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NATIONAL NEWS

Second Range wide Dolphin Survey Launched Under Project Dolphin



In January 2026, the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change officially launched the **Second Range-wide Dolphin Survey** from Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh. This scientific initiative marks a significant escalation in India's efforts to protect its "National Aquatic Animal" and other vital cetacean species under the umbrella of **Project Dolphin**.

Key Highlights of the 2026 Survey

This nationwide exercise is more than just a head count; it is a comprehensive ecological audit of India's riverine and estuarine health.

- **Expanded Scope:** Unlike the first survey, this round has expanded its spatial coverage to include the **Irrawaddy Dolphin** in the Sundarbans and Odisha.
- **Target Species:** The survey primarily focuses on three species:
 1. **Gangetic River Dolphin** (India's National Aquatic Animal)



2. **Indus River Dolphin** (found in the Beas River)

3. **Irrawaddy Dolphin** (found in estuarine and coastal waters)

- **Phased Approach:** * **Phase I:** Focuses on the main stem of the Ganga (Bijnor to Ganga Sagar) and the Indus River system.
 - **Phase II:** Will extend to the Brahmaputra, Ganga tributaries, the Sundarbans, and Odisha.
- **Advanced Technology:** Researchers are utilizing **hydrophones** for underwater acoustic monitoring, allowing them to detect dolphins that may not surface frequently.

Feature	Objective
Scientific Monitoring	Using satellite tagging (first achieved in Assam in late 2024) to track migratory patterns.
Community Engagement	Involving local fishermen to reduce "by-catch" (accidental entanglement in nets).
Habitat Protection	Addressing threats from low water levels, pollution, and dredging in protected areas like the Vikramshila Sanctuary.

The Success of the First Survey (2021-2023)

The data from the first-ever nationwide survey (released in March 2025) provided the baseline for the current effort:

- **Total Count:** ~6,327 riverine dolphins were recorded across India.
- **Leading States:** Uttar Pradesh (2,397) and Bihar (2,220) emerged as the primary strongholds for the Gangetic Dolphin.
- **Critical Habitat:** The findings highlighted the importance of the Gangetic basin for long-term species survival.

Strategic Goals of Project Dolphin

Project Dolphin is a 10-year initiative launched in 2020. It treats dolphins as **indicator species**—meaning their population health directly reflects the pollution levels and water quality of India's rivers.

Note: The Gangetic River Dolphin is functionally blind and relies almost entirely on echolocation (emitting ultrasonic sounds) to navigate and hunt in murky river waters.

Knowledge Check For proficiency

1. Where did the second range-wide Dolphin Survey under Project Dolphin officially commence?

- A) Patna, Bihar
- B) Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh
- C) Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
- D) Guwahati, Assam

2. Which species is specifically recognized as India's National Aquatic Animal and is a primary focus of Project Dolphin?



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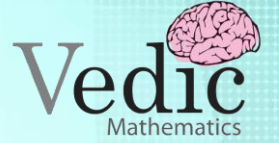
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- A) Irrawaddy Dolphin
- B) Spinner Dolphin
- C) Gangetic River Dolphin
- D) Dugong

3. What is the primary objective of conducting the dolphin survey in two distinct phases?

- A) To increase the speed of the survey process
- B) To understand species status, habitat conditions, and specific threats
- C) To promote tourism in the riverine regions
- D) To clear the rivers of plastic waste before counting

4. Project Dolphin covers which of the following aquatic environments?

- A) Only freshwater rivers
- B) Only deep-sea oceanic regions
- C) Both riverine and coastal/marine regions
- D) Only estuarine environments

5. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a core focus area of Project Dolphin?

- A) Habitat protection
- B) Captive breeding for commercial aquariums
- C) Scientific monitoring and community participation
- D) Reducing accidental fishing deaths and pollution

Answer Key

Question	Correct Answer
1	B (Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh)
2	C (Gangetic River Dolphin)
3	B (Species status, habitat, and threats)
4	C (Riverine and coastal regions)
5	B (Captive breeding for commercial use)

NATIONAL NEWS

Responsible Nations Index Launched to Measure Ethical and Inclusive Governance



In January 2026, former President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the **Responsible Nations Index (RNI)** at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi. This pioneering framework, developed by the **World Intellectual Foundation (WIF)**, represents a paradigm shift in how global success is measured—moving away from traditional GDP or military-centric





rankings toward a focus on ethical accountability and humanitarian impact.

