

Part 1: National & International News

Q1. Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited (APSEZ) operationalized India's first 'Port of Refuge' (PoR). What is the primary purpose of a Port of Refuge?

- A) Providing specialized fuel bunkering for naval warships
- B) A designated shelter to provide structured support for commercial vessels in distress
- C) A tax-free deep-water transshipment hub for electronic goods
- D) An exclusive maritime station for launching anti-piracy drones

Answer: B) A designated shelter to provide structured support for commercial vessels in distress

Detailed Explanation: In March 2026, Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited (APSEZ) officially operationalized India's first Port of Refuge (PoR). A Port of Refuge is a vital maritime infrastructure asset designed to accommodate ships that need assistance due to maritime accidents, structural damage, severe weather, or mechanical failures.

Key Facets: APSEZ has identified two strategic coastal hubs for this initiative: **Dighi Port** on the West Coast (to secure ships operating in the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf energy corridors) and **Gopalpur Port** on the East Coast (to assist vessels in the Bay of Bengal moving toward the Strait of Malacca). This step significantly enhances maritime safety along India's 11,000 km coastline.

Q2. Parliament passed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026. What major structural change does this amendment introduce?

- A) It introduces a mandatory 5% reservation in private sector employment
- B) It removes the right to self-perceived gender identity and mandates a medical certificate
- C) It establishes a dedicated National Transgender Banking Corporation
- D) It decriminalizes all historical family disputes involving transgender property

Answer: B) It removes the right to self-perceived gender identity and mandates a medical certificate

Detailed Explanation: The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026, marks a significant legislative shift. It removes the previously recognized right to absolute self-perceived gender identity.

Key Facets: Under the amended law, individuals seeking legal recognition must obtain a formal medical certification. This certification requires an official assessment by a district-level medical board headed by the Chief Medical Officer (CMO). This directly amends the framework established by the original 2019 Act and introduces changes to the self-identification parameters laid down in the landmark *NALSA vs. Union of India (2014)* Supreme Court judgment.

Q3. Indonesia recently became the first South Asian/Southeast Asian nation to take which drastic regulatory measure concerning digital media?

- A) An outright ban on artificial intelligence chatbots in public offices
- B) A complete ban on social media platforms for children under the age of 16
- C) Imposing a 25% digital service tax on international streaming platforms

D) Banning cryptocurrency transactions for retail e-commerce purchases

Answer: B) A complete ban on social media platforms for children under the age of 16

Detailed Explanation: In late March 2026, Indonesia implemented a sweeping new government regulation that bans children younger than 16 years of age from accessing digital social media platforms.

Key Facets: The Indonesian administration introduced this policy to protect minors from online harms, including cyberbullying, addiction, predatory scams, and inappropriate content. This move follows a global regulatory trend initiated by Australia, which became the first country worldwide to pass similar age-gated social media bans for children.

Q4. A proposal to expand the structural size of the Lok Sabha has been highlighted in national policy dialogues. What is the proposed new membership capacity of the lower house?

- A) From 543 to 650 members
- B) From 543 to 720 members
- C) From 543 to 816 members
- D) From 543 to 950 members

Answer: C) From 543 to 816 members

Detailed Explanation: A high-level proposal was floated to expand the total size of the Lok Sabha from its current strength of 543 members to a robust 816 members.

Key Facets: The expansion aims to improve democratic representation by aligning parliamentary seat distribution with population growth. A key element of this structural plan is the implementation of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, which would reserve approximately 273 seats (one-third of the expanded 816 seats) exclusively for women. The plan suggests

delinking this initial expansion from the broader, more complex post-Census delimitation process to speed up its rollout by the 2029 general elections.

Q5. Japan recently introduced the world's first dedicated 'Freight Shinkansen'. What unique operational capability does this infrastructure offer?

