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NATIONAL NEWS

India's AYUSH System Gains Global Boost Through Deals With Oman and New Zealand



This is a significant milestone for India's soft power and the global healthcare landscape. The formal inclusion of **AYUSH** (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) in bilateral trade agreements marks a transition from "cultural interest" to "economic and regulatory recognition."

Here is a breakdown of why these specific agreements with **Oman** and **New Zealand** are so impactful:

1. Regulatory Breakthroughs

Traditionally, herbal and traditional medicines face strict regulatory hurdles regarding safety standards and "scientific" labeling. By including **dedicated annexures** in trade deals:

- **Standards Alignment:** It simplifies the process for Indian practitioners and product manufacturers to meet the local health standards of the partner country.

- Ease of Export:** It reduces non-tariff barriers, making it easier for Indian wellness brands to enter these markets.

2. Strategic Market Access

- Oman (Middle East):** This serves as a gateway to the Gulf region, where there is already a high familiarity with Unani and Ayurvedic practices due to historical trade routes.
- New Zealand (Oceania):** Recognition here is a testament to the growing demand for "clean label" and holistic wellness products in Western-aligned economies that typically have very high regulatory benchmarks.

3. Economic Impact

The herbal and wellness sector is no longer just a niche market.

- Export Growth:** These agreements capitalize on the post-pandemic global shift toward preventive healthcare.
- Service Exports:** Beyond just products (like turmeric or ashwagandha), this opens doors for **health tourism** and the movement of certified AYUSH professionals across borders.

Key Takeaways for the Future

Feature	Impact
Formal Recognition	Legitimizes AYUSH alongside conventional medicine.
Bilateral Cooperation	Encourages joint research and clinical trials between nations.

Feature	Impact
Herbal Value Chain	Boosts Indian farmers and MSMEs involved in medicinal plant cultivation.

MCQ 1: Recent Bilateral Agreements

India has recently signed bilateral trade agreements that formally recognize the **AYUSH** system with which of the following pairs of countries?

- A) USA and United Kingdom
- B) Oman and New Zealand
- C) Australia and Japan
- D) Brazil and South Africa

MCQ 2: Scope of the Agreements

According to the trade agreements, what specific areas are included in the scope of cooperation for traditional medicine?

- A) Only the training of allopathic doctors
- B) Modern surgical techniques and pharmaceuticals
- C) Herbal products and wellness services
- D) Agricultural exports unrelated to health

MCQ 3: Structural Features of the Trade Deals

How is the recognition of health-related services specifically addressed within these bilateral trade agreements?

- A) Through verbal commitments only

- B) Via dedicated annexures on health-related services
- C) By excluding them from formal documentation
- D) Through private sector contracts only

MCQ 4: Market Trends

The inclusion of AYUSH in international trade agreements is a response to which of the following global trends?

- A) A decline in interest regarding traditional medicine
- B) Decreasing export growth for Indian herbal products
- C) Growing international demand for Indian herbal and wellness products
- D) A global shift away from wellness services

The approval of the **Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS)** rates for the Rabi 2025-26 season is a critical move to maintain agricultural stability in India. By fixing subsidies per kilogram of nutrient, the government aims to decouple farmer costs from the volatility of international fertilizer prices.

Financial and Operational Scale

The Union Cabinet has set a tentative budgetary requirement of **₹37,952.29 crore** for this season. This is an increase of approximately **₹736 crore** over the Kharif 2025 allocation, reflecting the government's commitment to absorbing higher global input costs rather than passing them on to farmers.

Approved NBS Rates (Rabi 2025-26)

The subsidy is calculated based on the specific nutrient content in each fertilizer bag:

Nutrient	Subsidy Rate (per kg)
Nitrogen (N)	₹43.02
Phosphorus (P)	₹47.96
Potassium (K)	₹2.38
Sulphur (S)	₹2.87

Significant Changes and Inclusions

- **DAP Subsidy Boost:** The subsidy for **Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP)** has been significantly increased to **₹29,805 per metric tonne**, up from ₹21,911 in the previous Rabi season.
- **Expansion of Grades:** The scheme now covers **28 grades** of P&K fertilizers. Recent

NATIONAL NEWS

Government of India Approves Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) Rates for Rabi 2025-26



additions include specialized fortified grades like NPK (11:30:14) with Magnesium, Zinc, Boron, and Sulphur.

