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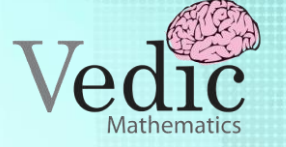
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NATIONAL NEWS

GeM's Womaniya Initiative Completes 7 Years Empowering Women



This milestone highlights a significant shift in how India leverages technology to foster economic inclusivity. By integrating gender-responsive policies into a digital marketplace, the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has essentially created a "fast track" for women-led businesses that previously struggled with the complexities of public tenders.

The Impact of the "Womaniya" Initiative

The success of this initiative can be attributed to three core pillars that have restructured the procurement landscape for women:

- **Removal of Intermediaries:** By providing a direct digital interface, the platform eliminates "middlemen" who often diluted the profits of small-scale women artisans and SHGs.
- **Capacity Building:** GeM doesn't just provide a storefront; it offers training and toolkits to help women navigate the digital registration and bidding process.



- **Market Visibility:** It brings hyper-local products—from tribal handicrafts to specialized services—to the attention of national-level government departments and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).

Understanding the GeM Ecosystem

The Government e-Marketplace acts as a unified portal for the procurement of common-use goods and services. Here is how the ecosystem bridges the gap between small sellers and large-scale government demand:

Feature	Impact on Women Entrepreneurs
Direct Access	Allows SHGs to sell directly to ministries without needing physical offices in Delhi or state capitals.
Transparency	Real-time tracking of payments and orders reduces the risk of corruption or delayed processing.
Reserved Categories	Ensures that a percentage of government procurement is sourced from MSEs, with specific focuses on women-led units.

Why This Matters for the Economy

When women-led Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) gain access to formal government contracts, the "multiplier effect" is substantial. It leads to:

1. **Financial Independence:** Steady government orders provide the predictable cash flow needed for business expansion.
2. **Job Creation:** Women entrepreneurs are statistically more likely to hire other women, boosting female labor force participation.

3. **Digital Literacy:** Joining the platform necessitates a level of digital proficiency that translates to other areas of business and life.

Knowledge Check for Proficiency

1. What is the primary objective of the "Womaniya" initiative launched by GeM?

- A) To provide subsidized loans to urban women.
- B) To enhance the participation of women-led Micro and Small Enterprises in government procurement.
- C) To recruit women directly into government administrative roles.
- D) To provide free digital literacy training to school-aged girls.

2. When was the Womaniya Initiative officially launched?

- A) January 2014
- B) August 2017
- C) January 2019
- D) October 2021

3. Which of the following groups is a specific focus of the Womaniya Initiative alongside women entrepreneurs?

- A) Large-scale multinational corporations
B) Self-Help Groups (SHGs)
C) Foreign Export Houses
D) Public Sector Banks

4. How does the Womaniya Initiative aim to reduce traditional entry barriers for its target beneficiaries?

- A) By setting up physical retail stores in every district.
B) By acting as a middleman between sellers and buyers.
C) By offering a direct, transparent, and fully digital interface.
D) By mandating that all government purchases must be from women-led businesses.

Answer Key

Question	Answer
1	B (Enhance participation in government procurement)
2	C (January 2019)
3	B (Self-Help Groups)
4	C (Direct, transparent, and fully digital interface)

NATIONAL NEWS

India Post Delivers First ONDC Order, Enters Digital Logistics Era



This development is a game-changer for "Bharat" (rural and semi-urban India). By turning its centuries-old network into a high-tech logistics backbone for the **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)**, India Post is solving the "last-mile" problem that has historically kept small rural sellers away from the national market.

The official delivery took place on **January 15, 2026**, marking the formal entry of the Department of Posts as a **Logistics Service Provider (LSP)** on the network.

How the Integration Works: The "Click & Book" Model

The Department of Posts has moved beyond simple mail to a technology-driven logistics system. Under this new model:

- Digital Booking:** Sellers on any ONDC-enabled app can now choose "India Post" as their delivery partner.

- **Doorstep Pickup:** Sellers generate a digital pickup request; a postal agent then collects the parcel directly from their premises.
- **End-to-End Tracking:** The entire journey—from the first mile to the final destination—is tracked via India Post's integrated software.

onboarding sellers who might otherwise be skeptical of digital platforms.

Note: This move aligns with the "Vocal for Local" and **One District One Product (ODOP)** initiatives, as it provides the physical infrastructure needed to move local products across state borders.

Key Milestone Details

Feature	Details
First Order Date	Booked on January 13, 2026; Delivered on January 15, 2026 .
First Consignment	Sourced from a seller in Srinagar, J&K , and delivered to New Delhi .
Enabling Partner	UdyamWell , an initiative supporting rural "Bharatpreneurs."
Network Scale	Leverages over 1.6 lakh (160,000) Post Offices , 90% of which are in rural areas.

