

National News & Government Schemes

1. PM Vishwakarma Scheme Completes 3 Years

- **Context:** Launched on September 17, 2023, the umbrella Central Sector Scheme completed three years of operation.
- **Outlay & Ministry:** Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), and Ministry of Finance with an outlay of ₹13,000 crore (FY24–FY28).
- **Trades Covered:** 18 traditional trade categories including carpenters, blacksmiths, armorers, cobblers, and stonemasons.
- **Key Achievements (3-Year Audit):**
 - Over 30 lakh artisans registered on the portal.
 - 24.5 lakh artisans completed 5-to-7-day basic skill training with a ₹500/day stipend.
 - ₹15,000 e-vouchers provided for modern toolkit delivery.
 - Over ₹5,316 crore disbursed in collateral-free Enterprise Development Loans (EDL) up to ₹3 lakh at a concessional 5% interest rate.

2. Kishau Multipurpose Project Inter-State Agreement Signed

- **Context:** The Chief Ministers of 6 states (UP, Uttarakhand, HP, Rajasthan, Delhi, and Haryana) signed the agreement in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.
- **Project Specifications:** A 232.6-meter-high concrete gravity dam to be constructed on the **Tons River** (a major tributary of the Yamuna) along the Uttarakhand–Himachal Pradesh border.

- **Funding Pattern:** Designated as a **National Project**—90% of the financial burden is borne by the Central Government and 10% shared among the six participating states.
- **Executing Agency:** Kishau Corporation Limited (a joint venture between Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand).

3. Tulu Granted Second Official Language Status in Karnataka

- **Context:** The Karnataka Cabinet accorded second official language status to **Tulu**, primarily spoken in Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Chikkamagaluru, and Shivamogga districts.

4. MEA Notifies Passports (Amendment) Rules, 2026

- **Key Provision:** Passports issued to children under 15 years of age will carry a validity of 5 years or until the child turns 18 years, whichever occurs earlier.

International News

1. US Passes "Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026"

- **Detail:** The US legislature granted executive authority to impose up to 100% tariffs on foreign nations continuing to purchase Russian crude oil.

2. FAO Releases "Forests for Food" Report

- **Publisher:** Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
- **Key Takeaways:** Highlights non-timber forest products, wild meat, and freshwater ecosystems as wealth-neutral dietary equalizers for rural communities suffering from malnutrition.

3. Global Gender Gap Report 2026 (WEF)

- **India's Rank:** 131st out of 145 countries with an overall gender parity score of 64.5%.
- **Highlights:** Political representation reached 24.5%, but economic participation remains low with only 41.2% female workforce parity.

- **Significance:** Second Kannada cinema artist to receive India's highest film honor after Dr. Rajkumar (1995).
- **Presentation Venue:** 72nd National Film Awards ceremony at Kevadia (Ekta Nagar), Gujarat.

Economics & Banking

Defense News & MoUs

Event / Issue Details & Exam Relevance

Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on UPI Government retained proposed 0.4% MDR on UPI transactions exceeding ₹2,000 to improve digital payment infrastructure sustainability.

Bloomberg Billionaires Index ByteDance (TikTok) founder **Zhang Yiming** surpassed **Gautam Adani** as Asia's richest person (\$105 Billion).

FSSAI Regulatory Enforcement Food Safety and Standards Authority **India** initiated legal action against **Nestlé Pro Stage 1 & Lactogen Pro 1** over non-compliance.

- **CISF & IIT Kanpur Strategic Cybersecurity MoU:** Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) signed two MoUs with IIT Kanpur to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) at **MPRTC Bendor (Rajasthan)** for anti-drone capabilities, drone forensics, and critical infrastructure protection.

- **MQ-9 Reaper UAV Integration:** Indian **Armed Forces** accelerated operational readiness trials for high-altitude long-endurance (HALE) **MQ-9B SkyGuardian/SeaGuardian** drones.