- Ammonium Sulphate:** For the first time, Ammonium Sulphate (both domestic and imported) has been formally included under the NBS ambit for this season.
- Fortification Incentives:** To encourage better soil health, additional incentives are provided for fortified fertilizers:
 - Boron-coated:** ₹300 per metric tonne.
 - Zinc-coated:** ₹500 per metric tonne.

Long-term Impact on Productivity

The NBS scheme, which began in 2010, has moved the needle on Indian agricultural efficiency. Domestic production of P&K fertilizers has grown by over 50% since 2014, reaching 168.55 LMT by late 2025. This has contributed to a rise in foodgrain productivity from 1,930 kg/ha in 2010–11 to 2,578 kg/ha in 2024–25.

Note on Compliance: Fertilizer companies are required to display the MRP and the applicable subsidy clearly on every bag. Profit margins are also capped (8% for importers, 10% for manufacturers) to ensure the subsidy reaches the end-user.

Practice Questions

1. What is the effective period for the NBS rates approved for the Rabi 2025–26 season? A) 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025

B) 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2025

C) 1 October 2025 to 31 March 2026

D) 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026

2. Under the Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) scheme, the government provides a fixed per-kilogram subsidy on which of the following nutrients? A) Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium, and Sulphur

B) Nitrogen, Zinc, Iron, and Potassium

C) Urea, Phosphorus, Boron, and Sulphur

D) Ammonia, Phosphate, Potash, and Magnesium

3. Which type of fertilizers are specifically covered under the approved NBS rates for Rabi 2025–26? A) Only Nitrogenous fertilizers (Urea)

B) Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers

C) Organic and Bio-fertilizers only

D) Only Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP)

4. How is the subsidy amount determined for different fertilizers under the NBS policy? A) Based on the brand name and manufacturer

B) Based on the retail market price set by companies

C) Based on the nutrient composition of the fertilizer

D) Based on the total weight of the fertilizer bag

5. How frequently are the NBS subsidy rates typically revised by the government? A) Every five years

B) Monthly based on stock availability

C) Annually or biannually

D) Only when a new government is elected

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz to Visit India on January 12-13



German Chancellor **Friedrich Merz** is scheduled to make his first official visit to India on **January 12 and 13, 2026**. This high-stakes diplomatic mission follows an invitation from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and marks a critical point in the **India-Germany Strategic Partnership**, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2025.

The visit is strategically timed, occurring just weeks before top EU leadership arrives in New Delhi for the India-EU Summit and amid a shifting global trade landscape.

Itinerary and Key Engagements

- Ahmedabad (Jan 12):** Prime Minister Modi will receive Chancellor Merz in Ahmedabad. The leaders are expected to hold comprehensive talks at **Mahatma Mandir** and visit **GIFT City**. Cultural engagements are also on the agenda, including paying respects at **Sabarmati Ashram** and participating in the **International Kite Festival**.

- Bengaluru (Jan 13):** The Chancellor will travel to Bengaluru, India's tech hub, to engage with business leaders and explore deeper cooperation in innovation and digital technologies.

Major Focus Areas

The discussions will center on the framework of the **Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC)**, focusing on several strategic pillars:

Pillar	Key Objectives for the 2026 Visit
Defence & Security	Buzz is growing around a landmark \$8 billion submarine deal involving the manufacture of advanced submarines with Air-Independent Propulsion (AIP) technology through a partnership between Germany's Thyssenkrupp and India's Mazagon Dock.
Trade & Economy	Strengthening bilateral trade (which reached record highs of ~\$33.4 billion in 2024) and pushing for progress on the India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) .
Green Partnership	Advancing the Green and Sustainable Development Partnership (GSDP) , focusing on the Indo-German Green Hydrogen Roadmap and renewable energy technology transfers.
Skilled Mobility	Enhancing pathways for Indian professionals and students to

Pillar	Key Objectives for the 2026 Visit
	work and study in Germany, building on the record 35,000+ Indian students currently in the country.

B) To celebrate the anniversary of independence
C) To deepen cooperation in trade, technology, and climate action

D) To discuss cultural exchange programs only

Section 2: Bilateral Relations

3. Germany is considered one of India's most important partners in Europe, specifically in which sectors?

- A) Manufacturing and renewable energy
- B) Agriculture and textiles
- C) Tourism and entertainment
- D) Mining and fisheries

4. What mechanism has historically helped India and Germany expand their cooperation in innovation and skill development?

- A) Annual sports tournaments
- B) Regular intergovernmental consultations
- C) Direct public voting
- D) Social media campaign

Section 3: Strategic Partnership

5. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a key area for deeper cooperation during this visit?