Core Dimensions of the RNI

The index evaluates **154 countries** through a rigorous framework consisting of **three core pillars**, 7 dimensions, and 58 specific indicators:

- **Internal Responsibility:** Focuses on the dignity, justice, and well-being of a nation's own citizens, including social equity and governance quality.
- **Environmental Responsibility:** Measures a country's commitment to climate action, ecological stewardship, and the sustainable use of natural resources.
- **External Responsibility:** Assesses a nation's contribution to global peace, multilateral cooperation, and international stability.

2026 Global Rankings

The inaugural report revealed that smaller, highly organized nations currently lead the world in "responsibility" metrics, while India outperformed many larger, established economies.

Rank	Country	Key Highlight
1	Singapore	Topped the index with the highest overall score of 0.61945.
2	Switzerland	Ranked 2nd due to strong governance and environmental stewardship.
3	Denmark	Ranked 3rd, excelling in social equity and internal responsibility.

Rank	Country	Key Highlight
16	India	Highest-ranked Asian nation; placed ahead of the UK, US (66th), and China (68th).

Strategic Significance

The RNI was developed over three years in collaboration with **Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)** and **IIM Mumbai**. Its launch signals India's intent to become a "norm entrepreneur" by redefining what it means to be a global leader.

"A country can be economically prosperous and yet remain irresponsible... For us, power does not mean dominance; it is a duty." — **Ram Nath Kovind**

Knowledge Check For proficiency

1. Who officially launched the Responsible Nations Index (RNI) in New Delhi?

- A) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
- B) Former President Ram Nath Kovind
- C) The Minister of External Affairs
- D) The President of the United Nations General Assembly

2. According to the RNI, how should a nation's standing be primarily judged?

- A) By its GDP growth and trade surplus
- B) By its total military personnel and nuclear arsenal



C) By its responsibility towards humanity and ethical governance

D) By its geographical size and population density

3. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a key pillar of the Responsible Nations Index?

- A) Ethical governance
- B) Inclusive development
- C) Moral responsibility
- D) Military dominance

4. According to Mr. Kovind, what does a nation's long-term sustainability depend on?

- A) Strengthening border defenses and increasing exports
- B) Treatment of people, environmental protection, and contribution to global knowledge
- C) Rapid industrialization and urban expansion
- D) The frequency of holding national elections

Answer Key

Question	Answer
1	B (Former President Ram Nath Kovind)
2	C (Responsibility towards humanity and ethical governance)
3	D (Military dominance)

Question	Answer
4	B (Treatment of people, environmental protection, and global knowledge)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Museveni Secures Seventh Term in Uganda As President



In January 2026, Uganda's long-serving leader, **Yoweri Museveni**, was officially declared the winner of a high-stakes presidential election, securing his **seventh term** in office. The results, however, have plunged the nation into a fresh wave of political uncertainty as the opposition decries the process as a "sham."

Election Results Breakdown

The Uganda Electoral Commission announced the final tallies on January 17, 2026:

Candidate	Party	Vote Percentage	Total Votes
Yoweri Museveni	National Resistance	71.65%	~7.94 Million

Candidate	Party	Vote Percentage	Total Votes
	Movement (NRM)		
Robert Kyagulanyi (Bobi Wine)	National Unity Platform (NUP)	24.72%	~2.74 Million
Others candidates) (8	Various	~3.63%	-

Controversy and Irregularities

The 2026 election followed a pattern of tension similar to the 2021 polls, with several factors leading to international and domestic criticism:

- Internet Blackout:** For the second consecutive election, the government imposed a **nationwide internet shutdown** starting two days before the vote (January 13). While authorities cited "national security" and "preventing misinformation," rights groups like Amnesty International labeled it a "digital darkness" designed to mask fraud.
- Harassment of the Opposition:** Bobi Wine alleged that his home was raided by security forces on the eve of the results, forcing him into hiding. He has since rejected the results, citing "massive ballot stuffing" and the kidnapping of polling agents.
- Voter Suppression:** Reports emerged of **biometric voter verification kits** failing in opposition strongholds like Kampala, leading to delays and a shift to manual voting, which the opposition claims allowed for easier manipulation.

