

## Section 1: International News

### Question 1

NATO has recently launched a new high-profile military coordination initiative named operation "Arctic Sentry." What is the primary geographical focus of this mission? A) The Mediterranean Sea

B) The South China Sea

C) The Arctic and High North

D) The Indo-Pacific Region

**Correct Answer: C) The Arctic and High North**

### Detailed Explanation:

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) formally rolled out the "Arctic Sentry" mission in late March 2026. This mission establishes a continuous, unified surveillance and military deterrence framework across the Arctic and High North waters. Due to global warming melting arctic ice caps, new northern shipping routes have opened up, leading to intensified territorial and resources friction involving major global powers. The mission focuses on tracking undersea movements, safeguarding submarine data cables, and coordinating maritime responses among Arctic NATO members.

### Question 2

During the official State Visit of Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to India in late March 2026, both nations set an ambitious bilateral trade target. What is the target value to be achieved by 2030? A) USD 15 Billion

B) USD 20 Billion

C) USD 30 Billion

D) USD 50 Billion

**Correct Answer: C) USD 30 Billion**

### Detailed Explanation:

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva held comprehensive bilateral talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi. To push economic ties within the strategic BRICS and IBSA frameworks, both leaders signed agreements targeting a bilateral trade volume of USD 30 billion by the year 2030. The roadmap heavily emphasizes strategic cooperation in defense manufacturing, bio-fuels (particularly ethanol blending technologies), space research, and agricultural export channels.

### Question 3

The "Strait of Hormuz," which was recently highlighted in global maritime transport updates as multiple Indian LPG carriers safely transited it, directly connects which two major bodies of water? A) Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

B) Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman

C) Arabian Sea and Red Sea

D) Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea

**Correct Answer: B) Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman**

### Detailed Explanation:

The Strait of Hormuz is a critical global energy choke point. It connects the Persian Gulf (on its west) with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea (on its east). In March 2026, Indian-flagged LPG tankers like the *BW Tyr* and *BW Elm* navigated the strait safely amid geopolitical tensions to bring over 94,000 tonnes of liquid gas to Indian ports. Roughly one-fifth of the world's total petroleum consumption passes through this narrow strait, making its security vital to global energy stability.

### Question 4

An international environmental report released in March 2026 highlighted a dramatic "Blood-

- Red Sky" phenomenon across Western Australia. What was the primary scientific cause behind this occurrence? A) Intense solar flare radiation hitting the upper atmosphere
- B) Rayleigh scattering of light caused by Tropical Cyclone Narelle's dust storms
- C) Severe industrial chemical emission reacting with low-hanging clouds
- D) High-altitude volcanic ash cloud blockages from the Pacific Ring of Fire

**Correct Answer: B) Rayleigh scattering of light caused by Tropical Cyclone Narelle's dust storms**

**Detailed Explanation:**

Western Australia experienced an eerie, deep-red atmospheric display due to severe dust storms triggered by Tropical Cyclone Narelle. The high-velocity winds lifted microscopic, iron-rich red soil particles into the mid-to-high troposphere. These dense dust layers blocked shorter wavelengths of light (like blue and violet) via atmospheric scattering, allowing only the longer, dominant red wavelengths to pass through, resulting in an apocalyptic red sky and low visibility.

**Section 2: National News**

**Question 5**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated the highly anticipated Phase I of the Noida International Airport (NIA). At which specific site in Uttar Pradesh is this megaproject located? A) Jewar
- B) Greater Noida
- C) Dadri
- D) Sikandrabad

**Correct Answer: A) Jewar**

**Detailed Explanation:**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Phase I of the Noida International Airport, constructed at Jewar in the Gautam Buddha Nagar district of Uttar Pradesh. Built at an initial cost of INR 11,200 crore via a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model involving Zurich Airport International, this airport is strategically designed to decongest Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport. It operates as a vital logistics hub for the upcoming Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) and aligns with India's civil aviation expansion program.

**Question 6**

- According to the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) report published in March 2026, India's youth unemployment rate (for ages 15–29) experienced a positive structural shift. What did the youth unemployment rate drop to? A) 11.5%
- B) 10.3%
- C) 9.9%
- D) 8.5%

**Correct Answer: C) 9.9%**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The National Statistical Office (NSO) released its annual Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data. A key highlight was the drop in the youth unemployment rate (ages 15–29) down to 9.9%, compared to 10.3% in the previous cycle. The survey also noted that the overall Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) held stable at 59.3%, while regular wage or salaried employment options climbed to 23.6%, reflecting a gradual formalization of the national workforce.

