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## NATIONAL NEWS

### Supreme Court Signs MoU for Law Clerks Exchange With Bhutan Country



In a significant step toward regional judicial diplomacy, the Supreme Court of India has officially entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Supreme Court of Bhutan.

Announced by the 53rd Chief Justice of India (CJI), Surya Kant, on January 5, 2026, this partnership aims to foster knowledge sharing and professional development for young legal minds in the neighboring nations.

#### Overview of the Exchange Program

The initiative facilitates an exchange program where young Bhutanese law graduates serve as clerks within the Indian apex court. This exposure allows them to understand the intricacies of India's constitutional and legal framework firsthand.

Feature	Details
Participants	Two law clerks from Bhutan
Tenure	Three months
Honorarium	Equivalent to Indian law clerks
Logistics	Travel expenses fully covered by the Supreme Court of India

- Institutional Strengthening:** By training Bhutanese clerks, India assists in the capacity building of Bhutan's legal system.
- Regional Precedent:** Similar cooperation models have been discussed or established with other neighbors, including **Nepal** and **Sri Lanka**, to promote human rights and judicial efficiency across South Asia.

### Practice Questions

1. Who recently announced the induction of law clerks from Bhutan into the Supreme Court of India?

- A) Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai
- B) Chief Justice of India Surya Kant
- C) The President of India
- D) The Prime Minister of Bhutan

2. What is the designated tenure for the Bhutanese law clerks serving in the Indian Supreme Court under this MOU?

- A) One month
- B) Six months
- C) Three months
- D) One year

3. Regarding the financial terms of the MOU, which of the following is true?

- A) Bhutan will pay the salaries of the clerks.
- B) The clerks will receive the same honorarium as Indian law clerks.

### Background and Visit of Justice B. R. Gavai

The foundation for this agreement was laid in October 2025, during the tenure of the 52nd CJI, B. R. Gavai.

- Official Visit:** Justice Gavai visited Bhutan and met with **King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck** and the Bhutanese Chief Justice, Justice Norbu Tshering.
- Strategic Goal:** The visit focused on deepening judicial ties, specifically in areas of **technology integration, capacity building, and legal education**.
- Announcement:** It was during this visit to the JSW School of Law in Bhutan that the proposal for the law clerkship was first introduced.

### Strategic Importance

This MoU is part of India's broader **"Neighbourhood First" policy**, which prioritizes strong institutional relationships with its immediate neighbors.



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C) The clerks will work on a voluntary, unpaid basis.

D) India will provide only housing, with no monthly honorarium.

**4. Which entity is responsible for bearing the travel expenses of the Bhutanese law clerks?**

A) The Royal Government of Bhutan

B) The Ministry of External Affairs, India

C) The Supreme Court of India

D) The United Nations Judicial Fund

**5. In which month and year did the former CJI B.R. Gavai visit Bhutan to initiate the deepening of judicial ties?**

A) January 2025

B) October 2025

C) June 2024

D) December 2025



This project, developed under the "Hydrogen for Heritage" initiative, positions India as the 5th country globally—joining Germany, Sweden, Japan, and China—to operate hydrogen-powered rail technology.

### Project Specifications & Performance

The train is a broad-gauge, 10-coach rake designed to provide a quieter, emission-free alternative to diesel engines on non-electrified routes.

Feature	Details
Route	Jind to Sonipat, Haryana (89 km)
Train Configuration	2 Driver Power Cars (DPCs) + 8 Passenger Coaches
Power Output	2,400 kW (Total) via Hydrogen Fuel Cells
Maximum Speed	110–140 km/h (Trial speed up to 150 km/h)

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Haryana to Launch India's First Hydrogen-Powered Train

India is reaching a landmark milestone in its transition to clean energy. As of January 9, 2026, the **Northern Railway** has commenced trial runs for India's first hydrogen-powered train on the **Jind–Sonipat** route in Haryana.



Feature	Details
Capacity	Approximately 2,500 passengers
Fuel Efficiency	9 kg of water produces 900g of \$H_2\$, powering 1 km

demonstrating a cost-effective path to modernizing existing fleets.

- **Passenger Experience:** The train operates almost silently and features modern "metro-style" amenities, including automatic doors and digital passenger information systems.