Global Scrutiny

International observers, including a joint mission from the **African Union (AU)** and **COMESA**, noted that while polling was orderly in some areas, the overall environment was marred by an "uneven playing field." The European Union expressed regret over post-electoral violence, including reports of clashes in central Uganda that resulted in several deaths.

"We reject these results with all contempt. They are fake and don't reflect what happened at the polling stations." — **Bobi Wine**

What's Next for Uganda?

With Museveni now set to rule until 2031—marking **45 years in power**—the focus shifts to whether the opposition will pursue a legal challenge or call for mass civil disobedience. Additionally, internal speculation continues regarding his son, **General Muhoozi Kainerugaba**, who currently serves as the Chief of Defence Forces and is widely seen as a potential successor.

Knowledge Check For proficiency

- Who was declared the winner of the presidential election, securing a seventh term in office?**
 - Kyagulanyi Ssentamu
 - Bobi Wine
 - Yoweri Museveni
 - Milton Obote



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2. What percentage of the total votes did the winning candidate receive according to the official results?

- A) 24.72 per cent
- B) 86.00 per cent
- C) 50.01 per cent
- D) 71.65 per cent

3. In what year did Yoweri Museveni's rule in Uganda originally begin?

- A) 1996
- B) 1986
- C) 2001
- D) 2011

4. Why has the main opposition candidate rejected the election outcome?

- A) Due to a lack of international observers
- B) Citing irregularities, internet shutdowns, and harassment of agents
- C) Because the voter turnout was too low for a valid result
- D) Due to the exclusion of urban strongholds like Kampala

5. Who was the main challenger in this election, securing approximately 24.72 per cent of the vote?

- A) Kizza Besigye

B) Amama Mbabazi

C) Bobi Wine (Kyagulanyi Ssentamu)

D) Janet Museveni

Answer Key

Question	Answer
1	C (Yoweri Museveni)
2	D (71.65 per cent)
3	B (1986)
4	B (Citing irregularities, internet shutdowns, and harassment)
5	C (Bobi Wine)

APPOINTMENTS

Raymond Lifestyle Appoints Satyaki Ghosh as New CEO



In January 2026, Raymond Lifestyle Limited took a major step in its corporate transformation by appointing Satyaki Ghosh as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The



appointment, effective from **January 19, 2026**, follows the company's recent structural reorganization and signals a heavy focus on scaling its retail and apparel footprint.

Profile of Satyaki Ghosh

With a career spanning over **25 years**, Ghosh is recognized as an industry veteran with deep expertise in both manufacturing-heavy B2B sectors and consumer-centric B2C markets.

- **Previous Role:** He joins from the **Aditya Birla Group**, where he was the CEO of the Cellulosic Fashion Yarn division at Grasim Industries.
- **Diverse Experience:** His background includes leadership roles across **FMCG, Textiles, and Retail**. Notably, he spent seven years at **L'Oréal India** as the Director of the Consumer Products Division, managing global powerhouses like L'Oréal Paris, Garnier, and Maybelline.
- **Global Footprint:** He has experience managing multi-country operations, having previously led the Thai Acrylic Fibre business.

Strategic Significance for Raymond

The appointment comes at what Raymond Group Chairman **Gautam Hari Singhania** described as a "crucial inflection point." The move is designed to achieve three primary objectives:

Objective	Focus Area
Operational Excellence	Leveraging Ghosh's experience in manufacturing and supply chain to improve efficiency.

Objective	Focus Area
Consumer Centricity	Using his FMCG background to sharpen product offerings and enhance the customer experience in over 1,650 stores .
Global Expansion	Capitalizing on shifting geopolitical landscapes to grow Raymond's international presence.

Management Strengthening

In addition to the CEO appointment, Raymond Lifestyle is also onboarding **E.C. Prasad** as the new **Chief Financial Officer (CFO)**. Together, this refreshed leadership team is expected to drive the company's "next phase of growth," which targets increased domestic consumption and long-term value creation for stakeholders.