Knowledge Check for Proficiency

1. Which organization recently marked a major digital milestone by delivering its first online order booked through the ONDC platform?

- A) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)
- B) Department of Posts (India Post)
- C) Container Corporation of India (CONCOR)
- D) National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)

2. What is the primary nature of the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)?

- A) A private e-commerce marketplace owned by a single company.
- B) A government-backed initiative for an open, interoperable digital commerce network.
- C) A social media platform for small-scale entrepreneurs.
- D) A global logistics network exclusively for international shipping.

3. Why is India Post considered a "crucial enabler" for the digital commerce ecosystem in India?

Why This Matters for Small Sellers

For a rural artisan or farmer, private courier services are often expensive or simply unavailable. India Post's entry provides:

1. **Universal Access:** Even a seller in a remote Himalayan village or a tribal belt in Odisha can now ship products to a metro city as easily as a large brand.
2. **Affordability:** By offering competitive government-regulated rates, it reduces the "logistics tax" that usually eats into the profits of MSMEs.
3. **Trust & Reliability:** The "Postman" is a trusted figure in rural India, which helps in

- A) It provides the fastest satellite internet to rural areas.
- B) It operates one of the world's largest postal networks for last-mile connectivity.
- C) It serves as the primary regulator for all digital payments in India.
- D) It manufactures the hardware required for digital transactions.

Question	Answer
1	B (Department of Posts)
2	B (Government-backed open, interoperable network)
3	B (Large network enabling last-mile connectivity)
4	C (Digital commerce and logistics)
5	B (Moving beyond traditional mail to support e-commerce)

4. The integration of India Post with ONDC is expected to primarily strengthen which ecosystem?

- A) Space research and development.
- B) Traditional print media and advertising.
- C) Digital commerce and logistics.
- D) Physical banking and brick-and-mortar retail.

5. Which of the following best describes India Post's "expanding role" mentioned in the text?

- A) Transitioning from logistics to purely financial services.
- B) Moving beyond traditional mail services to support modern e-commerce.
- C) Replacing private courier services entirely across the country.
- D) Focusing exclusively on international mail delivery.

Answer Key

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Yemen PM Resigns, Foreign Minister Appointed as New Prime Minister



This transition in Yemen represents more than just a change in personnel; it is a strategic restructuring of the **Presidential Leadership Council (PLC)** to consolidate control amidst a volatile power struggle between regional heavyweights.

The resignation of **Salem bin Breik** and the appointment of **Shaya Mohsen Zindani** on

January 15, 2026, follows a dramatic military and political escalation in southern Yemen.

The Leadership Shift

The PLC, headed by **Rashad al-Alimi**, officially approved the resignation of bin Breik during a meeting in Riyadh. The transition moved swiftly to ensure that the internationally recognized government maintained a unified front.

- **Outgoing PM:** Salem bin Breik (Now appointed as a senior financial and economic advisor to the PLC head).
- **Incoming PM:** Shaya Mohsen Zindani (Formerly the Foreign Minister and a career diplomat known for his close ties to al-Alimi).
- **The Mandate:** Zindani has been tasked with forming a new cabinet that "keeps pace with the transformations" recently experienced in the country.

Context: The "Southern Crisis"

The catalyst for this reshuffle was a major rupture within the anti-Houthi coalition in late December 2025 and early January 2026:

1. **STC Offensive:** Forces loyal to the **Southern Transitional Council (STC)**, backed by the UAE, seized key southern provinces like Hadramaut and Al-Mahrah, threatening Saudi border security and oil operations.
2. **Saudi Response:** Saudi Arabia conducted heavy airstrikes on STC positions and massed troops to roll back the advance. By early January, STC control collapsed, and

Saudi-backed forces retook the port city of **Aden**.

+1

3. **The Purge:** Following the military victory, the PLC stripped STC leader **Aidarous al-Zubaidi** of his council membership on charges of high treason. Other UAE-aligned ministers were also dismissed or referred for investigation.

+1

Why Zindani?

Shaya Mohsen Zindani's appointment is viewed as a move to **centralize sovereign decision-making** under Saudi-backed leadership. As a veteran diplomat from the al-Dhale' governorate, he is expected to:

- **Stabilize the Economy:** Address the collapse of the Yemeni riyal and the paralysis in state services (like the electricity crisis in Aden).
- **Navigate Geopolitics:** Use his foreign policy background to manage the strained relations between Saudi Arabia and the UAE regarding Yemen's future.
- **Restore Institutions:** Integrate various security and military factions under the central authority of the Defense and Interior Ministries.

