds each

5 of 5 notes · picked for exam value

GS3 · SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

P M

IIT Madras centre creates 3D maps of 100 human brains

Why in news: The Sudha Gopalakrishnan Brain Centre at IIT Madras launched a project to create 3D maps of 100 human brains from foetus to 85-year-olds to understand cellular-level structural changes across the lifespan.

REMEMBER

- Sudha Gopalakrishnan Brain Centre — located at IIT Madras
- 3D Brain Mapping — uses sections between 10 and 20 microns to reconstruct models
- 8,000 to 10,000 sections — number of sections an adult brain can yield for mapping

MAINS ANGLE Discuss how high-resolution neuro-mapping and cellular-level structural analysis can revolutionize personalized medicine and surgical planning in India.

USE: Neuroscience Cellular Resolution 3D Mapping Biotechnology

Full note → satyadheesh.in/upsc/note/139346

GS2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

P M

Rubio urges India to purchase American systems and process Venezuelan crude

Why in news: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio urged India to purchase American systems and process Venezuelan crude at the Jamnagar Refinery during a meeting with EAM S. Jaishankar.

REMEMBER

- Marco Rubio — US Secretary of State
- Energy, defence, and technology cooperation — key focus of the Mumbai meeting
- Jamnagar Refinery — proposed site for processing Venezuelan crude

MAINS ANGLE Examine the strategic implications of India's energy diversification and its role in navigating complex geopolitical dynamics between the US and Venezuela.

USE: Strategic Autonomy Energy Security Bilateral Cooperation Geopolitical Alignment

Full note → satyadheesh.in/upsc/note/139326

GS2 · POLITY & CONSTITUTION

P M

ECI faces scrutiny over missing names in Bihar draft roll

Why in news: The Election Commission of India (ECI) is facing scrutiny over the exclusion of 65 lakh names from the August 2025 Bihar draft roll and technical hurdles in the appeals process in West Bengal.

REMEMBER

- Election Commission of India (ECI) — responsible for the mass revision of electoral rolls.
- 65 lakh names — missing from the August 2025 Bihar draft roll due to deaths, migration, and duplicates.
- 27 lakh names — deleted during adjudication in West Bengal, leading to 22 lakh appeals.

MAINS ANGLE Discuss the importance of transparency and grievance redressal mechanisms in the maintenance of electoral rolls to ensure inclusive democratic participation.

USE: Electoral Roll Disenfranchisement Transparency Grievance Redressal

Full note → satyadheesh.in/upsc/note/139319

GS3 · AGRICULTURE

P M

Kerala Revenue Department earns ₹1,606 crore from paddy land regularisation

Why in news: The Department of Revenue earned ₹1,606 crore from regularising paddy land conversions despite the Kerala Conservation of Paddy Land and Wetland Act, 2008.

REMEMBER

- Kerala Conservation of Paddy Land and Wetland Act (KCPWA) — enacted in 2008 to protect wetlands and paddy fields.
- 80% decline — the reduction in Kerala's paddy fields from 8.82 lakh ha in 1974-75 to 1.76 lakh ha in 2024-25.
- ₹1,606 crore — the amount earned by the Department of Revenue from regularising paddy land conversions.

MAINS ANGLE Discuss the conflict between revenue generation and ecological preservation in the context of land use regularisation in Kerala.

USE: Regulatory arbitrage Land use conversion Revenue vs Conservation Administrative oversight

Full note → satyadheesh.in/upsc/note/139321

Google and Amazon launch open-source projects to challenge Nvidia dominance

Why in news: Google and Amazon launched open-source projects (TorchTPU and TorchNeuron) to enable AI applications to run on their respective hardware without code rewrites, aiming to reduce Nvidia's market dominance.

REMEMBER

- TorchTPU: Google's open-source project for running AI applications on Tensor Processing Units (TPUs)
- TorchNeuron: Amazon's project for running AI applications on Trainium chips
- LiteRT: A software framework updated by Google alongside the TPU agent suite

MAINS ANGLE *Discuss how the shift towards open-source hardware-agnostic software frameworks impacts the global semiconductor supply chain and the dominance of proprietary AI hardware.*

USE: Hardware-agnostic Open-source
Semiconductor supply chain Interoperability

Full note → satyadheesh.in/upsc/note/139310

5 questions, 5 minutes

Answers at the bottom, upside down

1 With reference to the brain mapping project at IIT Madras, consider the following statements:

1. The project aims to aid in understanding diseases and planning surgeries.
2. The brain sections used for reconstructing 3D models are between 30 and 40 microns thick.
3. The project aims to create 3D maps of 100 human brains ranging from foetus to 85-year-olds.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 2 only (b) 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 2 and 3 only

2 Which body is responsible for the mass revision of electoral rolls in India?

- (a) State Election Commission (b) National Election Authority
(c) Election Commission of India (d) Ministry of Home Affairs

3 With reference to the meeting between the US Secretary of State and the Indian External Affairs Minister, consider the following statements:

1. The meeting was held to discuss the purchase of Venezuelan systems for Indian refineries.
2. The meeting in Mumbai focused on energy, defence, and technology cooperation.
3. Marco Rubio proposed the processing of Venezuelan crude at the Jamnagar Refinery.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) 3 only (d) 2 and 3 only

4 Which act was enacted in 2008 to protect the wetlands and paddy fields in Kerala?

- (a) Kerala Conservation of Paddy Land and Wetland Act (b) Kerala Agriculture Promotion Act
(c) Kerala Wetland Protection Policy (d) Kerala Land Reform Act

5 With reference to the open-source projects launched by Google and Amazon, consider the following statements:

1. TorchTPU is an open-source project designed to run AI applications on Tensor Processing Units.
2. Amazon released TorchNeuron specifically for its Trainium chip.
3. TorchTPU was launched by Google in collaboration with Microsoft and OpenAI.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 2 only (b) 3 only
(c) 1 and 2 only (d) 2 and 3 only

MAINS PRACTICE

Write one answer today

GS3 • SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Discuss how high-resolution neuro-mapping and cellular-level structural analysis can revolutionize personalized medicine and surgical planning in India.

USE: Neuroscience Cellular Resolution 3D Mapping Biotechnology Precision Medicine

(c) 5 (a) 4 (d) 3 (c) 2 (c) 1 • ANSWERS



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