**Question 7**



The Indian Government has officially announced the definitive timeline for launching the highly anticipated 16th National Population Census. On what date will it officially commence? A) October 1, 2026

B) January 1, 2027

C) April 1, 2027

D) March 31, 2028

**Correct Answer: C) April 1, 2027**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The Ministry of Home Affairs confirmed that India's 16th National Population Census will officially begin on April 1, 2027. This digital-first census will leverage an advanced central portal and specialized mobile applications to systematically record demographic information. It marks a shift from past paper-heavy methods to real-time data collection, ensuring more accurate data for planning public resource distribution and welfare programs over the next decade.

**Question 8**

The "World Buddhist Peace Conference 2026," which brought together delegates from over 25 countries to deliberate on global harmony, was hosted in which Indian state? A) Bihar

B) Telangana

C) Maharashtra

D) Uttar Pradesh

**Correct Answer: B) Telangana**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The World Buddhist Peace Conference 2026 was organized in Telangana, centered around the state's historical heritage sites like Buddhavanam (a massive Buddhist spiritual theme park at Nagarjuna Sagar). The event

highlighted ancient Buddhist philosophies on peace, conflict resolution, and environmental preservation. It also aimed to position Telangana as a prime destination on the international Buddhist tourism circuit.

**Question 9**

A high-intensity natural disaster event was reported at the "Zojila Pass." This vital pass connects Srinagar with Kargil and Leh across which mountain range? A) Pir Panjal Range

B) Zaskar Range

C) Karakoram Range

D) Dhauladhar Range

**Correct Answer: B) Zaskar Range**

**Detailed Explanation:**

A major snow avalanche hit the strategic Zojila Pass, triggering massive deployment of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) for clearing operations. Located at an altitude of approximately 11,575 feet (3,528 meters), the Zojila Pass is situated within the Western Himalayan Zaskar Range. It serves as the single most critical terrestrial link connecting the Kashmir Valley directly to the Ladakh Union Territory via National Highway 1 (NH-1).

### Section 3: Economics and Banking

**Question 10**

Under the newly updated operational norms issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), commercial banks are permitted to extend lending facilities to Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) only if they fulfill which baseline condition? A) Listed on exchanges and operational for at least 1 year

B) Listed on exchanges and operational for at least 3 years

C) Maintain a minimum capital adequacy ratio of 15%

D) Maintain an asset base exceeding INR 50,000 Crore

**Correct Answer: B) Listed on exchanges and operational for at least 3 years**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The Reserve Bank of India issued a revised prudential lending circular for commercial banks interacting with real estate markets. Under the new rules, commercial banks can only offer credit facilities or subscribe to debt papers of Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) if the trust has been actively listed and operational for a minimum of 3 years. This requirement helps protect the banking sector from the volatility of early-stage real estate projects.

**Question 11**

What is the maximum aggregate bank exposure limit capped by the RBI for loans extended to any single Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) in terms of its overall asset valuation? A) 25%

B) 33%

C) 49%

D) 60%

**Correct Answer: C) 49%**

**Detailed Explanation:**

To safeguard the domestic financial grid against systemic real estate defaults, the RBI has capped a commercial bank's maximum credit exposure to a single REIT or InvIT group at 49% of the trust's total net asset value. Furthermore, the banking regulator mandated that these funds can only be used for completing ongoing projects or upgrading operational assets, strictly prohibiting banks from financing

speculative land acquisitions through these entities.

**Question 12**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed a monetary penalty of INR 31.8 Lakh on which Payments Bank for non-compliance with statutory financial disclosure requirements? A) Paytm Payments Bank

B) Airtel Payments Bank

C) Jio Payments Bank

D) India Post Payments Bank

**Correct Answer: B) Airtel Payments Bank**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The RBI invoked its enforcement powers under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, to levy a fine of INR 31.8 lakh on Airtel Payments Bank. A regulatory audit revealed discrepancies and non-disclosures in its financial performance statements for the fiscal year. Airtel Payments Bank, which launched operations in 2016 as India's first payments bank, attained Scheduled Bank status from the RBI in 2022.

