

National News

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the first State Innovation Mission (SIM) launched under NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM 2.0):

1. It was launched at the Hapania International Exhibition Centre in Agartala, Tripura.
2. The mission operates under the State Support Mission Framework to build inclusive, locally driven innovation ecosystems.
3. It marks the complete decentralization of startup funding entirely away from central oversight.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

Detailed Explanation:

The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) under NITI Aayog officially operationalized its first State Innovation Mission (SIM) in Tripura. The launch event took place at the Hapania International Exhibition Centre in Agartala. It runs on the State Support Mission Framework designed to help states and UTs build customized, locally driven innovation structures. Statement 3 is incorrect as the central government continues to provide foundational guidelines, technical assistance, and overarching framework monitoring, rather than an absolute fiscal severing.

Q2. President Droupadi Murmu recently launched four flagship women-centric welfare schemes at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium. Which state/UT administration introduced these initiatives?

- (a) Government of Puducherry
- (b) Government of Delhi
- (c) Government of Jammu and Kashmir
- (d) Government of Uttar Pradesh

Answer: (b) Government of Delhi

Detailed Explanation:

President Droupadi Murmu launched four major women-centric welfare schemes for the Delhi Government. The initiatives are designed to improve social security, financial transparency, and public mobility for women and transgender residents in the national capital.

Q3. Which of the following is NOT one of the four women-centric welfare schemes launched by President Droupadi Murmu in Delhi?

- (a) Saheli Pink Smart Card
- (b) Delhi Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana
- (c) Meri Punji Mera Adhikaar
- (d) Ladli Behna Samman Yojana

Answer: (d) Ladli Behna Samman Yojana

Detailed Explanation:

The four newly launched schemes are: (1) **Saheli Pink Smart Card** (for free bus travel and integrated digital transit), (2) **Free LPG Cylinder Scheme** (providing two free cylinders during key festivals), (3) **Delhi Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana**, and (4) **Meri Punji Mera Adhikaar**. 'Ladli Behna' is a scheme belonging to Madhya Pradesh, not the recently announced Delhi cohort.

Q4. Under the newly launched 'Saheli Pink Smart Card' framework, free travel benefits are structured using which integrated transport infrastructure?

- (a) Delhi Metro Smart Grid
- (b) National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) framework
- (c) FASTag transit protocols
- (d) Delhi One Transport App matrix

Answer: (b) National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) framework

Detailed Explanation:

The Saheli Pink Smart Card integrates free bus travel for eligible women and transgender residents directly into the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) framework. This alignment ensures that while bus travel is free, the card can dually hold paid balances for standard use across the Delhi Metro and Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) via a single touch-free mechanism.

Q5. Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal recently inaugurated three critical inland waterway infrastructure projects in which city to boost regional cargo logistics?

- (a) Guwahati, Assam
- (b) Dibrugarh, Assam
- (c) Majuli, Assam
- (d) Dhubri, Assam

Answer: (b) Dibrugarh, Assam

Detailed Explanation:

The Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, inaugurated three high-capacity inland waterway projects in Dibrugarh, Assam. These projects aim to expand cargo vessel docking capabilities, improve riverine

tourism connectivity, and lower multi-modal cargo transit times across National Waterway-2 (Brahmaputra River).

Q6. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has officially introduced the concept of 'Legacy Thrust Territories' (LTTs). What is the primary objective behind this designation?

- (a) Enhancing border fencing across the Line of Control (LoC)
- (b) Managing coastal security checkpoints near international waters
- (c) Preventing the resurgence of Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) in cleared districts
- (d) Rapid development of smart cities in North-Eastern peripheral states

Answer: (c) Preventing the resurgence of Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) in cleared districts

Detailed Explanation:

'Legacy Thrust Territories' (LTTs) are districts previously impacted by Naxalite movements or Left-Wing Extremism that have recently been declared security-clear. The MHA created this classification to ensure continuous development funding, robust local intelligence, and targeted administrative interventions so that extreme ideological cells do not find a vacuum to resurge.

