

THE DAILY UPSC BRIEF

HIGH-YIELD DAILY SOURCES & ANALYSIS | 5 OCTOBER 2026

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PRELIMS POINTERS — TODAY IN ONE LINE EACH

1. **Kumkum Mohod** — 17-year-old archer from Amravati (Maharashtra); first Indian woman to win an individual recurve gold at the Asian Games (Aichi-Nagoya 2026). Next Games: Doha, 2030.
2. **Koh Kong (Cambodia)** — about 1.98 lakh sq m of mine-contaminated land cleared and handed over to locals under India's Mekong-Ganga Cooperation Quick Impact Projects.
3. **Sant Ravidas Nagar Bhadohi** — new name of U.P.'s Bhadohi district, known for hand-knotted carpets; Ravidas was a medieval Bhakti saint whose verses are in the Guru Granth Sahib.
4. **Scarborough Shoal** — South China Sea feature where the Philippines says a Chinese J-16 harassed its patrol aircraft; the 2016 arbitral award (Philippines v. China) rejected China's 'nine-dash line'.
5. **Mekelle** — capital of Ethiopia's northern Tigray region, entered by government-allied forces after the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) withdrew.

HOW TO READ THIS BRIEF

- ☐ Why in News ☐ Target Prelims MCQ ☐ How to Use in UPSC Mains ☐ Mains Practice / Case Study Question

GS PAPER 1: INDIAN HERITAGE & GEOGRAPHY

Ramappa Temple: Activists Oppose a Coal Mine Near a World Heritage Site

Why in news: Heritage groups led by the KHT have urged the Centre to drop a proposed opencast coal mine at Venkatapur (Mulugu, Telangana), fearing harm to the UNESCO-inscribed Ramappa Temple and its lake.

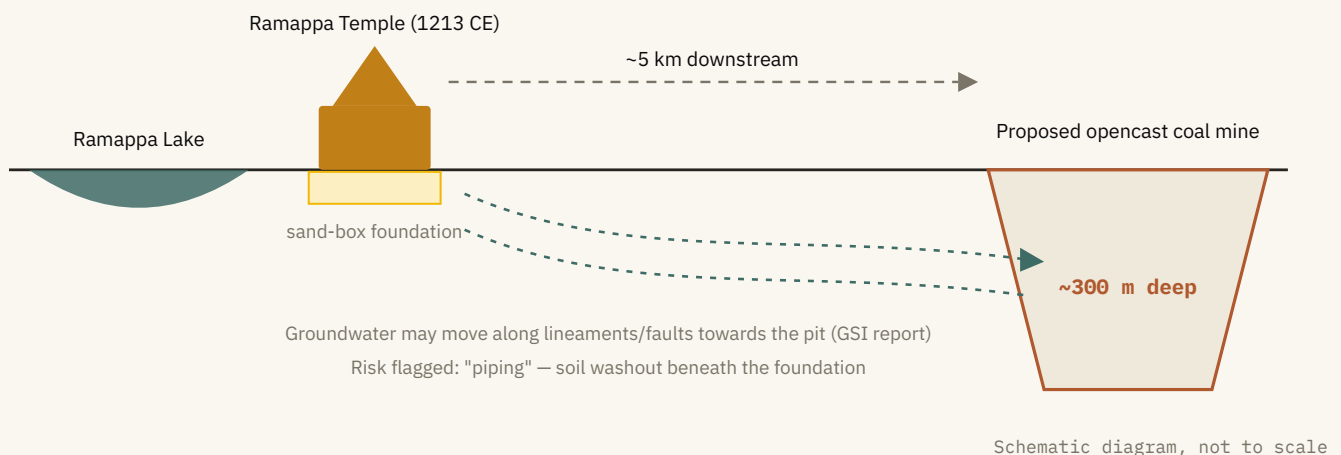
Key Details:

- **Proposed project:** The SCCL mine would sit about 5 km downstream of Ramappa Lake and the temple, with excavation to a depth of about 300 m.
- **Groundwater risk:** Former NIT-Warangal professor M. Pandu Ranga Rao cites a GSI report: lake water could move along geological lineaments and faults towards the pit.
- **Foundation at stake:** The nearly 800-year-old temple rests on a sand-box foundation; activists fear 'piping' (soil washout) beneath it and say distress signs are visible.
- **Mobilisation:** Activists met Coal and Mines Minister G. Kishan Reddy and plan protests from 15 villages after Dasara.

Data/Facts/Example:

- **The monument:** Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple was built in 1213 CE under Kakatiya ruler Ganapati Deva by his general Recharla Rudra; it is named after its sculptor, Ramappa.
- **Engineering:** Light 'floating' bricks in the superstructure and a sand-filled foundation that cushions tremors.
- **Inscription:** Added to the World Heritage List in 2021 (44th WHC session) as India's 39th WHS.

Ramappa: Why a Mine 5 km Away Worries Conservationists



The World Heritage Convention, 1972

- **Origin:** Adopted by UNESCO's General Conference in 1972; India ratified it in 1977.
- **Who decides:** The 21-member WHC inscribes sites, advised by ICOMOS on cultural and IUCN on natural sites.
- **Test for listing:** A site must show OUV under at least one of 10 criteria; it can be cultural, natural or mixed.
- **Safeguard:** Seriously threatened sites go on the 'List of World Heritage in Danger'; loss of OUV can lead to delisting.
- **India link:** India hosted the 46th WHC session in New Delhi (July 2024); Khangchendzonga NP is its only mixed site.
- **Domestic law:** ASI-protected monuments get a 100 m 'prohibited' and a further 200 m 'regulated' area under the AMASR Act, 1958.
- **Not to confuse:** Intangible heritage (e.g. Garba, Durga Puja in Kolkata) is listed under a separate 2003 UNESCO Convention.

How to use in UPSC Mains: Use in GS1 (conservation of heritage) and GS3 (EIA, development vs. conservation) answers to show that mining clearances need a heritage lens, since the AMASR buffer covers only the monument's immediate surroundings.

Mains value-add: UNESCO's Operational Guidelines (Para 118bis) ask States Parties to carry out Heritage Impact Assessments before development projects that could affect a site's OUV — cite it to argue that a mine 5 km away still needs heritage scrutiny, not just environmental clearance.

TARGET PRELIMS MCQ

Q. With reference to the Ramappa Temple and the World Heritage system, consider the following statements:

1. The temple was built during the reign of the Kakatiya ruler Ganapati Deva.
2. The temple is named after its sculptor rather than its presiding deity.
3. Sites are inscribed on the World Heritage List by the General Conference of UNESCO.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d) 1 and 2 only

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: the 1213 CE temple was built by Recherla Rudra, a general of Ganapati Deva. Statement 2 is correct: it is popularly named after the sculptor Ramappa; the deity is Rudreshwara (Shiva). Statement 3 is incorrect: inscription is decided by the 21-member World Heritage Committee; the General Conference only adopted the 1972 Convention.