**Question 13**

As per the updated Income Tax rules highlighted in late March 2026, what is the Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) threshold for interest income earned on Fixed Deposits (FDs) by senior citizens? A) INR 40,000

B) INR 50,000

C) INR 75,000

D) INR 1,00,000

**Correct Answer: D) INR 1,00,000**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The Income Tax Department issued clarifications regarding TDS deductions on

interest income accumulated via Fixed Deposits (FDs) and Recurring Deposits (RDs). For the general public, the threshold before TDS kicks in stands at INR 50,000. However, for senior citizens (aged 60 and above), the limit is expanded to INR 1,00,000. If an individual has a valid PAN linked to their account, the TDS rate is 10%; if not, the bank must deduct tax at a higher rate of 20%.

#### Question 14

The National Housing Bank (NHB) has formally launched a new citizen-centric digital portal to expedite housing finance accessibility. What is the name of this portal? A) Gruh Sugam

- B) Awas Sakhi
- C) Niwas Digital
- D) Gruha Bharat

**Correct Answer: A) Gruh Sugam**

#### Detailed Explanation:

The National Housing Bank (NHB) launched the "Gruh Sugam" online portal. This platform functions as an integrated single-window clearing system that allows low-to-middle-income urban and rural housing applicants to screen eligible subsidies, evaluate affordable housing loan interest rates across different primary lending institutions, and monitor their applications under various central housing programs.

### Section 4: Sports

#### Question 15

Which iconic Indian athlete was officially crowned with the "Para Archer of the Year 2025" title by the World Archery Federation (WA) in March 2026? A) Harvinder Singh

- B) Sheetal Devi

- C) Rakesh Kumar
- D) Shyam Sundar Swami

**Correct Answer: B) Sheetal Devi**

#### Detailed Explanation:

The World Archery Federation (WA), headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland, named India's teen sensation Sheetal Devi as the "Para Archer of the Year 2025." Hailing from the Kishtwar district of Jammu & Kashmir, Sheetal Devi made global history as the first international female para-archer to compete without arms, using her feet to operate the bow. She won a bronze medal at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games and received the Arjuna Award in 2023.

#### Question 16

Indian para-badminton legend Pramod Bhagat put up a stellar performance at the Spanish Para Badminton International 2026 championship. What was his total medal haul? A) 3 Gold Medals

- B) 1 Gold and 2 Silver Medals
- C) 2 Gold and 1 Bronze Medal
- D) 1 Gold and 1 Bronze Medal

**Correct Answer: B) 1 Gold and 2 Silver Medals**

#### Detailed Explanation:

At the Spanish Para Badminton International 2026 tournament, Padma Shri awardee Pramod Bhagat secured a total of three medals: one Gold medal in the Men's Singles SL3 classification and two Silver medals across the Men's Doubles and Mixed Doubles categories. The tournament serves as a key ranking platform for the upcoming Para Asian Games.

#### Question 17

Indian archers put up an impressive performance at the 2026 Archery Asia Cup. In

which city was this international tournament organized? A) Bangkok, Thailand

B) Tokyo, Japan

C) New Delhi, India

D) Seoul, South Korea

**Correct Answer: A) Bangkok, Thailand**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The 2026 Archery Asia Cup was hosted in Bangkok, Thailand. The Indian archery contingent secured multiple podium finishes, highlighted by two bronze medals in the recurve team events. The tournament provided an important testing ground for the country's elite archers ahead of the World Archery Championships.

## Section 5: Appointments

**Question 18**

Who has been elected as the new President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) for the upcoming 2026–27 executive term? A) Subhrakant Panda

B) Anish Shah

C) Harsha V. Agarwal

D) Sanjiv Mehta

**Correct Answer: C) Harsha V. Agarwal**

**Detailed Explanation:**

Harsha V. Agarwal (Vice Chairman and Managing Director of Emami Ltd) has been appointed as the President-elect of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) for the 2026–27 term. Agarwal will succeed outgoing President Anish Shah. His main focus will involve steering industry policy toward digital manufacturing

adoption, expanding MSME credit availability, and addressing international green tariff frameworks like Europe's CBAM.

**Question 19**

The Lok Sabha Speaker has recently constituted specialized "Parliamentary Friendship Groups" (PFGs) to enhance inter-parliamentary ties. How many bilateral countries are covered under this initiative? A) 40 Countries

B) 50 Countries

C) 64 Countries

D) 75 Countries

**Correct Answer: C) 64 Countries**

**Detailed Explanation:**

To strengthen ties and foster legislative exchanges, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla cleared the formation of Parliamentary Friendship Groups (PFGs) targeting 64 bilateral partner nations. These groups are composed of members of parliament across party lines. They are designed to share best practices on governance, build stronger diplomatic ties outside of traditional executive paths, and support public diplomacy goals.