### MCQs on India's First Hydrogen Train Project

1. On which specific route will India's first hydrogen-powered pilot train operate?

- A) Delhi to Chandigarh
- B) Jind to Sonipat
- C) Rohtak to Panipat
- D) Gurugram to Rewari

2. Which division of the Indian Railways is leading this pilot project?

- A) Western Railway
- B) Southern Railway
- C) Northern Railway
- D) Central Railway

3. What is the storage capacity of the hydrogen plant established at Jind?

- A) 1,500 kilograms
- B) 2,000 kilograms
- C) 3,000 kilograms
- D) 5,000 kilograms

### Infrastructure: The Jind Hydrogen Plant

The backbone of this project is the dedicated green hydrogen facility at **Jind**, currently the largest of its kind in India.

- **Production Method:** Uses a **1 MW PEM (Proton Exchange Membrane) Electrolyzer** to split water into hydrogen and oxygen.
- **Storage Capacity:** 3,000 kg of compressed gaseous hydrogen.
- **Power Supply:** A stable **11 kV electricity supply** ensures 24/7 production to meet the train's daily fueling needs.

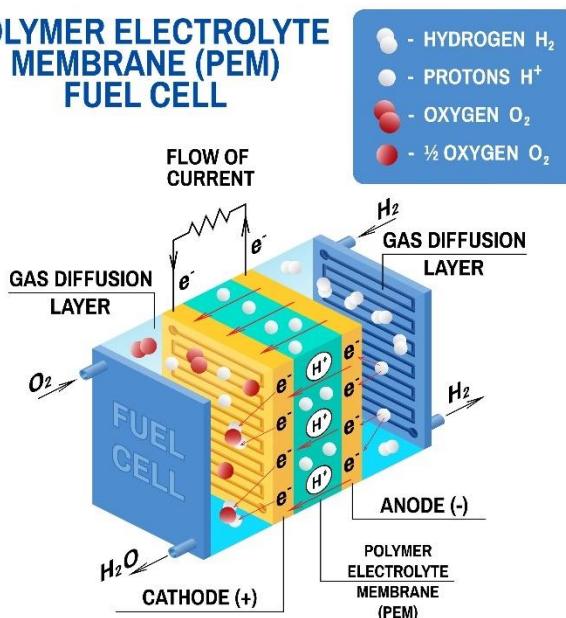
### Key Environmental & Technical Highlights

- **Zero Emissions:** The chemical reaction between hydrogen and oxygen in the fuel cell produces electricity, with **water vapor** and heat being the only byproducts.
- **Indigenous Engineering:** The train was manufactured at the **Integral Coach Factory (ICF)** in **Chennai**, showcasing India's **Atmanirbhar Bharat** (Self-Reliant India) capabilities.
- **Retrofitting Innovation:** Instead of building from scratch, Indian Railways retrofitted a **Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) rake**,

**4. What method is being used at the Jind plant to produce green hydrogen?**

- A) Steam Methane Reforming
- B) Coal Gasification
- C) Electrolysis
- D) Partial Oxidation

**POLYMER ELECTROLYTE MEMBRANE (PEM) FUEL CELL**



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**5. What is the voltage of the electricity supply used to power the hydrogen production plant at Jind?**

- A) 5 kV
- B) 11 kV
- C) 33 kV
- D) 220 kV

**6. What is the primary objective of this pilot project?**

- A) To increase the speed of suburban trains
- B) To reduce the cost of railway tickets
- C) To demonstrate the feasibility of hydrogen as a clean fuel for rail transport
- D) To replace all diesel engines in Haryana by 2026

**INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

UN Declares 2026 International Year for Rangelands and Pastoralists



In a significant move to rebalance global environmental priorities, the United Nations (UN) has officially declared 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP).

Lead by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), this initiative seeks to end the "forest-centric" bias in climate policy and recognize grasslands and savannas as indispensable tools for planetary health.

