

# UPSC Weekly Current Affairs — Week 29 · 13 Jul – 19 Jul 2026

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Exam digest: the 50 most exam-relevant of 297 notes this period, grouped by GS paper and subject.

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## Most important

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## GS1 · History · Society · Geography · 1

### History & Culture

Ancient & medieval India · Prelims + Mains · 14 Jul

#### Supreme Court Refuses Interim Order, Allows Friday Namaaz in Temple-Mosque Dispute

**Why in news:** The Supreme Court issued notices on appeals regarding the Bhojshala temple-Kamal Maula Mosque complex and allowed interim Friday prayers in an adjacent area.

**Key facts:** The Supreme Court refused an interim status quo order but permitted Friday Namaaz between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. in an adjacent open area. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) was directed not to alter the structure without court permission.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** Archaeological Survey of India (ASI): Statutory body under the Ministry of Culture responsible for archaeological research and preservation.
- **Place:** Bhojshala complex: Located in Madhya Pradesh, currently subject to litigation regarding its status as a temple or mosque.
- **Fact:** The court permitted Friday Namaaz specifically between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. in an adjacent open area.

**Mains question:** Discuss the judicial challenges in balancing religious freedom with the preservation of cultural heritage in complex temple-mosque disputes in India.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/83396](https://satyadheesh.in/news/83396)

### Polity & Constitution

Constitution, amendments & basic structure · Prelims + Mains · 15 Jul

#### Supreme Court Upholds 1971 Population Base for Lok Sabha Seats, Rejecting PIL Challenge

**Why in news:** The Supreme Court dismissed a PIL challenging the use of 1971 census data for delimiting Lok Sabha seats, upholding the constitutional validity of the current delimitation process.

**Key facts:** The Supreme Court ruled that the right to vote is independent of the delimitation process. The court upheld the use of 1971 population figures for parliamentary seat allocation, ensuring that representation remains consistent with the established constitutional framework.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Constitution:** Delimitation of constituencies is governed by the provisions of the Constitution of India and the Delimitation Act.
- **Fact:** The 1971 Census data is currently the baseline for determining the number of Lok Sabha seats in each state.
- **Body:** The Supreme Court of India has the power of judicial review over legislative amendments to ensure they do not violate the 'Basic Structure' of the Constitution.

**Mains question:** *Examine the constitutional balance between ensuring proportional population representation and maintaining federal stability in the delimitation of parliamentary constituencies.*

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/83950](https://satyadheesh.in/news/83950)

Constitution, amendments & basic structure · Prelims + Mains · 17 Jul

#### Supreme Court Clarifies: Deletion from Electoral Roll Doesn't Mean Loss of Citizenship

**Why in news:** The Supreme Court clarified that deletion from the electoral roll during Special Intensive Revision (SIR) does not equate to a loss of Indian citizenship.

**Key facts:** The Supreme Court observed that citizenship status can only be determined by a final adjudication by the concerned authority. Currently, approximately 33.5 lakh appeals regarding electoral roll deletions are pending, with 70% of disposed cases resulting in the restoration of names.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** Supreme Court of India: The highest judicial body in India, exercising judicial review.
- **Fact:** 33.5 lakh: Total number of pending appeals regarding electoral roll deletions as of the court's observation.
- **Fact:** 70%: Percentage of disposed cases where names were restored to the electoral roll.
- **Scheme:** Annapurna Yojana: A central government scheme providing food security to women.

**Mains question:** *Discuss the legal and administrative implications of using electoral rolls as a primary determinant for accessing welfare benefits and the necessity of clear adjudication for citizenship status.*

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/86059](https://satyadheesh.in/news/86059)

### Governance

e-Governance & citizen services · Prelims + Mains · 18 Jul

#### RGI Cracks Down: Stricter Checks to Thwart Fraud in Digitized Birth, Death Records

**Why in news:** The Registrar General of India (RGI) is enforcing stricter verification protocols to prevent fraudulent entries in digitized birth and death records under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 2023.

**Key facts:** The RGI identified compromised credentials due to shared user IDs and passwords in June 2024. On July 6, 2024, the RGI mandated verification against original registers and district registrar approval for all digitized records. The Ministry of Home Affairs plans to introduce an amendment bill in the Monsoon session of 2024.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** Registrar General of India (RGI): The primary authority responsible for the registration of births and deaths in India.

- **Act / Bill:** Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 2023: Mandates online registration via the Central Civil Registration System portal.
- **Fact:** Security measures include mandatory e-signatures, district registrar approval, and secure preservation of legacy records.
- **Body:** Ministry of Home Affairs: The nodal ministry responsible for the administration of birth and death registration.

**Mains question:** *How does the digitization of civil registration records enhance administrative transparency while posing risks to data integrity and security? Discuss.*

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/86143](https://satyadheesh.in/news/86143)

Bills, Acts & ordinances · Prelims + Mains · 19 Jul

### Home Minister to Criminalize Insults to 'Vande Mataram' in New Bill

**Why in news:** The Union Government is introducing the Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026, to criminalize insults to the national song 'Vande Mataram'.

**Key facts:** The bill seeks to amend the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971. It aims to provide legal protection to 'Vande Mataram' similar to the protections currently afforded to the National Anthem and the National Flag.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Act / Bill:** Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971: Provides legal protection to national symbols.
- **Fact:** Vande Mataram: Adopted as the national song of India in 1950.
- **Post:** Amit Shah: Current Union Home Minister of India.

**Mains question:** *Discuss the constitutional balance between the protection of national symbols and the right to freedom of expression under Article 19(1)(a).*

Source: NDTV · [satyadheesh.in/news/87550](https://satyadheesh.in/news/87550)

## Social Justice

Education policy · Prelims + Mains · 14 Jul

### CBSE plans three-language rule for Class IX, sparking concerns among students and parents

**Why in news:** CBSE announced the implementation of the three-language formula for Class IX starting in the 2026-27 academic year to align with NEP 2020.

**Key facts:** The policy requires students to study three languages, with at least two being Indian languages. The initiative is a direct implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and NCERT curriculum guidelines.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** CBSE: A national-level board for schools in India, headquartered in Delhi.
- **Scheme:** NEP 2020: National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes multilingualism and the three-language formula.
- **Fact:** Implementation date: Academic year 2026-27.

**Mains question:** *Discuss how the implementation of the three-language formula under NEP 2020 can promote linguistic diversity while addressing the logistical challenges faced by educational institutions.*

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/83402](https://satyadheesh.in/news/83402)

Vulnerable sections (SC/ST, minorities, disabled, elderly, children) · Prelims + Mains · 14 Jul

### On July 14, 2026, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta informed the Supreme Court

**Why in news:** The Union government amended the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD) to include victims of internal acid injuries as 'acid attack victims' following a Supreme Court directive.

**Key facts:** The amendment to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD) became effective retroactively from May 22, 2026. It expands the scope of the 2016 law to provide legal protections and benefits to individuals suffering from internal injuries caused by acid ingestion.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Act / Bill:** Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD) was enacted in 2016
- **Fact:** Amendment effective retroactively from May 22, 2026

- **Post:** Solicitor General of India is the highest-ranking law officer after the Attorney General

**Mains question:** *Examine how the expansion of the RPwD Act to include internal acid attack victims reflects the shift towards a more inclusive social justice framework in India.*

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/83632](https://satyadheesh.in/news/83632)

Education policy · Prelims + Mains · 17 Jul

### **Parliament Panel Wary: Bill Aims to Merge India's Higher Ed Bodies, Draws Safeguards Demand**

**Why in news:** A Parliamentary Joint Committee expressed concerns over the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025, regarding the proposed merger of higher education regulatory bodies and the preservation of institutional autonomy.

**Key facts:** The Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025, proposes merging existing higher education regulatory bodies into a single commission. It aims to operationalize the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, by creating specialized councils for regulation, accreditation, and standards.