- A) A bullet train that moves liquid natural gas across tectonic fault lines
- B) A freight-only high-speed bullet train operating at a top speed of 275 kmph
- C) An autonomous magnetic levitation train exclusively for electronic microchips
- D) A double-decker container bullet train connecting undersea cargo networks

Answer: B) A freight-only high-speed bullet train operating at a top speed of 275 kmph

Detailed Explanation: Developed by the East Japan Railway Company, Japan has successfully launched the world's first dedicated, freight-only high-speed bullet train (Shinkansen).

Key Facets: Operating along the Tohoku Shinkansen line between Morioka and Tokyo, the train achieves a top operating speed of 275 kmph. It is specifically designed to shift high-value, time-sensitive cargo and e-commerce logistics from trucks to rail. This initiative helps address driver shortages while reducing carbon emissions from long-haul freight transport.

Part 2: Economics & Banking

Q6. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released its strategic document titled 'Payments Vision 2028'. Which of the following is a key feature introduced under this roadmap?

- A) The complete phasing out of physical currency notes by December 2028

B) A Payments Switching Service (PaSS) for seamless switching and a perpetual regulatory sandbox

C) Mandating a 5% transaction fee on international UPI transactions

D) Restricting private commercial banks from issuing digital credit cards

Answer: B) A Payments Switching Service (PaSS) for seamless switching and a perpetual regulatory sandbox

Detailed Explanation: The RBI unveiled *Payments Vision 2028*, continuing its long-standing practice of issuing strategic, multi-year payment system roadmaps to drive secure digital payment ecosystems.

Key Facets: Key structural changes under Payments Vision 2028 include the introduction of a **Payments Switching Service (PaSS)** to facilitate seamless operational switching for payment service providers, and a **perpetual regulatory sandbox** tailored for small, innovative fintech operators. Additionally, the RBI plans to explore electronic cheques to blend traditional reliability with digital speed, and may introduce a Domestic Legal Entity Identifier (DLEI) to monitor large-scale payment flows.

Q7. The Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) organized an outreach program on the 'Duty Deferment Scheme'. Who is the primary target beneficiary group of this initiative?

A) Small-scale retail textile exporters

B) Eligible Manufacturer Importers (EMI)

C) Foreign institutional investors in the bond market

D) Domestic startups specializing in green hydrogen manufacturing

Answer: B) Eligible Manufacturer Importers (EMI)

Detailed Explanation: The CBIC conducted a comprehensive hybrid outreach program in New Delhi focused on the *Duty Deferment Scheme for Eligible Manufacturer Importers (EMI)*, which was introduced as a major trade facilitation initiative in the Union Budget 2026–27.

Key Facets: The scheme allows qualified manufacturer-importers to defer the payment of customs duties on raw materials and components. This significantly improves working capital efficiency by decoupling the physical customs clearance of goods from the immediate cash outflow required for import duties.

Q8. The World Economic Forum (WEF) recently published a report highlighting India's emergence as a global hub for 'Electro-Technology Manufacturing'. What key asset data was cited regarding India's solar module production?

A) Capacity reached 50 GW with 90% import dependence on cells

B) Capacity surged twelve-fold over a decade to reach 120 GW

C) Production is limited entirely to micro-grid applications

D) Solar manufacturing has completely replaced wind energy asset outlays

Answer: B) Capacity surged twelve-fold over a decade to reach 120 GW

Detailed Explanation: A recent World Economic Forum (WEF) assessment praised India for bypassing historical fossil-fuel-heavy development pathways to emerge as a global leader in electro-technology manufacturing.

Key Facets: The report noted that India's electronics sector has scaled rapidly, reaching an operational market valuation of \$130 billion by early 2026. Crucially, its solar module manufacturing capacity expanded twelve-fold over a decade to reach **120 GW**, making the nation self-sufficient and a major potential exporter. This growth has been accelerated by the Union Budget 2026–27, which increased the funding for the Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS) to ₹40,000 crore.

Q9. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued the 'RBI (Commercial Banks – Responsible Business Conduct) Third Amendment Directions, 2026'. What is the focus area of these guidelines?