## The "Green Blindness" Problem

Historically, international climate funding and national strategies (such as **NDCs** under the Paris Agreement) have focused almost exclusively on reforestation. This has led to the marginalization of rangelands, which cover

**54% of the Earth's land surface.**

Ecosystem	Primary Carbon Storage	Fire Resilience	Policy Status
Forests	Above ground (Trunks/Leaves)	Low (Carbon released on burning)	Highly Funded
Grasslands	Below ground (Roots/Soil)	High (Soil carbon stays intact)	Marginalized

## Scientific & Economic Significance

The UN's declaration is backed by a growing scientific consensus that rangelands are not "wastelands," but high-value assets:

- Carbon Sinks:** Grasslands store up to **30% of the world's soil organic carbon**. Unlike forests, they are "reliable" sinks because their carbon is stored underground, making it less vulnerable to wildfires.
- Biodiversity Hotspots:** Savannas like the **Brazilian Cerrado** or the **African Serengeti**

support unique megafauna and endemic flora that cannot survive in closed-canopy forests.

- Livelihood Security:** Over **2 billion people** and **50% of the world's livestock** depend on rangelands. Pastoralism is a highly adaptive, low-carbon food production system.

## Key Objectives for 2026

The FAO and the IYRP Global Alliance have outlined a 12-month roadmap, with each month dedicated to a specific theme:

- Closing the Policy Gap:** Encouraging countries to explicitly include grasslands in their **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**.
- Securing Land Rights:** Protecting pastoralists from "land grabbing" for industrial agriculture or massive tree-planting projects that can actually damage grassland ecosystems.
- Indigenous Knowledge:** Elevating traditional grazing and fire-management practices as "nature-based solutions" for climate resilience.
- Economic Valuation:** Shifting the narrative from "subsistence" to a "sustainable value chain" for products like wool, meat, and dairy.

**Important Note:** In India, this declaration is expected to accelerate the proposed **National Rangeland Utilisation Policy**, aimed at restoring nearly 120 million hectares of grassland currently classified as "wastelands."

### MCQs on the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists

1. Which year has the United Nations officially designated as the 'International Year for Rangelands and Pastoralists'?

- A) 2024
- B) 2025
- C) 2026
- D) 2030

2. What is the primary objective of this UN declaration?

- A) To increase the global production of industrial livestock
- B) To spotlight overlooked ecosystems like grasslands and savannahs
- C) To phase out pastoralist lifestyles in favor of urban development
- D) To focus exclusively on the restoration of tropical rainforests

3. According to the text, why is the current global climate strategy considered "imbalanced"?

- A) It focuses too much on technology and not enough on nature.
- B) It prioritizes urban infrastructure over rural development.
- C) It provides disproportionate funding and attention to forests over other ecosystems.
- D) It ignores the impact of carbon sequestration in the oceans.

4. What role do grasslands and savannahs play in climate mitigation, according to scientific consensus?

- A) They act as the primary source of methane emissions.
- B) They are less effective than deserts at regulating temperature.
- C) They function as critical carbon sinks.
- D) They have no significant impact on biodiversity conservation.

5. Which international framework is mentioned as currently having a "forest-centric" policy gap?

- A) The World Health Organization (WHO)
- B) The International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- C) The UNFCCC climate negotiations
- D) The Global Trade Agreement

### APPOINTMENTS

GI Council Appoints S Prakash as CEO for Health Insurance Ecosystem



In a landmark move to reform the health insurance landscape, the **General Insurance Council (GI Council)**—the apex body for non-life insurers in India—has appointed Dr. S. Prakash as its first **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** for **Health Insurance Ecosystem and Strategic Partnerships**.

Taking effect on **January 7, 2026**, this newly created leadership role is designed to bridge the long-standing gap between insurance companies, healthcare providers, and policyholders.

### The Mandate: Efficiency and Trust

Dr. Prakash, a qualified surgeon and former MD of Star Health Insurance, brings over 30 years of experience to address systemic "friction points" in the industry. His primary mission involves:

- Standardization of Care:** Implementing uniform treatment protocols and "care pathways" to reduce variations in hospital billing and medical necessity disputes.
- Fraud Mitigation:** Strengthening frameworks to curb fraudulent claims, which are estimated to cost the industry between ₹3,000–₹5,000 crore annually.
- Common Empanelment:** Expanding the "common empanelment platform" to ensure that more of India's 77,000+ hospitals offer seamless, cashless services at standardized rates.
- National Health Claims Exchange (NHCX):** Accelerating the onboarding of insurers and hospitals onto the NHCX to enable faster, digital, and interoperable claims processing.