Sports News

Appointments

- **Shashi Shekhar Vempati:** Appointed Chairperson of the reconstituted Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) for a 3-year tenure.
- **Sanjukta Parasor (IPS):** First woman officer appointed to lead the CRPF's specialized Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) unit.
- **N. Chandrasekaran:** Approved for a fresh 5-year term as Chairman of Tata Sons.

- **2026 Asian Games Contingent Approved:** Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports cleared a **503-athlete contingent** (269 men, 234 women) across 36 disciplines for the Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.
- **Women's Cricket:** Indian Women's Team led by Harmanpreet Kaur kicked off their Asian Games campaign against host nation Japan.

Art, Culture, Environment & Science

Awards & Honors

56th Dadasaheb Phalke Award (for 2024)

- **Recipient:** Veteran actor **Anant Nag**.

- **New Species Discovered:** **Duttaphrynus phawngpui** (a montane toad) discovered in Phawngpui National Park, Lawngtlai district, Mizoram.
- **Urban Afforestation ("Bharat Vann"):** Central Delhi deployed the **Miyawaki afforestation method** to build high-density micro-forests serving as biological

particulate filters against vehicular emissions.

National & International Important Days (September 18)

- **International Equal Pay Day:** Recognized by the UN to advocate for equal pay for work of equal value.
- **World Bamboo Day:** Aimed at raising awareness about the economic and environmental conservation values of bamboo.
- **World Water Monitoring Day:** Promotes public awareness and involvement in protecting water resources worldwide.

Practice Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Q1. Which river is the 232.6-meter-high dam of the Kishau Multipurpose Project being constructed on?

- (a) Giri River
- (b) Tons River
- (c) Yamuna River
- (d) Pabbar River

• **Answer:** (b) Tons River

• **Explanation:** The dam is located on the Tons River along the border of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh under a 90:10 Centre-State national project funding framework.

Q2. Who among the following has been named the recipient of the 56th Dadasaheb Phalke Award?

- (a) Mithun Chakraborty
- (b) Anant Nag
- (c) Kamal Haasan
- (d) Chiranjeevi

• **Answer:** (b) Anant Nag

- **Explanation:** Veteran Kannada actor Anant Nag became the 56th recipient, making him the second Kannada artist to receive the award after Dr. Rajkumar.

Q3. Under the PM Vishwakarma Scheme, what is the maximum amount of collateral-free loan provided in the first tranche to registered artisans?

- (a) ₹50,000
- (b) ₹1,000,000
- (c) ₹1,000,000 at 5% interest rate
- (d) ₹2,000,000

• **Answer:** (c) ₹1,000,000 at 5% interest rate

• **Explanation:** Artisans get collateral-free Enterprise Loans up to ₹3 lakh in two tranches (₹1 lakh first, followed by ₹2 lakh) at a 5% interest rate.

Q4. The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) partnered with which premier institution to setup a Drone & Anti-Drone Centre of Excellence in Behror, Rajasthan?

- (a) IIT Bombay
- (b) IIT Delhi
- (c) IIT Kanpur
- (d) IISc Bangalore

• **Answer:** (c) IIT Kanpur

• **Explanation:** CISF and IIT Kanpur signed two MoUs focusing on counter-drone technology, RF detection, and cybersecurity for critical infrastructure.

Q5. Duttaphrynus phawngpui, a recently discovered species in Mizoram, belongs to which category?

- (a) Freshwater Fish
- (b) Montane Toad
- (c) Spider

(d) Pit Viper

- **Answer:** (b) Montane Toad
- **Explanation:** Duttaphrynus phawngpui was discovered in Mizoram's Phawngpui National Park.

National News

Q1. Which Marathi movie has been selected as India's official entry for the Best International Feature Film category at the 99th Academy Awards (Oscars 2027)?

- (A) Puglya
- (B) Gondhal
- (C) Sairat
- (D) Court

Answer: (B) Gondhal

Explanation: The Film Federation of India (FFI) selected the Marathi thriller Gondhal, directed by Santosh Davakhar, as India's official entry for the 99th Academy Awards.

