

1. National News

India-UK CETA Operationalization

- **Context:** The **India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)** officially came into force.

The Indian Express

- **Key Details:**
 - Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal announced that the pact grants **zero-duty market access to nearly 99% of India's exports** to the UK.

The Indian Express

- It covers almost 100% of the overall bilateral trade value, boosting key Indian export sectors like textiles, leather, footwear, engineering goods, and agriculture.

The Indian Express

- **Exam Relevance:** Important for UPSC Mains (GS Paper II: Bilateral Agreements) and SSC/Banking (International Trade Alliances).

Cabinet Reallocation in Madhya Pradesh

- **Context:** MP Chief Minister Mohan Yadav withdrew the Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development portfolio from Minister of State (Independent Charge) Lakhman Patel.

The Indian Express

- **Details:** CM Mohan Yadav has taken direct charge of the department.

The Indian Express

2. International News

US Airstrikes on Iran's Strategic Assets

- **Context:** US Central Command (CENTCOM) launched a new series of daytime airstrikes on Iranian forces.

The Indian Express

- **Key Details:**
 - Operations targeted coastal defense systems and cruise missile storage infrastructure located on **Greater Tunb Island**.

The Indian Express

- **Geopolitical Significance:** Greater Tunb Island sits near the strategic Strait of Hormuz—a crucial maritime choke point for global oil transportation.

US Sanctions Proposal on Energy Buyers

- **Context:** A revised US bill proposed by Senator Lindsey Graham introduced tariffs up to **100%** targeting the five largest buyers of Russian oil and natural gas.

The Economic Times

- **Objective:** To squeeze global revenues funding Russian state expenditure.

The Economic Times

3. Economics & Banking

India Semiconductor Mission (ISM 2.0)

- **Context:** Union Cabinet approved Phase II of the India Semiconductor Mission.

The Economic Times

- **Key Details:**
 - **Total Outlay:** ₹1.27 lakh crore allocated across 12 years.
 - **Incentive:** Offers up to 5% financial incentive on eligible sales to boost local fabrication and component manufacturing ecosystems.
 - **ACC Battery Storage Capacity Expansion**
- **Context:** Government announced a dedicated **10 GWh capacity allocation** under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI)

alongside setting a new qualification pathway for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics / 2028 T20 World Cup.

7. Art, Culture & Festivals

Puri Jagannath Rath Yatra 2026

- **Context:** The world-famous Chariot Festival commenced at Puri, Odisha.

Born To Banger

- **Details:**
 - **Date:** Observed on Ashadha Shukla Dwitiya (16 July 2026).

Born To Banger

- Deities **Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra** travel in massive wooden chariots to the Shree Gundicha Temple.
- Return journey is known as the **Bahuda Yatra**.

SSBCrackExams

8. Important Days (15 - 16 July)

World Snake Day (16 July)

- **Objective:** Spreading ecological awareness regarding snake conservation, bio-diversity preservation, and debunking urban myths.

World Youth Skills Day (15 July)

- **Theme (2026):** "Skills for a Shared Future"
- **Background:** Established by UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/145 (First observed in 2015).

9. Obituary & Death Anniversary

S. Janaki (Passing)

- **Context:** Celebrated legendary playback singer **S. Janaki** (known affectionally as the "Nightingale of South India") passed away at age 88.

The Economic Times

- **Honors:** Recipient of 4 National Film Awards and multiple State Film Awards across South Indian languages.

Exam Practice Questions (MCQs)

Q1. What is the name of the official mascot unveiled for the 22nd Commonwealth Table Tennis Championship 2026?

- (a) Udaan
- (b) Shera
- (c) Mayur
- (d) Gajraj

- **Answer:** (c) Mayur

Q2. Who has been appointed as the new Secretary of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)?

- (a) Santosh Rastogi
- (b) Dr. Srinivasa Kumar Tummala

Indian Mandarins

- (c) Nipun Jindal
- (d) Sahil Goyal

- **Answer:** (b) Dr. Srinivasa Kumar Tummala

Q3. Under the expanded PLI scheme for ACC Battery Storage, how much GWh capacity is dedicated strictly to grid-scale stationary energy storage?

- (a) 50 GWh
- (b) 20 GWh
- (c) 10 GWh
- (d) 5 GWh

- **Answer:** (c) 10 GWh

Q1. The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), which came into effect on 16 July 2026, was signed between India and which nation?