#### **Prelims pointers**

- **Act / Bill:** Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025: Proposed legislation to merge higher education regulatory bodies.
- **Scheme:** National Education Policy (NEP), 2020: The overarching policy framework for the proposed educational reforms.
- **Fact:** The bill proposes a three-tier oversight structure: specialized councils for regulation, accreditation, and standards.

**Mains question:** *Critically analyze the balance between centralized regulatory oversight and institutional autonomy in higher education under the proposed Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025.*

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/85459](https://satyadheesh.in/news/85459)

Health policy & public health · Prelims + Mains · 17 Jul

### **TB Vaccine Candidate M72/AS01E Set for Production Ready to Prevent Millions of Cases**

**Why in news:** The Gates Medical Research Institute partnered with Serum Institute of India (SII) to manufacture the M72/AS01E TB vaccine candidate following successful Phase 3 trials.

**Key facts:** The M72/AS01E vaccine candidate is currently in Phase 3 trials involving 20,000 participants across five countries. Serum Institute of India (SII) will invest over \$100 million for production readiness, with GSK supplying the necessary adjuvant.

#### **Prelims pointers**

- **S&T:** M72/AS01E: A vaccine candidate specifically targeting Tuberculosis (TB).
- **Body:** Serum Institute of India (SII): World's largest vaccine manufacturer based in Pune, Maharashtra.
- **Fact:** The Phase 3 trial enrolled 20,000 participants across five countries.
- **Post:** Gates Medical Research Institute: A research entity funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

**Mains question:** *Discuss the significance of public-private partnerships in accelerating the development and manufacturing of vaccines for neglected tropical diseases and infectious diseases like Tuberculosis.*

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/85497](https://satyadheesh.in/news/85497)

Health policy & public health · Prelims + Mains · 17 Jul

### **Supreme Court takes suo motu cognisance of matter regarding access to life-saving medicines**

**Why in news:** The Supreme Court took suo motu cognizance of the 'In Re Exorbitant Pricing of Life Saving Patented Medicines' case to address the issue of unaffordable cancer drugs.

**Key facts:** The Supreme Court took cognizance on July 17, 2026, regarding a plea filed in 2022 by a woman in Kerala. The court directed the Kerala High Court Chief Justice to expedite the disposal of cases involving high prices of patented life-saving medicines.

#### **Prelims pointers**

- **Body:** Supreme Court of India: Has the power to take suo motu cognizance of matters of public importance.
- **Place:** Kerala: State where the original plea regarding cancer drug pricing originated.
- **Fact:** The original plea challenging exorbitant drug prices was filed in 2022.

**Mains question:** Examine the conflict between the protection of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and the fundamental right to health in the context of high-priced life-saving medicines.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/85851](https://www.satyadheesh.in/news/85851)

Vulnerable sections (SC/ST, minorities, disabled, elderly, children) · Prelims + Mains · 17 Jul

### Supreme Court Urges Centre and States on Intersex Guidelines Within Six Months

**Why in news:** The Supreme Court of India directed the Centre and States to formulate separate statutory guidelines for intersex persons within six months to prevent forced medical interventions.

**Key facts:** The petition filed by advocate Shamshevish Rein seeks a National Medical Protocol Committee and a ban on unnecessary surgeries on intersex infants. The legal basis for the petition rests on Articles 14 (Equality), 15 (Non-discrimination), and 21 (Right to Life and Liberty) of the Constitution.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Constitution:** Article 14 guarantees equality before the law and equal protection of the laws.
- **Constitution:** Article 15 prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth.
- **Constitution:** Article 21 protects the right to life and personal liberty, including bodily autonomy.
- **Fact:** The Supreme Court requested a response from the Centre and States by July 2026.

**Mains question:** Examine the constitutional safeguards required to protect the bodily autonomy and dignity of intersex individuals from non-consensual medical interventions in India.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/85927](https://www.satyadheesh.in/news/85927)

Poverty, hunger & nutrition · Prelims + Mains · 18 Jul

### The Indian Express UPSC Key for July 18, 2026, covers EPFO reform

**Why in news:** The Government is developing 'EPFO Reform 3.0' to introduce a new contributory pension scheme for both organized and unorganized sector workers.

**Key facts:** The proposed scheme aims to accumulate contributions into a 'Target Retirement Sum' (TRS) invested in government-backed securities. It targets workers currently excluded from the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) and includes provisions for gig/platform workers via aggregators.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** EPFO: Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, the primary body for managing social security funds for workers in India.
- **Scheme:** Unified Pension Scheme (UPS): A recently introduced pension framework distinct from the National Pension Scheme (NPS).
- **Fact:** Reform 3.0 proposes a defined contribution framework allowing contributions from workers, employers, and CSR funds.
- **Fact:** Workers may have the flexibility to decide the purpose of their retirement savings at the age of 55 years.

**Mains question:** Discuss the significance of expanding social security coverage to the unorganized and gig economy workers through the proposed EPFO Reform 3.0.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/86746](https://www.satyadheesh.in/news/86746)

## International Relations

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains · 13 Jul

### Trump Announces F-35 Sale to Turkey, Igniting Regional Firestorm

**Why in news:** US President Donald Trump announced the lifting of sanctions and openness to selling F-35 fighter jets to Turkey on July 8, 2026, despite Turkey's purchase of Russian S-400 systems.

**Key facts:** The Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II is a 5th-generation multirole fighter jet. Turkey is reportedly seeking an initial delivery of six jets and potential engines for its homegrown KAN fighter aircraft.

#### Prelims pointers

- **S&T:** F-35 Lightning II: A 5th-generation multirole fighter jet manufactured by Lockheed Martin.
- **Fact:** Turkey is seeking an initial delivery of six F-35 jets as of July 2026.
- **Place:** The announcement was made at a NATO summit in Ankara on July 8, 2026.
- **S&T:** S-400: A long-range surface-to-air missile system manufactured by Russia.

**Mains question:** Analyze how the shift in US defense cooperation with Turkey impacts the regional balance of power in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean.

Source: NDTV · [satyadheesh.in/news/82713](https://satyadheesh.in/news/82713)

India's bilateral relations · Prelims · 13 Jul

### US Uses Sea Drones to Strike Iran's Port Facility for First Time

**Why in news:** US Central Command (CENTCOM) conducted the first-ever combat use of unmanned surface vessels (sea drones) to strike an Iranian port facility in Bandar Abbas.

**Key facts:** CENTCOM deployed three Corsair unmanned surface vessels to target a submarine and ship maintenance facility at Bandar Abbas port. The operation was initiated to degrade Iran's ability to target commercial shipping in the region.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** CENTCOM: United States Central Command, responsible for the Middle East, Central Asia, and parts of South Asia.
- **S&T:** Corsair: The specific model of unmanned surface vessel (USV) used by the US for this operation.
- **Place:** Bandar Abbas: A major port city in Iran located on the Strait of Hormuz.
- **Fact:** This marks the first time the US has used sea drones in a combat operation.

**Mains question:** Analyze the implications of unmanned maritime systems in modern naval warfare and their impact on regional maritime security in the Middle East.

Source: NDTV · [satyadheesh.in/news/82934](https://satyadheesh.in/news/82934)

International institutions & agencies (UN, WTO, IMF...) · Prelims + Mains · 14 Jul

### India's Jaishankar pitches SHANTI vision to Guterres at UN, eyes 2028-2029 UNSC seat

**Why in news:** External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to discuss global conflicts and formally launch India's campaign for a non-permanent UNSC seat for the 2028-2029 term.

**Key facts:** India launched its UNSC campaign featuring the 'SHANTI' vision (Securing Holistic Advancement through Norms, Trust and Integrity). The framework focuses on six priorities including Global South representation and multilateral reforms.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** UNSC: The United Nations Security Council is the primary international body responsible for maintaining international peace and security.
- **Fact:** India is seeking a non-permanent seat on the UNSC for the 2028-2029 term.
- **Post:** S. Jaishankar: Current Minister of External Affairs of India.
- **Body:** UN Secretary-General: The chief administrative officer of the United Nations.