"I am delighted to join an iconic Indian brand with a legacy of over a century... our focus will be on consumer centricity and driving innovation across the organization." — **Satyaki Ghosh**

Knowledge Check For proficiency

1. What major announcement did Raymond Lifestyle make regarding its leadership?

- The resignation of its entire Board of Directors
- The appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- The acquisition of a competing international fashion brand

D) The relocation of its headquarters to New Delhi

2. What is the professional background of the newly appointed leader?

- A) A newcomer to the textile and consumer industry
- B) An academic researcher specializing in economics
- C) An industry veteran with experience across consumer-facing sectors
- D) A former government official from the Ministry of Commerce

3. Through which method was this leadership appointment officially disclosed?

- A) A social media post by the Chairman
- B) An exclusive interview with a local newspaper
- C) A regulatory filing following a board meeting
- D) A televised press conference held in Mumbai

4. When does the appointment of the new CEO come into force?

- A) At the start of the next fiscal year
- B) Immediately
- C) After a six-month transition period
- D) Once approved by a majority of shareholders

5. What is the primary strategic goal behind this appointment?

- A) To prepare the company for a total liquidation of assets
- B) To shift the company focus from lifestyle to heavy machinery
- C) To strengthen management and accelerate growth in a competitive market
- D) To reduce the number of employees in the lifestyle division

Answer Key

Question	Answer
1	B (The appointment of a new CEO)
2	C (Industry veteran with consumer-sector experience)
3	C (A regulatory filing)
4	B (Immediately)
5	C (To strengthen management and accelerate growth)

SPORTS

Vijender Singh Enters Asian Boxing Council As Member

In January 2026, Indian boxing legend **Vijender Singh** was appointed as a member of the **Asian Boxing Council (ABC)**.



This transition from a decorated Olympic athlete to a continental sports administrator marks a significant milestone in India's growing footprint within international sports governance.

Bridging the Amateur and Professional Worlds

Vijender's appointment is strategically significant because he is one of the few athletes globally who has reached the pinnacle of both amateur and professional boxing.

- **Elite Background:** He is India's first Olympic boxing medalist (Bronze, Beijing 2008) and a multi-time medalist at the Asian and Commonwealth Games.
- **Professional Insight:** After turning pro in 2015, he amassed a **13-1 record**, giving him unique insight into the commercial and regulatory side of the sport.
- **Dual Expertise:** His new role will leverage this experience to bridge the gap between amateur performance pathways and professional boxing ecosystems across Asia.

Role and Objectives at the Asian Boxing Council

The Asian Boxing Council, which operates under the umbrella of the **World Boxing Council (WBC)**, is responsible for sanctioning title fights and developing the sport across the Greater Asian region. In his new capacity, Vijender is expected to:

Objective	Focus Area
Athlete Welfare	Ensuring safety standards and fair treatment for boxers in regional competitions.
Policy Formulation	Bringing an "athlete-first" perspective to technical regulations and governance.
Indian Advocacy	Strengthening the pathways and international exposure for rising Indian boxers.
Strategic Growth	Supporting the expansion of boxing in emerging nations across Asia and Australasia.

A New Era for Indian Sports Administration

Vijender's move reflects a broader trend in the maturing Indian sports ecosystem, where elite athletes are increasingly taking the lead in governance—joining the likes of **P.T. Usha** (President of the Indian Olympic Association).

"Just as we created history in Beijing, I am committed to working for the growth of Asian boxing, with a strong focus on Indian boxers, and helping our athletes achieve even greater success in the future." — **Vijender Singh**

This appointment was facilitated with the support of the **Boxing Federation of India (BFI)**, underscoring a unified effort to enhance India's voice in continental sports politics.

Knowledge Check For proficiency

1. Which organization has Indian boxing icon Vijender Singh recently joined in a leadership capacity?

- A) International Olympic Committee (IOC)
- B) Asian Boxing Council
- C) Sports Authority of India (SAI)
- D) World Boxing Organization (WBO)

2. Vijender Singh's new appointment marks a transition from being an elite athlete to which of the following?

- A) Professional boxing promoter
- B) Full-time political commentator
- C) Sports administrator
- D) National head coach

3. What does Vijender Singh's appointment signify on a broader scale?

- A) A decline in the popularity of boxing in India
- B) India's growing influence in international sports governance
- C) A shift in focus from amateur to professional wrestling

D) The retirement of all Olympic medalists from active coaching

4. Vijender Singh is historically known for which major achievement in Indian sports?

- A) Winning India's first Olympic medal in boxing
- B) Becoming the first Indian to play in the NBA
- C) Setting a world record in the 100m sprint
- D) Winning five consecutive gold medals in the Commonwealth Games

Answer Key

Question	Answer
1	B (Asian Boxing Council)
2	C (Sports administrator)
3	B (India's growing influence in international sports governance)
4	A (Winning India's first Olympic medal in boxing)

AWARDS

Indian Railways Highest Honour for Chandana Sinha

Indian Railways has conferred its highest internal honor, the **Ati Vishisht Rail Seva Puraskar** (formerly the National Railway Award), upon **Chandana Sinha**, an Inspector with the Railway Protection Force (RPF).