### Why Now? The Changing Landscape

This appointment comes during a period of rapid transformation for Indian health insurance:

Driver	Recent Development
Tax Reform	The <b>0% GST regime</b> on retail health insurance (implemented Sept 2025) has spiked demand.
Claim Rejections	Rising public concern over ₹26,000 Cr in rejected claims (FY24) pressured the industry for better oversight.
Market Share	Health insurance is now the largest non-life portfolio, accounting for <b>~38.5% of total premiums</b> .

### Strategic Impact

By creating a dedicated CEO role for the "ecosystem," the GI Council is shifting from a company-centric model to a collaborative governance model. This is expected to:

- Reduce Premiums:** Through better cost control and fraud management.
- Improve Transparency:** Making the "hospital-to-claim-settlement" journey more predictable for the common man.
- Support "Insurance for All by 2047":** Aligning with the IRDAI's vision of universal health coverage.

### Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is the primary objective of the new leadership appointment by the industry body of non-life insurers?

- A) To increase the premiums for health insurance policies.
- B) To reduce the number of insurance providers in the market.
- C) To foster a more coordinated and structured approach in the sector.
- D) To eliminate the role of private hospitals in the insurance ecosystem.

2. According to the text, which of the following is NOT mentioned as a challenge currently facing the health insurance industry?

- A) Claim disputes
- B) Hospital billing practices
- C) Shortage of medical professionals
- D) Fraud management

3. Which group is responsible for making the key leadership appointment mentioned in the passage?

- A) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- B) The industry body of non-life insurers
- C) The World Health Organization (WHO)
- D) A consortium of private multi-specialty hospitals

4. What is the expected outcome of creating this new leadership role?

A) A decrease in the total number of policyholders.

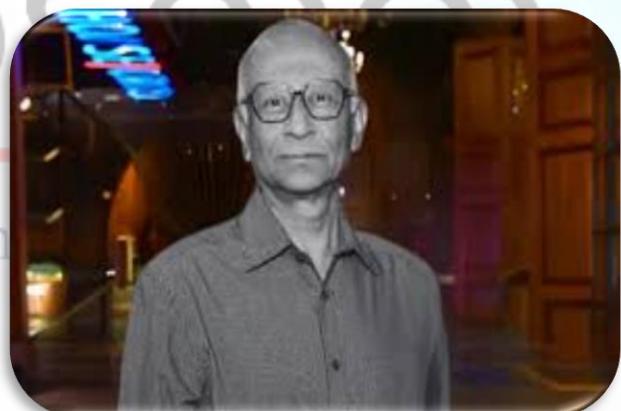
B) Enhanced efficiency and trust across the health insurance ecosystem.

C) The nationalization of all non-life insurance companies.

D) A shift toward manual processing of all insurance claims.

### SPORTS

Former World Billiards Champion Manoj Kothari Passes Away



The Indian cue sports community is mourning the loss of a true legend. **Manoj Kothari**, the 1990 World Billiards Champion and Chief National Coach, passed away on **January 5, 2026**, at the age of 67.

His passing in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, following a cardiac arrest, marks the end of an era for a man who not only dominated the green baize as a player but also sculpted the future of the sport in India as its premier mentor.

## A Career of Excellence

Manoj Kothari's legacy is defined by his transition from a world-class competitor to a strategic mastermind behind India's international dominance in cue sports.

Achievement	Details
World Champion	Won the IBSF World Billiards Championship in 1990 (Bengaluru).
World Doubles	Won the World Doubles Billiards Championship in 1997 with Ian Williamson.
National Impact	16-time State Champion; served as Chief National Coach since 2011.
Highest Honor	Conferred with the Dhyan Chand Award (Lifetime Achievement) in 2005.
Recent Honor	Received the BSFI Lifetime Achievement Award in late 2025.

## The "Kothari Legacy": A Unique Father-Son Milestone

One of the most heartwarming chapters of his life was his role as a coach to his son, Sourav Kothari.

- Historical First:** They remain the only **father-son duo** in history to both hold World Billiards Championship titles.
- The Final Triumph:** In a poetic conclusion to his coaching career, Manoj witnessed Sourav

win the IBSF World Billiards Championship in late 2025, defeating the legendary Pankaj Advani in the final—a victory Sourav dedicated entirely to his father's mentorship.