## Section 6: Awards and Honors

**Question 20**

The 2026 Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards were presented in March 2026. Which institutional group organizes these awards annually to honor reporting integrity? A) Press Trust of India (PTI)

B) The Indian Express Group

C) The Hindu Group

D) Prasar Bharati

**Correct Answer: B) The Indian Express Group**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards are managed annually by The Indian Express Group. Named after the group's founder, Ramnath Goenka, these awards recognize exceptional contributions across print, broadcast, and digital media formats. The categories cover investigative journalism, sports coverage, regional language reporting, and political analysis, honoring journalists who maintain high standards of factual accuracy and independence.

**Question 21**

Which Indian municipal corporation set a Guinness World Record by executing a massive green cover initiative that planted over 2.5 Lakh saplings within a single operational window? A) Indore Municipal Corporation

B) Varanasi Municipal Corporation

C) Surat Municipal Corporation

D) Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike

**Correct Answer: B) Varanasi Municipal Corporation**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The Varanasi Municipal Corporation, in collaboration with local environmental groups and forest authorities, secured a Guinness World Record by planting over 250,000 indigenous tree saplings within a single day. This initiative targeted urban heat islands along the Ganges basin, aiming to improve urban canopy coverage and support carbon sequestration efforts under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).

**Section 7: Science and Defense News**

**Question 22**

The Indian Armed Forces successfully conducted Exercise "Dweep Shakti." What was the primary tactical objective of this joint military exercise? A) High-altitude cold-weather warfare simulation near the Line of Actual Control

B) Tri-service joint operations to secure India's strategic island territories and coastline

C) Anti-submarine warfare coordination with Quad navies in the deep Indian Ocean

D) Cyber-warfare defense training across nationwide critical infrastructure grids

**Correct Answer: B) Tri-service joint operations to secure India's strategic island territories and coastline**

**Detailed Explanation:**

Exercise *Dweep Shakti* was a large-scale, high-intensity tri-service joint military drill conducted by the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force. The exercise focused on testing rapid-response deployment capabilities, amphibious landing operations, and coastal air-defense systems. It was designed to improve tactical synergy across branches to defend India's strategic island territories (such as the Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep archipelagos) and its vast Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

**Question 23**

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has initiated a combat capability upgrade for its MiG-29 fighter fleet by integrating the "ASRAAM" missile system. What type of weapon is the ASRAAM? A) Beyond-Visual-Range Air-to-Surface Missile

- B) Short-Range Air-to-Air Missile
- C) Anti-Radiation Cruise Missile
- D) Hypersonic Glide Interceptor

**Correct Answer: B) Short-Range Air-to-Air Missile**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The Advanced Short-Range Air-to-Air Missile (ASRAAM), developed by European defense major MBDA, is being integrated into the Indian Air Force's upgraded MiG-29 fighter fleet. The ASRAAM is a within-visual-range missile that features advanced "look and shoot" and Lock-On After Launch (LOAL) capabilities. It can track and intercept highly maneuverable target aircraft or drones even at sharp off-boresight angles, providing a substantial boost to close-combat air defense.

**Question 24**

NASA has finalized preparations for its upcoming "Artemis II" space mission. What makes this particular phase of the Artemis program historically significant? A) It marks the first launch of an autonomous robotic rover to the Martian south pole

- B) It will operate as the first crewed lunar flyby test flight under the program
- C) It will deploy a permanent multi-module space station into orbit around Venus
- D) It is a dedicated mission to test kinetic asteroid deflection techniques

**Correct Answer: B) It will operate as the first crewed lunar flyby test flight under the program**

**Detailed Explanation:**

NASA's Artemis II mission is the first crewed flight under the Artemis lunar exploration framework. Launching from the Kennedy Space Center, the mission will send four astronauts

aboard the Orion spacecraft on a deep-space trajectory to perform a lunar flyby before returning safely to Earth. This mission tests the core space-launch systems, life-support networks, and crew operations needed for subsequent manned landings on the lunar surface.