- A) Global governance
- B) Climate action
- C) Space exploration

Why This Visit Matters Now

1. **Economic Diversification:** Against a backdrop of shifting global tariffs, India is looking to solidify Germany as its primary gateway to the European market.
2. **Technological Synergy:** Germany's "Industry 4.0" expertise is viewed as a vital match for India's "Make in India" manufacturing ambitions.
3. **Geopolitical Stability:** The leaders are expected to exchange views on regional and global challenges, including the Russia-Ukraine conflict and supply chain resilience.

Section 1: Visit Details & Objectives

1. On which dates is German Chancellor Friedrich Merz scheduled to visit India?

- A) January 1–2, 2026
- B) January 12–13, 2026
- C) February 12–13, 2026
- D) December 12–13, 2025

2. What is the primary significance of this high-level visit?

- A) To sign a new peace treaty

D) Technology

6. How is the partnership between India and Germany described in the text?

- A) A newly formed alliance
- B) A long-standing strategic partnership
- C) A strictly commercial relationship
- D) A regional trade agreement

APPOINTMENTS

Ramesh Kumar Juneja Takes Charge as Chairman of Council for Leather Exports



The appointment of **Ramesh Kumar Juneja** as the Chairman of the **Council for Leather Exports (CLE)** on January 6, 2026, marks a strategic leadership transition for one of India's oldest and most employment-intensive export sectors.

Juneja, who previously served as the Vice-Chairman, takes over from **R.K. Jalan** at a time when the industry is navigating a "China Plus One" global sourcing shift and tightening environmental regulations in Europe.

Who is Ramesh Kumar Juneja?

A veteran with over **40 years of experience**, Juneja is a well-known figure in the leather and chemicals industry:

- **Institutional Depth:** He has been a board member of the CLE for over 15 years and has served as the Regional Chairman (Eastern Region) since 2014.
- **Industrialist:** He is the founder of the **JC Group**, a major player in finished leather and footwear, and heads **Indotan Chemicals**.
- **International Liaison:** He also serves as the Vice-Chairman of the **Indo-Italian Chamber of Commerce**, which is vital given Italy's status as a global benchmark for leather design and technology.

Strategic Priorities for 2026

The CLE under Juneja's leadership is expected to focus on several high-stakes targets:

- **Ambitious Export Targets:** The council is aiming for **\$7 billion** in exports for the 2025-26 fiscal year, with a long-term vision to reach **\$13.7 billion by 2030**.
- **Market Diversification:** While the EU (55%) and US (22%) remain the primary markets, there is a push to expand into the UK (following the FTA), Australia, and Japan.
- **Non-Leather Expansion:** A major focus will be on **non-leather footwear** (sneakers, synthetic materials), which is the fastest-growing segment globally.
- **Sustainability & Compliance:** Implementing the **Indian Footwear and Leather Development Programme (IFLDP)** to

modernize infrastructure, specifically focusing on zero liquid discharge and sustainable tanning processes to meet strict EU "Green Deal" norms.

D) Providing loans to small-scale leather artisans

3. Under which government ministry is the Council for Leather Exports (CLE) sponsored?

A) Ministry of Finance

B) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

C) Ministry of Commerce and Industry

D) Ministry of External Affairs

4. What specific background does Ramesh Kumar Juneja bring to his new role as Chairman?

A) Academic research in synthetic materials

B) Extensive industry experience and institutional involvement

C) A background in international civil law

D) Expertise in domestic retail logistics only

5. The Council for Leather Exports (CLE) is officially classified as a(n):

A) Public Sector Undertaking (PSU)

B) Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)

C) Export Promotion Council

D) Statutory Regulatory Authority

Industry Snapshot (Projected 2025-26)

Metric	Status / Target
Current Export Value	~\$5.5 - \$5.7 Billion
Growth Rate (FY25)	~25% Year-on-Year
Global Market Share	~2.3% (Aiming for top 5 global exporters)
Employment	Supports ~4.4 million people (mostly women/weaker sections)

1. Who has recently been appointed as the Chairman of the Council for Leather Exports (CLE)?

A) R.K. Singh

B) Ramesh Kumar Juneja

C) Sanjay Kumar Lele

D) Nirmala Sitharaman

2. The Council for Leather Exports (CLE) is an apex body primarily responsible for:

A) Regulating domestic leather prices

B) Manufacturing high-end leather luxury goods

C) Promoting leather exports from India

BANKING/ECONOMY

SEBI Proposes 30-Day Lag on Market Price Data for Investor Education



In a significant move to streamline the "Finfluencer" and investor education landscape, the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** released a consultation paper on **January 6, 2026**, proposing a uniform **30-day time lag** for the sharing and usage of stock price data.