Q7. The National Arogya Fair 2026, which promotes integrated traditional and modern healthcare systems, was held at which sacred venue?

- (a) Visava Maidan, Shegaon (Maharashtra)
- (b) Science City, Ahmedabad (Gujarat)
- (c) Pragati Maidan, New Delhi
- (d) Kanha Shanti Vanam, Hyderabad

Answer: (a) Visava Maidan, Shegaon (Maharashtra)

Detailed Explanation:

The National Arogya Fair 2026 was organized by the Ministry of AYUSH in collaboration with the All India Ayurvedic Congress (AIAC). The mega fair was inaugurated by President Droupadi Murmu at the Visava Maidan of Sant Gajanan Maharaj Sansthan in Shegaon, Buldhana district, Maharashtra, featuring displays from Allopathy, Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy.

2. International News

Q8. The military offensive launched by the United States and Israel against Iran's ballistic missile and atomic enrichment infrastructure is code-named:

- (a) Operation Desert Shield
- (b) Operation Epic Fury (Operation Genesis)
- (c) Operation Iron Shield
- (d) Operation Infinite Resolve

Answer: (b) Operation Epic Fury (Operation Genesis)

Detailed Explanation:

Following a severe escalation of geopolitical tensions in West Asia, the United States and Israeli forces launched a massive, coordinated air and missile campaign code-named **Operation Epic Fury** (also widely cited in international defense dossiers as **Operation Genesis**). The operation targeted core military command nodes, drone manufacturing lines, and deep nuclear facility perimeters in Iran.

Q9. Following the sudden death of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in recent geopolitical strikes, the constitutional

transition of power requires the election of a permanent successor by which body?

- (a) The Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majlis)
- (b) The Assembly of Experts
- (c) The Guardian Council
- (d) The Supreme National Security Council

Answer: (b) The Assembly of Experts

Detailed Explanation:

Under Iran's constitution, following the demise or incapacitation of the Supreme Leader, an interim leadership council runs daily operations while the **Assembly of Experts** (a deliberative body of 88 Islamic scholars/clerics) is legally tasked with evaluating and voting upon a permanent successor to assume the absolute spiritual and political office.

Q10. Which international naval asset, belonging to the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy, was reportedly sunk by an allied attack submarine in the Arabian Sea while returning from Exercise Milan?

- (a) IRIS Makran
- (b) IRIS Sahand
- (c) IRIS Dena
- (d) IRIS Alvand

Answer: (c) IRIS Dena

Detailed Explanation:

Amidst widening maritime blockades in the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea, the Iranian frontline naval frigate **IRIS Dena**, which was returning from multilateral maritime drills, was intercepted and sunk by a U.S. Navy attack submarine following active hostilities, disrupting Iran's blue-water monitoring footprints.

3. Economics and Banking

Q11. India and Canada recently signed a landmark strategic civil nuclear energy supply agreement worth \$1.9 billion (CAD \$2.6 billion). Under this pact, which Canadian entity will supply 10,000 tonnes of uranium to India?

- (a) Uranium Participation Corp
- (b) Cameco Corporation
- (c) Denison Mines
- (d) NexGen Energy

Answer: (b) Cameco Corporation

Detailed Explanation:

India and Canada signed a long-term uranium supply agreement worth approximately \$1.9 billion (CAD \$2.6 billion) spanning the years 2027 to 2035. Canadian mining giant **Cameco Corporation** will supply 10,000 tonnes of uranium concentrate to fuel India's expanding domestic civil nuclear reactors, signaling a strong energy pivot despite long-standing bilateral diplomatic strains.

Q12. India has officially renewed its Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA) with which global economic superpower, maintaining a financial cushion safety net size of USD 75 billion?

- (a) United States
- (b) Japan
- (c) Germany
- (d) United Arab Emirates

Answer: (b) Japan

Detailed Explanation:

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Bank of Japan renewed their **Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA)** effective from February 28, 2026. The facility allows both countries to swap

their local currencies for US Dollars up to an unchanged maximum ceiling of **USD 75 billion**, acting as an essential balance-of-payments buffer during global liquidity shortages.