- **Context & Plot:** Set against the backdrop of Maharashtra's traditional ritualistic folk art form, Gondhal narrates the story of a married woman named Suman entangled in love, betrayal, and social dynamics.
- **Selection Process:** The decision was made by a 15-member jury headed by renowned filmmakers after screening 33 official submissions from across India.

Q2. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) recently introduced the 'OneTag' feature on the Rajmargyatra app. What is the primary purpose of this initiative?

- (A) To issue free FASTags to electric commercial vehicles
- (B) To allow FASTag portability across banks without changing the physical tag

(C) To provide real-time GPS tracking for toll evasion penalties

(D) To convert existing FASTags into fuel payment cards

Answer: (B) To allow FASTag portability across banks without changing the physical tag

Explanation: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari launched the **OneTag** feature, developed by the Indian Highway Management Company Limited (IHMCL) in collaboration with NPCI, available through the Rajmargyatra mobile app.

- **Key Mechanism:** OneTag permits vehicle owners to switch their FASTag issuer bank smoothly without replacing the physical RFID tag attached to their vehicle windshield.
- **Benefits:** It reduces e-waste, eliminates delays associated with ordering new tags, and retains the unique tag ID linked directly to the vehicle registration number.

Q3. In September 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated SEMICON India 2026, highlighting the launch of 'Semicon 2.0'. What is the financial outlay approved for Semicon 2.0?

- (A) ₹76,000 crore
- (B) ₹1,00,000 crore
- (C) ₹1,27,500 crore
- (D) ₹1,50,000 crore

Answer: (C) ₹1,27,500 crore

Explanation: Following the success of Semicon 1.0 (outlay of ₹76,000 crore), the Union Cabinet approved **Semicon 2.0** with a total financial outlay of **₹1,27,500 crore**.

- **Core Pillars:** Semicon 2.0 is built on six critical pillars, including raw materials & specialized gases, manufacturing equipment, applied R&D, supply chain

integration, talent ecosystem creation, and advanced packaging.

- **Current Status:** 12 semiconductor projects have been approved so far, with three commercial production units under Semicon 1.0 already operational.

International News

Q4. Who became the richest person in Asia according to global wealth indexes updated in September 2026?

- (A) Mukesh Ambani
- (B) Gautam Adani
- (C) Zhang Yiming
- (D) Tadashi Yanai

Answer: (C) Zhang Yiming

Explanation: Zhang Yiming, the 41-year-old co-founder of ByteDance (the parent company of TikTok and Douyin), emerged as Asia's richest person.

- **Valuation Surge:** Driven by ByteDance's expansion into AI models, search platforms, and e-commerce integrations across Asia and Western markets, Zhang Yiming's net worth surpassed Indian industrialist Mukesh Ambani.
- **Global Standing:** He also ranks among the top 10 wealthiest individuals globally, reflecting the growing dominance of Asian consumer tech firms in global AI markets.

Q5. In a significant monetary policy shift, the Bank of Japan (BoJ) raised its benchmark interest rate to which level, marking its highest interest rate since 1995?

- (A) 0.50%
- (B) 0.75%
- (C) 1.25%
- (D) 2.00%

Answer: (C) 1.25%

Explanation: The Bank of Japan (BoJ) ended decades of ultra-loose monetary policy and negative interest rates by raising its key short-term policy interest rate to **1.25%**.

- **Economic Drivers:** Persistent core inflation sticking near 1.7%–2.0%, steady real wage increases, and currency depreciation pressures pushed Japan's central bank to adjust rates.
- **Historical Context:** This represents the highest policy rate set by Japan since 1995, impacting global carry-trade dynamics and foreign exchange markets.

Q6. India signed the First Additional Protocol to its Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with which regional trade bloc to introduce paperless trade?

- (A) ASEAN
- (B) MERCOSUR
- (C) SAFTA
- (D) GCC

Answer: (B) MERCOSUR

Explanation: India and MERCOSUR (Southern Common Market, comprising South American economies like Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay) signed the First Additional Protocol to the existing India–MERCOSUR PTA.