This proposal aims to resolve existing regulatory contradictions and curb the practice of providing "disguised investment advice" under the banner of education.

The Problem: Conflicting Timelines

Previously, educators and market participants were navigating two different sets of rules that created a "regulatory paradox":

- **May 2024 Circular:** Permitted stock exchanges to share data for educational purposes with a **1-day lag**.
- **January 2025 Circular:** Mandated that entities solely engaged in education must use data that is at least **3 months old**.

The gap between "sharing" (1 day) and "usage" (90 days) led to confusion and allowed some unregistered "educators" to use near-real-time data to give stock tips, effectively acting as unregistered investment advisors.

The Proposed Solution: The 30-Day Rule

SEBI's new proposal seeks a "middle ground" to ensure content remains educational without being actionable for immediate trading.

Feature	Current Fragmented Framework	Proposed Uniform Framework
Data Sharing (by Exchanges)	1-Day Lag	30-Day Lag
Data Usage (by Educators)	3-Month Lag	30-Day Lag
Primary Goal	Technical delay & content restriction	Standardization & consistency

Strategic Rationale

1. **Preventing "Shadow" Advisories:** Using data with a 1-day or 3-month lag was either too risky (easily used for tips) or too stale (irrelevant for learning). A 30-day window ensures that any "patterns" being taught cannot be used to execute immediate trades in the current market cycle.
2. **Maintaining Relevance:** Stakeholders argued that a 3-month lag made it impossible to teach investors about recent market events (like a recent Budget or a global economic shift), rendering the education less effective.
3. **Tackling "Pump and Dump" Schemes:** By removing the "recency bias," SEBI aims to reduce the ability of influencers to use their

audience as counter-parties for their own trades.

Context: The "Avadhut Sathe" Case

The timing of this proposal is closely linked to SEBI's crackdown on high-profile educators. In **December 2025**, SEBI took action against the **Avadhut Sathe Trading Academy** for allegedly earning over ₹546 crore through illegal investment advisory services disguised as training. Cases like this have accelerated the need for a clear, enforceable boundary between *teaching* how to trade and *telling* people what to trade.

MCQs on SEBI's Price Data Proposal

1. What is the uniform time lag proposed by SEBI for sharing and using price data in investor education programs?

- A) 15 days
- B) 30 days
- C) 45 days
- D) 60 days

2. What is the primary objective behind SEBI's proposal to introduce a time lag for market data in educational content?

- A) To increase the cost of data for educational institutions
- B) To promote real-time trading among students
- C) To balance data security with the relevance of educational material
- D) To phase out investor awareness programs

3. According to the proposal, why is using "live" or "near real-time" data restricted for educational purposes?

- A) Because it makes the learning process too difficult for beginners
- B) Because it blurs the line between education and regulated investment advisory/research
- C) Because it reduces the profit margins of stock exchanges
- D) Because technical infrastructure cannot support high-speed data for schools

4. The new 30-day proposal seeks to resolve inconsistencies between which two previous norms?

- A) A 1-day lag for sharing and a 3-month lag for usage
- B) A 7-day lag for sharing and a 1-month lag for usage
- C) A real-time sharing norm and a 1-year usage norm
- D) A 15-day lag for sharing and a 6-month lag for usage

5. Which of the following is a key concern SEBI aims to address with this 30-day uniform lag?

- A) To ensure investors only buy government bonds
- B) To prevent the misuse of sensitive data by gaming platforms or for giving "stock tips"
- C) To mandate that all educators become registered brokers
- D) To stop the publication of annual financial reports

BANKING/ECONOMY

Delhi Government Brings Finances Under RBI Framework with Historic MoU



This historic agreement, signed on **January 5, 2026**, represents a paradigm shift in the National Capital's fiscal architecture. By formalizing the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** as its official banker and debt manager, Delhi has moved away from ad-hoc financial arrangements toward a structured, professional framework used by most Indian states.

1. Significant Cost Savings

The most immediate impact is the drastic reduction in borrowing costs.

- Old System:** Delhi often relied on high-cost loans from alternative sources with interest rates as high as **12-13%**.
- New System:** Under the RBI's umbrella, Delhi can now issue **State Development Loans (SDLs)**. These are high-rated securities that allow the government to borrow at competitive market rates, currently around **7%**.