Regional Implications

This change marks a significant setback for southern separatist ambitions and signals Saudi Arabia's intent to lead a more unified Yemeni government. However, with the **Houthis** still



controlling the north (including Sanaa) and internal tensions remaining high, Zindani faces a daunting task in providing a "model of a functional state."

Knowledge Check for Proficiency

1. Who recently resigned as the Prime Minister of Yemen's Saudi-backed government in January 2026?

- A) Shaya Mohsen Zindani
- B) Salem bin Breik
- C) Maeen Abdulmalik Saeed
- D) Rashad al-Alimi

2. Who has been appointed as the new Prime Minister and tasked with forming a new cabinet?

- A) The current Defense Minister
- B) The former Governor of Aden
- C) Shaya Mohsen Zindani
- D) Salem bin Breik

3. Prior to being appointed as the head of government, what role did Shaya Mohsen Zindani hold?

- A) Minister of Finance
- B) Minister of Interior
- C) Ambassador to Saudi Arabia
- D) Foreign Minister

4. What is the primary objective of the leadership council in swiftly appointing a new Prime Minister, according to the report?

- A) To dissolve the council and hold immediate elections
- B) To ensure continuity in governance amid political and security challenges
- C) To merge with the Houthi administration
- D) To reduce the influence of the Saudi-led coalition

5. The political transition in Yemen is taking place against a backdrop of:

- A) A peaceful transition to a unified democracy
- B) Renewed regional tensions and prolonged civil war
- C) The complete withdrawal of all foreign diplomatic missions
- D) A historic economic boom in the Gulf region

Answer Key

Question	Correct Answer
1	B) Salem bin Breik
2	C) Shaya Mohsen Zindani
3	D) Foreign Minister
4	B) To ensure continuity in governance...
5	B) Renewed regional tensions and prolonged civil war





APPOINTMENT

Centre Appoints Rakesh Aggarwal as New Director General of NIA



The Union Government has significantly restructured the leadership of India's top internal security and border-guarding agencies. These appointments, approved by the **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** on **January 14, 2026**, emphasize institutional continuity and operational experience at a time of heightened regional security concerns.

+1

New Leadership Appointments

Agency	Newly Appointed Chief	Batch & Cadre	Tenure Until
NIA	Rakesh Aggarwal	1994, Himachal Pradesh	August 31, 2028
BSF	Praveen Kumar	1993, West Bengal	September 30, 2030

Agency	Newly Appointed Chief	Batch & Cadre	Tenure Until
ITBP	Shatrujeet Singh Kapoor	1990, Haryana	October 31, 2026

Key Institutional Changes

1. National Investigation Agency (NIA)

Rakesh Aggarwal takes over as the regular Director General after serving as the Special DG and holding the interim charge following the repatriation of the previous chief, Sadanand Vasant Date, to Maharashtra.

- **Focus:** His tenure is expected to focus on the NIA's evolving role in dismantling terror-funding networks and investigating global extremist links within India.

2. Border Security Force (BSF)

Praveen Kumar, who was previously the Director General of the ITBP and holding additional charge of the BSF, has now been formally moved to head the BSF.

- **Focus:** Tasked with guarding the sensitive borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh, his long tenure (until 2030) suggests a government focus on long-term border infrastructure and technological upgrades (like the Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System).

3. Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)

Shatrujeet Singh Kapoor, the former Director General of Police (DGP) in Haryana, has been appointed to lead the ITBP.





- **Focus:** The ITBP is the primary force guarding the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China. Kapoor's appointment comes as the force continues to expand its presence in high-altitude Himalayan sectors.

Strategic Significance

This "top-to-bottom" refresh of security leadership ensures that three critical domains—**anti-terror investigations (NIA)**, **western/eastern border management (BSF)**, and **northern mountain warfare (ITBP)**—are led by officers with extensive field and administrative experience. It aligns with the Ministry of Home Affairs' "zero-tolerance" policy toward terrorism and its push for modernized border security.

Knowledge Check for Proficiency

1. Who has been appointed as the new Director General (DG) of the National Investigation Agency (NIA)?

- A) Sadanand Vasant Date
- B) Rakesh Aggarwal
- C) Shatrujeet Singh Kapoor
- D) Praveen Kumar

2. Senior IPS officer Shatrujeet Singh Kapoor has been appointed to lead which of the following Central Armed Police Forces?

- A) Border Security Force (BSF)
- B) Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)

C) Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)

D) Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)

3. Praveen Kumar, a 1993-batch IPS officer, has taken over as the Director General of which security organization?

- A) National Investigation Agency (NIA)
- B) Border Security Force (BSF)
- C) Intelligence Bureau (IB)
- D) Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW)

4. Which committee is responsible for approving the appointments of the DGs of major national security and paramilitary organizations?