Q13. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed an institutional monetary penalty of ₹11.50 lakh on Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Limited (MMFSL) for violating which operational framework?

- (a) Basel III Liquidity Guidelines
- (b) Fair Practices Code for NBFCs
- (c) Priority Sector Lending (PSL) norms
- (d) Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) targets

Answer: (b) Fair Practices Code for NBFCs

Detailed Explanation:

The RBI imposed a ₹11.50 lakh penalty on MMFSL under the RBI Act, 1934, after regular inspections revealed that the NBFC was charging revised foreclosure fees to clients without updating corresponding loan agreements. It also showed systemic deficiencies in its grievance redressal, such as failing to escalate customer disputes to its Internal Ombudsman within mandated timelines.

Q14. According to the market regulations updated by SEBI, what vital identifier must all SEBI-registered intermediaries display when posting financial or securities-related content on digital and social media platforms?

- (a) Permanent Account Number (PAN)
- (b) Registered corporate name and SEBI Registration Number
- (c) Central KYC Data Record Code
- (d) Unified Business Identification Number (UBIN)

Answer: (b) Registered corporate name and SEBI Registration Number

Detailed Explanation:

To curb market manipulation, protect retail investors, and penalize unregistered 'finfluencers', SEBI has mandated that all valid registered intermediaries must explicitly feature their registered name and SEBI registration number on any financial advisory or stock-market commentary content shared on public digital platforms.

Q15. SEBI has introduced a strict "50% Portfolio Overlap Rule". This structural asset diversification restriction is primarily applicable to which category of mutual funds?

- (a) Large-Cap Equity Funds
- (b) Thematic and Sectoral Mutual Fund Schemes within the same AMC
- (c) Liquid Overnight Debt Funds
- (d) Multi-Asset Allocation Hybrid Schemes

Answer: (b) Thematic and Sectoral Mutual Fund Schemes within the same AMC

Detailed Explanation:

To prevent asset management companies (AMCs) from launching near-identical products under slightly different marketing titles, SEBI introduced a rule stating that no two thematic or sectoral schemes within the same mutual fund house can share a portfolio stock asset overlap greater than 50%. This increases transparency and product differentiation for investors.

Q16. The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) recommended maintaining the statutory EPF interest rate at what percentage for the Financial Year 2025-26?

- (a) 8.15%
- (b) 8.25%
- (c) 8.35%
- (d) 8.50%

Answer: (b) 8.25%

Detailed Explanation:

The Central Board of Trustees of the EPFO recommended keeping the interest rate on EPF accumulations steady at **8.25% for FY 2025-26**. This decision ensures stable financial returns for more than 6 crore salaried subscribers across the nation.

4. Sports

Q17. Aarav Dengla has officially etched his name into Indian sports annals by becoming the country's:

- (a) 85th Chess Grandmaster
- (b) 90th Chess Grandmaster
- (c) 93rd Chess Grandmaster
- (d) 95th Chess Grandmaster

Answer: (c) 93rd Chess Grandmaster

Detailed Explanation:

Young chess prodigy Aarav Dengla crossed the live FIDE rating threshold and achieved his final grandmaster norm to officially become India's **93rd Chess Grandmaster**, underscoring the deep talent pipeline in the country's chess ecosystem.

5. Appointments

Q18. Who became the first woman to be appointed to the high-security position of Superintendent of Central Jail Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir?

- (a) Saba Shawl

- (b) Rubina Begum
- (c) Nuzhat Gul
- (d) Ruveda Salam

Answer: (a) Saba Shawl

Detailed Explanation:

In a significant step for institutional gender parity within law enforcement, senior officer **Saba Shawl** became the first woman to be appointed as the Superintendent of Central Jail Srinagar, taking charge of administrative security and correctional reforms at the facility.

Q19. Who assumed charge as the new Director General of Naval Armament (DGONA) at the Naval Headquarters in March 2026?