**Mains question:** Examine the significance of India's 'SHANTI' vision in advocating for a more representative and democratic multilateral order for the Global South.

Source: NDTV · [satyadheesh.in/news/83321](https://satyadheesh.in/news/83321)

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains · 14 Jul

### Iran strikes UAE tankers, kills Indian sailor in Strait of Hormuz attack

**Why in news:** Iran launched cruise missiles at UAE-flagged tankers in the Strait of Hormuz on July 14, 2026, resulting in the death of an Indian sailor and sparking a diplomatic protest.

**Key facts:** On July 14, 2026, Iran targeted two UAE-flagged tankers in the Strait of Hormuz. The attack resulted in the death of one Indian sailor and injuries to several others, leading to a formal protest by the Indian government against the Iranian Deputy Chief of Mission.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Strait of Hormuz: A strategic maritime chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.
- **Fact:** The incident occurred on July 14, 2026, involving UAE-flagged tankers.
- **S&T:** Cruise missiles: Low-altitude, long-range missiles capable of traveling at speeds close to the speed of sound.

**Mains question:** Examine the significance of the Strait of Hormuz in global energy security and discuss the implications of maritime insecurity on India's energy trade routes.

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains · 15 Jul

### India-UK free trade agreement takes effect after four years of talks

**Why in news:** The India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) officially took effect on July 15, 2026, following four years of negotiations to reduce trade barriers and boost bilateral commerce.

**Key facts:** The FTA reduces tariffs on British cars from 110% to 30% (initially) and then to 10%. It also cuts duties on British spirits from 150% to 75% (initially) and eventually to 40%, while introducing a self-declaration system for export origins in the UK.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** India-UK FTA took effect on July 15, 2026
- **Fact:** Tariff reduction for British cars: 110% to 30% (initial) and then to 10%
- **Fact:** Tariff reduction for British spirits: 150% to 75% (initial) and then to 40%
- **Fact:** Professional exemption: 75,000 Indian professionals exempt from UK National Insurance for 5 years
- **Fact:** Trade concessions provided for Indian textiles, gems & jewellery, and footwear

**Mains question:** *Examine how bilateral trade agreements like the India-UK FTA can reshape India's supply chain dependencies and influence its position in global value chains.*

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/84438](https://www.satyadheesh.in/news/84438)

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains · 16 Jul

### Australia to supply uranium to India marking policy shift

**Why in news:** Australia agreed to supply uranium to India during the 3rd India-Australia Annual Summit in July 2024, signaling a shift in its export policy towards non-NPT members.

**Key facts:** The agreement was finalized during the 3rd India-Australia Annual Summit on July 9, 2024, in Melbourne. It aims to support India's nuclear energy expansion goal of reaching 100 GW capacity by 2047.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** India's nuclear energy expansion target: 100 GW capacity by 2047
- **Body:** NPT: Non-Proliferation Treaty, which Australia previously used as a criterion for uranium exports
- **Place:** Melbourne: Venue of the 3rd India-Australia Annual Summit in July 2024
- **S&T:** Uranium: Primary fuel source for nuclear fission in power generation

**Mains question:** *Discuss how the expansion of nuclear energy cooperation between India and Australia strengthens the 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' and addresses India's energy security needs.*

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/84826](https://www.satyadheesh.in/news/84826)

India's bilateral relations · Prelims · 16 Jul

### On Tuesday, Iran launched fresh attacks on US military bases in Jordan

**Why in news:** Iran launched fresh attacks on US military bases in Jordan, Kuwait, and Bahrain, leading to a cycle of retaliatory strikes by the US.

**Key facts:** The US targeted Iranian command centers, air defense sites, and coastal surveillance facilities in Bandar Abbas and Greater Tunb Island. The escalation follows six days of renewed hostilities between the two nations.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Bandar Abbas: A major port city in the Hormoz Strait, Iran
- **Place:** Greater Tunb Island: An island in the Gulf of Aden, historically significant in maritime security
- **Fact:** The conflict involved strikes on military bases in Jordan, Kuwait, and Bahrain

**Mains question:** *Analyze the implications of escalating military tensions in the Persian Gulf on global energy security and regional maritime stability.*

Source: BBC · [satyadheesh.in/news/84915](https://www.satyadheesh.in/news/84915)

India's bilateral relations · Prelims · 16 Jul

### US Central Command Strikes Iranian Sites; Iran Hits US Bases, Iraq Intercepts Drones

**Why in news:** Escalation of direct military strikes between the US and Iran in the Middle East, involving strikes on military sites and oil infrastructure in the Strait of Hormuz.

**Key facts:** US Central Command (CENTCOM) targeted Iranian sites including Bandar Abbas and Greater Tunb Island. Iran retaliated against US bases in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Jordan, while Iraq intercepted drones near Erbil.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Strait of Hormuz: A strategic maritime chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman.
- **Place:** Bandar Abbas: A major port city in Iran's Hormozgan Province.
- **Place:** Greater Tunb Island: One of the three islands in the Tunbs archipelago, located in the Persian Gulf.
- **Fact:** Casualties: At least 35 deaths and over 300 injuries reported since the start of attacks in late 2024.

**Mains question:** Analyze the implications of escalating military tensions in the Strait of Hormuz on global energy security and maritime trade routes.

Source: Al Jazeera · [satyadheesh.in/news/85002](https://satyadheesh.in/news/85002)

Policies of other countries affecting India · Prelims + Mains · 16 Jul

#### Developed nations cut climate funding as poor countries need at least \$2 trillion annually

**Why in news:** The widening climate finance gap is a critical issue as developed nations reduce funding despite developing nations requiring \$2 trillion annually for climate adaptation.

**Key facts:** Developing nations require a minimum of \$2 trillion annually to adapt to extreme weather conditions. The World Bank has recently lowered its climate finance targets amidst a reduction in contributions from major donor nations.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** Minimum annual climate adaptation funding required by developing nations: \$2 trillion
- **Body:** World Bank: Multilateral development bank that recently adjusted its climate finance targets
- **Fact:** Report Date: July 16, 2026

**Mains question:** Discuss the ethical and economic implications of the widening climate finance gap between developed and developing nations in the context of global climate justice.

Source: Al Jazeera · [satyadheesh.in/news/85052](https://satyadheesh.in/news/85052)

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains · 16 Jul

#### On July 15, the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) came

**Why in news:** The India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) came into force on July 15, enabling zero-duty imports for Indian jewellery and coffee to the UK.

**Key facts:** The CETA covers approximately 99% of all tariff lines for Indian exports to the UK. The agreement aims to increase bilateral trade from \$65 billion to \$100 billion by 2030.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** India-UK trade target: \$100 billion by 2030
- **Fact:** CETA covers 99% of tariff lines for Indian exports to the UK
- **Place:** Kruti Coffee (Odisha) and Nysa Creations (London) are early beneficiaries of the pact
- **Body:** UK Department for Business and Trade (DBT) is the UK counterpart for the agreement

**Mains question:** Examine how bilateral trade agreements like the India-UK CETA can serve as catalysts for industrial growth and employment generation in developing economies.

Source: Economic Times · [satyadheesh.in/news/85282](https://satyadheesh.in/news/85282)

India's bilateral relations · Prelims · 18 Jul

#### US Embassy: Another MH-60R Seahawk delivered to Indian Navy, two more arriving soon

**Why in news:** The US Embassy announced the delivery of MH-60R Seahawk helicopters to the Indian Navy, marking a milestone in the bilateral defense cooperation agreement signed in 2020.

**Key facts:** India signed an agreement in February 2020 to procure 24 MH-60R Seahawk helicopters from the US. The Indian Ministry of Defence signed Letters of Offer and Acceptance (LOAs) on November 28, 2025, for sustainment support worth approximately Rs 7,995 crore.