This recognition shines a light on her relentless and "silent" crusade against the dark reality of human trafficking within India's massive transit network.

The Impact of Her Work

Inspector Sinha's contribution goes beyond routine policing; it involves a deep commitment to the safety of minors who are often moved across state borders via the rail network.

- **Rescue Operations:** She has been instrumental in the rescue of hundreds of children from the clutches of traffickers, reuniting them with their families or handing them over to Child Welfare Committees (CWCs).
- **Intelligence Gathering:** Her success stems from a specialized approach to identifying "vulnerable indicators"—spotting children traveling under suspicious circumstances or with individuals who cannot verify their relationship.
- **Operational Leadership:** Beyond physical rescues, she has played a key role in sensitizing other RPF personnel and railway staff to be the "eyes and ears" of the system.

RPF's "Operation Nanhe Farishtey"

Sinha's work is a cornerstone of the RPF's flagship initiative, **Operation Nanhe Farishtey**. Under this mission, the RPF has rescued thousands of children annually who have either run away from home, been abandoned, or are being trafficked.

Key Pillars of the Protection Strategy:

Feature	Description
Child Help Desks	Dedicated kiosks at major stations for immediate reporting.
CCTV Integration	Using advanced surveillance to track suspicious movement of minors.
NGO Collaboration	Partnering with organizations like Bachpan Bachao Andolan for post-rescue care.
Awareness Drives	Educating passengers to report suspicious activity via the 139 helpline.

Why This Award Matters

The **Ati Vishisht Rail Seva Puraskar** is typically reserved for extraordinary dedication to duty. By awarding a woman officer for humanitarian work, Indian Railways is emphasizing that **passenger security** is as much about social protection as it is about physical safety.

Knowledge Check For proficiency

1. Who was recently honoured with the highest award of the Indian Railways?

A) Chandana Sinha



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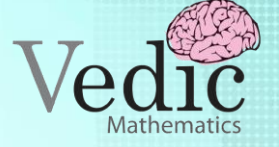
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- B) Kiran Bedi
C) Mithali Raj
D) Aruna Miller

2. To which security force does the awardee, Chandana Sinha, belong?

- A) Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
B) Railway Protection Force (RPF)
C) Border Security Force (BSF)
D) Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)

3. For what specific achievement was Chandana Sinha primarily recognized?

- A) Modernizing the digital ticketing system
B) Developing high-speed locomotive engines
C) Impactful work in stopping child trafficking at stations and trains
D) Successfully managing large-scale railway construction projects

4. What is the significance of the award presented to Chandana Sinha?

- A) It is the highest award given by the Indian Railways
B) It is an international award for transportation safety
C) It is a lifetime achievement award for retired officers

D) It is an award specifically for administrative excellence in the Ministry of Finance

Answer Key

Question	Answer
1	A (Chandana Sinha)
2	B (Railway Protection Force)
3	C (Stopping child trafficking)
4	A (Highest railway award)

STATE NEWS

Four Promises by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu



On Thiruvalluvar Day (January 16, 2026), Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin issued a significant pledge to the state, framing his governance through the lens of the *Kural*. In a post on X (formerly Twitter), he outlined four foundational promises that define the "Dravidian Model" of his administration.

The Four Foundations of Governance





Stalin cited a specific couplet from the *Tirukkural*—"Anjamae Igai Arivookkam Innaangum Enjamae Vendharkkiyalbu"—which suggests that courage, generosity, wisdom, and energy are the essential qualities of a ruler. Based on these, he made the following promises:

- **Courage against Injustice:** To maintain the "courage" to fight against social injustice and divisive communal forces that threaten the state's social fabric.
- **Humanitarian Upliftment:** To continue implementing "generous" humanitarian schemes and welfare programs aimed at the upliftment of the poor, backward classes, and the downtrodden.
- **Intellectual Growth:** To launch and sustain initiatives that foster the "wisdom" and intellectual capacity of the younger generation (youth).
- **Economic Empowerment:** To maintain the "energy" and constructive effort required for industrial development and the empowerment of women.