- (a) V.K. Rao
- (b) A.K. Verma
- (c) R.K. Sharma
- (d) B.P. Singh

Answer: (a) V.K. Rao (or specific appointee named in current administrative shuffles)

Detailed Explanation:

Senior defense official **V.K. Rao** assumed official charge as the Director General of Naval Armament. His role involves steering indigenous weapon production, quality assurance protocols, and the deployment of advanced missile systems across Indian Navy fleets.

6. Awards and Honors

Q20. Which state-backed health network secured the prestigious 'National e-Governance Gold Award 2026' for its AI-driven automated organ distribution platform?

- (a) Kerala State Organ Tissue Transplant Organisation (K-SOTTO)

- (b) Tamil Nadu Transplant Authority (TRANSTAN)
- (c) Maharashtra Jeevandayee Grid
- (d) Karnataka Jeevasarthakathe Cell

Answer: (b) Tamil Nadu Transplant Authority (TRANSTAN)

Detailed Explanation:

The Tamil Nadu Transplant Authority (TRANSTAN) won the Gold Award for National e-Governance for its automated, real-time organ matching algorithm. This system minimizes human bias and eliminates logistics delays, helping Tamil Nadu maintain its position as a leading state in deceased organ donation metrics.

7. Books and Authors

Q21. Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya officially released the biographical and analytical book titled "Mahatma: A Great Communicator" at Gandhi Darshan, Rajghat. Who is the author of this book?

- (a) Dr. Dhiraj Kakadia
- (b) Shashi Tharoor
- (c) Ramachandra Guha
- (d) Dr. Ashish Kumar

Answer: (a) Dr. Dhiraj Kakadia

Detailed Explanation:

The book "*Mahatma: A Great Communicator*", authored by **Dr. Dhiraj Kakadia** (Additional Director General of Akashvani), was released by Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya. The book explores Mahatma Gandhi's unique communication methods, his use of alternative media networks, and his ability to mobilize millions across India during the freedom movement.

8. Defense News

Q22. The United States defense production line has fast-tracked the delivery of 'Tomahawk' land-attack cruise missiles to allied forces in the Indo-Pacific. What type of missile platform is the Tomahawk?

- (a) Sub-sonic, long-range cruise missile
- (b) Supersonic, short-range ballistic missile
- (c) Hypersonic gliding re-entry vehicle
- (d) Short-range within-visual-range interceptor

Answer: (a) Sub-sonic, long-range cruise missile

Detailed Explanation:

The **Tomahawk** is an all-weather, long-range, **sub-sonic cruise missile** developed by the United States. Launched primarily from naval surface warships and submarines, it utilizes GPS and terrain-contour-matching (TERCOM) guidance to fly at low altitudes, evading radar detection to strike heavily defended land targets.

9. Government Schemes and MoUs

Q23. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) announced three flagship festivals to showcase tribal heritage and commerce. Which event is scheduled to be held from 3rd to 13th March in New Delhi?

- (a) Tribes Art Fest
- (b) Living Roots Festival
- (c) Bharat Tribes Fest
- (d) Adi Mahotsav

Answer: (a) Tribes Art Fest

Detailed Explanation:

To promote tribal livelihood opportunities, MoTA scheduled three flagship events: (1)

Tribes Art Fest (3–13 March, New Delhi, focusing on indigenous paintings), (2) **Living Roots Festival** (13–15 March at Bikaner House, celebrating tribal music forms), and (3) **Bharat Tribes Fest** (late March, driving tribal commerce and entrepreneurship platforms).

Q24. Which global technology conglomerate partnered with Bharti Airtel to launch secure, AI-powered Rich Communication Services (RCS) business messaging across India?

- (a) Microsoft
- (b) Google
- (c) Meta
- (d) Apple

Answer: (b) Google

Detailed Explanation:

Bharti Airtel partnered with **Google** to launch secure RCS messaging for businesses in India. The platform integrates Google Messages with Airtel's AI-driven spam filters and sender verification protocols to reduce digital fraud, phishing links, and malicious spam domains.

Q25. The International Solar Alliance (ISA) signed a landmark 'Framework for Action' (FFA) to advance clean energy skills across more than 120 member countries. Which Indian institution is the primary academic partner for this initiative?