#### Prelims pointers

- **S&T:** MH-60R Seahawk: A maritime variant of the Blackhawk helicopter designed for all-weather missions with advanced avionics.

- **Fact:** India's procurement agreement for MH-60R Seahawk helicopters was signed in February 2020 for a total of 24 units.
- **Body:** Lockheed Martin: The US aerospace and defense company responsible for manufacturing the MH-60R Seahawk.
- **Fact:** The sustainment support for the MH-60R fleet was valued at approximately Rs 7,995 crore under the Foreign Military Sales programme.

**Mains question:** Discuss how the deepening of bilateral defense cooperation with the United States contributes to India's maritime security and its role as a net security provider in the Indo-Pacific.

Source: NDTV · [satyadheesh.in/news/86174](https://satyadheesh.in/news/86174)

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains · 18 Jul

## India's B28 High-Speed Train to Run Mumbai-Ahmedabad Corridor Until Japanese E10s Arrive Early 2030s

**Why in news:** The Ministry of External Affairs announced that India will use indigenously developed B28 high-speed trains for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad corridor until Japanese E10 series Shinkansen trains arrive in the early 2030s.

**Key facts:** The Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) project will initially utilize the B28 train, an indigenous high-speed model. Japan is slated to provide the E10 series Shinkansen trains by the early 2030s. The first section of the corridor is expected to open in 2027.

### Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** B28: India's indigenously developed high-speed train for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad corridor.
- **Fact:** E10 series: The Shinkansen train model to be provided by Japan in the early 2030s.
- **Fact:** 2027: Expected opening year for the first section of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed rail corridor.
- **Body:** Ministry of External Affairs (MEA): The nodal ministry for managing the bilateral rail cooperation with Japan.

**Mains question:** Discuss how the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail project serves as a catalyst for India's 'Make in India' initiative and strengthens bilateral cooperation with Japan.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/86315](https://satyadheesh.in/news/86315)

Policies of other countries affecting India · Prelims + Mains · 18 Jul

## India's Defence Minister Highlights Growing Strategic Influence and Defence Exports

**Why in news:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh highlighted India's expanding strategic influence in the Indo-Pacific and the rapid growth of the domestic defence export sector.

**Key facts:** India currently exports defence products to nearly 100 countries. The annual production value reached ₹1.78 lakh crore as of July 2026, with a target of ₹3 lakh crore by 2029.

### Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** India's current annual defence production value is ₹1.78 lakh crore as of July 2026
- **Fact:** India aims to reach a defence production target of ₹3 lakh crore by 2029
- **Fact:** India exports defence products to nearly 100 countries
- **Post:** Rajnath Singh is the current Union Minister of Defence

**Mains question:** Discuss how the expansion of India's defence exports and strategic presence in the Indo-Pacific contributes to its objective of becoming a net security provider.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/86695](https://satyadheesh.in/news/86695)

India's bilateral relations · Prelims · 19 Jul

## Indian President Murmu makes history, begins first visit to Moldova, North Macedonia, Romania

**Why in news:** President Droupadi Murmu embarked on a historic state visit to Moldova, North Macedonia, and Romania in July 2026 to bolster trade and technological cooperation.

**Key facts:** President Murmu's visit marks the first-ever visit by an Indian President to Moldova. The tour includes high-level meetings with heads of state and business forums in Moldova (July 20, 2026), North Macedonia (July 21-22, 2026), and Romania (July 23-25, 2026).

### Prelims pointers

- **Post:** President Droupadi Murmu: The current President of India.

- **Place:** Moldova: A landlocked country in Eastern Europe.
- **Place:** North Macedonia: A landlocked country in the Balkan Peninsula.
- **Fact:** First-ever visit by an Indian President to Moldova occurred in July 2026.

**Mains question:** Discuss the significance of India's expanding diplomatic footprint in Eastern Europe for its 'Look East' and 'Act East' policies.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/87382](https://satyadheesh.in/news/87382)

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains · 19 Jul

### US and Iran tensions escalate after US military personnel killed in Jordan

**Why in news:** Escalating military tensions between the US and Iran following the killing of US personnel in Jordan on July 18, 2026, threatening maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz.

**Key facts:** Two US military personnel were killed in Jordan on July 18, 2026. Iran claims US strikes resulted in at least 50 deaths and over 500 injuries. The conflict is linked to US efforts to loosen Iranian control over the Strait of Hormuz.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Strait of Hormuz: A strategic chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.
- **Fact:** Iran claims 50 deaths and 500+ injuries resulting from US strikes as of July 2026.
- **Fact:** MoU signed between the involved parties on June 17, 2026, prior to the escalation.

**Mains question:** Analyze the geopolitical implications of escalating US-Iran tensions on global energy security and the safety of Indian nationals in the Gulf region.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/87574](https://satyadheesh.in/news/87574)

## GS3 · Economy · S&T · Environment · Security · 23

### Economy

Monetary policy, RBI & banking · Prelims · 15 Jul

### RBI Proposes One-Time Approval for Funds to Re-acquire Up to 10% in Banks

**Why in news:** The RBI proposed a one-time approval for institutional investors to re-acquire up to 10% stakes in banks without further consent if holdings fall below 5%.

**Key facts:** The proposal is part of the draft RBI (Commercial Banks — Acquisition and Holding of Shares or Voting Rights) Amendment Directions, 2026. Eligible entities include mutual funds, insurance companies, and pension funds registered with SEBI, IRDAI, or PFRDA.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** RBI: The central bank of India responsible for regulating the banking sector and monetary policy.
- **Fact:** The proposed threshold for re-acquisition without further RBI consent is up to 10% of the bank's stake.
- **Fact:** The trigger for this one-time approval is when an institution's holding falls below 5%.
- **Body:** SEBI, IRDAI, and PFRDA: The respective regulatory bodies for mutual funds, insurance companies, and pension funds.

**Mains question:** Discuss how simplifying the shareholding norms for institutional investors can enhance the capital structure and stability of the Indian banking sector.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/83823](https://satyadheesh.in/news/83823)

Monetary policy, RBI & banking · Prelims + Mains · 15 Jul

### RBI MPC Faces Dilemma as Food Inflation Hits 5.32%, Monsoon Fails

**Why in news:** The RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) faces a policy dilemma as food inflation hit 5.32% amidst a below-normal monsoon affecting kharif sowing.

**Key facts:** Food inflation reached 5.32% with significant spikes in ginger, tomato, and raisin prices. Below-normal monsoon rainfall led to a 16% reduction in kharif sowing compared to the previous year.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** MPC: The Monetary Policy Committee of the RBI is responsible for determining the benchmark repo rate.
- **Fact:** Kharif sowing reduction: 16% decrease compared to the previous year due to monsoon failure.
- **Fact:** Food inflation rate: Recorded at 5.32% in the current period.

**Mains question:** Discuss the challenges faced by the Monetary Policy Committee in managing inflation when supply-side shocks, such as monsoon failure, dominate the price index.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/83995](https://satyadheesh.in/news/83995)

Capital markets & SEBI · Prelims + Mains · 16 Jul

### **SEBI Imposes Stricter Rules: No New Equity Investments, Gifts Over ₹50,000 Prohibited**

**Why in news:** SEBI approved a new code of conduct on June 19, 2026, to enhance transparency and accountability following allegations against its former chief.

**Key facts:** The new code applies to both Whole-Time Members (WTMs) and Part-Time Members (PTMs) of SEBI. Key restrictions include a ban on new equity investments during tenure and a cap on gifts at ₹50,000.