Related PYQ: UPSC Prelims 2017: "Which one of the following was a very important seaport in the Kakatiya kingdom? (a) Kakinada (b) Motupalli (c) Machilipatnam (Masulipatnam) (d) Nelluru" — Answer: (b) Motupalli.

■ **[Abbreviations & Terminology]:** KHT: Kakatiya Heritage Trust | UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization | SCCL: Singareni Collieries Company Ltd. | NIT: National Institute of Technology | GSI: Geological Survey of India | WHC: World Heritage Committee | WHS: World Heritage Site | ICOMOS: International Council on Monuments and Sites | IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature | OUV: Outstanding Universal Value | NP: National Park | ASI: Archaeological Survey of India | AMASR: Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains | EIA: Environmental Impact Assessment

QUICK FACTS & EXAMPLES — GS PAPER 1

Keralam ended the southwest monsoon with a 28% rainfall deficit — 1,446.5 mm against a normal of 2,018.6 mm — and large parts of the State face drought-like conditions, even though Keralam is where the monsoon first sets in over the mainland.

How to use: GS1 (Indian monsoon, drought) — pair it with the 2026 all-India deficit to show that even the wettest gateway State is not monsoon-proof; supports a case for rainwater harvesting and crop planning.

GS PAPER 2: POLITY, GOVERNANCE, SOCIAL JUSTICE & IR

Universal Adult Suffrage and the SIR: Is the Roll Revision on Firm Legal Ground?

Why in news: SC judge Justice Ujjal Bhuyan said any process that disenfranchises millions is 'intrinsically arbitrary' and violates Arts 326 and 14, as Opposition protests seeking the CEC's removal entered a third day.

Story so far: The 1 Oct Brief covered the ECs' objections to SIR decision-making and the CEC Act's immunity clause; the 2 Oct Brief covered Form 7 mass deletions. New today: a sitting SC judge's public critique, about 13.3 crore deletions so far, and an Opposition plan to move a removal motion against the CEC.

Key Details:

- **Scale:** The SIR has led to deletion of about 13.3 crore voters; former SC judge Rohinton F. Nariman flagged some 90 lakh disenfranchised in West Bengal alone.

- **Legal basis questioned:** RP Act S.21 provides intensive or summary revision of rolls and, under S.21(3), a 'special revision' of a constituency or part of it; per P.D.T. Achary, 'special intensive revision' is not in the law.
- **Due process:** Except for a dead voter, an enrolled name cannot be deleted without notice and hearing (Bhuyan J.); the EC has meanwhile let EROs close notice cases without hearings via new ERONET options.
- **Removal route:** The Opposition plans a motion to remove the CEC; the presiding officer of either House can refuse to admit it at the threshold.

Data/Facts/Example:

- **Colonial contrast:** The GoI Act, 1935 gave a 'partial franchise' tied to property, tax, literacy and similar tests — only about 14% of the population.
- **Constituent Assembly:** Dr Ambedkar centralised the election machinery because provincial CECs, often CMs' nominees, had deleted opponents' names en masse.
- **Immunity:** S.16 of the CEC Act, 2023 bars civil or criminal proceedings against a serving or former CEC/EC for official acts.

Revising Electoral Rolls under the RP Act, 1950

Provision	Type of revision	Scope
S.21(2)(a)–(b)	Before every general election and by-election	Rolls of the constituencies concerned, with reference to a qualifying date
S.21(2)(c) + Rule 25, RER 1960	In any year, if the ECI so directs	Intensive, summary, or partly intensive and partly summary
S.21(3)	Special revision	'Any constituency or part of a constituency', for reasons recorded in writing
S.22–23	Correction and inclusion	Individual claims and objections (Forms 6, 7, 8)

Universal Adult Suffrage (Article 326)

- **What it says:** Lok Sabha and Assembly elections are held on adult suffrage — every citizen aged 18 or above may register as a voter.
- **Only these bars:** A voter can be disqualified only by law, on grounds of non-residence, unsoundness of mind, crime, or corrupt or illegal practice.
- **Voting age:** The 61st Amendment Act, 1988 lowered the voting age from 21 to 18.
- **One roll for all:** Art 325: no one can be left off the roll, or put on a separate roll, only because of religion, race, caste or sex.
- **Who prepares rolls:** Art 324 vests superintendence of rolls in the ECI; EROs prepare them on the ground.
- **Nature of the right:** The SC called voting a statutory right in *Kuldip Nayar (2006)*; Bhuyan J. described it as a constitutional right tied to the Basic Structure.
- **Not to confuse:** Art 324(5): the CEC can be removed only like an SC judge; other ECs only on the CEC's recommendation.

How to use in UPSC Mains: Use in GS2 answers on ECI independence, electoral reforms and Arts 324–329, and to argue that free and fair elections are part of the Basic Structure (*Indira Gandhi v. Raj Narain, 1975*).

Mains value-add: *Mohinder Singh Gill v. CEC (1978)*: Art 324 is a reservoir of power where enacted law is silent, but the ECI must act in conformity with, not in derogation of, the law — cite it to test whether a revision not named in the RP Act can be valid.

TARGET PRELIMS MCQ

Q. With reference to the Election Commission and adult suffrage in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Chief Election Commissioner can be removed from office only in the manner and on the grounds of a Supreme Court judge.
2. The other Election Commissioners can be removed in the same manner as the Chief Election Commissioner, without any further condition.
3. The voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 years by the 61st Constitutional Amendment Act, 1988.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: Art 324(5) gives the CEC the same removal protection as an SC judge. Statement 2 is incorrect: other ECs can be removed only on the CEC's recommendation — a protection the CEC alone enjoys in full. Statement 3 is correct: the 61st Amendment Act, 1988 amended Art 326 to lower the age to 18.

Related PYQ: UPSC Prelims 2017: "Consider the following statements: 1. The Election Commission of India is a five-member body. 2. Union Ministry of Home Affairs decides the election schedule for the conduct of both general elections and bye-elections. 3. Election Commission resolves the disputes relating to splits/mergers of recognised political parties. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?" — Answer: (d) 3 only.

■ **[Abbreviations & Terminology]:** SIR: Special Intensive Revision | SC: Supreme Court | CEC: Chief Election Commissioner | EC/ECs: Election Commission / Election Commissioners | ECI: Election Commission of India | RP Act: Representation of the People Act, 1950 | ERO: Electoral Registration Officer | ERONET: the EC's online electoral-roll management portal | GoI Act: Government of India Act | CM: Chief Minister | RER: Registration of Electors Rules

Does a Visa Guarantee Entry into India? Delhi HC Says No

Why in news: The Delhi HC (30 Sept) held that a valid visa gives a foreign national no inherent or legally enforceable right to enter India, upholding the denial of entry to a Turkmenistan citizen with a business visa.