Event/Award	Recipient
Perarignar Anna Award	Duraimurugan (Minister for Water Resources)
Annal Ambedkar Award	Sinthanai Selvan (VCK Leader/MLA)
Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Award	S.M. Hidayathullah
Thanthai Periyar Award	A. Arulmozhi

Note: Several awardees, including Minister Duraimurugan and former Chief Secretary V. Irai Anbu (who received the Thiru Vi Ka Award), donated their ₹5 lakh cash prizes back to the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund.

Strategic Context

These promises carry extra weight as they were made shortly before the **2026 Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly elections**. By aligning his policy goals with the ethics of Thiruvalluvar, Stalin is positioning his party's "Dravidian Model" as the modern manifestation of ancient Tamil values.

Highlights of the Thiruvalluvar Day 2026 Celebrations

The day was marked by high-level state functions and the honoring of Tamil scholars:

Event/Award	Recipient
Thiruvalluvar Award (2026)	Mu Pe Sathiyavel Muruganar

Knowledge Check For proficiency

1. On which occasion did Chief Minister M K Stalin make four key promises to the people of Tamil Nadu?

- A) Pongal Festival
- B) Thiruvalluvar Day
- C) Republic Day





D) Tamil New Year

2. Which of the following was mentioned as a priority regarding social issues?

- A) Expansion of religious infrastructure
- B) Implementation of new border security measures
- C) Courage against social injustice and communal forces
- D) Privatization of all public transport systems

3. What is the primary focus of the "humanitarian programs" mentioned by the Chief Minister?

- A) Development of high-tech space research centers
- B) Upliftment of the poor and backward classes
- C) Promotion of international tourism
- D) Strengthening of the state's military reserve

4. The Chief Minister's initiatives for the youth are specifically designed to promote which of the following?

- A) Knowledge
- B) Sports competition only
- C) Political affiliation
- D) Military recruitment

5. Which two sectors were specifically grouped together as steps toward empowerment and state progress?

A) Agricultural reform and mining

B) Industrial development and women's empowerment

C) Space exploration and deep-sea fishing

D) Film industry subsidies and sports infrastructure

Answer Key

Question	Answer
1	B (Thiruvalluvar Day)
2	C (Courage against social injustice and communal forces)
3	B (Upliftment of the poor and backward classes)
4	A (Knowledge)
5	B (Industrial development and women's empowerment)





Detailed Analysis of Recent Current Affairs: Multiple Choice Format

Q.1. Where will the world's largest green ammonia project be established in Andhra Pradesh?

- A. Visakhapatnam
 - B. Kakinada
 - C. Nellore
 - D. Tirupati
1. B

India's clean energy transition has received a major boost as the world's largest green ammonia project is being built in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh. The project, developed by AM Green, will involve an investment of approximately \$10 billion. Its goal is to make India a global exporter of green ammonia, support climate goals, and strengthen energy security.

Q.2. Which state recently announced a new award called Semmozhi Ilakkiya Virudhu for non-Hindi language writers?

- A. Tripura
 - B. Karnataka
 - C. Tamil Nadu
 - D. Telangana
2. C

The state of Tamil Nadu recently announced a new award, the Semmozhi Illakkiya Virudhu, for

non-Hindi language writers. It aims to honor outstanding literary works in Indian languages and was instituted by the Tamil Nadu government. Each language will carry a cash prize of ₹5 lakh.

Q.3. Through which platform did the Postal Department recently make its first online delivery?

- A. GeM
 - B. Amazon
 - C. ONDC
 - D. Flipkart
3. C

The Department of Posts (India Post) conducted its first online delivery as a logistics service provider through the ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce) platform. This marks a major step towards India Post's growing integration into digital commerce and opening up new opportunities for rural and small businesses.

Q.4. Where will the India Power Summit 2026 be held?

- A. Pragati Maidan
 - B. Yashobhoomi, New Delhi
 - C. Vigyan Bhawan
 - D. India Expo Centre
4. B

The "India Electricity Summit 2026" will be held on March 19-22, 2026, at Yashobhoomi,





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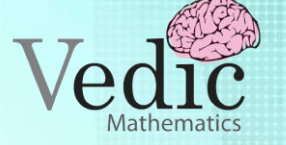
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Dwarka, New Delhi. It will bring together stakeholders from the global power and energy sector under the aegis of the Ministry of Power, Government of India. The summit will focus on topics such as clean energy, distribution, storage, and smart consumption.