- A) Capping the corporate profit margins of non-scheduled urban banks
- B) Strengthening customer protection in electronic banking transactions
- C) Regulating real-estate assets held as collateral by foreign banks
- D) Establishing mandatory rural branches for newly licensed fintech platforms

Answer: B) Strengthening customer protection in electronic banking transactions

Detailed Explanation: The RBI issued these advanced statutory directions under the powers vested in it via the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, with the rules scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2026.

Key Facets: The third amendment focuses heavily on boosting customer protection and liability frameworks during electronic banking transactions. It establishes clear guidelines for banks regarding unauthorized electronic fund transfers, secure digital authentication protocols, and fast redressal mechanisms for retail customers facing digital fraud.

Q10. India recently amended its bilateral tax treaty with France. Which significant technical clause was completely removed from this updated agreement?

- A) The Double Taxation Avoidance Exception (DTAE) clause
- B) The Most Favoured Nation (MFN) clause
- C) The Permanent Establishment Safe Harbor (PESH) clause
- D) The Sovereign Wealth Tax Exemption (SWTE) clause

Answer: B) The Most Favoured Nation (MFN) clause

Detailed Explanation: During the recent diplomatic state visit of French President Emmanuel Macron, India and France formally signed and revised their bilateral tax treaty.

Key Facets: The most vital modification was the complete removal of the **Most Favoured Nation (MFN)** clause from the tax treaty. This change gives India greater flexibility to alter dividend tax rules and capital gains taxation, while integrating advanced anti-tax avoidance standards recommended by the OECD's Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) framework.

Part 3: Sports

Q11. Who won the top position in the final medal tally at the Khelo India Winter Games 2026?

- A) Jammu & Kashmir
- B) Ladakh
- C) Indian Army
- D) Himachal Pradesh

Answer: C) Indian Army

Detailed Explanation: The Indian Army sports contingent delivered a dominant performance to secure the number one position in the final medal tally at the Khelo India Winter Games 2026.

Key Facets: The games, which showcase winter sports like alpine skiing, snowboarding, and ice hockey, saw intense competition between northern states and specialized service teams. The Indian Army's winter sports athletes used their high-altitude training advantages to capture the championship trophy.

Q12. Harry Brook recently created international cricket history by becoming the first team captain to score a century in which tournament?

- A) ICC World Test Championship Finals
- B) T20 World Cup
- C) Asia Cup ODI Tournament
- D) Under-19 Men's Cricket World Cup

Answer: B) T20 World Cup

Detailed Explanation: England's explosive batsman Harry Brook etched his name into the record books by becoming the first designated team captain to hit a century in the history of the T20 World Cup.

Key Facets: Brook's century set a new benchmark for captain's innings in short-format cricket, highlighting a tactical shift where captains lead from the front with high-strike-rate performances during world tournaments.

Q13. Which domestic cricket team won its maiden Ranji Trophy title in 2026, breaking a 67-year championship drought?

- A) Vidarbha
- B) Kerala
- C) Jammu & Kashmir

D) Bengal

Answer: C) Jammu & Kashmir

Detailed Explanation: The Jammu & Kashmir domestic cricket team created sports history by clinching their maiden Ranji Trophy title in their first-ever appearance in the finals.

Key Facets: This historic victory broke a 67-year championship drought since the association's inception. It highlights the rapid development of cricket infrastructure, professional mentoring, and talent identification networks across the Union Territory.

Part 4: Appointments, Awards & Honors

Q14. Senior diplomat Shri Naba Kumar Pal (IFS batch 2008) has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to which Central African nation?

- A) Republic of Chad
- B) Republic of Niger
- C) Cameroon
- D) Gabon

Answer: A) Republic of Chad

Detailed Explanation: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) officially announced the appointment of Shri Naba Kumar Pal, a 2008-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, as India's next Ambassador to the Republic of Chad.

Key Facets: Prior to this role, he handled key departmental responsibilities as a Director within the MEA headquarters in New Delhi. His diplomatic brief in Chad will center on strengthening bilateral ties with this landlocked Central African country. This includes managing development partnerships, Lines of Credit (LoC), and capacity-building initiatives under

the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program.