Key Details:

- **Facts:** She landed at IGI Airport on 25 March with her husband on the same visa category; he was admitted, she was sent back the same day over 'adverse inputs'.
- **Holding:** Issuing visas, refusing entry and immigration clearance are sovereign functions; holding a visa and being admitted are two distinct stages.
- **Art 14 plea rejected:** Her husband's admission did not make the two similarly situated, as the inputs, shown to the court in a sealed cover, concerned only her.
- **No writ:** With no legally enforceable right shown, no writ could issue under Art 226; the petition was dismissed.

Data/Facts/Example:

- **Statute:** S.3 of the IFA, 2025 requires a valid passport or travel document and visa; S.7 lets the Centre prohibit, regulate or restrict foreigners' entry, stay and exit.
- **Precedents:** Hans Muller of Nuremburg (1955): wide Central discretion over foreigners, incl. expulsion; Louis De Raedt (1991): Art 19(1) (e) (reside and settle) is for citizens only.

Which Fundamental Rights Can a Foreigner Claim?

Available to all persons (incl. foreigners)	Available only to citizens
Art 14 — equality before law	Art 15 — no discrimination on religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth
Arts 20–22 — conviction safeguards, life and liberty, arrest safeguards*	Art 16 — equality in public employment
Arts 23–24 — against exploitation	Art 19 — six freedoms, incl. to reside and settle
Arts 25–28 — freedom of religion	Arts 29–30 — cultural and educational rights

*Art 22 safeguards do not apply to enemy aliens or preventive detainees.

The Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025

- **In force:** From 1 Sept 2025 — one code for passports, visas, registration and stay of foreigners.
- **Laws replaced:** Repealed the Passport (Entry into India) Act 1920, Registration of Foreigners Act 1939, Foreigners Act 1946 and Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act 2000.
- **Gatekeeper:** Gives statutory backing to the BoI (set up in 1971 under the IB); Immigration Officers examine documents at entry.
- **Inadmissibility:** Entry or stay is barred on grounds of national security, sovereignty and integrity, relations with a foreign State, or public health.
- **Reporting duty:** Hotels, universities, hospitals and nursing homes must report foreigners; airlines and ships must share advance passenger data.
- **Penalties:** Using forged travel documents: 2–7 years' jail and a fine of ₹1–10 lakh.
- **Not to confuse:** Who is a citizen is decided under the Citizenship Act, 1955; the 2025 Act governs only foreigners' entry, stay and exit.

How to use in UPSC Mains: Use in GS2 (rights of non-citizens, role of HCs) and GS3 (border management, internal security) to show how sovereign discretion over entry co-exists with judicial review on Art 21 fairness.

Mains value-add: NHRC v. State of Arunachal Pradesh (1996): the SC protected Chakma refugees from forced eviction under Art 21 — cite it to show that while entry is discretionary, a foreigner already inside India keeps life-and-liberty protection.

TARGET PRELIMS MCQ

Q. With reference to the rights and regulation of foreigners in India, consider the following statements:

1. The right to reside and settle in any part of India under Article 19(1)(e) is available to foreigners lawfully present in India.
2. The right to equality before the law under Article 14 is available to foreigners as well.
3. The Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025 repealed the Foreigners Act, 1946.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c) 2 and 3 only

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect: all Art 19 freedoms belong only to citizens (Louis De Raedt, 1991), however lawful a foreigner's stay. Statement 2 is correct: Art 14 uses the word 'person', so it covers foreigners. Statement 3 is correct: the 2025 Act repealed four older laws, including the Foreigners Act, 1946.

■ **[Abbreviations & Terminology]:** HC: High Court | IGI: Indira Gandhi International | IFA: Immigration and Foreigners Act | BoI: Bureau of Immigration | IB: Intelligence Bureau | SC: Supreme Court | NHRC: National Human Rights Commission

Three-Language Policy: SC Extends Board-Exam Relief to Current Class 6 Students

Why in news: The SC has ruled that current Class 6 CBSE students, like those in Classes 7–9, will face only internal assessment — not a Board exam — in their third language in Class 10.

Key Details:

- **Court's thrust:** The SC is softening the policy's rough edges: it asked whether rollout could start in 2027, not 2026, and called a new language in Class 9 disruptive.
- **English question:** The Court mooted reconsidering English's label as a 'foreign' language; The Hindu calls it a de facto Indian language, in use for 300+ years.
- **Practical effect:** With two of three languages required to be Indian, French, Spanish and other foreign languages are being squeezed out of CBSE schools.
- **Alternative view:** The Hindu argues for two languages (English + mother tongue), with a third language of choice assessed only internally.

Data/Facts/Example:

- **NEP 2020 rule:** Students learn three languages, at least two of them native to India; the policy says no language will be imposed on any State.
- **Scheduled languages:** The Eighth Schedule now lists 22 languages (14 in the original Constitution).
- **A two-language State:** Tamil Nadu has followed a Tamil + English policy since 1968.

The Three-Language Formula

- **Origin:** Recommended by the Kothari Commission (1964–66) and adopted in the NPE, 1968.
- **Original design:** Hindi States: Hindi, English and a modern Indian language (preferably southern); non-Hindi States: regional language, Hindi and English.
- **Continuity:** Retained in the NPE 1986 (revised 1992) and made more flexible in NEP 2020.
- **Mother tongue:** Art 350A asks States to provide primary-stage teaching in the mother tongue for children of linguistic minorities.
- **Hindi directive:** Art 351 directs the Union to promote the spread of Hindi.
- **Official language:** Art 343: Hindi in Devanagari is the Union's official language; English continues under the Official Languages Act, 1963.
- **Not to confuse:** The 22 'scheduled' languages (Eighth Schedule) differ from the 11 'classical' languages, a separate Union government recognition.

How to use in UPSC Mains: Use in GS2 (education policy, federalism, role of the judiciary) and GS1 (linguistic diversity, regionalism) answers on balancing national integration with linguistic choice.

Mains value-add: Art 29(1): any section of citizens with a distinct language, script or culture has the right to conserve it — cite it to argue that language policy should widen choice, not impose uniformity.

TARGET PRELIMS MCQ

Q. With reference to language policy in Indian education, consider the following statements:

1. The three-language formula was adopted in the National Policy on Education, 1968.
2. The National Education Policy, 2020 requires Hindi to be one of the three languages taught in every State.
3. Article 350A asks every State to provide instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage to children of linguistic minority groups.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a) 1 and 3 only

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: the formula, recommended by the Kothari Commission, entered the NPE 1968. Statement 2 is incorrect: NEP 2020 requires two of three languages to be native to India but says no language, Hindi included, will be imposed. Statement 3 is correct: this is exactly Art 350A's mandate.

Related PYQ: UPSC Mains 2020, GS-II: "National Education Policy 2020 is in conformity with the Sustainable Development Goal-4 (2030). It intends to restructure and reorient education system in India. Critically examine the statement." (15 marks)

■ **[Abbreviations & Terminology]:** SC: Supreme Court | CBSE: Central Board of Secondary Education | NEP: National Education Policy | NPE: National Policy on Education

Odisha Frames Guidelines to Protect Property Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Why in news: Odisha has issued guidelines directing revenue officials to safeguard the inherited and self-acquired property of PwDs, after repeated cases of relatives usurping their shares.