- **Key Provision:** The agreement formally enables the cross-border acceptance of electronic Certificates of Origin (e-CoO).
- **Impact:** This paperless trade mechanism reduces customs clearance times, lowers administrative costs, and streamlines trade flows between India and South America.

Q7. The 9th ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry (AIMMAF) was hosted in which city?



- (A) Jakarta
- (B) Singapore
- (C) New Delhi
- (D) Kuala Lumpur

Answer: (C) New Delhi

Explanation: The 9th AIMMAF took place in **New Delhi**, focusing on strengthening agricultural trade, climate-resilient farming, and food security between India and ASEAN member states.

- **Key Highlights:** Both sides endorsed the ASEAN Food, Agriculture and Forestry Sectoral Plan 2026–2030 and highlighted that bilateral trade in agricultural goods exceeded USD 128 billion in FY 2025–26.

Economics & Banking

Q8. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently cancelled the Certificates of Registration (CoR) of five Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs). Which of the following was among the entities whose license was cancelled?

- (A) Tata Capital Ltd
- (B) Rolta Holding and Finance Corporation
- (C) Muthoot Finance Ltd
- (D) Bajaj Finance Ltd

Answer: (B) Rolta Holding and Finance Corporation

Explanation: Under Section 45-IA (6) of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, the RBI cancelled the CoR of 5 NBFCs due to non-compliance with capital adequacy norms, governance failures, and cessation of core activities.

- **Entities Affected:** The list includes Rolta Holding and Finance Corporation, Dar's Financial Services, Vasudeo Securities,

Parsoli Corporation, and A C Choksi Financial Services.

- **Additional Action:** An additional 8 NBFCs voluntarily surrendered their registration certificates after exiting non-banking operations.

Q9. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) launched India's first sovereign AI compact model built specifically for retail banking called:

- (A) BharatBot Banking
- (B) FiMI Banking
- (C) FinAI India
- (D) RuPay Intelligence

Answer: (B) FiMI Banking

Explanation: NPCI announced the creation of "Finance Model for India (FiMI) Banking", India's first indigenous, sovereign AI compact model engineered specifically for the Indian banking and payment infrastructure.

- **Purpose:** It operates offline/on-edge to process localized financial queries, fraud detection algorithms, and multi-lingual voice payments safely while keeping sensitive customer financial data within domestic borders.

Q10. For the first time in twelve years, the Union Cabinet approved a proposal to revise which social security threshold under the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF)?

- (A) Gratuity calculation ceiling
- (B) EPFO statutory wage ceiling
- (C) Employees' State Insurance (ESI) wage limit
- (D) Minimum pension under EPS-95

Answer: (B) EPFO statutory wage ceiling

Explanation: The Union Cabinet announced an upward revision of the **EPFO wage ceiling**.

- **Historical Context:** The wage ceiling was last updated in September 2014, when it was raised from ₹6,500 to ₹15,000 per month.
- **Impact:** The enhancement expands mandatory social security coverage to millions of formal sector employees who were previously excluded due to basic salary caps crossing the ₹15,000 threshold.

Q11. According to official data released for August 2026, India's Consumer Price Index (CPI) combined retail inflation stood at what rate (with base year updated to 2024=100)?

- (A) 3.85%
- (B) 4.82%
- (C) 5.95%
- (D) 6.10%

Answer: (B) 4.82%

Explanation: Official macroeconomic statistics showed headline CPI retail inflation standing at **4.82%** for August 2026 (up from 4.45% in July) under the recalculated series.

- **Breakdown:** Food inflation stood at **5.95%**, while core inflation (excluding food and energy) remained comfortable at **1.7%**, well within the RBI's target band of 4% ($\pm 2\%$).

Sports

Q12. Which Asian city is set to host the upcoming 20th edition of the Asian Games in 2026?

- (A) Doha, Qatar
- (B) Nagoya, Japan
- (C) Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- (D) Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Answer: (B) Nagoya, Japan

Explanation: The 20th Asian Games (2026 Asian Games) will be co-hosted by **Aichi Prefecture and Nagoya, Japan**.