#### **Prelims pointers**

- **Body:** SEBI: Securities and Exchange Board of India, a statutory body established under the SEBI Act, 1992
- **Fact:** Gift limit: SEBI members are prohibited from accepting gifts exceeding ₹50,000
- **Fact:** Investment restriction: Whole-Time Members (WTMs) are barred from making new equity investments during their tenure
- **Fact:** Recusal: Members must recuse themselves from discussions involving entities where they have significant financial interests

**Mains question:** Discuss the importance of robust ethical frameworks and conflict-of-interest regulations in maintaining the integrity of capital market regulators like SEBI.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/84708](https://satyadheesh.in/news/84708)

Fiscal policy, budget & taxation (GST) · Prelims · 16 Jul

### **India has raised windfall taxes on exports of diesel and aviation turbine**

**Why in news:** The Government of India increased windfall taxes on diesel and aviation turbine fuel exports while lowering petrol export duties to manage domestic price stability amidst rising global oil prices.

**Key facts:** The windfall tax on diesel exports was raised to ₹15.5 per litre and aviation turbine fuel to ₹14.5 per litre effective July 16. The petrol export duty was simultaneously reduced from ₹4 to ₹2.5 per litre.

#### **Prelims pointers**

- **Fact:** Windfall tax on diesel exports: ₹15.5 per litre as of July 16
- **Fact:** Windfall tax on aviation turbine fuel: ₹14.5 per litre as of July 16
- **Fact:** Petrol export duty: Reduced to ₹2.5 per litre
- **Fact:** Context: Global oil price surge linked to U.S.-Iran conflict escalation

**Mains question:** Discuss the role of windfall taxes as a fiscal tool for balancing domestic energy security with international trade obligations during global commodity price volatility.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/84816](https://satyadheesh.in/news/84816)

Industry, investment & MSMEs · Prelims + Mains · 16 Jul

### **Modi orders ministries to identify goods for local production, aims to reduce import dependence**

**Why in news:** PM Modi directed ministries to identify and substitute high-import-dependence goods with domestic alternatives to reduce trade deficits and foreign exchange reliance.

**Key facts:** The Ministry of Commerce is compiling a list of over 100 products, including electronics and chemicals, for domestic production. The Cabinet approved \$19.7 billion in financial support specifically for chip and smartphone manufacturing.

#### **Prelims pointers**

- **Fact:** Cabinet approved \$19.7 billion in financial support for chip and smartphone production.
- **Fact:** Ministry of Commerce is identifying over 100 products for domestic production substitution.
- **S&T:** Semiconductor (chip) manufacturing is a key focus area for reducing import dependence.

**Mains question:** Discuss the significance of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' in mitigating geopolitical risks and reducing trade deficits in the context of India's manufacturing sector.

Industry, investment & MSMEs · Prelims + Mains · 16 Jul

## **NPCIL Assures Safety as Cabinet Allocates ₹1.27 Lakh Crore for ISM 2.0 Semiconductor Subsidies**

**Why in news:** The Union Cabinet approved ₹1.27 lakh crore for the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) 2.0 while NPCIL clarified that a data breach at Kudankulam affected only conventional facilities, not nuclear safety.

**Key facts:** The Union Cabinet allocated ₹1.27 lakh crore for ISM 2.0 to subsidize semiconductor supply chains, specifically targeting gases and chemicals. NPCIL confirmed on July 16, 2026, that the Kudankulam data breach was confined to Balance of Plant (BoP) facilities.

### **Prelims pointers**

- **Fact:** ISM 2.0 budget allocation: ₹1.27 lakh crore
- **Body:** NPCIL: Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited, a public sector undertaking under the Department of Atomic Energy
- **S&T:** Balance of Plant (BoP): Conventional facilities like cooling systems and water treatment, distinct from the nuclear reactor core
- **S&T:** Semiconductors: Essential components for modern electronics, requiring specialized gases and chemicals for fabrication

**Mains question:** Discuss the significance of the India Semiconductor Mission 2.0 in achieving 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and reducing global supply chain dependencies in the electronics sector.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/85179](https://satyadheesh.in/news/85179)

Monetary policy, RBI & banking · Prelims + Mains · 16 Jul

## **RBI tightens bank oversight with new governance framework revisions**

**Why in news:** The RBI revised its governance framework to strengthen strategic oversight and risk management for banks to ensure financial stability.

**Key facts:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) updated its governance framework to enhance oversight of banking institutions. The update focuses on risk management and strategic alignment to maintain systemic stability.

### **Prelims pointers**

- **Body:** RBI: The central bank of India responsible for monetary policy and banking regulation
- **Fact:** Mobile phone manufacturing scheme: A 5-year duration follow-on of the PLI scheme
- **S&T:** ANEEL: A thorium-based fuel deployable in Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) without design changes
- **Fact:** ISM 2.0: Offers lower subsidies than ISM 1.0 but includes R&D support for semiconductors

**Mains question:** Discuss how the RBI's governance framework revisions contribute to maintaining systemic stability and mitigating risks in the Indian banking sector.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/85214](https://satyadheesh.in/news/85214)

Industry, investment & MSMEs · Prelims + Mains · 16 Jul

## **Union Cabinet OKs Rs 62,500 crore mobile phone scheme to boost local production**

**Why in news:** The Union Cabinet approved a ₹62,500 crore mobile phone manufacturing scheme to enhance domestic value addition and R&D in the electronics sector.

**Key facts:** The scheme is approved for a duration of five years with a total outlay of ₹62,500 crore. It builds upon the existing Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme which successfully raised local value addition to 24%.

### **Prelims pointers**

- **Fact:** Total outlay for the new mobile phone manufacturing scheme is ₹62,500 crore.
- **Fact:** Current local value addition in the mobile phone sector stands at 24%.
- **Scheme:** The scheme provides an additional incentive of up to 1.5% for domestic sourcing of key components.
- **Scheme:** An additional incentive of 3% on eligible sales is provided for design and R&D by Indian brands.
- **Fact:** The scheme is scheduled to be in force for a period of five years.

**Mains question:** Discuss how production-linked incentive schemes contribute to India's goal of becoming a global electronics manufacturing hub and reducing import dependency.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/85233](https://satyadheesh.in/news/85233)

Infrastructure (energy, ports, roads, railways) · Prelims + Mains · 17 Jul

### Supreme Court Hits Indian Railways with Steep Compensation, Curbs Deemed Licensee Status

**Why in news:** The Supreme Court ruled that Indian Railways cannot be treated as a 'deemed licensee' under the Electricity Act, requiring it to pay cross-subsidies and surcharges to distribution companies.

**Key facts:** The Supreme Court's division bench dismissed appeals by Indian Railways regarding its status under the Electricity Act. The ruling mandates the Railways to pay backdated dues and surcharges to state distribution companies (discoms).

#### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** Indian Railways: A statutory body under the Ministry of Railways.
- **Act / Bill:** Electricity Act: Governs the generation, transmission, distribution, and sale of electricity in India.
- **Fact:** Deemed Licensee: A status allowing certain entities to distribute electricity without a formal license under specific conditions of the Electricity Act.

**Mains question:** Examine the implications of the Supreme Court's ruling on the 'deemed licensee' status for public infrastructure projects and the regulatory framework of the power sector.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/85871](https://satyadheesh.in/news/85871)

Industry, investment & MSMEs · Prelims + Mains · 18 Jul

### Top 5 states attract 85% of FDI, leaving northeast with less than 1%

**Why in news:** Niti Aayog released the Investment Friendliness Index 2026, highlighting a severe regional disparity where the top five states capture 85% of FDI while the Northeast receives less than 1%.

**Key facts:** The Investment Friendliness Index 2026 ranks states on infrastructure, business climate, and regulatory ease. Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Goa emerged as the top-performing states in the report.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** Niti Aayog: The premier policy think tank of the Government of India.
- **Fact:** Top 5 states (Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Goa) attract 85% of total FDI.
- **Fact:** Northeast states receive less than 1% of total FDI as per the 2026 Index.

**Mains question:** Analyze the factors contributing to regional investment disparities in India and suggest measures to integrate the Northeast region into the national industrial growth trajectory.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/86135](https://satyadheesh.in/news/86135)

Growth, inflation & macro indicators · Prelims + Mains · 18 Jul

### RBI Governor forecasts 6.6% GDP growth despite weak monsoon, global uncertainties

**Why in news:** RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra projected a 6.6% GDP growth for the current financial year despite monsoon and global headwinds.