- (a) Australia
- (b) United Kingdom (UK)
- (c) Canada
- (d) Japan

Answer: (b) United Kingdom (UK)

Explanation: The India–UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) grants zero-duty market access to nearly 99% of Indian exports to the UK, significantly benefiting labor-intensive sectors like textiles, leather, engineering goods, and agriculture.

Q2. Under which Article of the Indian Constitution has a customized self-governance framework been proposed for the Union Territory of Ladakh?

- (a) Article 370
- (b) Article 371
- (c) Article 239A
- (d) Article 356

Answer: (b) Article 371

Explanation: The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) proposed a unique governance model under Article 371 to address constitutional safeguards, land rights, and cultural protection for Ladakh.

Q3. Which state government recently received Geographical Indication (GI) tags for Bhagaiya Silk, Kuchai Silk, and Tumka Chadar?

- (a) Odisha
- (b) West Bengal
- (c) Jharkhand
- (d) Assam

Answer: (c) Jharkhand

Explanation: Jharkhand showcased its newly GI-tagged handloom items (including Bhagaiya Silk, Kuchai Silk, Tumka Chadar, and Tassar Silk) at Bharat Tex 2026 to promote state heritage and artisan livelihoods.

Section 2: International News & Environment

Q4. Greater Tunb Island, which witnessed recent military developments involving US CENTCOM airstrikes, is located near which strategic maritime choke point?

- (a) Strait of Malacca
- (b) Bab-el-Mandeb
- (c) Strait of Hormuz
- (d) Suez Canal

Answer: (c) Strait of Hormuz

Explanation: Greater Tunb Island is situated near the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global choke point for world crude oil shipments.

Q5. The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), recently highlighted in international food safety news, was jointly established by which two international bodies?

- (a) WTO and UNIDO
- (b) FAO and WHO



- (c) UNEP and FAO
(d) UNICEF and WHO

Answer: (b) FAO and WHO

Explanation: The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) was established jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to set international standards for food safety and quality.

Q6. Which country launched BOHR, billed as the world's first commercial nuclear-powered satellite?

- (a) USA
(b) Russia
(c) China
(d) France

Answer: (a) USA

Explanation: The world's first commercial nuclear-powered satellite, BOHR, was deployed by a US commercial space firm into orbit.

Section 3: Economics & Banking

Q7. What is the total financial outlay approved for Phase II of the India Semiconductor Mission (Semicon 2.0)?

- (a) ₹76,000 crore
(b) ₹1,27,500 crore
(c) ₹2,00,000 crore
(d) ₹50,000 crore

Answer: (b) ₹1,27,500 crore

Explanation: The Union Cabinet approved Semicon 2.0 with an allocation of ₹1.27 lakh crore over 12 years to encourage domestic wafer fabrication and chip ecosystem development.

Q8. Under the expanded PLI scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage, how much manufacturing capacity is dedicated strictly to grid-scale stationary storage?

- (a) 50 GWh
(b) 25 GWh
(c) 10 GWh
(d) 5 GWh

Answer: (c) 10 GWh

Explanation: Out of the 50 GWh total target under the ₹18,100-crore PLI ACC scheme, 10 GWh is dedicated to stationary grid storage systems for integrating renewable power.

Q9. Which Union Ministry implements and administers the PM E-DRIVE scheme for electric vehicles?

- (a) Ministry of Power
(b) Ministry of Heavy Industries
(c) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
(d) Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

Answer: (b) Ministry of Heavy Industries

Explanation: The PM E-DRIVE Scheme is administered by the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) to incentivize e-buses, electric two-wheelers, and charging infrastructure rollout across the country.



Q10. The National Investment Policy for Urea (NIPU-2026) aims to promote domestic production through which type of manufacturing plants?

- a) Coal-based only
- (b) Gas-based urea manufacturing units
- (c) Solar-driven chemical units
- (d) Biomass gasification plants

Answer: (b) Gas-based urea manufacturing units

Explanation: NIPU-2026 focuses on establishing new gas-based urea manufacturing units to substitute imports and achieve self-reliance in fertilizers.

Section 4: Appointments & Resignations

Q11. Who has been appointed as the Secretary of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)?