Q15. Mangaluru International Airport was recently honored at the global ASQ (Airport Service Quality) Awards. In which specific category did it win?

- A) Cleanest Airport in the Asia-Pacific Region
- B) Best Airport at Arrivals – Globally
- C) Most Eco-Friendly Airport Architecture
- D) Best Airport for Baggage Delivery Speed

Answer: B) Best Airport at Arrivals – Globally

Detailed Explanation: Mangaluru International Airport (MIA) secured top honors at the Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Awards, winning the title of *Best Airport at Arrivals – Globally*.

Key Facets: The ASQ awards are managed by Airports Council International (ACI) and are based on live passenger feedback surveys that measure key performance indicators. MIA's top ranking in the arrivals category reflects its smooth immigration, fast baggage deboarding, customs efficiency, and overall traveler-friendly infrastructure.

Q16. Who was appointed by the Union Government as the head of the High-Level Committee constituted to review the DigiLocker regulatory framework?

- A) Rajeev Chandrasekhar
- B) Ajay Sawhney
- C) Shaktikanta Das
- D) K. VijayRaghavan

Answer: A) Ajay Sawhney

Detailed Explanation: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) formed a high-level expert committee, appointing former IT Secretary Ajay Sawhney as

its chairperson, to review and upgrade the DigiLocker regulatory framework.

Key Facets: The committee is tasked with expanding DigiLocker's ecosystem beyond basic document storage. It will formulate guidelines for cross-institutional data sharing, advanced encryption protocols, and zero-knowledge storage proofs. The goal is to safely position DigiLocker as a foundational pillar for private business verifications and civic access.

Part 5: Books, Authors & Defense News

Q17. The Defense Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), along with the Indian Navy, successfully tested an indigenous Air Droppable Container off the Goa coast. What is its payload capacity?

- A) 50 kilograms
- B) 100 kilograms
- C) 150 kilograms
- D) 250 kilograms

Answer: C) 150 kilograms

Detailed Explanation: DRDO and the Indian Navy successfully completed flight trials of an indigenously developed Air Droppable Container from a P-8I long-range maritime patrol aircraft off the coast of Goa.

Key Facets: The container is engineered with a payload capacity of **150 kilograms**. This technology allows land bases or long-range aircraft to drop critical spare parts, medical supplies, and logistical rations directly to naval ships operating in remote ocean areas. This significantly reduces the need for ships to return to port for urgent operational supplies.

Q18. The Indian Navy participated in the US-led multinational naval anti-submarine warfare

exercise 'Exercise Sea Dragon 2026'. Where was this exercise conducted?

- A) South China Sea
- B) Guam Region (Pacific Ocean)
- C) Northern Arabian Sea
- D) Strait of Malacca

Answer: B) Guam Region (Pacific Ocean)

Detailed Explanation: *Exercise Sea Dragon 2026* is a premier, US-led multinational maritime exercise centered on high-end anti-submarine warfare (ASW) tactics and coordination.

Key Facets: The exercise took place in the waters surrounding the **Guam region** in the western Pacific Ocean. The Indian Navy deployed long-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft alongside naval forces from the United States, Australia, Japan, and New Zealand to enhance interoperability and tracking capabilities against underwater threats.

Q19. The 11th edition of the joint military exercise 'Exercise LAMITIYE 2026' was conducted between India and which partner nation?

- A) Maldives
- B) Seychelles
- C) Madagascar
- D) Mauritius

Answer: B) Seychelles

Detailed Explanation: The 11th edition of the joint military training exercise *Exercise LAMITIYE 2026* was successfully conducted at the Seychelles Defence Academy.

Key Facets: "Lamitiye" translates to "Friendship" in the Creole language. The exercise focuses on low-intensity, counter-insurgency, and counter-terrorism operations

in semi-urban terrain. It serves as a key platform for building tactical defense bonds and security cooperation between the Indian Army and the Seychelles Defence Forces.

Q20. A newly published report titled 'Global Assessment of Migratory Freshwater Fishes' raised serious environmental warnings. Which Indian river system was highlighted as a high-priority basin due to its rich migrant biomass?