**Key facts:** The RBI projected a 6.6% GDP growth for the current financial year with inflation raised to 5.1% for FY2027. India recorded \$95 billion in FDI inflows last year and \$7 billion in the first two months of the current financial year.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** India's projected GDP growth for the current financial year is 6.6%.
- **Fact:** RBI raised the inflation forecast for FY2027 to 5.1%.
- **Fact:** Agriculture contributes approximately 17% to India's GDP.
- **Fact:** India received \$95 billion in FDI inflows in the previous year.
- **Fact:** RBI is exploring AI adoption in banking with a focus on cybersecurity and data privacy.

**Mains question:** Analyze the factors that sustain India's macroeconomic resilience against global uncertainties and climate-related shocks to the agricultural sector.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/86153](https://satyadheesh.in/news/86153)

## India's First Undersea Railway Tunnel Digging Begins with 13.6-Meter TBM

**Why in news:** NHRCL commenced excavation for India's first undersea railway tunnel under Thane Creek as part of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail project.

**Key facts:** The project involves a 10-km tunnel section where 7 km passes under Thane Creek. The excavation utilizes a 13.6-meter-diameter cutterhead TBM weighing approximately 3,200 tonnes equipped with Mixshield technology.

### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** NHRCL: National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited is the special purpose vehicle for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project.
- **S&T:** Mixshield technology: A specialized TBM technology used to stabilize tunnel faces in soft ground and underwater conditions.
- **Fact:** The TBM used for the Thane Creek tunnel has a diameter of 13.6 meters and weighs 3,200 tonnes.
- **Place:** Thane Creek: A tidal creek in Maharashtra, now site of India's first undersea railway tunnel.

**Mains question:** *Examine how the integration of advanced tunneling technologies and high-speed rail infrastructure can catalyze regional economic integration and urban connectivity in India.*

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/87051](https://satyadheesh.in/news/87051)

## RBI bans banks from reselling repossessed properties to original borrowers

**Why in news:** The RBI issued the Third Amendment Directions, 2026, prohibiting banks from reselling repossessed properties back to original borrowers to ensure transparency in NPA management.

**Key facts:** The RBI's Third Amendment Directions, 2026, mandates that banks must classify loans as Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) before acquiring non-financial assets (SNFAs). Banks are required to create internal policies for SNFA management and must list these assets separately as 'non-banking assets' in their balance sheets.

### Prelims pointers

- **Body:** RBI: The regulatory body responsible for issuing directions on NPA management and SNFA disposal.
- **Fact:** SNFAs: Non-financial assets acquired by banks from defaulting borrowers.
- **Fact:** Third Amendment Directions, 2026: The specific regulatory framework governing the acquisition and disposal of repossessed properties.
- **Fact:** Balance Sheet Requirement: SNFAs must be listed separately under 'non-banking assets' rather than being bundled with core banking assets.

**Mains question:** *Discuss how the RBI's regulations on non-financial assets (SNFAs) aim to enhance transparency and prevent 'evergreening' of non-performing assets in the Indian banking sector.*

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/87160](https://satyadheesh.in/news/87160)

## Science & Technology

## ISRO succeeds in critical Gaganyaan tests, ensuring safe crew module separations

**Why in news:** ISRO successfully conducted three critical Gaganyaan crew module tests on July 12, 2026, to ensure safe separation and stability during the mission.

**Key facts:** ISRO conducted three specific tests: upright positioning post-splashdown using a cold-gas-based system, umbilical mechanism separation between crew and service modules, and structural integrity during apex cover separation. These tests are vital for the safety of the Gaganyaan human spaceflight mission.

### Prelims pointers

- **S&T:** Gaganyaan: India's first human spaceflight mission to send a crew to orbit.
- **S&T:** Cold-gas-based system: Used in Gaganyaan to ensure upright positioning of the crew module post-splashdown.
- **S&T:** ISRO: Space agency under the Department of Space, Ministry of Science and Technology.
- **Fact:** Three major tests were successfully completed on July 12, 2026.

**Mains question:** Discuss the technological challenges and safety protocols involved in India's Gaganyaan mission and its significance for India's aspirations in the global space economy.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/82470](https://satyadheesh.in/news/82470)

Space technology (ISRO, missions) · Prelims · 14 Jul

### NASA Astronaut Anil Menon Heads to ISS for Historic 8-Month Mission

**Why in news:** NASA astronaut Anil Menon is scheduled to launch for an 8-month ISS mission on July 14, 2026, marking a significant milestone for the Indian diaspora in space exploration.

**Key facts:** Anil Menon will launch from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on July 14, 2026, at 8:17 p.m. IST. The mission involves a collaboration with Russian cosmonauts to conduct experiments on microgravity effects and semiconductor crystal production.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Baikonur Cosmodrome: Located in Kazakhstan, it is the world's first and largest operational spaceport.
- **S&T:** ISS: The International Space Station is a modular space station in low Earth orbit.
- **Fact:** Mission Duration: The scheduled mission duration for Anil Menon is 8 months starting July 2026.
- **S&T:** Microgravity Research: Experiments include studying human physiology and manufacturing semiconductor crystals in space.

**Mains question:** Discuss the significance of India's growing participation in international space missions and the potential of space-based manufacturing for the Indian economy.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/83713](https://satyadheesh.in/news/83713)

IT, AI, semiconductors & computing · Prelims + Mains · 16 Jul

### India's IndiaAI Mission Aims Big with Rs 10,372 Crore for Practical AI Applications

**Why in news:** The Government of India launched the IndiaAI Mission with a budget of over Rs 10,372 crore to foster practical AI applications and infrastructure.

**Key facts:** The IndiaAI Mission focuses on leveraging India's diverse datasets and talent pool to develop cost-effective AI solutions. It has onboarded nearly 38,000 GPUs to support the development of AI for sectors like banking, healthcare, and governance.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** IndiaAI Mission budget: Over Rs 10,372 crore
- **Fact:** GPU infrastructure: Nearly 38,000 GPUs onboarded under the mission
- **S&T:** IndiaAI Mission focus: Practical AI applications in banking, healthcare, and governance
- **S&T:** Strategic focus: Cost-effective AI solutions for local languages over frontier large language models

**Mains question:** Discuss how the IndiaAI Mission can bridge the digital divide and foster inclusive growth by leveraging localized AI solutions for governance and healthcare.

Source: NDTV · [satyadheesh.in/news/84925](https://satyadheesh.in/news/84925)

IT, AI, semiconductors & computing · Prelims + Mains · 18 Jul

### AI Maps 64,000 Square Miles of Heat-Resistant Coral Reefs for Global Conservation

**Why in news:** An international team used AI to map 64,000 square miles of heat-resistant coral reefs to guide global conservation efforts against bleaching.

**Key facts:** The study identified coral sanctuaries across 71 countries and 100 territories. The research was presented at the Our Ocean Conference in Mombasa, Kenya, highlighting reefs resilient to severe heat stress.

#### Prelims pointers

- **S&T:** AI application: Used for mapping and identifying heat-resistant coral reef structures.
- **Fact:** Scale: Over 64,000 square miles of coral reefs mapped.
- **Place:** Our Ocean Conference: Held in Mombasa, Kenya.
- **Fact:** Scope: Research covers 71 countries and 100 territories.

**Mains question:** Discuss how Artificial Intelligence can be leveraged to mitigate the impacts of climate change on marine biodiversity and coral reef ecosystems.

Source: Times of India · [satyadheesh.in/news/86195](https://satyadheesh.in/news/86195)

## **Modi launches India's first hydrogen train, zero-emission 10-coach marvel covering 356 km daily**

**Why in news:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off India's first hydrogen-powered train between Jind and Sonipat to showcase zero-emission railway technology.