Key Details:

- **Trigger:** Activist-paediatrician Arabinda Mohanty took the issue to the State Commissioner for PwDs in 2025; in August 2026 the PwD department sought guidelines from the Revenue department.

- **Key proposals:** A register of PwD property complaints at tehsil and Sub-Collector levels, monitored by the Collector, and prompt inquiry into encroachment, illegal mutation or alienation.
- **Legal basis:** Framed under RPwD Act Sections 12, 13, 84 and 85; activists want SC/ST-style prior permission before any transfer of PwD land.
- **Lived reality:** A visually impaired man in Khordha has fought 35 years for his share; siblings with 100% locomotor disability in Bhadrak live in a 100-sq-ft room.

Data/Facts/Example:

- **Most exposed:** Persons with intellectual disabilities, dependent on parents or guardians, are flagged as the most vulnerable in property transfers.
- **Housing link:** The Panchayati Raj department has been asked to sensitise field officials so PwDs are covered under government housing schemes.
- **Scale:** Census 2011 counted about 2.68 crore PwDs, 2.21% of India's population.

The RPwD Act, 2016

- **Purpose:** Replaced the PwD Act, 1995 to give effect to the UNCRPD, which India ratified in 2007.
- **Coverage:** Recognises 21 specified disabilities (up from 7), including acid-attack survivors, autism, thalassaemia and Parkinson's disease.
- **Benchmark disability:** At least 40% of a specified disability, as certified — the threshold for reservation benefits.
- **Reservation:** 4% of vacancies in government establishments (S.34); at least 5% of seats in government-funded higher education (S.32).
- **Property and capacity:** S.13: equal right to own or inherit movable and immovable property; S.12: equal access to justice.
- **Enforcement:** S.84: a Special Court in each district for offences under the Act; S.85: a Special Public Prosecutor.
- **Not to confuse:** The Chief Commissioner (Centre) and State Commissioners for PwDs are monitoring bodies, not courts.

How to use in UPSC Mains: Use in GS2 (vulnerable sections; laws, institutions and bodies for their protection) to show that rights on paper need administrative machinery at the tehsil level to become real.

Mains value-add: Jeeja Ghosh v. Union of India (2016): the SC held dignity of PwDs integral to Art 21 and awarded ₹10 lakh to a passenger with cerebral palsy deplaned by an airline — cite it to argue for a rights-based, not charity-based, approach.

TARGET PRELIMS MCQ

Q. With reference to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, consider the following statements:

1. The Act recognises 21 specified disabilities.
2. The Act provides 5% reservation in vacancies in government establishments for persons with benchmark disabilities.
3. The Act guarantees persons with disabilities an equal right to own or inherit both movable and immovable property.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d) 1 and 3 only

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: the list grew from 7 under the 1995 Act to 21. Statement 2 is incorrect: job reservation is 4% (S.34); the 5% figure applies to seats in government-funded higher education (S.32). Statement 3 is correct: S.13 secures equal property and inheritance rights.

Related PYQ: UPSC Mains 2017, GS-II: "Does the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 ensure effective mechanism for empowerment and inclusion of the intended beneficiaries in the society? Discuss." (10 marks)

■ **[Abbreviations & Terminology]:** PwDs: Persons with Disabilities | RPwD: Rights of Persons with Disabilities | SC/ST: Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes | UNCRPD: UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities | SC: Supreme Court

Rabies Deaths: Why India's Data Systems Don't Agree

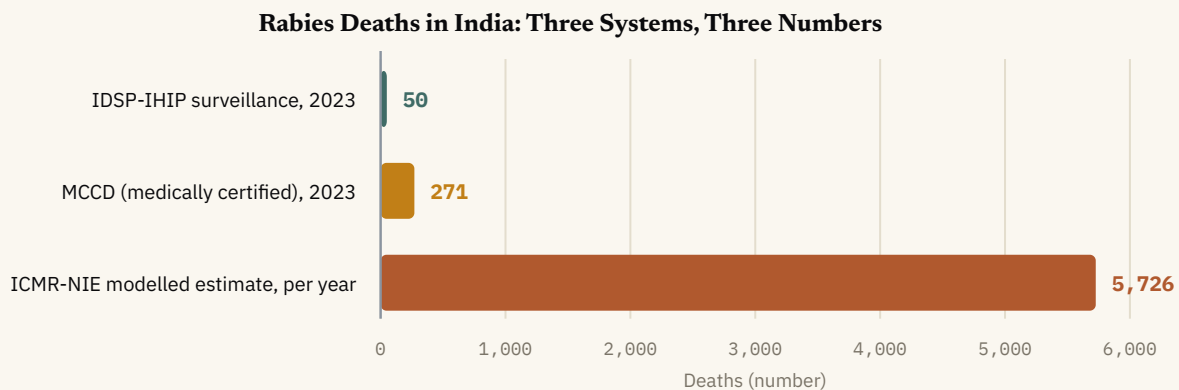
Why in news: Health Ministry surveillance logged 50 rabies deaths in 2023 and the RGI's MCCD 271, while an ICMR-NIE study estimates 5,726 deaths a year — a gap that clouds India's 2030 elimination goal.

Key Details:

- **Two official counts:** IDSP-IHIP logged 21, 50 and 54 deaths in 2022–24; MCCD logged 66 in 2022 and 271 in 2023.
- **Coverage gap:** MCCD captures only medically certified deaths — 22.3% (2022) and 22.0% (2023) of registered deaths; many rabies deaths happen outside hospitals.
- **Modelled estimate:** ICMR-NIE surveyed 3,37,808 people in 78,807 households across 60 districts of 15 States (The Lancet Infectious Diseases): about 9.1 mn animal bites a year, 5.6 mn by dogs.
- **Not equivalent:** The 2024 surveillance count (54) is under 1% of the estimate; officials say the methods differ and the figures should not be equated.

Data/Facts/Example:

- **Global burden:** Rabies kills about 59,000 people a year worldwide; WHO estimates India's share at about 35%.
- **Other VBDs, 2025:** Recorded deaths: 55 from malaria, 131 from dengue and 27 from kala-azar.



Rabies and NAPRE

- **Disease:** A viral zoonosis caused by a Lyssavirus (family Rhabdoviridae) that attacks the central nervous system.
- **Spread:** Dog bites and scratches cause up to 99% of human cases (WHO); saliva of other infected mammals can also transmit it.
- **Key fact:** Almost 100% fatal once symptoms appear, but almost 100% preventable with timely PEP — wound washing, vaccine and RIG where needed.
- **NAPRE:** Launched on World Rabies Day, 28 Sept 2021, by the MoHFW and the Animal Husbandry department: zero dog-mediated human deaths by 2030.
- **Approach:** One Health — mass dog vaccination, PEP access and surveillance; the NRCP is run by the NCDC.
- **Global frame:** The 'Zero by 30' plan (2018) of WHO, FAO, WOA and GARC.
- **Not to confuse:** Dengue and kala-azar are vector-borne (Aedes mosquito, sandfly); rabies passes directly through an animal's bite or scratch.