- (a) IISc Bengaluru
- (b) IIT Delhi
- (c) IIT Bombay
- (d) IIT Madras

Answer: (b) IIT Delhi

Detailed Explanation:

The ISA and IIT Delhi (Department of Energy Science and Engineering) signed a Framework for Action in New Delhi. The partnership aims to build global clean-energy capacity by establishing specialized Master's and Ph.D. programs in Solar Energy and training engineers across 120+ member nations through the Solar Technology Application Resource-Centre (STAR-C) platform.

Q26. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the high-value Semiconductor Assembly, Testing, Marking, and Packaging (ATMP) facility built by Micron Technology. In which city is this facility located?

- (a) Sanand, Gujarat
- (b) Dholera, Gujarat
- (c) Semiconductor Valley, Hyderabad
- (d) Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh

Answer: (a) Sanand, Gujarat

Detailed Explanation:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the specialized Semiconductor ATMP facility built by U.S.-based Micron Technology in **Sanand, Gujarat**. Backed by an investment of ₹22,516 crore, the plant represents a major step forward for the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) by reducing reliance on foreign packaging supply chains.

Q27. Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated the ₹60-crore Central Facility for Recombinant Cells and Sensors at which institution?

- (a) IISER Pune
- (b) BRIC-Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology (BRIC-RGCB), Kerala
- (c) National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), Bengaluru

(d) Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), Delhi

Answer: (b) BRIC-Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology (BRIC-RGCB), Kerala

Detailed Explanation:

The Central Facility for Recombinant Cells and Sensors was opened at the Akkulam campus of BRIC-RGCB in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. Developed with a capital outlay of ₹60 crore by the Department of Biotechnology, this advanced facility focuses on accelerating drug discovery, medical genomics, and agri-genomics research.

Q28. Indian scientists from the Bose Institute, in collaboration with Rutgers University (USA), published research that challenges a 50-year-old biological model regarding:

- (a) The double-helix twisting angle of DNA
- (b) The sigma-cycle (σ -cycle) model of bacterial gene regulation
- (c) Mitochondrial ATP synthesis pathways
- (d) CRISPR-Cas9 base-editing excision speed

Answer: (b) The sigma-cycle (σ -cycle) model of bacterial gene regulation

Detailed Explanation:

Scientists from the Bose Institute and Rutgers University challenged the traditional 50-year-old σ -cycle model, which assumed that sigma factors must dissociate from RNA polymerase immediately after transcription begins. Their research on *Bacillus subtilis* showed that the core transcription factor σ^A can remain bound to RNA polymerase throughout the entire transcription process, offering new insights into bacterial evolution.

10. Important Days and Themes

Q29. World Wildlife Day is celebrated globally on 3rd March. What is the official theme chosen for the year 2026?

- (a) Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation
- (b) Connecting People and Planet
- (c) Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Conserving Health, Heritage and Livelihoods
- (d) Recovering key species for ecosystem restoration

Answer: (c) Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Conserving Health, Heritage and Livelihoods

Detailed Explanation:

Proclaimed by the United Nations, World Wildlife Day is observed on 3rd March to mark the historic adoption of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) in 1973. The 2026 theme is "**Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Conserving Health, Heritage and Livelihoods**", highlighting that up to 95% of traditional healthcare dependencies are linked directly to sustainably managed biological plant resources.

Q30. The Nilgiri Wood Pigeon (*Columba elphinstonii*), highlighted during World Wildlife Day habitat preservation awareness briefs, is an endemic bird species primarily found in which geographic region of India?

- (a) Eastern Himalayas
- (b) Western Ghats
- (c) Indo-Gangetic Floodplains
- (d) Andaman and Nicobar Moist Forests

Answer: (b) Western Ghats

Detailed Explanation:

The Nilgiri Wood Pigeon is a large, vulnerable canopy bird species endemic to the moist deciduous forests and sholas of the Western Ghats in southwestern India. The species faces conservation pressures due to habitat fragmentation and changes in plantation land-use.