**Key facts:** The train is a 10-coach marvel capable of speeds up to 75 kmph. It operates on a daily schedule of two round trips covering a total of 356 km, consuming approximately 300 kg of hydrogen per day.

### **Prelims pointers**

- **S&T:** Hydrogen fuel cells: Power source for the first hydrogen-powered train in India.
- **Fact:** Operational speed: Up to 75 kmph.
- **Fact:** Daily hydrogen consumption: Approximately 300 kg per day.
- **Fact:** Route: Jind to Sonipat, Haryana.

**Mains question:** *Examine the potential of hydrogen fuel cell technology in decarbonizing the Indian railway network and the logistical challenges in establishing a green hydrogen supply chain.*

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/86388](https://satyadheesh.in/news/86388)

## **Skyroot launched the Vikram-1 rocket, marking India's first privately developed orbital mission**

**Why in news:** Skyroot Aerospace successfully launched the Vikram-1 rocket on July 18, 2026, marking India's first privately developed orbital mission.

**Key facts:** Skyroot Aerospace, a private Indian space startup, launched the Vikram-1 rocket on July 18, 2026. The mission was a tribute to Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, whose leadership led to India's first satellite launch via SLV-3 on July 18, 1980.

### **Prelims pointers**

- **S&T:** Vikram-1: India's first privately developed orbital rocket launched by Skyroot Aerospace.
- **S&T:** SLV-3: India's first indigenous satellite launch vehicle, which placed the Rohini satellite in orbit in 1980.
- **Post:** Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam: Former President of India and key figure in India's space program.
- **Fact:** The Vikram-1 launch occurred exactly 46 years after the SLV-3 mission on July 18, 2026.

**Mains question:** *Discuss the significance of the growing private space sector in India's space economy and the role of the government in fostering private orbital missions.*

Source: NDTV · [satyadheesh.in/news/86845](https://satyadheesh.in/news/86845)

## **SCTIMST and HSFC Sign Agreement for India's First Postdoctoral Fellowship in Bioastronautics**

**Why in news:** SCTIMST and ISRO's HSFC signed an agreement on July 18, 2026, to launch India's first Postdoctoral Fellowship in Bioastronautics to study human health in space.

**Key facts:** The agreement was signed between Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST) and the Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC). The fellowship will offer two positions annually starting from July 2026 to research space travel challenges.

### **Prelims pointers**

- **Body:** HSFC: Human Space Flight Centre is a specialized unit under the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- **S&T:** Bioastronautics: The study of biological systems and human physiology in space environments.
- **Fact:** The fellowship programme will advertise two positions annually starting from July 2026.
- **Body:** SCTIMST: A premier medical research institute located in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

**Mains question:** *Discuss the significance of bioastronautics in India's Gaganyaan mission and the necessity of interdisciplinary research in space exploration.*

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/86887](https://satyadheesh.in/news/86887)

## Environment & Ecology

Climate change & international agreements · Prelims + Mains · 15 Jul

### El Niño Surges: India Faces 40% Monsoon Deficit, Crop Crisis

**Why in news:** NOAA confirmed rapid El Niño intensification, leading to a 40% monsoon deficit in India during June, threatening rice crop production.

**Key facts:** NOAA predicts a peak Nino 3.4 anomaly of 3.6 degrees Celsius by late 2026. India's southwest monsoon rainfall deficit reached nearly 40% below average in June, exacerbated by a neutral Indian Ocean Dipole status.

#### Prelims pointers

- **S&T:** Nino 3.4 anomaly: A key metric for El Niño monitoring measuring sea surface temperatures in the central equatorial Pacific.
- **Fact:** India's southwest monsoon rainfall deficit reached nearly 40% below average in June.
- **S&T:** Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD): A climate phenomenon involving the difference in sea surface temperatures between the western and eastern parts of the Indian Ocean.
- **S&T:** El Niño: Characterized by the warming of surface waters in the eastern Pacific Ocean, often leading to erratic monsoon patterns in India.

**Mains question:** Analyze how the increasing frequency and intensity of El Niño events pose a systemic threat to India's food security and agrarian economy.

Source: NDTV · [satyadheesh.in/news/84477](https://satyadheesh.in/news/84477)

Pollution (air, water, plastic) · Prelims + Mains · 17 Jul

### The Indian Express reports that Delhi's borders halt thousands of diesel trucks

**Why in news:** The Centre proposed a network of five multimodal logistics hubs to curb winter pollution in Delhi by shifting long-haul diesel freight to electric vehicles under the NHEV initiative.

**Key facts:** The National Highways for EV (NHEV) initiative proposes five hubs in Sonipat, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Greater Noida, and Gurgaon. The plan aims to shift nearly 50% of long-haul freight entering Delhi to a hub-and-spoke model using zero-emission vehicles.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Scheme:** NHEV: National Highways for EV initiative aims to decarbonize freight transport.
- **Fact:** The hub-and-spoke model aims to shift nearly 50% of long-haul freight entering Delhi.
- **Place:** Proposed hubs are located in Sonipat, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Greater Noida, and Gurgaon.
- **Body:** GRAP: Graded Response Action Plan is the emergency measure to control air pollution in Delhi.

**Mains question:** Examine how the transition to a hub-and-spoke logistics model and electric freight transport can mitigate the recurring air quality crisis in the National Capital Region.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/85428](https://satyadheesh.in/news/85428)

## Internal Security

Left-wing extremism · Mains · 13 Jul

### Senior Correspondent Unearths Digital Scams, Covers Historic Maoist Surrender

**Why in news:** Reporting on the historic surrender of the final Maoist cadres in Madhya Pradesh in late 2025, leading to the state being declared Maoist-free.

**Key facts:** The surrender involved the final Maoist cadres in Madhya Pradesh, resulting in the state being declared Maoist-free. The reporting highlighted backchannel negotiations and a 'vacuum of command' within the insurgency. The coverage also touched upon institutional lapses regarding the National Security Act (NSA) and custodial safety.

#### Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** Madhya Pradesh was declared Maoist-free in late 2025.
- **Act / Bill:** National Security Act (NSA) is used for preventive detention of individuals deemed a threat to national security.
- **Place:** Kuno National Park is the primary site for Project Cheetah in Madhya Pradesh.

**Mains question:** *Analyze the factors contributing to the decline of Maoist insurgency in Central India and the role of backchannel negotiations in achieving peace.*

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/82942](https://satyadheesh.in/news/82942)

## Practice — Mains questions

1. Discuss the significance of the growing private space sector in India's space economy and the role of the government in fostering private orbital missions. · GS3
2. Examine how bilateral trade agreements like the India-UK FTA can reshape India's supply chain dependencies and influence its position in global value chains. · GS2
3. Discuss how production-linked incentive schemes contribute to India's goal of becoming a global electronics manufacturing hub and reducing import dependency. · GS3
4. Discuss how the expansion of nuclear energy cooperation between India and Australia strengthens the 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' and addresses India's energy security needs. · GS2
5. Examine the constitutional balance between ensuring proportional population representation and maintaining federal stability in the delimitation of parliamentary constituencies. · GS2
6. Analyze the geopolitical implications of escalating US-Iran tensions on global energy security and the safety of Indian nationals in the Gulf region. · GS2
7. Examine the potential of hydrogen fuel cell technology in decarbonizing the Indian railway network and the logistical challenges in establishing a green hydrogen supply chain. · GS3
8. Analyze the implications of escalating military tensions in the Strait of Hormuz on global energy security and maritime trade routes. · GS2
9. Examine the significance of the Strait of Hormuz in global energy security and discuss the implications of maritime insecurity on India's energy trade routes. · GS2
10. Discuss the significance of India's expanding diplomatic footprint in Eastern Europe for its 'Look East' and 'Act East' policies. · GS2
11. Discuss how the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail project serves as a catalyst for India's 'Make in India' initiative and strengthens bilateral cooperation with Japan. · GS2
12. Discuss how the deepening of bilateral defense cooperation with the United States contributes to India's maritime security and its role as a net security provider in the Indo-Pacific. · GS2
13. Discuss the legal and administrative implications of using electoral rolls as a primary determinant for accessing welfare benefits and the necessity of clear adjudication for citizenship status. · GS2
14. Examine the conflict between the protection of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and the fundamental right to health in the context of high-priced life-saving medicines. · GS2
15. Analyze the factors contributing to regional investment disparities in India and suggest measures to integrate the Northeast region into the national industrial growth trajectory. · GS3