How to use in UPSC Mains: Use in GS2 (health, disease surveillance, data quality) and GS3 (One Health) answers to show that elimination targets cannot be verified without complete death registration and cause-of-death certification.

Mains value-add: The Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023 (under the PCA Act, 1960) make local bodies responsible for sterilising and vaccinating community dogs against rabies — cite it to show dog-population management is a legal municipal duty, not a voluntary one.

TARGET PRELIMS MCQ

Q. With reference to rabies, consider the following statements:

1. Rabies is caused by a virus belonging to the genus *Lyssavirus*.
2. Post-exposure vaccination can still cure a patient after clinical symptoms of rabies have appeared.
3. India's national action plan aims to eliminate dog-mediated human rabies by 2030.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: rabies virus is a *Lyssavirus* of the family *Rhabdoviridae*. Statement 2 is incorrect: PEP works only before symptoms begin; once clinical rabies sets in it is almost always fatal. Statement 3 is correct: NAPRE (2021) targets zero dog-mediated human deaths by 2030.

■ **[Abbreviations & Terminology]:** RGI: Registrar General of India | MCCD: Medical Certification of Cause of Death | ICMR-NIE: Indian Council of Medical Research–National Institute of Epidemiology | IDSP-IHIP: Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme–Integrated Health Information Platform | mn: million | WHO: World Health Organization | VBDs: vector-borne diseases | PEP: post-exposure prophylaxis | RIG: rabies immunoglobulin | NAPRE: National Action Plan for Dog-Mediated Rabies Elimination by 2030 | MoHFW: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare | NRCP: National Rabies Control Programme | NCDC: National Centre for Disease Control | FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization | WOAH: World Organisation for Animal Health | GARC: Global Alliance for Rabies Control | PCA Act: Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act

India–U.S.: Leverage in Washington's New Defence Bargain

Why in news: As INDOPACOM chief Adm. Samuel Paparo held talks with EAM S. Jaishankar in New Delhi, a mid-term update of the 2026 U.S. NDS signals that Washington wants partners like India to carry more of the regional security load.

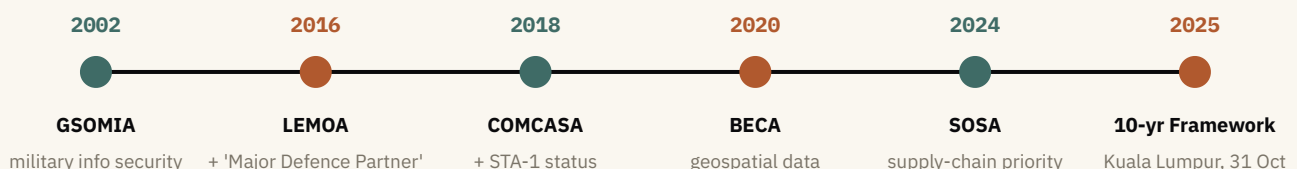
Key Details:

- **NDS goals:** Defend the U.S. homeland, deter China (especially along the First Island Chain), get more from allies and partners, and rebuild the U.S. defence industry.
- **New bargain:** The U.S. keeps advanced capabilities and extended deterrence; partners supply more troops, infrastructure, funding and industrial support.
- **Paparo visit (3–8 Oct):** Focus on maritime security, domain awareness, emerging technologies and interoperability under the Major Defence Partnership.
- **Balancing act:** EAM called the U.S. a 'lonelier power' by choice and defended Russia, which 'stood by India'; Russian oil is over 50% of India's oil imports.

Data/Facts/Example:

- **Leverage over importance:** Anil Raman (Takshashila Institution): economic scale, military capability, technology and market access set the terms on which Washington deals with a partner.
- **Quad:** India, the U.S., Japan and Australia keep a free and open Indo-Pacific as a shared agenda.

Building Blocks of the India–U.S. Defence Partnership



Four foundational agreements (2002–2020) plus status upgrades and the 2025 framework

India–U.S. Foundational Defence Agreements

- **GSOMIA (2002):** Protects classified military information the two countries share.
- **LEMOA (2016):** Reciprocal use of each other's bases for refuelling, repair and supplies — India's version of the U.S. LSA.
- **COMCASA (2018):** Secure, encrypted communication equipment on U.S.-origin platforms; an India-specific version of CISMOA.
- **BECA (2020):** Sharing of geospatial intelligence, maps and satellite data for navigation and targeting.
- **Status markers:** 'Major Defence Partner' (2016); STA-1 status (2018) — the third Asian country after Japan and South Korea.
- **Latest:** SOSA (2024) for supply-chain priority; a 10-year Framework for the Major Defence Partnership signed in Kuala Lumpur on 31 Oct 2025.
- **Not to confuse:** INDOPACOM (Hawaii) is a U.S. combatant command, renamed from PACOM in 2018; the Quad is a diplomatic grouping, not a military alliance.

How to use in UPSC Mains: Use in GS2 (India–U.S. relations, Indo-Pacific, strategic autonomy) to argue that India gains most by building its own capability while deepening U.S. ties — leverage, not alignment, sets the terms.

Mains value-add: Jaishankar's formula in The India Way (2020) — 'engage America, manage China, cultivate Europe, reassure Russia, bring Japan into play' — cite it to frame India's multi-alignment amid the new U.S. bargain.

TARGET PRELIMS MCQ

Q. With reference to India–U.S. defence cooperation, consider the following statements:

1. LEMOA was the first of the foundational defence agreements signed between India and the U.S.
2. BECA provides for the sharing of geospatial intelligence between the two countries.
3. India was granted Strategic Trade Authorisation Tier-1 (STA-1) status by the U.S. in 2018.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c) 2 and 3 only

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect: GSOMIA (2002) came first; LEMOA followed in 2016. Statement 2 is correct: BECA (2020) covers geospatial and satellite data. Statement 3 is correct: STA-1 was granted in 2018, easing licence-free access to sensitive U.S. technology.

Related PYQ: UPSC Mains 2020, GS-II: "What is the significance of Indo-US defence deals over Indo-Russian defence deals? Discuss with reference to stability in the Indo-Pacific region." (15 marks)

■ **[Abbreviations & Terminology]:** INDOPACOM: U.S. Indo-Pacific Command | Adm.: Admiral | EAM: External Affairs Minister | NDS: National Defense Strategy | Quad: Quadrilateral Security Dialogue | GSOMIA: General Security of Military Information Agreement | LEMOA: Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement | LSA: Logistics Support Agreement | COMCASA: Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement | CISMOA: Communication and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement | BECA: Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement | STA-1: Strategic Trade Authorisation Tier-1 | SOSA: Security of Supply Arrangement | PACOM: U.S. Pacific Command

QUICK FACTS & EXAMPLES — GS PAPER 2

Karnataka Police registered an FIR under Section 353 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita ('statements conducing to public mischief') against a party's booth-level agent who sought deletion of 7,561 electors in Ballari City through bulk Form 7 objections; it is the sixth such FIR in the State. Fake death certificates were also used to seek deletions in Vijayapura.