- **Context:** This marks the third time Japan is hosting the Asian Games, after Tokyo (1958) and Hiroshima (1994).
- **Indian Contingent:** Top athletes like shot-putter Tajinderpal Singh Toor and shooter Manu Bhaker are leading India's multi-sport preparation pipeline.

Appointments

Q13. Tavengwa Mukuhani has been appointed as the ICC Deputy Chairperson until November 2027. Which country's cricket board does he currently head?

- (A) Kenya
- (B) Zimbabwe
- (C) South Africa
- (D) West Indies

Answer: (B) Zimbabwe

Explanation: Tavengwa Mukuhani, Chairman of Zimbabwe Cricket, was named the Deputy Chairperson of the International Cricket Council (ICC).

- **Succession:** He succeeds Imran Khwaja and will serve in the position until November 2027.
- **Significance:** Mukuhani becomes the first administrator from Zimbabwe to hold this high-ranking role at the ICC.

Defense News

Q14. The Government of West Bengal approved the establishment of a new DRDO missile testing site called the 'Navdurga Missile Test Range' (NMTR). Where is NMTR primarily located to reduce pressure on Chandipur/Kalam Island?

Free Job Alert

- (A) Nagayalanka
- (B) Junput, East Medinipur
- (C) Wheeler Island
- (D) Digha Beach

Answer: (B) Junput, East Medinipur

Explanation: To support expanding missile tests, clearance was granted for the Defense Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) launch facility in **Junput, East Medinipur (West Bengal)**, alongside the development of the **Navdurga Missile Test Range (NMTR)** at **Nagayalanka (Andhra Pradesh)**.

- **Operational Goal:** This reduces testing pressure on Odisha's Integrated Test Range (ITR) facilities at Chandipur-on-Sea and Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Island.
- **About DRDO:** Established in 1958, headquartered in New Delhi; Motto: "Balasya Mulam Vigyanam" (Strength's origin is in Science).

Q15. The Indian Defence Service of Engineers (IDSE) celebrated its Raising Day on September 17, 2026. Which edition of the Raising Day was observed?

- (A) 50th
- (B) 65th
- (C) 77th
- (D) 100th

Answer: (C) 77th

Explanation: The Indian Defence Service of Engineers (IDSE) marked its **77th Raising Day** in New Delhi.

- **Function:** IDSE is an elite cadre of premier defense engineers functioning under the Military Engineer Services (MES) within the Ministry of Defence.

- **Focus Area:** The 2026 event emphasized transparency, accountability, and digital tracking via tools like the Electronic Measurement Book (e-MB) for military infrastructure creation.

Q16. The Ministry of Defence previously placed an order worth ₹6,828.36 crore for 70 HTT-40 aircraft. What type of defense asset is HTT-40?

- (A) Heavy-lift military transport helicopter
- (B) Basic Trainer Aircraft
- (C) Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle (UCAV)
- (D) Anti-submarine warfare drone

Answer: (B) Basic Trainer Aircraft

Explanation: The HTT-40 (Hindustan Turbo Trainer-40) is an indigenous **Basic Trainer Aircraft** designed and manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

- **Technical Specs:** Features modern avionics, tandem seating, zero-zero ejection seats, and a full glass cockpit to train stage-I flight cadets of the Indian Air Force.

Q17. Where was the multi-national Table Top Exercise (TTX) under the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) conducted in September 2026?

- (A) Andaman & Nicobar Command, Port Blair
- (B) Eastern Naval Command, Visakhapatnam
- (C) Southern Naval Command, Kochi
- (D) Western Naval Command, Mumbai

Answer: (B) Eastern Naval Command, Visakhapatnam

Explanation: The Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) concluded its joint Table Top Exercise (TTX) at the **Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**.

- **Focus Areas:** Maritime safety, counter-terrorism, combating transnational crime, cyber security, and humanitarian assistance



and disaster relief (HADR) among Indian Ocean member states (India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius, Bangladesh).