- (a) Santosh Rastogi
- (b) Dr. Srinivasa Kumar Tummala
- (c) Nipun Jindal
- (d) Sahil Goyal

Answer: (b) Dr. Srinivasa Kumar Tummala

Explanation: Dr. Srinivasa Kumar Tummala, former head of the UNESCO IOTWMS Secretariat, was appointed as the Secretary of the Ministry of Earth Sciences for a 2-year tenure.

Q12. Santosh Rastogi (IPS) was recently promoted to which key administrative post?

- (a) Director General of BSF

(b) Additional Director General (ADG) of NIA

(c) Director of CBI

(d) Chief of RAW

Answer: (b) Additional Director General (ADG) of NIA

Explanation: IPS Officer Santosh Rastogi was elevated from Inspector General (IG) to Additional Director General (ADG) in the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

Section 5: Sports News

Q13. What is the name of the official mascot unveiled for the 22nd Commonwealth Table Tennis Championship?

- (a) Shera
- (b) Mayur
- (c) Veera
- (d) Amrit

Answer: (b) Mayur

Explanation: 'Mayur', inspired by the Indian Peacock, was unveiled as the official tournament mascot for the championship held at Thyagraj Stadium, New Delhi.

Q14. The Double Contribution Convention (DCC) signed between India and the UK benefits which category of professionals?

- (a) Overseas Students studying under 2 years
- (b) Deputed Indian professionals working up to 60 months in the UK
- (c) Merchant Navy Sailors
- (d) Commercial Airline Pilots

Answer: (b) Deputed Indian professionals working up to 60 months in the UK

Explanation: The DCC agreement ensures Indian employees on assignments of up to 5 years (60 months) in the UK avoid paying double social security contributions.

Section 6: Government Schemes & Initiatives

Q15. The 'Viksit Bharat Yuva Connect Programme' (VBYCP) 2026 was launched under which theme?

- (a) Digital India for Youth
- (b) Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat
- (c) Yuva Shakti, Rashtra Shakti
- (d) Fit India, Healthy India

Answer: (b) Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat

Explanation: Organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports via MY Bharat, VBYCP 2026 centers on anti-substance abuse awareness among youth aged 15–25.

Q16. The 31st edition of 'Divya Kala Mela' was inaugurated in which Indian city?

- (a) Bhopal
- (b) Jaipur
- (c) Guwahati
- (d) Kolkata

Answer: (a) Bhopal

Explanation: The Divya Kala Mela showcases crafts, products, and entrepreneurial skills of Divyangjan (differently-abled) artisans nationwide.

Section 7: Defense & Technology

Q17. Tritium, which featured in nuclear energy news, is an isotope of which chemical element?

- (a) Helium
- (b) Hydrogen
- (c) Oxygen
- (d) Carbon

Answer: (b) Hydrogen

Explanation: Tritium (^3H) is a radioactive isotope of Hydrogen containing one proton and two neutrons, widely used in fusion energy experiments.

Q18. What does "Forward Deployed Engineering" (FDE) primarily involve in modern tech and defense operations?

- (a) Manufacturing semiconductor chips in cleanrooms
- (b) Deploying AI and software solutions directly into real-world operational environments
- (c) Setting up radar lines along physical borders
- (d) Designing deep-sea submarines

Answer: (b) Deploying AI and software solutions directly into real-world operational environments

Explanation: FDE refers to embedding software engineers and AI developers directly into active field environments to tailor tech tools in real time.

Section 8: Awards, Honors, Books & Authors

Q19. Who was conferred with the 60th Jnanpith Award?

- (a) Gulzar
- (b) S. L. Bhyrappa
- (c) Javed Akhtar
- (d) R. Vairamuthu

Answer: (b) S. L. Bhyrappa

Explanation: Renowned Kannada novelist S. L. Bhyrappa was selected for the prestigious 60th Jnanpith Award for his outstanding lifetime contribution to Indian literature.

Q20. Which prominent landmark/infrastructure building dedicated to judicial administration was inaugurated in Gurugram?

- (a) Nyaya Lok
- (b) Tower of Justice
- (c) Samvidhan Bhawan
- (d) Vidhi Bhavan

Answer: (b) Tower of Justice

Explanation: The 'Tower of Justice' was opened in Gurugram, emphasizing modern, accessible, and women-friendly legal infrastructure.