How to use: GS2 (electoral integrity, SIR) — evidence that the objection process can be weaponised, and that safeguards (verification by the Electoral Registration Officer, caps on bulk filing) matter.

Two pregnant women died at a district hospital in Bihar's Jamui after doctors were allegedly absent, and in Meghalaya's West Khasi Hills a child died during a three-hour trek to the nearest vehicle point on a road sanctioned at a cost of ₹25 crore but not yet built.

How to use: GS2 (health, last-mile service delivery) — illustrate how doctor absenteeism and missing rural roads, not just hospital numbers, drive maternal and child deaths.

U.S. troops left Iraq on 30 September 2026, more than 23 years after the March 2003 invasion justified by weapons-of-mass-destruction claims that proved false; Iran-backed militias (Popular Mobilisation Forces) have since become a 'state within the state'.

How to use: *GS2 (West Asia, limits of regime change) — a ready example, alongside Afghanistan (2021), of interventions leaving weak states and strong militias behind.*

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said India is going 'beyond advocacy' on the Russia–Ukraine war, conveying messages between Moscow and Kyiv on Black Sea shipping safety, grain and energy exports and non-attack arrangements.

How to use: *GS2 (India's foreign policy, strategic autonomy) — example of India as a bridge between rival powers rather than a bystander.*

GS PAPER 3: ECONOMY, SECURITY & SCIENCE

Next-Gen GST: Half-Year Numbers and the Next Round of Process Reform

Why in news: Ahead of the GST Council meeting on 7 Oct, FM Nirmala Sitharaman said gross GST collections reached ₹12.46 lakh crore in April–September 2026, up 11.6%, a year after the Next-Gen GST rate cuts.

Story so far: The 2 Oct Brief carried September's GST collections as a quick fact. New today: the FM's half-year review — a wider base after the rate cuts — and process reforms (registration, returns, refunds, ITC) headed to the Council.

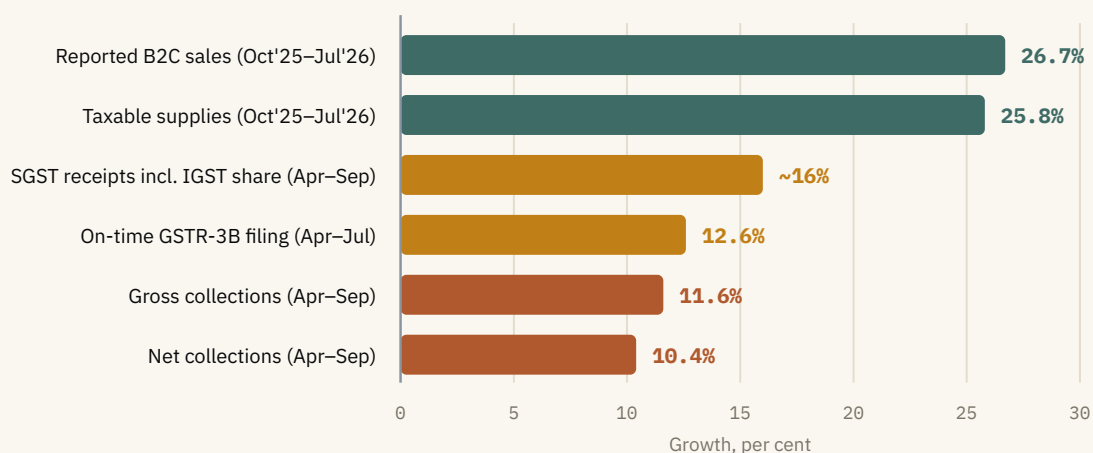
Key Details:

- **Rate reform:** Next-Gen GST rationalised rates from 22 Sept 2025; taxable supplies rose 25.8% between Oct 2025 and Jul 2026 over a year earlier.
- **Revenue:** Every month from June to September grew in double digits; net collections after refunds rose 10.4%; about ₹1.80 lakh crore was refunded in April–September.
- **Base and compliance:** Registrations stood at about 1.71 crore at end-August, up nearly 15%; on-time GSTR-3B filing rose 12.6% for April–July.
- **Next phase (proposed):** Process reforms on registration, returns, refunds, disputes and ITC flow go to the Council on 7 Oct — still proposals, not law.

Data/Facts/Example:

- **ITC:** The share of tax paid through credits rose while accumulated credit fell relative to taxable supplies — easing working capital for MSMEs.
- **States:** Aggregate SGST receipts, including their share of IGST settlements, grew about 16% in April–September.

Next-Gen GST: Growth Over the Previous Year (%)



The GST Council (Article 279A)

- **Origin:** Created by the 101st Constitution Amendment Act, 2016; GST was rolled out on 1 July 2017.
- **Members:** Union FM (chair), Union MoS for Finance, and the Finance or Taxation Minister of every State (incl. UTs with legislatures).
- **Voting:** Centre's vote counts for 1/3 and all States together 2/3; decisions need 3/4 of the weighted votes; quorum is half the members.
- **Taxing power:** Art 246A lets Parliament and State legislatures both levy GST; IGST on inter-State supplies is levied by the Centre (Art 269A).
- **Legal weight:** Mohit Minerals (2022): the Council's recommendations are persuasive, not binding, on legislatures.
- **Slabs since Sept 2025:** Two main rates, 5% and 18%, plus 40% on select luxury and 'sin' goods.
- **Not to confuse:** Crude, petrol, diesel, ATF and natural gas are within GST law but not yet taxed under it until the Council recommends a date.

How to use in UPSC Mains: Use in GS3 (indirect taxes, mobilisation of resources) and GS2 (cooperative fiscal federalism) to argue that rate rationalisation must be followed by simpler compliance and faster refunds.

Mains value-add: The Kelkar Task Force (2004) first proposed a comprehensive GST to end the cascading of taxes — cite it to show that GST's core logic is a single market with an unbroken credit chain, which the ITC and refund reforms aim to complete.

TARGET PRELIMS MCQ

Q. With reference to the GST Council, consider the following statements:

1. It was constituted under Article 279A, inserted by the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2016.
2. The Union Government's vote carries a weight of one-third, and decisions require a three-fourths majority of weighted votes.
3. The Council's recommendations are binding on Parliament and the State legislatures.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: Art 279A came with the 101st Amendment. Statement 2 is correct: the Centre has 1/3 weight, States 2/3, and decisions need 3/4 of weighted votes. Statement 3 is incorrect: in Union of India v. Mohit Minerals (2022) the SC held the recommendations persuasive, not binding.