2. Professional Cash Management

The MoU introduces a "smart" approach to the city's daily liquidity:

- Automatic Investment:** Previously, surplus cash often sat idle in accounts. Now, any excess funds are automatically invested by the RBI on a daily basis, generating interest income for the state.
- Liquidity Buffers:** Delhi gains access to **Ways and Means Advances (WMA)** and **Special Drawing Facilities (SDF)**. These are low-cost "overdraft" facilities that help the government bridge temporary gaps between its spending and tax collections without a financial crisis.

3. Focus on Capital Assets

Chief Minister **Rekha Gupta** has explicitly stated that the funds raised through these new market borrowings will be restricted to **Capital Expenditure (Capex)**.

Priority Sector	Targeted Projects
Environment	Rejuvenation of the Yamuna River and advanced drainage systems.
Utilities	Modernizing drinking water supply and health infrastructure.
Mobility	Construction of new roads, flyovers, and expanding public transport.

Why the Change Happened Now

The agreement follows a January 2, 2026, notification by the Central Government which officially separated Delhi's public accounts from the Government of India's accounts. This separation was the legal prerequisite for Delhi to operate an independent banking and borrowing structure.

Institutional Milestone: With this move, Delhi is now at par with other states (except Sikkim, which has a unique arrangement) in terms of financial integration with the central bank.

Category 1: General Framework & Governance

1. What is the primary objective of the MoU signed between the Delhi Government and the RBI?

- A) To privatize Delhi's public sector undertakings.
- B) To align Delhi's finances with nationally accepted fiscal practices.
- C) To allow the RBI to collect local taxes on behalf of the government.
- D) To eliminate the need for a state budget.

2. Which of the following functions will the RBI now perform for the Delhi Government?

- A) Legislative oversight and auditing.
- B) Banking operations, cash management, and debt management.
- C) Setting GST rates for local businesses.
- D) Managing the Delhi Police payroll.

Category 2: Debt & Liquidity Mechanisms

3. Under the new agreement, how will the Delhi Government primarily raise long-term funds from the market?

- A) Through International Monetary Fund (IMF) grants.
- B) By issuing State Development Loans (SDLs).
- C) By selling equity in the Delhi Metro.
- D) Through direct loans from private commercial banks only.

4. What happens to surplus cash in the Delhi Government's account under the new RBI framework?

- A) It is transferred to the Union Government's general fund.
- B) It remains idle in a current account.
- C) It is automatically invested to generate returns.
- D) It is used to pay off national external debt.

5. "Ways and Means Advances" (WMA), which Delhi can now access, are primarily used for:

- A) Funding long-term infrastructure projects like highways.
- B) Bridging temporary mismatches between receipts and payments.
- C) Providing subsidies to the energy sector.
- D) Paying for international trade imports.

Category 3: Impact Analysis

6. Which of the following is a direct benefit of Delhi joining the RBI's debt management framework?

- A) Complete immunity from fiscal deficits.
- B) Access to low-cost liquidity facilities and structured borrowing.
- C) The ability to print local currency for the National Capital Territory.
- D) Removal of the need for central government approval for all expenditures.

STATE NEWS

Thamirabarani River Pollution Case



The appointment of **Rajendra Singh**, the "Waterman of India," as a Court Commissioner by the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court is a landmark step in the effort to save the **Thamirabarani**, Tamil Nadu's only perennial river.

The order, passed on **January 3, 2026**, by a division bench comprising **Justices G.R. Swaminathan and B. Pugalendhi**, stems from a contempt petition highlighting the government's failure to curb sewage and industrial pollution despite previous court mandates.

1. The Commissioner's Mandate

Rajendra Singh, a Ramon Magsaysay and Stockholm Water Prize recipient, has been tasked with a "clinical" assessment of the river.

- **Scope of Study:** Conduct field inspections from the river's origin at **Papanasam** to its estuary at **Punnaikayal**.
- **Objective:** Identify specific "pollution points"—locations where untreated municipal sewage and industrial waste are directly discharged.
- **Remedial Roadmap:** Submit a feasible, community-led rejuvenation plan to the court within **30 days**.