- A) Godavari-Krishna Basin
- B) Narmada-Tapi Basin
- C) Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna Basin
- D) Cauvery-Pennar Basin

Answer: C) Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna Basin

Detailed Explanation: The *Global Assessment of Migratory Freshwater Fishes* report, backed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Bonn Convention (CMS), revealed that global populations of migratory freshwater fish have declined by 81% since 1970.

Key Facets: The report identified India's **Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna river system** as a globally critical, high-priority conservation basin due to its high biomass of migratory fish. Flagship species under immediate threat within this system include the Hilsa, Golden Mahseer, Goonch Catfish, and the Indian Mottled Eel. The study also noted that India holds Asia's highest proportion of endemic freshwater finfish species at 27.8%.

Part 6: Government Schemes & MoU's

Q21. The central government extended incentives for electric three-wheelers (e-rickshaws and e-carts) under its clean mobility framework. What is the updated implementation timeline?

- A) Until December 2026
- B) Until March 2027
- C) Until March 2028
- D) Until June 2029

Answer: C) Until March 2028

Detailed Explanation: The Ministry of Heavy Industries formally announced an extension of targeted financial incentives for electric three-wheelers, specifically focusing on e-rickshaws and e-carts, extending the program until **March 2028**.

Key Facets: This long-term extension aims to provide policy stability for manufacturers and drivers. It supports affordable last-mile public connectivity, urban-rural micro-logistics, and eco-friendly e-commerce delivery networks, helping lower carbon footprints in urban centers.

Q22. The Andhra Pradesh Government launched a tribal welfare food initiative titled 'Araku Kouni'. What is the primary focus of this project?

- A) Distributing free organic honey collected by Chenchu tribes
- B) Introducing the state's first tribal millet-based food menu into mainstream culture
- C) Establishing zero-waste solar-powered cold storages for organic turmeric
- D) Exporting premium tribal coffee varieties to European union markets

Answer: B) Introducing the state's first tribal millet-based food menu into mainstream culture

Detailed Explanation: The Andhra Pradesh state administration launched *Araku Kouni*, which serves as the state's first official tribal millet-based culinary initiative.

Key Facets: The program integrates traditional, highly nutritious millet diets from indigenous tribal communities into mainstream hospitality and food culture. This helps create sustainable livelihoods for tribal farmers in the Araku valley while promoting healthy, climate-resilient food choices.

Q23. Which village in the Kendrapada district became Odisha's first 'Smart Village' under a mission-mode initiative led by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)?

- A) Raghurajpur village
- B) Kusunpur village
- C) Pipili village
- D) Chani village

Answer: B) Kusunpur village

Detailed Explanation: **Kusunpur village**, located in the Kendrapada district, has achieved the distinction of becoming Odisha's first official "Smart Village."

Key Facets: This transformation was carried out under a mission-mode initiative driven by CSIR. The project combines research institution expertise with local governance to introduce practical, tech-driven solutions. These include solar-powered micro-grids, automated sub-surface drainage systems, purified community drinking water plants, and digital literacy hubs.

Q24. The Maharashtra assembly passed the 'Freedom of Religion Bill 2026'. What maximum term of imprisonment does the bill prescribe for unlawful religious conversions via fraud or coercion on the pretext of marriage?

- A) Three years
- B) Five years
- C) Seven years
- D) Ten years

Answer: C) Seven years

Detailed Explanation: The Maharashtra state legislative assembly passed the *Freedom of Religion Bill 2026* by a voice vote to curb forced conversions.

Key Facets: The bill introduces strict penalties to prohibit religious conversions carried out through coercion, fraud, allurement, or misrepresentation on the pretext of marriage. Under the provisions of this statute, individuals found guilty of orchestrating unlawful conversions will face a mandatory imprisonment term of **seven years** along with a civil financial penalty of ₹1 lakh.

Q25. Micron Technology Inc. established India's first semiconductor ATMP facility in Sanand, Gujarat. What percentage of capital subsidy was provided by the Union Government under the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)?