## Tributes from the Fraternity

The sporting world has expressed deep grief over the loss of a man known as much for his technical brilliance as for his kindness.

"I lost everything. He was my hero... his selfless service produced many players who went on to become champions."

— Sourav Kothari, World Champion & Son

"Manoj Kothari was an efficient administrator and a fantastic coach. More than that, he was an amazing human being... a huge loss to the cue sports fraternity."

— Pankaj Advani, 28-time World Champion

## Final Journey

Kothari had recently undergone a successful liver transplant in Tirunelveli; however, a subsequent lung infection led to the fatal cardiac arrest. He is survived by his wife, Neeta, his son, Sourav, and his daughter, Shreya.

## Section 1: General Awareness & Current Affairs

1. Manoj Kothari, who passed away in January 2026, was a legendary figure in which sport?

- A) Chess
- B) Cue Sports (Billiards & Snooker)
- C) Squash
- D) Table Tennis

2. At the time of his passing, what official position did Manoj Kothari hold in Indian sports?

A) President of the Billiards and Snooker Federation of India (BSFI)

B) Chief National Coach of the Indian billiards team

C) Chairman of the Sports Authority of India

D) Director of the Indian Olympic Association

3. In which city did the former World Billiards Champion, Manoj Kothari, breathe his last?

A) Kolkata, West Bengal

B) Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu

C) Bengaluru, Karnataka

D) Pune, Maharashtra

### Section 2: Achievements & Legacy

4. Which of the following prestigious titles was held by Manoj Kothari during his active playing career?

A) World Billiards Champion

B) Olympic Gold Medalist

C) World Snooker Champion

D) Asian Games Tennis Champion

5. How old was Manoj Kothari at the time of his demise in January 2026?

A) 62 years

B) 65 years

C) 67 years

D) 70 years

## BANKING/ECONOMY

Axis Bank Launches 'Safety Centre' to Boost Digital Banking Security



In a significant move to combat the rising tide of cybercrime, Axis Bank launched the 'Safety Centre' on its mobile application, 'open', on January 6, 2026.

This new feature serves as a centralized "security hub," transitioning the bank's strategy from reactive support to proactive, customer-led prevention. By placing granular controls directly in the hands of the user, the bank aims to neutralize common fraud tactics such as phishing, SIM swapping, and unauthorized third-party access.

### Key Features of the 'Safety Centre'

The Safety Centre provides real-time, instantly actionable settings that allow users to "switch off" or restrict specific banking functions without needing to call customer care.

Feature	Functionality
SMS Shield	Industry-First: Verifies the authenticity of incoming bank

Feature	Functionality
	SMS messages by checking the sender ID against official bank records to identify spoofing.
Net Banking Toggle	Allows users to completely disable Internet Banking access when not in use.
Transaction Kill-Switch	Instantly stops all fund transfers across both mobile and internet banking with a single toggle.
UPI Restrictions	Enables users to block or set per-transaction limits specifically for UPI payments.
Payee Control	Prevents the addition of new beneficiaries, ensuring funds can only be sent to pre-existing, trusted contacts.
Third-Party Blocking	Specifically blocks online shopping or net banking transactions initiated through third-party e-commerce platforms.

- **Independence:** Customers no longer need to wait for a customer service representative during high-stress moments (like losing a phone or spotting a suspicious alert).
- **Layered Security:** This builds upon previous innovations like 'Lock FD' (preventing digital closure of fixed deposits) and 'In-App Mobile OTP' (TOTPs that don't rely on the SMS network).

### The Broader Context

According to **Sameer Shetty**, Group Executive at Axis Bank, the Safety Centre is a response to the evolving threat landscape where fraudsters exploit the speed of digital transactions. By providing tools like **SMS Shield**, Axis Bank is addressing the root cause of many social engineering attacks—fake communication.

### Axis Bank 'Safety Centre' MCQs

1. When did Axis Bank launch the 'Safety Centre' feature on its mobile app?
  - January 2025
  - June 2025
  - January 2026
  - December 2025
2. What is the primary objective of the 'Safety Centre' feature?
  - To provide instant personal loans
  - To strengthen customer protection against digital fraud
  - To offer rewards and cashback on UPI transactions

### Why It Matters: The "Golden Hour" of Fraud

Digital fraud often relies on the time it takes for a victim to realize they have been compromised and contact their bank to freeze their account.