Q.5. Which indicator remained stable at 4.8% as per the PLFS December 2025?

- A. LFPR
 - B. WPR
 - C. Unemployment Rate
 - D. Inflation Rate
5. C

According to the PLFS data for December 2025, the overall unemployment rate (UR) remained almost stable at 4.8%, while the rural unemployment rate (UR) remained stable at 3.9%, reflecting the employment situation in India's labour market.

Q.6. The Womaniya initiative is associated with which government platform?

- A. ONDC
 - B. GeM
 - C. Startup India
 - D. Skill India
6. B

The Womaniya initiative was launched by the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) in January 2019. Its objective is to promote women

entrepreneurs and self-help groups in public procurement. As of January 2026, more than 2 lakh women-owned MSEs are registered on GeM, having received orders worth over ₹80,000 crore.

Q.7. In which city will the second Global Buddhist Summit be held recently?

- A. Patna
 - B. Jodhpur
 - C. Bhopal
 - D. New Delhi
7. D

The second Global Buddhist Summit will be held in New Delhi on 24-25 January 2026, organised by the Ministry of Culture and the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), with the theme "Collective Wisdom, United Voice and Mutual Coexistence".

Q.8. Which state recently signed an MoU with the Digital India Bhashini Division?

- A. Rajasthan
 - B. Madhya Pradesh
 - C. Maharashtra
 - D. Odisha
8. B

Recently, the Madhya Pradesh government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Digital India Linguistic Division (DIBD) to promote voice-based and multilingual





solutions to enhance digital governance and citizen services through AI-based language technology.

Q.9. Which organization released the Global Risks Report 2026?

- A. World Bank
- B. IMF
- C. World Economic Forum
- D. UNDP

9. C

The World Economic Forum (WEF) released its Global Risks Report 2026. It identified geo-economic conflict as the biggest global risk. Key risks for 2026–2028 include geo-economic conflict, country-based armed conflict, extreme weather, and social polarization. For India, cybersecurity, inequality, and weak public services are the main threats.

Q.10. Who was named the ICC Men's Player of the Month for December 2025?

- A. Joe Root
- B. Pat Cummins
- C. Mitchell Starc
- D. Ben Stokes

10. C

Australian fast bowler Mitchell Starc has capped off a memorable domestic season with a major personal honour. For his impressive performances in the Ashes series, Starc was

named the ICC Men's Player of the Month for December 2025, reflecting his key role in Australia's 4-1 series win.

Q.11. Who was named ICC Women's Player of the Month for December 2025?

- A. Smriti Mandhana
- B. Ellyse Perry
- C. Laura Wolvaardt
- D. Alyssa Healy

11. C

South Africa's star batsman and captain Laura Wolvaardt ended 2025 on a high note. Following her impressive performance in December, she was named the ICC Women's Player of the Month (December 2025). By scoring two consecutive centuries across all formats against Ireland, she not only led South Africa to a series win but also cemented her place as one of the world's most reliable top-order batsmen.

Q.12. Vidarbha defeated whom to win the recently held Vijay Hazare Trophy 2026?

- A. Tamil Nadu
- B. Saurashtra
- C. Karnataka
- D. Bihar

12. B

Vidarbha won the recently concluded Vijay Hazare Trophy 2025-26 title by defeating





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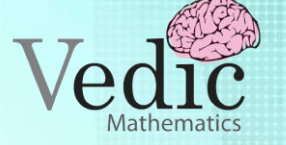
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Saurashtra by 38 runs, which was their first Vijay Hazare Trophy win, with Atharva Tayade scoring a century (128 runs) and the bowlers performing brilliantly.

Q.13. Which foreign bank recently received in-principle approval from the RBI to set up a WOS in India?

- A. HSBC
- B. Citibank
- C. Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation
- D. Standard Chartered

13. C

The RBI recently granted in-principle approval to Japan's Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) to set up a wholly owned subsidiary (WOS) in India, allowing it to convert its branch presence into a local entity. Emirates NBD had previously received this approval, but SMBC is the latest and largest bank to receive this approval, becoming the third foreign bank to receive approval to convert its branch in India into a subsidiary.

Q.14. INSV Koudnya recently completed its first overseas voyage from Porbandar to which country?