## Section 8: Government Schemes and MoUs

**Question 25**

The Central Government updated the operational directives for the "Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2026." What is the mandatory waste segregation framework introduced under these rules? A) Dual-stream segregation (Wet and Dry)

- B) Three-stream segregation (Biodegradable, Non-biodegradable, Hazardous)
- C) Four-stream segregation (Wet, Dry, Sanitary, and Special Care Waste)
- D) Five-stream segregation (Organic, Plastic, Metal, Glass, E-waste)

**Correct Answer: C) Four-stream segregation (Wet, Dry, Sanitary, and Special Care Waste)**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notified the revised Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2026. The new regulations mandate a strict four-stream waste segregation model at the source: wet (biodegradable), dry (recyclable), sanitary (diapers, hygiene products), and special care waste (domestic hazardous elements like batteries and expired medicines). The rules shift focus toward a circular economy model and apply an Extended Bulk Waste Generator Responsibility (EBWGR) rule to entities producing more than 100 kg of waste per day.

**Question 26**

The Ministry of Education launched "Teacher App 2.0" to modernize academic delivery across government schools. Approximately how many AI-enabled instructional tools are built into this platform? A) 10+ AI Tools

- B) 25+ AI Tools
- C) 45+ AI Tools
- D) 100+ AI Tools

**Correct Answer: C) 45+ AI Tools**

**Detailed Explanation:**

As part of the digital education push under the National Education Policy (NEP), the central government rolled out "Teacher App 2.0." The updated platform integrates more than 45 distinct artificial intelligence tools designed to assist educators with automated lesson planning, multi-language content translation, student performance predictive analytics, and personalized homework generation, helping optimize administrative workloads in public classrooms.

**Question 27**

The CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research (CSIR-NIScPR) executed a strategic MoU with the Science City of which state to promote grassroots scientific literacy? A) Tamil Nadu

- B) Andhra Pradesh
- C) Gujarat
- D) Karnataka

**Correct Answer: B) Andhra Pradesh**

**Detailed Explanation:**

CSIR-NIScPR signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Science City of Andhra Pradesh. This partnership focuses on

translating complex scientific studies into accessible regional languages, hosting joint science exhibitions, and training rural teachers under the "Jigyasa" student-scientist connect initiative to foster scientific temper at the school level.

**Question 28**

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) launched the "PAIMANA" digital dashboard infrastructure. What is the core function of this platform? A) Electronic toll collection audit using blockchain tracking

- B) Real-time monitoring and tracking of national highway construction projects
- C) Automated wildlife underpass tracking using AI cameras
- D) Managing electric vehicle charging corridors along highways

**Correct Answer: B) Real-time monitoring and tracking of national highway construction projects**

**Detailed Explanation:**

The NHAI introduced the PAIMANA dashboard to improve transparency and efficiency in infrastructure development. Connected to ISRO's satellite imagery networks and drone mapping feeds, the portal allows project managers to track construction progress, monitor contractor timelines, identify land acquisition bottlenecks, and ensure adherence to environmental clearance parameters in real time.

**Section 9: Important Days**

**Question 29**

A comprehensive international health tracking paper published in *The Lancet* highlighted challenges related to India's Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR). What is the specific target



milestone for MMR set under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for 2030?

- A) Below 100 per 1,00,000 live births
- B) Below 70 per 1,00,000 live births
- C) Below 50 per 1,00,000 live births
- D) Below 30 per 1,00,000 live births

**Correct Answer: B) Below 70 per 1,00,000 live births**

**Detailed Explanation:**

*The Lancet* report analyzed maternal mortality rates across developing countries, noting that India's MMR has improved significantly down to 88 according to recent Sample Registration System (SRS) records. However, to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3.1 (SDG Target 2030), India must lower this metric below 70 deaths per 100,000 live births. Achieving this target requires strengthening rural emergency obstetric care and expanding access to institutional delivery options.

**Question 30**

World Theatre Day is celebrated globally every year to honor the history and cultural impact of the performing arts. On which date is it observed? A) March 15

- B) March 21
- C) March 27
- D) March 31

**Correct Answer: C) March 27**

**Detailed Explanation:**

World Theatre Day was established in 1961 by the International Theatre Institute (ITI). Celebrated annually on March 27 by theater communities worldwide, the day features a variety of national and international performing arts events. A key highlight is the circulation of

the World Theatre Day International Message, written by an outstanding figure in theater to reflect on the art form's role in promoting cross-cultural dialogue and peace.