- **Instant Activation:** All changes made in the Safety Centre take effect **immediately**.

D) To allow users to book international flight tickets

**3. Which of the following is a key benefit of the 'Safety Centre' for customers?**

A) It requires a mandatory branch visit for security updates

B) It connects users directly to a human agent for every transaction

C) It allows users to manage key banking functions without visiting a branch

D) It provides physical lockers for storing documents

**4. How can Axis Bank customers access the 'Safety Centre'?**

A) By visiting any Axis Bank ATM

B) Through a physical letter sent to the base branch

C) Directly through the mobile banking app

D) By calling a toll-free number only

**5. The 'Safety Centre' aims to give customers greater control over which two areas?**

A) Stock market investments and fixed deposits

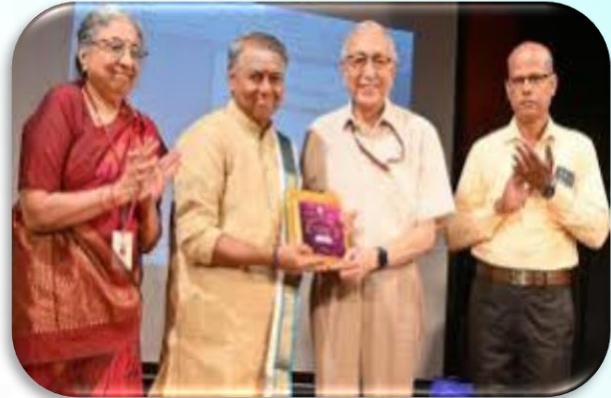
B) Digital banking security and fraud prevention

C) Credit score management and tax filing

D) Property loans and insurance renewals

## STATE NEWS

### Music Writings of U Ve Swaminatha Iyer



In a celebration of Tamil literary and musical heritage, The Music Academy released the English translation of the writings of the legendary scholar U. Ve. Swaminatha Iyer in early January 2026.

Commonly revered as **Tamil Thatha** (the Grand Old Man of Tamil) for his Herculean efforts in recovering lost Sangam literature, Iyer was also a deep connoisseur of the performing arts. This new volume, translated by **Justice Prabha Sridevan**, offers a rare English-language window into the world of 19th-century Carnatic music.

### Key Highlights of the Translation

The collection, titled ***U. Ve. Sa. on Music and Musicians***, meticulously documents the lives and artistry of legendary figures from the "Golden Age" of Carnatic music.

- Article Count:** The book consists of 18 articles originally penned in Tamil.

- Core Profiles:** It features extensive, three-part detailed writings on:
  - Ghanam Krishna Iyer:** A master of the *Ghanam* style of singing.
  - Gopalakrishna Bharathi:** The composer of the seminal *Nandanar Charitam*.
  - Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan:** A prodigy known for his 72-Melakarta Ragamalika.
- Historical Context:** Beyond biography, the book serves as an ethnomusicological record, describing the *Gurukulam* system and the social fabric of the Tanjavur musical tradition.

### The Translator's Vision

Justice Prabha Sridevan, a former judge of the Madras High Court and an acclaimed translator, noted that U. Ve. Sa.'s prose is characterized by its simplicity and deep empathy.

"These aren't just biographies; they are character sketches that capture the 'bhava' (emotion) of the era. Translating them was an exercise in preserving the soul of Tamil musical history for a global audience." — Justice Prabha Sridevan

### Significance of the Release

- Bridging the Gap:** While U. Ve. Sa. is world-famous for his work on Tamil epics like *Silappatikaram*, his contributions to musicology have remained largely inaccessible to non-Tamil speakers.
- Cultural Preservation:** The Music Academy, Chennai, commissioned this project to ensure that the primary source accounts of

these musical legends are preserved in a world-link language.