- A) Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)
- B) Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)
- C) National Security Council (NSC)
- D) Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)

5. Rakesh Aggarwal, the newly appointed NIA chief, belongs to which state's IPS cadre?

- A) Himachal Pradesh
- B) Haryana
- C) West Bengal
- D) Maharashtra





Answer Key

Question	Correct Answer
1	B) Rakesh Aggarwal
2	C) Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)
3	B) Border Security Force (BSF)
4	B) Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)
5	A) Himachal Pradesh

Quick Reference Table

Organization	New Director General	Previous Role / Batch
NIA	Rakesh Aggarwal	Special DG, NIA (1994 Batch)
BSF	Praveen Kumar	DG, ITBP (1993 Batch)
ITBP	Shatrujeet Singh Kapoor	Former DGP, Haryana (1990 Batch)

SPORT

Laura Wolvaardt Named ICC Women's Player of the Month for December 2025

Laura Wolvaardt's crowning as the ICC Women's Player of the Month for December 2025 is a fitting tribute to one of the most dominant individual months in recent cricket history.



This recognition, announced on January 15, 2026, marks her second such award in just three months (having also won in October 2025), underscoring her current status as the premier batter in the women's game.

December 2025: A Month of Pure Dominance

Wolvaardt's performance against Ireland was nothing short of a masterclass in both aggression and endurance. Across the T20I and ODI series, she amassed 392 runs and struck three centuries.

1. The T20I Blitz (Series Won 2-0*)

In the opening T20I at Cape Town, Wolvaardt played what many are calling the "innings of the year."

- **The Score:** 115* off just 65 balls.
- **The Impact:** She hit 15 boundaries and 5 sixes, striking at over 205. It was the seventh-fastest century in Women's T20I history.
- **Overall T20I Stats:** 137 runs in the series, losing her wicket only once.

2. The ODI Masterclass (Series Won 3-0)



Transitioning to the longer format, she maintained her relentless form to lead South Africa to a clinical whitewash.

- **2nd ODI (Gqeberha):** Smashed **124 off 111 balls** (19 boundaries), anchoring a massive team total of 375.
- **3rd ODI (Johannesburg):** Followed up with an unbeaten **100 off 93 balls*** to comfortably chase down Ireland's target.
- **Overall ODI Stats:** 255 runs at an average of 127.50.

Key Takeaways from Her Achievement

- **Elite Company:** She edged out high-caliber nominees, including India's explosive opener **Shafali Verma** and her own teammate **Sune Luus**, who had a stellar month herself with 323 runs and 8 wickets.
- **Captaincy and Form:** Since taking over the captaincy, Wolvaardt has seen her personal form skyrocket, currently holding the **No. 1 ranking in ICC ODIs** and a top-5 spot in T20Is.
- **Looking Ahead:** Wolvaardt has signaled that her focus is now on the **2026 T20 World Cup**, intending to use this momentum to finally secure a major ICC trophy for the Proteas.

"To win it two times in three months is very special... With the T20 World Cup 2026 on the horizon, my focus is firmly on carrying this momentum forward." — *Laura Wolvaardt*

1. Which South African cricketer was named the ICC Women's Player of the Month for December 2025?

- A) Marizanne Kapp
- B) Laura Wolvaardt
- C) Suné Luus
- D) Chloe Tryon

2. Against which team did Laura Wolvaardt score consistent centuries across formats to earn this recognition?

- A) England
- B) India
- C) Ireland
- D) Australia

3. In addition to being a top-order batter, what other role does Laura Wolvaardt hold within the South African national team?

- A) Head Coach
- B) Wicket-keeper
- C) Captain
- D) Lead Spinner

4. According to the text, what was the primary reason for Wolvaardt's selection as the Player of the Month?

- A) Her high strike rate in T20 leagues

Knowledge Check for Proficiency

B) Her sensational form and consistent centuries in December 2025

C) Her debut as a bowler in international cricket

D) Her record for the most catches in a series

Answer Key

Question	Correct Answer
1	B) Laura Wolvaardt
2	C) Ireland
3	C) Captain
4	B) Her sensational form and consistent centuries...

BANKING/ECONOMY

RBI Mandates Auto Transfer of Unresolved Complaints to Internal Ombudsman



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced a more robust customer protection framework by notifying the **Internal Ombudsman (IO) Directions, 2026** on January 14, 2026. This overhaul moves away from discretionary grievance handling and mandates a strictly

automated, "check-and-balance" system within financial institutions.

The primary goal is to ensure that no customer complaint is rejected without being vetted by an independent, high-level authority—the Internal Ombudsman—before the bank or NBFC sends its final response.