Related PYQ: UPSC Prelims 2017: "What is/are the most likely advantages of implementing 'Goods and Services Tax (GST)'? 1. It will replace multiple taxes collected by multiple authorities and will thus create a single market in India. 2. It will drastically reduce the 'Current Account Deficit' of India and will enable it to increase its foreign exchange reserves. 3. It will enormously increase the growth and size of economy of India and will enable it to overtake China in the near future." — Answer: (a) 1 only.

■ **[Abbreviations & Terminology]:** GST: Goods and Services Tax | FM: Finance Minister | ITC: input tax credit | GSTR-3B: monthly summary GST return | MSMEs: Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises | SGST: State GST | IGST: Integrated GST | B2C: business-to-consumer | MoS: Minister of State | UTs: Union Territories | ATF: aviation turbine fuel | SC: Supreme Court

Agnipath at Four: Services Suggest Fixes as the First Batch Completes Tenure

Why in news: With the first batch of Agniveers set to finish its four-year tenure this year, the Army, Navy and IAF have sent recommendations to the DMA to improve the scheme; a report is with the competent authority.

Key Details:

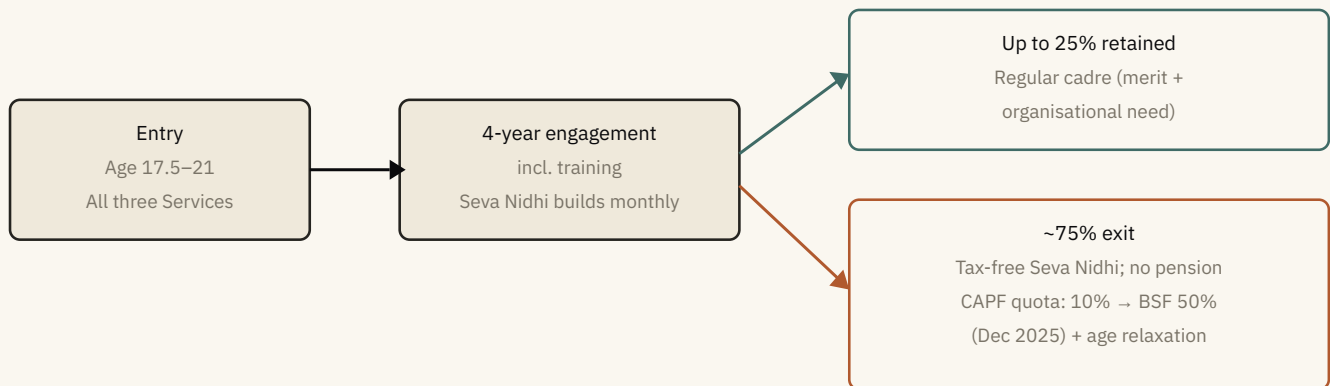
- **The trade-off:** The Services seek to balance a younger force with the need for operational experience and continuity.
- **Current design:** Up to 25% of each batch is retained in the regular cadre on merit and organisational need; the rest exit with a tax-free Seva Nidhi and no pension or gratuity.
- **Proposals pending:** The Services' suggestions are under consideration and are not yet policy.

- **Exit pathways:** The CAPF quota for ex-Agniveers began at 10%; the MHA raised it to 50% of BSF constable vacancies in Dec 2025, with age relaxation.

Data/Facts/Example:

- **Design:** Introduced in June 2022; entry age 17.5–21; a four-year engagement that includes training.
- **Benefits:** Seva Nidhi of about ₹11.71 lakh including interest, and ₹48 lakh non-contributory life insurance while in service.

The Agnipath Pipeline: Entry, Service and Exit



Schematic; Services' 2026 recommendations not yet policy

The Agnipath Scheme

- **Launched:** 14 June 2022 by the MoD — a common short-service entry for soldiers, sailors and airmen below officer rank.
- **Entry:** Ages 17.5–21; a four-year engagement including training; open to women.
- **Retention:** Up to 25% of each batch selected for regular service on merit and organisational need.
- **Seva Nidhi:** Agniveers contribute 30% of monthly pay, matched by the government; the tax-free corpus is paid on exit.
- **What it is not:** No pension or gratuity for those who exit.
- **Rationale:** A younger, tech-savvy force with a lower age profile and a smaller long-term pension bill.
- **Not to confuse:** Officers' short-term entry is the separate Short Service Commission; Agnipath covers personnel below officer rank.

How to use in UPSC Mains: Use in GS3 (defence reforms, security forces' manpower) and GS2 (welfare of ex-servicemen) to weigh a younger profile against combat experience, unit cohesion and post-exit livelihoods.

Mains value-add: The Kargil Review Committee (2000), chaired by K. Subrahmanyam, flagged the armed forces' ageing profile and called for a younger, fitter Army — cite it to show that the youth rationale behind Agnipath predates the scheme.

TARGET PRELIMS MCQ

Q. With reference to the Agnipath scheme, consider the following statements:

1. Agniveers are enrolled between the ages of 17.5 and 21 years for a four-year engagement that includes training.
2. Agniveers who exit after four years are entitled to pension and gratuity.
3. The Seva Nidhi package is exempt from income tax and is built from the Agniveer's monthly contribution matched by the government.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d) 1 and 3 only

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: this is the scheme's entry window and tenure. Statement 2 is incorrect: exiting Agniveers get no pension or gratuity — the key difference from regular service. Statement 3 is correct: Seva Nidhi is tax-free and built from 30% of monthly pay matched by the government.

■ **[Abbreviations & Terminology]:** IAF: Indian Air Force | DMA: Department of Military Affairs | CAPF: Central Armed Police Forces | MHA: Ministry of Home Affairs | BSF: Border Security Force | MoD: Ministry of Defence

National Supercomputing Mission: 40 Systems, 68 Petaflops and an Indigenous Stack

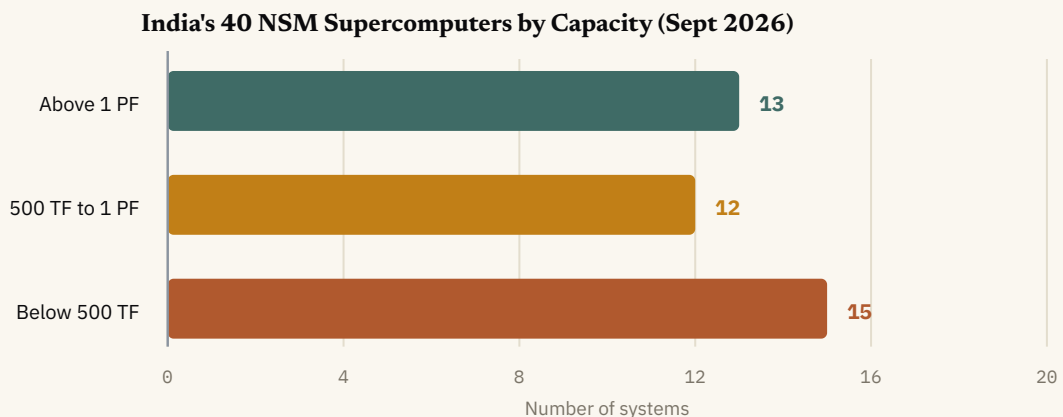
Why in news: A PIB backgrounder (4 Oct) reports that 40 supercomputers with 68 PF of combined capacity have been deployed under the NSM, with 6,000 indigenous Rudra servers in use.