## Prelims quick revision

- **S&T:** Vikram-1: India's first privately developed orbital rocket launched by Skyroot Aerospace.
- **S&T:** SLV-3: India's first indigenous satellite launch vehicle, which placed the Rohini satellite in orbit in 1980.
- **Post:** Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam: Former President of India and key figure in India's space program.
- **Fact:** India-UK FTA took effect on July 15, 2026
- **Fact:** Tariff reduction for British cars: 110% to 30% (initial) and then to 10%
- **Fact:** Tariff reduction for British spirits: 150% to 75% (initial) and then to 40%
- **Fact:** Total outlay for the new mobile phone manufacturing scheme is ₹62,500 crore.
- **Fact:** Current local value addition in the mobile phone sector stands at 24%.
- **Scheme:** The scheme provides an additional incentive of up to 1.5% for domestic sourcing of key components.

- **Fact:** India's nuclear energy expansion target: 100 GW capacity by 2047
- **Body:** NPT: Non-Proliferation Treaty, which Australia previously used as a criterion for uranium exports
- **Place:** Melbourne: Venue of the 3rd India-Australia Annual Summit in July 2024
- **Constitution:** Delimitation of constituencies is governed by the provisions of the Constitution of India and the Delimitation Act.
- **Fact:** The 1971 Census data is currently the baseline for determining the number of Lok Sabha seats in each state.
- **Body:** The Supreme Court of India has the power of judicial review over legislative amendments to ensure they do not violate the 'Basic Structure' of the Constitution.
- **Place:** Strait of Hormuz: A strategic chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.
- **Fact:** Iran claims 50 deaths and 500+ injuries resulting from US strikes as of July 2026.
- **Fact:** MoU signed between the involved parties on June 17, 2026, prior to the escalation.
- **S&T:** Hydrogen fuel cells: Power source for the first hydrogen-powered train in India.
- **Fact:** Operational speed: Up to 75 kmph.
- **Fact:** Daily hydrogen consumption: Approximately 300 kg per day.
- **Place:** Strait of Hormuz: A strategic maritime chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman.
- **Place:** Bandar Abbas: A major port city in Iran's Hormozgan Province.
- **Place:** Greater Tunb Island: One of the three islands in the Tunbs archipelago, located in the Persian Gulf.
- **Place:** Strait of Hormuz: A strategic maritime chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.
- **Fact:** The incident occurred on July 14, 2026, involving UAE-flagged tankers.
- **S&T:** Cruise missiles: Low-altitude, long-range missiles capable of traveling at speeds close to the speed of sound.
- **Post:** President Droupadi Murmu: The current President of India.
- **Place:** Moldova: A landlocked country in Eastern Europe.
- **Place:** North Macedonia: A landlocked country in the Balkan Peninsula.
- **Fact:** B28: India's indigenously developed high-speed train for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad corridor.
- **Fact:** E10 series: The Shinkansen train model to be provided by Japan in the early 2030s.
- **Fact:** 2027: Expected opening year for the first section of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed rail corridor.
- **S&T:** MH-60R Seahawk: A maritime variant of the Blackhawk helicopter designed for all-weather missions with advanced avionics.
- **Fact:** India's procurement agreement for MH-60R Seahawk helicopters was signed in February 2020 for a total of 24 units.
- **Body:** Lockheed Martin: The US aerospace and defense company responsible for manufacturing the MH-60R Seahawk.
- **Body:** Supreme Court of India: The highest judicial body in India, exercising judicial review.
- **Fact:** 33.5 lakh: Total number of pending appeals regarding electoral roll deletions as of the court's observation.
- **Fact:** 70%: Percentage of disposed cases where names were restored to the electoral roll.
- **Body:** Supreme Court of India: Has the power to take suo motu cognizance of matters of public importance.

- **Place:** Kerala: State where the original plea regarding cancer drug pricing originated.
- **Fact:** The original plea challenging exorbitant drug prices was filed in 2022.
- **Body:** Niti Aayog: The premier policy think tank of the Government of India.
- **Fact:** Top 5 states (Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Goa) attract 85% of total FDI.
- **Fact:** Northeast states receive less than 1% of total FDI as per the 2026 Index.
- **Fact:** Cabinet approved \$19.7 billion in financial support for chip and smartphone production.
- **Fact:** Ministry of Commerce is identifying over 100 products for domestic production substitution.
- **S&T:** Semiconductor (chip) manufacturing is a key focus area for reducing import dependence.
- **Place:** Baikonur Cosmodrome: Located in Kazakhstan, it is the world's first and largest operational spaceport.
- **S&T:** ISS: The International Space Station is a modular space station in low Earth orbit.
- **Fact:** Mission Duration: The scheduled mission duration for Anil Menon is 8 months starting July 2026.
- **Act / Bill:** Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD) was enacted in 2016
- **Fact:** Amendment effective retroactively from May 22, 2026
- **Post:** Solicitor General of India is the highest-ranking law officer after the Attorney General
- **Fact:** Madhya Pradesh was declared Maoist-free in late 2025.
- **Act / Bill:** National Security Act (NSA) is used for preventive detention of individuals deemed a threat to national security.
- **Place:** Kuno National Park is the primary site for Project Cheetah in Madhya Pradesh.
- **S&T:** F-35 Lightning II: A 5th-generation multirole fighter jet manufactured by Lockheed Martin.
- **Fact:** Turkey is seeking an initial delivery of six F-35 jets as of July 2026.
- **Place:** The announcement was made at a NATO summit in Ankara on July 8, 2026.
- **Fact:** India-UK trade target: \$100 billion by 2030
- **Fact:** CETA covers 99% of tariff lines for Indian exports to the UK
- **Place:** Kruti Coffee (Odisha) and Nysa Creations (London) are early beneficiaries of the pact
- **Body:** RBI: The central bank of India responsible for monetary policy and banking regulation
- **Fact:** Mobile phone manufacturing scheme: A 5-year duration follow-on of the PLI scheme
- **S&T:** ANEEL: A thorium-based fuel deployable in Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) without design changes
- **Body:** SEBI: Securities and Exchange Board of India, a statutory body established under the SEBI Act, 1992
- **Fact:** Gift limit: SEBI members are prohibited from accepting gifts exceeding ₹50,000
- **Fact:** Investment restriction: Whole-Time Members (WTMs) are barred from making new equity investments during their tenure
- **S&T:** Nino 3.4 anomaly: A key metric for El Niño monitoring measuring sea surface temperatures in the central equatorial Pacific.
- **Fact:** India's southwest monsoon rainfall deficit reached nearly 40% below average in June.
- **S&T:** Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD): A climate phenomenon involving the difference in sea surface temperatures between the western and eastern parts of the Indian Ocean.
- **Body:** MPC: The Monetary Policy Committee of the RBI is responsible for determining the benchmark repo rate.
- **Fact:** Kharif sowing reduction: 16% decrease compared to the previous year due to monsoon failure.
- **Fact:** Food inflation rate: Recorded at 5.32% in the current period.

- **Body:** RBI: The central bank of India responsible for regulating the banking sector and monetary policy.
- **Fact:** The proposed threshold for re-acquisition without further RBI consent is up to 10% of the bank's stake.
- **Fact:** The trigger for this one-time approval is when an institution's holding falls below 5%.
- **Body:** CBSE: A national-level board for schools in India, headquartered in Delhi.
- **Scheme:** NEP 2020: National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes multilingualism and the three-language formula.

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