Key Changes in the 2026 Directions

The new framework introduces several structural shifts to make grievance redressal faster and more transparent:

- **Mandatory Auto-Escalation:** Regulated Entities (REs) must now use a fully automated Complaint Management System (CMS). Any complaint categorized as "Partially Resolved" or "Wholly Rejected" must be automatically transferred to the Internal Ombudsman for review.
- **Independent Oversight:** The IO cannot be a current employee of the bank or its subsidiary. They must be a retired or serving officer (rank of General Manager or equivalent) from another financial entity or regulator, ensuring an unbiased "outsider's" perspective.
- **Strict Timelines:**
 - * **Internal Review:** The IO must be given at least **10 days** for cases involving standard RBI/NPCI guidelines and **20 days** for other complaints.
 - **Final Decision:** The bank must communicate the final decision to the customer within **30 days** of receiving the original complaint.
- **Limited Overruling:** A bank's management can only overrule an IO's recommendation

with the explicit approval of a **Whole-time Director or Executive Director**. These cases must then be reported to the Board's Customer Service Committee.

Comparison of Grievance Redressal (Old vs. New)

Feature	Pre-2026 Framework	2026 Revised Framework
Escalation	Manual/Discretionary in many cases.	Fully Automated (Auto-escalation).
Independence	Often handled by internal departments.	IO must be a quasi-independent external appointee.
Compensation	Standardized but fragmented.	Integrated with RB-IOS 2026 (up to ₹30 lakh).
Board Oversight	General reporting.	IO is a permanent invitee to Board committee meetings.

Who is Covered?

The 2026 directions apply to a wide range of entities that meet specific criteria as of March 31, 2025:

- **Commercial Banks:** All banks with 10 or more outlets.

- **NBFCs:** Deposit-taking NBFCs with 10+ branches and Non-deposit-taking NBFCs with an asset size of **₹5,000 crore** and above.
- **Others:** Payments Banks, Small Finance Banks, Credit Information Companies (CICs), and non-bank PPI (Prepaid Instrument) issuers.

Note: The Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS), 2026 was also announced, which will go live on **July 1, 2026**. This acts as the secondary level of appeal if a customer is still unsatisfied after the Internal Ombudsman's review.

Why This Matters for Customers

This "front-loads" accountability. Instead of a customer having to figure out how to approach the RBI Ombudsman, the bank is now legally forced to involve its own internal judge (the IO) to **double-check any decision that doesn't fully favor the customer**. It reduces the "arbitrary rejection" of legitimate claims.

Knowledge Check for Proficiency

1. Under the new RBI directions issued in January 2026, what must banks and eligible NBFCs do with customer complaints that remain unresolved?

- Dismiss them after 45 days.
- Refer them to the local police station.
- Automatically transfer them to their Internal Ombudsman (IO).
- Charge a processing fee for further review.



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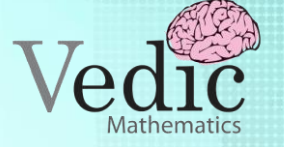
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2. What is the primary role of the "Internal Ombudsman" in the revised framework?

- A) To act as a public relations officer for the bank.
- B) To serve as an independent senior functionary who reviews rejected or partially resolved complaints.
- C) To sell insurance and mutual fund products to aggrieved customers.
- D) To represent the customer in the Supreme Court.

3. According to the 2026 guidelines, within what timeframe must the final decision on a complaint be communicated to the customer?

- A) 10 days
- B) 15 days
- C) 30 days
- D) 60 days

4. Which category of Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) is generally required to appoint an Internal Ombudsman under these norms?

- A) All NBFCs, regardless of size or branches.
- B) Only those NBFCs that do not have a public customer interface.
- C) Deposit-taking NBFCs with 10 or more branches or non-deposit NBFCs with assets of ₹5,000 crore or more.
- D) Only NBFCs operating in rural areas.

5. What is the maximum compensation the RBI Ombudsman can award for non-financial loss (harassment/mental anguish) under the Integrated Ombudsman Scheme 2026?

- A) ₹1 lakh
- B) ₹3 lakh
- C) ₹10 lakh
- D) ₹30 lakh

Answer Key

Question	Correct Answer
1	C) Automatically transfer them to their Internal Ombudsman
2	B) To serve as an independent senior functionary...
3	C) 30 days
4	C) Deposit-taking NBFCs (10+ branches) or Assets of ₹5,000cr+
5	B) ₹3 lakh

STATE NEWS

50 lakh metric tonnes of legacy waste



The clearing of **50 lakh metric tonnes** of legacy waste at the Perungudi dumpyard marks a major environmental victory for Chennai. This effort, equivalent to removing a "mountain of garbage" that stood for five decades, is a critical step in restoring the ecologically sensitive **Pallikaranai marshland**, a designated Ramsar site.