Government Schemes & MoUs

Q18. The PM Vishwakarma Scheme completed three years of implementation on September 18, 2026. Which ministry administers this central sector scheme?

- (A) Ministry of Rural Development
- (B) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- (C) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)
- (D) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Answer: (C) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)

Explanation: Launched on September 17, 2023, the PM Vishwakarma Scheme completed 3 successful years. It is nodalized by the **Ministry of MSME** in collaboration with the Ministry of Skill Development.

- **Key Achievements:** Over 30 lakh artisans registered, 24.50 lakh completed basic skill training, 18.15 lakh received modern toolkits, and over ₹5,297 crore in collateral-free loans (at 5% interest) was disbursed to 6.18 lakh beneficiaries.

Q19. In September 2026, India completed four years of 'Project Cheetah'. Which sanctuary/national park served as the primary site for this reintroduction program?

- (A) Jim Corbett National Park
- (B) Kuno National Park
- (C) Gir National Park
- (D) Kaziranga National Park

Answer: (B) Kuno National Park

Explanation: India marked 4 years of Project Cheetah—the world's first intercontinental wild carnivore translocation project.

- **Location:** Introduced at Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh in September 2022.
- **Status:** Cheetahs were officially declared extinct in India in 1952. The wild population in Kuno has expanded through successful second-generation births on Indian soil.

Environment & Science Discoveries

Q20. A new subterranean, legless, burrowing amphibian species named Gegeneophis chandgadi was discovered by researchers in which region?

- (A) Eastern Himalayas, Arunachal Pradesh
- (B) Northern Western Ghats, Maharashtra
- (C) Nilgiri Hills, Tamil Nadu
- (D) Nicobar Islands

Answer: (B) Northern Western Ghats, Maharashtra

Explanation: A multi-institutional research team led by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) discovered a new species of caecilian (legless amphibian) named **Gegeneophis chandgadi** in the Northern Western Ghats of Chandgad, Maharashtra.

- **Characteristics:** It lives completely underground in rich humus soil, contributing to bio-indicator studies of ecological health in the Western Ghats biodiversity hotspot.

Q21. Astronomers utilizing Keck Observatory and ESO's Very Large Telescope confirmed the discovery of an extremely young protoplanet named 'Elias 2-24 b'. What is the estimated age of this planet?

- (A) Less than 1 million years old

- (B) 100 million years old
- (C) 1.5 billion years old
- (D) 4.5 billion years old

Answer: (A) Less than 1 million years old

Explanation: Elias 2-24 b is one of the youngest exoplanets ever detected, with an estimated age of **less than one million years**.

- **Observation:** Embedded inside a dense protoplanetary disk of gas and dust, it provides scientists with a real-time view of how gas giants accrete matter and form in early solar systems.

Important Days (National & International)

Q22. World Bamboo Day is observed globally on which date every year?

- (A) 15 September
- (B) 16 September
- (C) 18 September
- (D) 21 September

Answer: (C) 18 September

Explanation: World Bamboo Day is celebrated every year on **September 18** to raise global awareness regarding the conservation and sustainable commercial utilization of bamboo.

- **2026 Theme:** Focuses on "Regenerative Development and Responsible Use of Bamboo".
- **Botanical Fact:** Bamboo is classified taxonomically as a perennial grass (not a tree), making it one of the fastest-growing renewable resources on Earth.

Q23. What is the designated date for the annual United Nations observance of International Equal Pay Day?

- (A) 8 March

- (B) 18 September
- (C) 24 October
- (D) 10 December

Answer: (B) 18 September

Explanation: Declared by the UN General Assembly, **International Equal Pay Day** is observed annually on **18 September**.

- **Objective:** It highlights the persistent global gender pay gap and reinforces the principle of "Equal pay for work of equal value", encouraging equal remuneration practices across industries.

Q24. World Patient Safety Day, organized by the World Health Organization (WHO), is observed annually on:

- (A) 15 September
- (B) 17 September
- (C) 18 September
- (D) 20 September

Answer: (B) 17 September

Explanation: World Patient Safety Day is celebrated on **September 17**.