2. Initial Findings (January 2026)

During his preliminary field visits in the first week of January, Singh used stark imagery to describe the river's state:

- **"In the ICU":** He noted that the river is effectively "fighting for life" due to severe stagnation and contamination.
- **Government Failure:** He observed that civic bodies themselves are the primary polluters, dumping waste along the banks and discharging wastewater directly into the flow.
- **Ecological Disconnect:** He criticized the construction of check-dams and pumping sets that do not account for the river's ecological health, leading to heavy siltation at points like the **Srivaikuntam anicut**.

3. Comparison: Thamirabarani vs. Ganga

One of Singh's most encouraging observations was that the Thamirabarani is "smaller and simpler" to restore than the Ganga. Having successfully revived 23 rivers in Rajasthan (such as the Arvari and Ruparel), he believes the Thamirabarani can be restored if the state shifts from "temporary projects" to a permanent, dedicated management team.

Key Pollutants Identified

Problem Area	Observed Impact
Sewage Discharge	Over 17 locations in Tirunelveli city alone where gutters mix with river water.
BOD Levels	Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) at the tail end (Punnaikayal) has been recorded at 6 times the permissible limit.
Physical Obstructions	Invasive growth and unauthorized check-dams causing water stagnation.

The "Waterman's" Solution: Singh advocates for a "River Parliament" model—eliciting public participation where local communities take ownership of the river's health, rather than relying solely on changing government officials.

Rajendra Singh: Waterman of India

This video highlights the lifelong commitment of Rajendra Singh to water conservation and explains the traditional methods he used to revive dead rivers in Rajasthan, which he now plans to apply to the Thamirabarani.

Thamirabarani River Conservation Quiz

- Who was appointed as the Commissioner by the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court in January 2026 to study pollution in the Thamirabarani River?
 - M.S. Swaminathan
 - Rajendra Singh
 - Medha Patkar
 - Sunita Narain
- Rajendra Singh is widely recognized by which of the following titles?
 - Forest Man of India
 - Ice Man of India
 - Waterman of India
 - Mountain Man of India
- Which prestigious international award has been conferred upon Rajendra Singh?
 - Nobel Peace Prize
 - Ramon Magsaysay Award
 - Pulitzer Prize
 - Abel Prize
- What is the primary objective of the study commissioned by the Madras High Court regarding the Thamirabarani River?
 - To build new hydroelectric dams
 - To study the river's pollution levels and condition
 - To redirect the river's flow for irrigation
 - To conduct a census of aquatic wildlife



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Detailed Analysis of Recent Current Affairs: Multiple Choice Format

Q.1. Where did Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurate development projects of the Andaman and Nicobar Administration?

- A. Port Blair
- B. Sri Vijayapuram
- C. Car Nicobar
- D. Diglipur

1. B

Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for various development projects of the Government of Andaman and Nicobar Islands in Sri Vijayapuram. Present on the occasion were Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Nityanand Rai, Shri Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Administrator of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Admiral (Retd) Shri DK Joshi, and Union Home Secretary, Shri Govind Mohan, among others. Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah also inaugurated an exhibition on three new laws in Sri Vijayapuram.

Q.2. Who inaugurated the 9th Siddha Day celebrations at Kalaivanar Arangam in Chennai?

- A. Prime Minister of India
- B. Union Health Minister
- C. Vice President of India
- D. Governor of Tamil Nadu

2. C

The 9th Siddha Day celebrations were inaugurated by the Vice President of India, Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan, at the Kalaivanar Arangam in Chennai. Several dignitaries were present, including the Minister of State for AYUSH, Shri Prataprao Jadhav, and the Health Minister of Tamil Nadu, Shri Ma. Subramanian.

Q.3. Through what medium will the Prime Minister inaugurate the 72nd National Volleyball Tournament?

- A. Physical presence
- B. Radio broadcast
- C. Video conferencing
- D. Recorded message

3. C

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 72nd National Volleyball Tournament in Varanasi via video conferencing. Addressing players and officials, he highlighted how volleyball's values of teamwork, coordination, and shared responsibility reflect India's development journey. The event brought together teams from across the country and demonstrated the government's emphasis on sports and youth development.

Q.4. Who will inaugurate the Smart Green Agriculture Farm and RAS facility?

- A. Dharmendra Pradhan
- B. Rajiv Ranjan Singh
- C. Giriraj Singh
- D. Ashwini Vaishnav

4. B



Smart Green Aquaculture Farm and RAS facility inaugurated by Union Minister Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh (Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying) in Ranga Reddy district of Telangana, which is India's first commercial scale Tropical Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS) based farm where cold water species like Rainbow Trout are being cultivated.