The Scale of the Transformation

The project is being executed in phases, with the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) aiming for a "zero-landfill" future for the city.

- **Total Legacy Waste:** 90 lakh metric tonnes.
- **Current Progress:** 50 lakh metric tonnes (approx. 55%) cleared as of January 2026.
- **Target Completion:** February 2027.
- **Land Reclaimed:** Approximately 100 acres have already been recovered and are being mapped for restoration or handover to the Forest Department.

How Biomining Works: From Trash to Treasure

The process, managed by **Blue Planet Environmental Solutions**, does not just move waste; it scientifically segregates and repurposes it.

Output Category	Repurposed Use
Plastics (RDF)	Converted into "plastic lumber" for outdoor furniture (benches, tables) or used as fuel in cement plants.
Stones & Rubble	Processed into concrete slabs for construction or used for park ramps.

Output Category	Repurposed Use
Glass & Metal	Segregated and sent to recycling units to be turned into new bottles and hardware.
Bio-earth/Soil	Used as an alternative to river sand or as manure for the city's parks and medians.

Restoring the Pallikaranai Marshland

The Perungudi site sits directly adjacent to the Pallikaranai marshland—one of the last natural wetlands in South India. For years, the dumpyard was a source of toxic leachate (polluted liquid) and frequent methane fires.

1. **Pollution Mitigation:** Biomining neutralizes the soil and prevents further toxic runoff into the wetland.
2. **Flood Resilience:** Reclaiming the land allows the marshland to return to its natural function as a giant sponge, significantly reducing flood risks for neighborhoods like Velachery and Thoraipakkam.
3. **Biodiversity Recovery:** Once the waste is cleared, the land is expected to be integrated back into the marshland ecosystem to support over 115 bird species and 46 fish species.

Did You Know? The Refuse-Derived Fuel (RDF) generated from the plastic waste at Perungudi has already helped avert over **55,000 tonnes of \$CO_{2}\$ emissions**, which is roughly equal to taking 12,000 cars off the road for a year.



What's Next?

While Perungudi is nearing completion, the GCC has already begun scaling this success to the **Kodungaiyur** dumpyard in North Chennai, which is nearly three times larger. The goal is to transform Chennai into a model for circular waste management in India.

Knowledge Check for Proficiency

1. How much total legacy waste was initially identified for clearing by the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC)?

- A) 50 lakh metric tonnes
- B) 75 lakh metric tonnes
- C) 90 lakh metric tonnes
- D) 120 lakh metric tonnes

2. Which technology is being utilized at the Perungudi dumpyard to clear the legacy waste?

- A) Incineration
- B) Bio-mining
- C) Deep-well injection
- D) Sanitary landfilling

3. What is the target deadline set by the GCC to clear the remaining legacy waste?

- A) December 2025
- B) August 2026
- C) February 2027

D) May 2028

4. Which organization is providing the technical solutions for the waste clearance at the Perungudi dumpyard?

- A) Green Earth Systems
- B) Blue Planet Environmental Solutions
- C) Eco-Waste India Ltd.
- D) National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI)

5. Approximately what percentage of the total legacy waste has the GCC successfully cleared so far?

- A) Over 50%
- B) Less than 25%
- C) Exactly 75%
- D) Nearly 90%

Answer Key

Question	Correct Answer
1	C) 90 lakh metric tonnes
2	B) Bio-mining
3	C) February 2027
4	B) Blue Planet Environmental Solutions
5	A) Over 50% (50 out of 90 lakh tonnes)





Detailed Analysis of Recent Current Affairs: Multiple Choice Format

Q.1. Which state government recently launched the "Akka Pade" scheme?

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

1. B

The Karnataka government, led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, has launched the "Akka Pade" (Elder Sister Force) scheme. The scheme aims to ensure the safety of women and minor girls across Karnataka. It is a women- and community-focused program designed to prevent social evils such as violence, harassment, and child marriage. Initially, the scheme was launched in Mysore, Belagavi, and Dakshina Kannada, and will later be expanded to 31 districts and five police commissionerates.

Q.2. Which Union Minister recently launched the 'Speed Post 24' and 'Speed Post 48' services?

- A. Ashwini Vaishnav
- B. Jyotiraditya Scindia
- C. Nitin Gadkari
- D. Piyush Goyal

2. B

Launched by Union Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, 'Speed Post 24' and 'Speed Post 48' services are India Post's new premium

services and will ensure guaranteed delivery of parcels within 24 and 48 hours, thereby speeding up and modernising postal services.

Q.3. In which district was the Dagadarthi Greenfield Airport project recently approved?