### Practice Questions

- Who is affectionately known by the title "Tamil Thatha" (the grand old man of Tamil)?**
  - Gopalakrishna Bharathi
  - U Ve Swaminatha Iyer
  - Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan
  - Ghanam Krishna Iyer
- Which organization released the English translation of U Ve Swaminatha Iyer's writings on music and musicians?**
  - The Tamil Sahitya Academy
  - The Madras Sanskrit College
  - The Music Academy
  - The Kalakshetra Foundation
- Who is the translator responsible for bringing these Tamil articles into English?**
  - Justice Prabha Sridevan
  - U Ve Swaminatha Iyer
  - Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan
  - Justice V. Ramasubramanian
- According to Justice Prabha Sridevan, how many articles are contained in this specific collection?**
  - 12

B) 15

C) 18

D) 21

**5. The book features detailed writings on which of the following trio of musical figures?**

A) Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar, and Syama Sastri

B) Ghanam Krishna Iyer, Gopalakrishna Bharathi, and Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan

C) Papanasam Sivan, Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, and Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer

D) Purandara Dasa, Kanaka Dasa, and Annamacharya

Systems, based on the Israeli PULS system, making it 'Made in India' and a big step towards self-reliant India.

**Q.2. Who was recently appointed as Director (Finance) at the Bengaluru-based Central Silk Board?**

A. Tarun Garg

B. P.S. Girisha

C. Nagesh Kapoor

D. R.K. Aggarwal

2. B

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of P.S. Girisha (IAS) as Director (Finance) of the Central Silk Board. P.S. Girisha is a 2012 batch Indian Administrative Service officer from the Andhra Pradesh cadre of the IAS. This appointment is on deputation basis under the Ministry of Textiles.

**Q.3. Who recently launched the book "Khutbat-e-Modi: From the Red Fort to the Fashil"?**

A. Narendra Modi

B. Amit Shah

C. Dharmendra Pradhan

D. Rajnath Singh

3. C

Union Education Minister, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan released the book "Khutbat-e-Modi: Lal Qila ki Fasil Se" in New Delhi. The book is a collection of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Independence Day speeches delivered from the Red Fort between 2014 and 2025. Published in Urdu, the book has been brought

### Detailed Analysis of Recent Current Affairs: Multiple Choice Format

**Q.1. With which country did the Indian Army recently sign an agreement for the Suryastra rocket system?**

A. Russia

B. United States

C. Israel

D. France

1. C

The Indian Army has not signed an agreement directly with any country for the 'Suryastra' rocket system, but with India's private company NIBE Limited, which is manufacturing it in India in technical collaboration with Israel's Elbit

out by the National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL), New Delhi, a national body under the Ministry of Education, tasked with promoting, preserving and propagating the Urdu language across the country.

**Q.4. Which event did Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurate in Varanasi via video conferencing?**

A. National Kho-Kho Championship

B. 72nd National Volleyball Tournament

C. National Yoga Day

D. National Athletics Meet

4. B

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the 72nd National Volleyball Tournament via video conferencing. More than 1,000 players from 58 teams from various states and institutions are participating in the event. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 72nd National Volleyball Tournament via video conferencing, and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was also present at the event.

**Q.5. Where was the very rare 'Sandalwood Leopard' recently spotted?**

A. Kerala

B. Karnataka

C. Rajasthan

D. Tamil Nadu

5. B

A very rare strawberry-colored leopard, known as the Sandalwood Leopard, has been sighted in Karnataka for the first time. This is only the

second such sighting in India; the previous one was in Rajasthan in November 2021.

**Q.6. In which state has the central government recently approved the 'Kalai-II Hydroelectric Project' on the Lohit River?**

A. Himachal Pradesh

B. Assam

C. Arunachal Pradesh

D. Uttarakhand

6. C

The central government has approved the Kalai-II hydropower project in Arunachal Pradesh. Conservationists have warned that the project's EIA ignores the critically endangered white-bellied heron, whose habitat is near the Lohit River basin.

**Q.7. Which state government recently abolished the 'two-child norm' for local body elections?**

A. Uttar Pradesh

B. Gujarat

C. Telangana

D. Assam

7. C

The Telangana Legislative Assembly has passed four bills without opposition, including the Telangana Panchayat Raj (Amendment) Bill, 2026. This bill eliminates the long-standing "two-child norm," which barred candidates with more than two children from contesting local body elections.