Q.5. In which city will the Rajasthan Regional AI Impact Conference 2026 be held?

- A. Udaipur
- B. Jodhpur
- C. Jaipur
- D. Ajmer
- 5. C

Rajasthan will host the Regional AI Impact Summit 2026 in Jaipur. Electronics and Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnav and State Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Jitin Prasada will participate. It is being organized in collaboration with Rajasthan Digifest and the TiE Global Summit. This event is part of a series of events leading up to the India AI Impact Summit 2026 next month.

Q.6. Which institute will host the IndiaAI Human Capital Working Group meeting?

- A. IIT Delhi
- B. IIT Bombay
- C. IIT Guwahati
- D. IISc Bengaluru
- 6. C

India AI, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, in collaboration with the Government of Assam and IIT Guwahati, will convene a meeting of the Human Capital Working Group at the IIT Guwahati campus. The Working Group will be chaired by Prof. T.G. Sitharam, Chairman of the Human Capital Working Group and former Chairman of AICTE, Government of India. The two-day meeting will bring together senior policymakers, academics, industry experts, and practitioners to discuss the future of education, skill development, and workforce preparation in the age of Artificial Intelligence.

Q.7. Which PSU signed an agreement with the Gujarat Cancer and Research Institute for radiotherapy advancement?

- A. ONGC
- B. NTPC Limited
- C. BHEL
- D. SAIL
- 7. B

NTPC Limited - Western Region-I, headquartered in Mumbai, has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Gujarat Cancer and Research Institute (GCRI) to upgrade radiotherapy services. This initiative is part of NTPC's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Under this project, NTPC has sanctioned ₹23.16 crore to upgrade radiotherapy services at GCRI's Siddhpur Satellite Center in Ahmedabad.

Q.8. Under which Act did ICICI Bank launch the Capital Gains Account Scheme?

- A. Banking Regulation Act

B. RBI Act

C. Income Tax Act, 1961

D. Companies Act

8. C

ICICI Bank Limited has launched the Capital Gains Account Scheme (CGAS), 1988 under the Income Tax (IT) Act, 1961, which will be effective from January 2026. It aims to help taxpayers accumulate uninvested long-term capital gains and avail tax exemption.

Q.9. Which institution records UPI transactions in December 2025?

A. RBI

B. Ministry of Finance

C. NPCI

D. SEBI

9. C

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), which operates the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), reported record UPI transactions in December 2025, with over 21.6 billion transactions valued at approximately ₹27.97 lakh crore. This reflects the significant growth and adoption of digital payments in India.

Q.10. Which country has declared 100% duty-free on Indian exports from January 2026?

A. Canada

B. United Kingdom

C. Australia

D. New Zealand

10. C

From January 2026, every Indian product entering Australia will be tariff-free. No exemptions, no fine print. Three years after the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) came into effect, Australia has completely eliminated tariffs on Indian exports—giving Indian businesses unrestricted access to its nearly \$2-trillion economy. In a world where trade barriers are rising, this is a rare, yet significant success story.

Q.11. From which country did the Indian Oil Corporation purchase crude oil for the first time?

A. Brazil

B. Colombia

C. Venezuela

D. Mexico

11. B

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) recently imported crude oil from Colombia for the first time. This is part of its strategy to reduce its dependence on Russia and diversify its supply sources. Under this major deal, IOC purchased 2 million barrels of Colombian 'Castilla' crude, with delivery scheduled for late February 2026.

Q.12. Who was appointed Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court?

A. Justice Sanjeev Khanna

B. Justice Mahesh S. Sonak

C. Justice D. Y. Chandrachud

D. Justice Vikram Nath

12. B

The central government has approved the appointment of Justice Mahesh Sharadchandra Sonak as the Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court. According to a notification issued by the Union Ministry of Law and Justice, President Draupadi Murmu has approved Justice Sonak's appointment. Justice Sonak currently serves as a judge of the Bombay High Court.

Q.13. Which IPS officer was given the additional charge of Director General of the NIA?

A. Ajay Kumar

B. Rakesh Agarwal

C. Alok Verma

D. S. K. Mishra

13. B

In a significant administrative development related to internal security, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has given senior IPS officer Rakesh Agarwal the additional charge of Director General of the National Investigation Agency (NIA). The move is aimed at ensuring institutional stability and continuity at the headquarters of India's largest counter-terrorism agency.

Q.14. In which district was the 'Radio Sangam' community radio station launched?