- A. Guntur
- B. Chittoor
- C. Nellore
- D. Kurnool

3. C

In a major boost to Andhra Pradesh's aviation and industrial infrastructure, the state cabinet has approved the Dagadarthi Greenfield Airport in Nellore district. With this approval, Dagadarthi will become Andhra Pradesh's eighth airport, further strengthening the state's vision of building a future-ready, multi-lane transport and industrial network.

Q.4. In which city will India host the 28th CSPOC conference?

- A. Mumbai
- B. New Delhi
- C. Bengaluru
- D. Hyderabad

4. B

India is hosting the 28th Commonwealth Speakers' and Presiding Officers' Conference (CSPOC) in New Delhi, which was inaugurated





by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Central Hall of the Constitution House.

Q.5. Recently, India has started preparations to chair which group in 2026?

- A. G20
 - B. SCO
 - C. BRICS
 - D. ASEAN
5. C

India has launched its official logo and website, marking the formal start of its BRICS presidency in 2026. On the occasion, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar outlined India's vision and priorities, and how BRICS, in its 20th year, will emerge as a symbol of global well-being, cooperation, and sustainable development.

Q.6. Which Punjabi singer recently launched the women's safety app 'Friendo'?

- A. Sumit Goswami
 - B. Diljit Dosanjh
 - C. Kaka
 - D. Amrit Maan
6. C

Moving beyond the world of music, popular Punjabi singer Kaka has launched a new mobile app, "Friendo," aimed at strengthening women's safety in India. The app focuses on providing women and girls with immediate emergency assistance and digital safety tools. The initiative

reflects concern over the rising crimes against women and emphasizes the role of technology and social responsibility in creating a safer society.

Q.7. With which country did India recently sign 19 agreements?

- A. France
 - B. Japan
 - C. Germany
 - D. Australia
7. C

India and Germany have signed 19 important MoUs and made eight major announcements. These include a joint declaration of intent to strengthen bilateral defence industrial cooperation and the creation of a CEOs forum to promote trade and investment.

Q.8. On which date will the Responsible Nations Index be launched?

- A. 15 January
 - B. 18 January
 - C. 19 January
 - D. 26 January
8. C

The Responsible Nations Index (RNI) will be launched by former Indian President Ram Nath Kovind in New Delhi on January 19, 2026. It is a global index created by the World Intellectual





Foundation that evaluates countries based on their responsibility.

Q.9. What is India's rank in the recent Henley Passport Index 2026?

A. 72

B. 75

C. 78

D. 80

9. D

India ranks 80th globally in the Henley Passport Index 2026. Indian passport holders enjoy visa-free, visa-on-arrival, or e-visa access to 55 destinations, up from last year's rank of 85. India shares this spot with Nigeria and Algeria, while neighbors Bangladesh and Pakistan are even lower.

Q.10. Which rules did the Central Government recently notify in 2026?

A. National Education Rules

B. National Sports Governance Rules

C. Olympic Federation Rules

D. Athlete Welfare Rules

10. B

The central government has notified the National Sports Administration Rules, 2026, under the National Sports Administration Act, 2025. These rules provide a framework for the inclusion of highly talented athletes as members of national sports bodies and regional sports

federations, the composition of the executive committee, and disqualification criteria. These rules also outline the process for the registration of affiliated units with the National Sports Election Panel and the National Sports Board.

Q.11. Which cricketer recently retired from all forms of international cricket?

A. Meg Lanning

B. Alyssa Healy

C. Ellyse Perry

D. Beth Mooney

11. B

Australian women's cricket team captain Alyssa Healy has announced her retirement from all forms of international cricket ahead of the 2026 Twenty20 World Cup. The 35-year-old said in a podcast that she decided to retire due to recurring injuries and mental fatigue.

Q.12. Which bank recently launched India's first solar-powered mobile ATM van, 'TGB on Wheels'?

A. NABARD

B. SBI

C. Tripura Gramin Bank

D. Assam Gramin Bank

12. C

To promote sustainable and inclusive banking, Tripura Gramin Bank launched India's first fully





solar-powered mobile ATM van in January 2026. This new initiative, called 'TGB on Wheels', aims to provide uninterrupted ATM and basic banking services in rural and remote areas, especially those with poor or no electricity supply.

Q.13. For whom was the Paripurna Mediciam AYUSH insurance recently launched?

- A. Ayushman Bharat beneficiaries
- B. CGHS beneficiaries
- C. PMJAY card holders
- D. ESIC members

13. B

The Union Ministry of Finance has launched a new optional health insurance plan for CGHS (Central Government Health Scheme) beneficiaries. The plan is called Paripoorna Mediciam Ayush Insurance. This policy complements existing CGHS benefits, offering improved coverage for hospitalization expenses and flexible premium options. It aims to provide greater financial security to CGHS beneficiaries amid rising medical expenses.