Section 9: Important Days

Q21. World Snake Day is observed globally on which date every year?

- (a) 12 July

(b) 15 July

(c) 16 July

(d) 18 July

Answer: (c) 16 July

Explanation: World Snake Day is observed on July 16 to create awareness about snake conservation and ecological balance.

Q22. What is the designated UN theme for World Youth Skills Day (observed on 15 July)?

- (a) Youth Skills for Peace and Development
- (b) Skilling the Future Workforce
- (c) Skills for a Shared Future
- (d) Digital Transformation in Skilling

Answer: (c) Skills for a Shared Future

Explanation: World Youth Skills Day 2026 was celebrated under the theme "Skills for a Shared Future"

Section 10: Art, Culture & Science

Q23. The iconic Puri Rath Yatra marks the journey of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra to which temple?

- (a) Lingaraj Temple
- (b) Shree Gundicha Temple
- (c) Sun Temple, Konark
- (d) Mukteshwar Temple

Answer: (b) Shree Gundicha Temple

Explanation: During the Rath Yatra in Puri, the deities travel in wooden chariots from the main Jagannath Temple to the Gundicha Temple.

Q24. Antarctic Icefish are unique among adult vertebrates because they completely lack which component?

- (a) A liver
- (b) Hemoglobin and red blood cells
- (c) Scales and fins
- (d) Spinal cords

Answer: (b) Hemoglobin and red blood cells

Explanation: Antarctic icefish (*Channichthyidae*) live in sub-zero waters and are the only known adult vertebrates lacking hemoglobin and red blood cells, absorbing oxygen directly through transparent blood plasma.

Q25. Which Indian company unveiled its sustainable textile showcase titled "Sutradhaar" at Bharat Tex 2026?

- (a) Reliance Retail
- (b) RSWM Ltd.
- (c) Aditya Birla Fashion
- (d) Arvind Mills

Answer: (b) RSWM Ltd.

Explanation: RSWM Ltd. presented its sustainable yarn and fabric collection named "Sutradhaar" at the Bharat Tex 2026 expo.

Section 11: General Awareness & Quick Fire

Q26. What physical feature makes the Caspian Sea geographically distinct?

- (a) It is the smallest sea connected to the Atlantic Ocean
- (b) It is the world's largest enclosed inland body of water
- (c) It contains exclusively freshwater
- (d) It is bordered by 10 countries

Answer: (b) It is the world's largest enclosed inland body of water

Explanation: The Caspian Sea is the world's largest inland body of water, classified as both a full-fledged sea and a lake, bordered by 5 countries (Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and Iran).

Q27. The famous 'Bahuda Yatra' associated with Odisha's culture signifies:

- (a) The inauguration of chariot building
- (b) The return journey of the deities to the main Jagannath Temple
- (c) The bathing ritual of the deities (*Shana Yatra*)
- (d) The installation of new idols (*Nabakalebara*)

Answer: (b) The return journey of the deities to the main Jagannath Temple

Explanation: Bahuda Yatra is the grand return procession of the three deities from the Shree Gundicha Temple back to the main Jagannath Temple.

Q28. Legendary playback singer S. Janaki, who passed away recently, was affectionately known by which moniker?

- (a) Nightingale of India
- (b) Swar Kokila
- (c) Nightingale of South India
- (d) Melody Queen

Answer: (c) Nightingale of South India

Explanation: S. Janaki was widely known as the "Nightingale of South India" for her career spanning thousands of songs across Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and Hindi.

Q29. Section 356 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) primarily addresses which legal framework?

- (a) Plea bargaining
- (b) Trial in absentia
- (c) Anticipatory bail parameters
- (d) Mercy petitions

Answer: (b) Trial in absentia

Explanation: Section 356 of the BNSS outlines the procedure for conducting a trial in absentia for proclaimed offenders who abscond to evade justice.

Q30. Under BRICS CONNECT, what is the core objective of the new platform?

- (a) Establishing a common space station
- (b) Facilitating digital payments and financial messaging among member nations
- (c) Joint military naval exercises in the Indian Ocean
- (d) Free visa movement for BRICS citizens

Answer: (b) Facilitating digital payments and financial messaging among member nations

Explanation: BRICS CONNECT is designed to streamline cross-border digital payments and reduce dependence on Western financial messaging systems among member economies.