**Q.8. Which country recently launched a new missile destroyer ship named 'Loudi'?**

A. Japan

B. China

C. South Korea

D. Russia

8. B

The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has commissioned the upgraded Type 052D guided missile destroyer "Loudi" into its navy. This reflects China's rapidly growing naval power and its focus on modern technology. The warship features improved air defense, maritime strike, and command capabilities.

Q.9. Which country recently banned the broadcast of the Indian Premier League (IPL)?

A. China

B. Pakistan

C. Bangladesh

D. Nepal

9. C

The Bangladesh government has banned the broadcast of the IPL in the country. The IPL's live broadcast in Bangladesh is based on a sub-licensing model. The official Indian broadcaster sells the rights to the Bangladeshi broadcaster, and each season, including TV and digital, costs approximately ₹80-120 crore (approximately \$800 million to \$120 million). However, due to the government's decision to ban the tournament, the Bangladeshi broadcaster will be unable to sell advertising and, therefore, will lose subscription revenue. In such a situation, the official broadcaster may also seek legal recourse. Overall, this will result in a loss of ₹80-

120 crore (approximately \$800 million to \$120 million) for the Bangladeshi broadcaster.

Q.10. Where was the second edition of the 'Khelo India Beach Games' recently inaugurated?

A. Goa

B. Lakshadweep

C. Andaman and Nicobar

D. Diu

10. D

The second Khelo India Beach Games are set to begin at Ghoghla Beach in Diu. Organized by the Union Territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, the Beach Games will see over 2,100 athletes compete in eight different sports. The Games will be held under the technical supervision of the Sports Authority of India and the National Sports Federations. There will be six medal events: beach soccer, beach volleyball, beach sepak takraw, beach kabaddi, pencak silat, and open water swimming. Mallakhamb and tug of war will be non-medal events.

Q.11. Where was India's first indigenous pollution control vessel, the 'ICGS Samudra Pratap', recently commissioned?

A. Mumbai

B. Goa

C. Chennai

D. Kochi

11. B

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh dedicated the Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Samudra Pratap

to the nation in Goa. Built by Goa Shipyard Limited, the ship is India's first indigenously designed pollution control vessel and the largest ship in the Indian Coast Guard fleet. This achievement marks a major step towards a self-reliant India in the maritime sector.

**Q.12. Who was recently honored with the 'Nritya Kalanidhi Award'?**

- A. Mallika Sarabhai
- B. Sonal Mansingh
- C. Urmila Satyanarayanan
- D. Hema Malini

12. C

Renowned Bharatanatyam expert Urmila Satyanarayanan was recently honored with the Nritya Kalanidhi Award at The Music Academy's 19th Annual Dance Festival in Chennai. The award recognizes her outstanding artistry and lifelong dedication to dance. Previously, Mohiniyattam expert Dr. Neena Prasad received the 2024 award.

**Q.13. Who was recently appointed the new Chief Justice of the Sikkim High Court?**

- A. Justice Somen Sen
- B. Justice A. Muhammad Mustaq
- C. Justice Sangam Kumar Sahu
- D. Justice Revati Prashant

13. B

In a significant development for the Sikkim judiciary, the High Court has a new Chief Justice. This swearing-in ceremony marks a change in leadership aimed at further strengthening the

judicial system in the state. With experience gained in other High Courts, this appointment raises hopes for effective judicial administration and strengthening justice delivery.

**Q.14. In which state was the Smart Green Aquaculture RAS facility (India's first inland premium trout farm) recently inaugurated?**

- A. Tamil Nadu
- B. Telangana
- C. Andhra Pradesh
- D. Kerala

14. B

India's fisheries sector has achieved a major technological milestone with the launch of a large-scale trout farming project in Telangana. Until now, trout farming, once considered confined to the cold regions of the Himalayas, has been successfully adopted in the warm interior regions. This initiative demonstrates India's efforts towards innovation-based aquaculture, value addition, and export-oriented growth.

**Q.15. Which country recently surpassed China to become the world's largest rice producer?**

- A. Thailand
- B. Vietnam
- C. India
- D. Indonesia

15. C

India has surpassed China to become the world's largest rice producer, producing 150.18 million tons of rice. This announcement was

made by Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. This achievement was achieved due to improved farming methods and new varieties. Recently, 184 new varieties of 25 crops were also released.

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