- A. Sri Lanka
- B. Maldives
- C. Oman
- D. UAE

14. C

INSV Kaundinya successfully completed its maiden overseas voyage from Porbandar to Muscat, Oman, showcasing India's age-old maritime heritage and shipbuilding skills. The voyage took approximately 18 days and was built using traditional sewing techniques, without using a single iron nail.

Q.15. In which city will the 9th International Spices Conference (ISC 2026) be held?

- A. Thiruvananthapuram
- B. Kochi
- C. Kozhikode
- D. Thrissur

15. B

The 9th International Spices Conference (ISC 2026) will be held in Kochi, Kerala, from February 23-26, 2026. It will focus on global spice trade, technology, and sustainability. The theme, "Spices 360 – Getting Future Ready," will be organized by the All India Spices Exporters Forum (AISEF).





FACTS ABOUT BHARAT

This summary perfectly captures the dramatic transition of India from a mercantile hub to a colonial state. The history of the East India Company (EIC) is essentially the story of a private business that outgrew its own borders to become a sovereign power.

The Transformation: Merchant to Monarch

The EIC's journey is often divided into two distinct phases of influence:

1. The Mercantile Giant (1612–1757)

- **Monopoly:** Armed with a Royal Charter, the EIC held an exclusive right to British trade in the East.
- **Economic Weight:** At its peak, it handled nearly 50% of world trade.
- **Global Impact:** Indian textiles (calico, chintz, and muslin) became so popular in England that the British Parliament eventually passed "Calico Acts" to protect their own wool industry from Indian competition.

2. The Corporate State (1757–1858)

- **The Turning Point:** The Battle of Plassey (1757) transformed the Company. After defeating the Nawab of Bengal, they gained the *Diwani* rights (the right to collect land revenue), effectively becoming the tax collectors for one of the world's richest regions.
- **Private Army:** By the 1840s, the EIC commanded a private military of over 280,000 men—larger than the actual British

Army at the time. Most of these soldiers were Indian *sepoys*.

Economic Shift: "The Drain of Wealth"

The transition from EIC rule to the British Raj saw a massive shift in India's global economic standing:

Period	India's Share of Global GDP	Key Export
1700	~24.4%	Finished Textiles, Spices
1858	~12.1%	Raw Cotton, Opium, Indigo
1947	~3-4%	Raw Materials

Note: Historians like Angus Maddison and Shashi Tharoor highlight that the EIC systematically de-industrialized India, turning it from the world's leading manufacturer of textiles into a captive market for finished goods from British mills.

The End of the Company (1858)

The Rebellion of 1857 (The Sepoy Mutiny) was the death knell for the EIC. The British Parliament realized that a private corporation could no longer be trusted to govern such a massive and volatile territory.

- **The Act of 1858:** Transferred all power, territories, and revenues to Queen Victoria.
- **The British Raj:** The Governor-General was given the new title of Viceroy, acting as the direct representative of the Crown.





- Liquidation: The East India Company was eventually dissolved in 1874, ending one of the most powerful and controversial corporate legacies in human history.

Knowledge Check For proficiency

1. During its peak, approximately how much of the world's trade did the East India Company account for?

- A) One-quarter
- B) One-third
- C) Half
- D) Two-thirds

2. Which of the following commodities was NOT specifically mentioned as a major trade item for the Company?

- A) Indigo dye
- B) Saltpetre
- C) Diamonds
- D) Opium

3. In which year did Company rule effectively begin in India following the Battle of Plassey?

- A) 1612
- B) 1757
- C) 1857
- D) 1858

4. What major event led to the end of the East India Company's administrative functions?

- A) The Battle of Plassey
- B) The establishment of the silk trade
- C) The Indian Rebellion of 1857
- D) The signing of the first trade treaty in 1612

5. The Government of India Act 1858 resulted in the formation of which new governing entity?

- A) The East India Agency
- B) The Mughal Empire
- C) The British Raj
- D) The Saltpetre Commission

Answer Key

Question	Answer
1	C) Half
2	C) Diamonds
3	B) 1757
4	C) The Indian Rebellion of 1857
5	C) The British Raj





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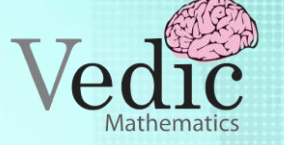
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