Key Details:

- **Capacity mix:** 13 systems exceed 1 PF, 12 lie between 500 TF and 1 PF, and 15 are below 500 TF (Sept 2026).
- **Target:** 50 supercomputers with a combined capacity above 123 PF across academic and research institutions.
- **Indigenisation:** 6,000 Rudra servers deployed and 1,500 more being built; indigenous 100–200 Gbps interconnect and HPC software stack; indigenous cooling being deployed.
- **Reach:** PARAM Shavak, a 'supercomputing-in-a-box', takes HPC to smaller institutions.

Data/Facts/Example:

- **Mission:** Launched in 2015 with a ₹4,500-crore outlay; steered by DST and MeitY, implemented by C-DAC (Pune) and IISc (Bengaluru).
- **Lineage:** From PARAM 8000 (1991) to PARAM Rudra; C-DAC's AIRAWAT AI system ranked 75th on the Top500 list in 2023.



National Supercomputing Mission (NSM)

- **Launched:** 2015, to build a national grid of supercomputers for academia and R&D.
- **Stewards:** DST and MeitY jointly; implemented by C-DAC and IISc.
- **Phased indigenisation:** Early systems were assembled with imported parts; later phases indigenised servers, interconnects and software.
- **Network:** Systems are linked over the NKN so researchers can use them remotely.
- **Uses:** Weather and climate modelling, drug discovery, genomics, materials science and AI training.
- **Unit:** 1 PF = 10^{15} floating-point operations per second; 1 TF = 10^{12} .
- **Not to confuse:** Arka and Arunika are MoES weather HPC systems (IITM Pune, NCMRWF Noida); the NQM is a separate quantum mission.

How to use in UPSC Mains: Use in GS3 (indigenisation of technology, AI compute, Atmanirbhar Bharat) to show how sovereign compute capacity underpins weather forecasting, research and strategic autonomy.

Mains value-add: C-DAC was set up in 1988 after the U.S. declined to export a Cray supercomputer to India — and delivered PARAM 8000 in 1991; cite it as the classic case of technology denial spurring indigenous capability.

TARGET PRELIMS MCQ

Q. With reference to supercomputing in India, consider the following statements:

1. The National Supercomputing Mission is jointly steered by the Department of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
2. One petaflop equals 10^{15} floating-point operations per second.
3. India's first supercomputer, PARAM 8000, was developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b) 1 and 2 only

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: DST and MeitY jointly steer the NSM, with C-DAC and IISc implementing it. Statement 2 is correct: 'peta' is 10^{15} . Statement 3 is incorrect: PARAM 8000 (1991) was built by C-DAC, Pune, not ISRO.

■ **[Abbreviations & Terminology]:** PIB: Press Information Bureau | PF: petaflops | TF: teraflops | NSM: National Supercomputing Mission | HPC: high-performance computing | Gbps: gigabits per second | DST: Department of Science and Technology | MeitY: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology | C-DAC: Centre for Development of Advanced Computing | IISc: Indian Institute of Science | AI: artificial intelligence | R&D: research and development | NKN: National Knowledge Network | MoES: Ministry of Earth Sciences | IITM: Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology | NCMRWF: National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting | NQM: National Quantum Mission | ISRO: Indian Space Research Organisation

QUICK FACTS & EXAMPLES — GS PAPER 3

The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) has promulgated five Positive Indigenisation Lists covering 509 items (Aug 2020–Oct 2023): 191 items worth ₹3.40 lakh crore are contracted, Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) covers 114 items worth ₹4.75 lakh crore, and 204 items worth ₹5.41 lakh crore are under development; the Department of Defence Production has six separate lists covering 5,417 items. A sixth DMA list is in its final stage.

How to use: *GS3 (defence indigenisation, Atmanirbhar Bharat) — data to show import embargo lists converting into domestic orders.*

Andhra Pradesh Police's Counter Intelligence Cell arrested a Navy sailor posted in the Eastern Naval Command for allegedly passing classified maritime information to a Pakistani intelligence operative who befriended him on social media.

How to use: *GS3 (internal security, cyber threats) — example of social-media 'honey traps' as an espionage vector and the need for cyber-hygiene training in the forces.*

GS PAPER 4: ETHICS, INTEGRITY & APTITUDE**From Security Camp to School Hostel: Administrative Empathy in Bastar**

Why in news: A former security forces camp at Bhatpal in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district now houses over 150 tribal schoolboys as a residential hostel — the first such conversion in the Bastar division.

Key Details:

- **What changed:** Narayanpur Collector Namrata Jain repurposed a campus that housed security personnel for over 15 years into pre-matric (Classes 6–10) and post-matric (Classes 11–12) ST boys' hostels.
- **Need met:** Boys from remote villages earlier lodged outside school at extra cost; a Class 12 student from 22 km away now has safe, affordable housing near Education City, Kutul.
- **GS4 lens:** A textbook example of empathy and compassion towards the weaker sections and dedication to public service — values UPSC itself names as foundational.
- **Bigger shift:** Marks a move from security-oriented infrastructure to education, after the Centre declared the country free of Maoism earlier this year.

Data/Facts/Example:

- **Capacity:** Pre-matric hostel: sanctioned 100, now houses 114; post-matric hostel: sanctioned 50, houses 39; residential since 11 August.

Foundational Values: Empathy, Compassion and Dedication

- **Syllabus anchor:** GS4 lists empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker sections among the foundational values for civil service.
- **Empathy vs sympathy:** Empathy is feeling with a person and grasping their need; sympathy is feeling for them, and can stay passive.
- **Compassion:** Empathy plus action — the urge to relieve the suffering one sees.
- **Dedication to public service:** Going beyond the file to solve the citizen's real problem — judging success by outcomes, not paperwork.
- **Reform reports:** The 2nd ARC's 4th Report, 'Ethics in Governance' (2007), places citizen-centric administration at the heart of ethics.
- **Not to confuse:** Compassion is not favouritism — it must stay within rules, impartial and non-partisan.

How to use in UPSC Mains: Use in GS4 answers on empathy, compassion and innovation in administration, and in GS3 (Left Wing Extremism) to show development as the lasting counter to insurgency.

Mains value-add: Gandhi's talisman: 'Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man... and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him' — cite it as the test a civil servant can apply before any decision.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Turning a former security camp in Bastar into a hostel for tribal students shows how administrative empathy can turn instruments of security into instruments of development. Discuss the role of empathy and compassion towards the weaker sections in public administration, with suitable examples. (150 words)

■ **[Abbreviations & Terminology]:** ST: Scheduled Tribe | 2nd ARC: Second Administrative Reforms Commission