- **Goal:** Established by the World Health Assembly in 2019, its primary objective is to enhance global understanding of patient safety, reduce healthcare-associated harm, and promote safe clinical practices.

Art & Culture & Festivals

Q25. The folk ritual performance Gondhal, recently featured prominently in national news, belongs traditionally to which Indian state?

- (A) Gujarat
- (B) Rajasthan
- (C) Maharashtra
- (D) Odisha

Answer: (C) Maharashtra

Explanation: Gondhal is a traditional, dramatic folk art form and religious ritual performance native to **Maharashtra** (and parts of Karnataka).

- **Cultural Context:** Dedicated to deities like Goddess Bhavani or Renuka, it combines singing, dancing, and storytelling accompanied by traditional instruments like the Sambhal and Tuntuna.

Q26. The historic 'Kumbabhishekam' (consecration ceremony) was conducted at the Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple. In which city is this temple situated?

- (A) Thanjavur
- (B) Madurai
- (C) Kanchipuram
- (D) Tiruchirappalli

Answer: (B) Madurai

Explanation: The historic Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple is located on the southern bank of the Vaigai River in **Madurai, Tamil Nadu**.

- **Architecture:** Constructed primarily in the Dravidian architecture style, the temple complex features 14 gateway towers (gopurams), including the famous multi-tiered outer towers.

Banking & Policy Rules

Q27. With reference to payments technology, what does 'MDR' stand for in UPI and card merchant transactions?

- (A) Minimum Deposit Rate
- (B) Merchant Discount Rate
- (C) Marginal Delivery Ratio
- (D) Mutual Direct Reimbursement

Answer: (B) Merchant Discount Rate

Explanation: Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) is the fee charged to a merchant by a bank for accepting digital payments from customers.

- **Key Provision:** While standard peer-to-peer (P2P) and small peer-to-merchant (P2M) transactions on UPI remain zero-MDR, regulatory frameworks specify MDR rules for specialized commercial transactions and credit card-linked UPI payments.

Q28. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index 2026, which country secured the 1st position for the 17th consecutive edition?

- (A) Finland
- (B) Norway
- (C) Iceland
- (D) New Zealand

Answer: (C) Iceland

Explanation: Iceland ranked 1st in the Global Gender Gap Index 2026 published by the World Economic Forum (WEF).

- **Performance:** Iceland remains the only country to have closed over 90% of its overall gender gap.
- **Four Pillars:** The index measures gender parity across 4 main dimensions: Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment.

History & Polity

Q29. Under Article 44 of the Indian Constitution, the State shall endeavor to secure a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) for citizens. In which section of the Constitution is Article 44 placed?

- (A) Part III - Fundamental Rights
- (B) Part IV - Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)

(C) Part IV-A - Fundamental Duties

(D) Part V - The Union Executive

Answer: (B) Part IV - Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)

Explanation: Article 44 is located under **Part IV (Directive Principles of State Policy)** of the Constitution of India.

- **Constituent Assembly Debates:** Dr. B.R. Ambedkar advocated for UCC as a desirable ultimate goal while recognizing that its implementation should initially remain voluntary to maintain social cohesion during the transition period. DPSP provisions are non-justiciable in court but fundamental to governance.

Science & Infrastructure Acts

Q30. The SHANTI Act passed by Parliament supports clean power generation for AI data centers. What technology does it specifically focus on expanding?

- (A) Offshore Wind Turbines
- (B) Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and Micro Nuclear Reactors
- (C) Geothermal Energy Wells
- (D) Tidal Wave Power Generators

Answer: (B) Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and Micro Nuclear Reactors

Explanation: The **SHANTI Act** facilitates private-public partnerships to build **Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and Micro Nuclear Reactors**.

- **Data Center Surge:** India's installed data center power demand grew from 375 MW in 2020 to over 1.57 GW. SMRs provide zero-carbon, continuous baseload power required by AI supercomputers and cloud server farms.