Q.14. According to recent data, how much FDI did India attract in the last 6 months?

- A. \$35 billion
- B. \$42 billion
- C. \$51 billion
- D. \$60 billion

14. C

India's growth story is attracting global attention. Over the past six months, the country has attracted \$51 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI), reflecting investor confidence in its economy. This surge is linked to the government's continued encouragement of startups, innovation, and manufacturing, which are rapidly transforming India's economic and industrial environment.

Q.15. Which of the following was recently recognized by the RBI as a self-regulatory organization (SRO) for forex dealers?

- A. FIMMDA
- B. SEBI
- C. IBA
- D. FEDAI

15. D

The Reserve Bank of India has taken a significant step to strengthen oversight of the foreign exchange market by recognizing FEDAI as a self-regulatory organization. This decision formalizes FEDAI's long-standing role in guiding authorized dealers and aims to bring greater uniformity, discipline, and transparency to the functioning of the foreign exchange market within the banking system.





FACTS ABOUT BHARAT

Kohima is indeed a fascinating blend of history and heritage. While the name "Kohima" is what the world uses today, your mention of "Kewhira" touches on the authentic identity of the land.

The Origin of the Name

The name is deeply rooted in the Angami Naga culture and geography:

- **Kewhima / Kewhira:** The original name comes from the Kewhi flower, a wild flower (often associated with species like *Rhododendron* or *Lilium maclineae*) that once grew in abundance across the ridges.
- **The Translation:** In the local *Tenyidie* dialect, *Kewhima* translates to "the land where the Kewhi flower grows." * **The British Influence:** When British administrators established their headquarters there in 1878, they found "Kewhira" difficult to pronounce. Over time, it was anglicized to "Kohima," which became the official administrative name.

The Soul of the Angami Naga Tribe

Kohima is the ancestral home of the Angami Naga, one of the 16 major tribes of Nagaland. They are renowned for:

- **Terrace Cultivation:** Unlike many other tribes that practiced *Jhum* (slash-and-burn) agriculture, the Angamis are masters of stone-walled terrace farming, which carves the hillsides into beautiful green "steps."

- **Sekrenyi Festival:** Celebrated in February, this is their "Festival of Purification," where tribal members perform rituals to sanctify their bodies and souls for the coming year.
- **Architecture:** The city is unique because it still houses Kohima Village (Kewhira), often called the second-largest village in Asia, right within the urban limits. It features traditional large wooden gates (*Kharu*) and houses decorated with buffalo horns.

A City of "Serpentine" Beauty

As you noted, the city's layout follows the natural contours of the mountain ranges. This geography played a pivotal role in history:

- **Battle of Kohima (1944):** Often called the "Stalingrad of the East," the ridges and tennis courts of Kohima were the site of a fierce WWII battle where Allied forces stopped the Japanese advance into India.
- **The War Cemetery:** Today, it stands on the Garrison Hill ridge, famous for the inscription: "*When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow, we gave our today.*"

Key Cultural Landmarks

If you're exploring the "tribal traditions" of Kohima, these sites are the heart of the experience: | Place | Significance | | :--- | :--- | | Kisama Heritage Village | The permanent site for the Hornbill Festival (held every December). | | Khonoma Village | India's first "Green Village," known for its conservation efforts and Angami warrior history. | | Japfü Peak | Offers a view of





the world's tallest Rhododendron tree, standing at over 100 feet. |

Knowledge Check for Proficiency

1. Kohima is traditionally recognized as the land of which specific Naga tribe?

- A) Ao Naga
- B) Angami Naga
- C) Sumi Naga
- D) Lotha Naga

2. The name 'Kohima' is derived from 'Kewhira' or 'Kewhima', which translates to:

- A) The land of the rising sun
- B) The land where the Kewhi flower grows
- C) The village of great warriors
- D) The mountain of mist

3. Based on the description, how is the geographical layout of Kohima city characterized?

- A) A flat plateau surrounded by rivers
- B) A valley located below sea level
- C) A city that serpentine along mountain ranges to the top
- D) A coastal settlement with white sand beaches

4. According to the text, the culture of Kohima is a "seamless blend" of which two elements?

- A) Modern industry and ancient ruins
- B) Nature and tribal traditions/culture
- C) Desert landscapes and nomadic life
- D) Colonial architecture and maritime history

Answer Key

Question	Correct Answer
1	B) Angami Naga
2	B) The land where the Kewhi flower grows
3	C) A city that serpentine along mountain ranges...
4	B) Nature and tribal traditions/culture





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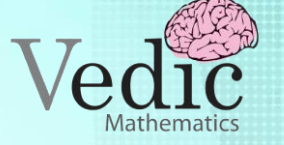
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