A. Kupwara

B. Poonch

C. Rajouri

D. Baramulla

14. C

The first community radio station has been set up along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, strengthening access to information in border areas. He said the station, called "Radio Sangam," was set up by the Indian Army in collaboration with the civil administration and locals in Keri village, about a kilometer from the Line of Control (LoC).

Q.15. Which organization has developed a portable desalination device called Sea Water Desalination System (SWaDeS)?

A. Indian Space Research Organization

B. Defense Research and Development Organization

C. Council of Scientific and Industrial Research

D. National Institute of Ocean Technology

15. B

Recently, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) developed a portable desalination device called the Sea Water Desalination System (SWaDeS). It is designed to meet the drinking water needs of soldiers in remote and field locations. The system can be manually or motor-powered and was developed by the Defence Laboratory in Jodhpur for the Tri-Command Services. The manual version can be carried by one person and can support 10-12 people in an emergency. It is suitable for naval operations, coastal areas, and inland saline areas like Pangong Tso in Ladakh.

FACTS ABOUT BHARATHA

It is fascinating that you brought up the Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC)! It wasn't just a "Bronze Age" society; it was arguably the most advanced urban culture of the ancient world, predating many modern concepts we use today.

While you've noted its dates (3300 BCE – 1300 BCE), here are some of the most mind-blowing facts about Bharat's earliest urban ancestors:

Masters of Urban Planning

Long before New York or London, the Harappans were building cities on a **grid system**.

- **Precision Engineering:** Their streets were laid out in perfect North-South and East-West directions.
- **The World's First Sanitation:** Almost every house had a private bathroom and a toilet connected to a covered sewer system. They even had "manholes" for cleaning!
- **Standardized Bricks:** Whether in Gujarat or Punjab, every brick used across the entire civilization followed a strict **1:2:4 ratio**.

Ancient "High-Tech" Inventions

The people of Bharat were pioneers in science and technology:

- **Dentistry:** Archaeologists found evidence in Mehrgarh of bow drills being used to treat tooth decay as far back as **7,000 years ago**.
- **Buttons & Dice:** The oldest buttons (made of seashells) and the earliest 6-sided cubical dice were discovered in IVC sites.

- **Metallurgy:** They were the first to develop techniques to test the purity of gold using a "touchstone," a method still used by Indian jewelers today.

Global Trade & Economy

Bharat was a global trade hub even in 2500 BCE.

- **World's First Dock:** At Lothal (Gujarat), they built the world's first tidal dock to facilitate trade with Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq).
- **Cotton Pioneers:** They were the first in the world to cultivate cotton and turn it into fabric, which became a major export.
- **Standard Weights:** They used a highly accurate system of weights based on the binary system (\$1, 2, 4, 8, 16...) for smaller items and a decimal system for larger ones.

Culture & Mystery

• **The Deciphered Silence:** We have found over 4,000 seals with a unique script, but to this day, **no one has been able to read it**.

- **Peaceful Society:** Unlike ancient Egypt or Mesopotamia, excavations have found almost no evidence of large-scale weaponry, armies, or depictions of war.
- **The "Pashupati" Seal:** One of the most famous seals depicts a figure sitting in a yogic posture, surrounded by animals, which many historians believe is a "Proto-Shiva."

Indus Valley Civilisation Quiz

1. The Indus Valley Civilisation is classified as belonging to which archaeological age?

- A) Neolithic Age
- B) Iron Age
- C) Bronze Age
- D) Paleolithic Age

2. Which of the following names is also commonly used to refer to the Indus Valley Civilisation?

- A) Mesopotamian Civilisation
- B) Harappan Civilisation
- C) Vedic Civilisation
- D) Sumerian Civilisation

3. According to the timeline of the Indus Valley Civilisation, during which period did it flourish in the northwestern regions of South Asia?

- A) 1500 BCE to 500 BCE
- B) 3300 BCE to 1300 BCE
- C) 4500 BCE to 2500 BCE
- D) 1000 BCE to 200 BCE

4. The first site of this civilisation to be excavated in 1921 was:

- A) Mohenjo-daro
- B) Lothal
- C) Harappa
- D) Dholavira

Dear Aspirants,

"We trust that this current affairs preparation will be beneficial for your upcoming examination. Consistent daily study of current affairs is highly recommended. Should you have any suggestions for improvement or feedback regarding the class, please feel free to communicate them. Your ideas are valuable, and we welcome your assistance in helping us to provide enhanced support in the future."

We wish best for your studies & Exams

Best Wishes

Murthy sir (MSM)

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