- A) 25%
- B) 40%
- C) 50%
- D) 75%

Answer: C) 50%

Detailed Explanation: Global semiconductor leader Micron Technology established India's pioneer Assembly, Test, Marking, and Packaging (ATMP) semiconductor facility at Sanand, Gujarat, marking a major milestone for domestic electronics hardware.

Key Facets: Under the guidelines of the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM), the Union Government provided an upfront **50% capital subsidy** to support the project. The state government of Gujarat provided an additional 20% financial subsidy, showcasing a combined effort to build a self-reliant semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem in India.

Part 7: Science, Environment & Important Days

Q26. India initiated the 'Zero Prize' program to drive environmental innovation. What specific issue does this prize seek to tackle?

- A) Deep-sea plastic micro-particles
- B) Air Pollution and tangible particulate emissions reduction
- C) E-waste accumulating in landfill areas
- D) Industrial wastewater chemical contamination

Answer: B) Air Pollution and tangible particulate emissions reduction

Detailed Explanation: The Union Government introduced the innovative *Zero Prize* initiative as a challenge to reward individuals, research labs, and startups that demonstrate scalable reductions in ambient emissions.

Key Facets: The primary target of the prize is **Air Pollution**. It focuses on breakthroughs that can significantly reduce $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10} dust levels, mitigate agricultural stubble burning, and lower urban vehicular emissions through cost-effective technological interventions.

Q27. Jammu & Kashmir Police unveiled a specialized squad named 'Snow Leopard'. What is the operational focus of this unit?

- A) Cyber security tracking for encrypted dark-web servers
- B) Specialized security and tactical rescue operations in mountainous/high-altitude terrain
- C) Counter-insurgency tracking inside deep riverine wetlands

D) Urban VIP traffic management via drone systems

Answer: B) Specialized security and tactical rescue operations in mountainous/high-altitude terrain

Detailed Explanation: The Jammu & Kashmir Police force officially raised and deployed a highly trained tactical unit named the *Snow Leopard* squad.

Key Facets: The squad is specifically trained for mountain security, winter survival, and high-altitude tactical operations. These teams safeguard treacherous mountain passes, provide rapid-response disaster rescue during avalanches, and counter security vulnerabilities along rugged highland borders.

Q28. Environmentalists raised concerns over expanding groundwater contamination across India. Which toxic heavy metal was identified as a growing threat in the deeper aquifers of the Indo-Gangetic plains?

- A) Cadmium
- B) Arsenic
- C) Mercury
- D) Lead

Answer: B) Arsenic

Detailed Explanation: Hydro-geological assessments conducted in March 2026 highlighted a growing groundwater contamination crisis affecting rural drinking water sources across India.

Key Facets: Arsenic contamination remains a severe public health hazard within the deeper alluvial aquifers of the Indo-Gangetic plains (covering parts of West Bengal, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh). Prolonged exposure to arsenic-contaminated water causes arsenicosis, skin lesions, and elevates the risk of various cancers,

prompting calls for widespread water-purification infrastructure.

Q29. National Safety Day is observed every year across India on which date to promote safety measures across industrial and public sectors?

- A) March 1
- B) March 4
- C) March 12
- D) March 23

Answer: B) March 4

Detailed Explanation: National Safety Day is celebrated throughout India on **March 4** each year. The day is organized by the National Safety Council (NSC) of India.

Key Facets: The annual observance on March 4 marks the foundation day of the National Safety Council, which was set up by the Ministry of Labour in 1966. The campaign aims to renew the commitment of employees and the general public to work safely, reducing industrial accidents and promoting a nationwide culture of safety.

Q30. The Rajasthan Government issued an official gazette notification renaming the historic hill station town of Mount Abu. What is its new official name?

- A) Abu Nagar
- B) Aravali Dham
- C) Abu Raj
- D) Raj Abu

Answer: C) Abu Raj

Detailed Explanation: In a significant administrative update, the state government of Rajasthan issued a notification changing the name of its iconic hill station, Mount Abu, to **Abu Raj**.