

1. International News

North Korea Unveils 'Zam-2.0' AI-Guided Autonomous Torpedo System

- **In Detail:** North Korea has formally unveiled its next-generation underwater weapon system designated as the 'Zam-2.0'. The weapon is an AI-guided, self-propelled underwater torpedo designed to target surface ships and naval submarines.
- **Key Features:** Unlike basic autonomous strike systems, the Zam-2.0 utilizes **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** for real-time acoustic signal processing, course correction, target recognition, and homing guidance underwater.
- **Exam Relevance:** Important for International Security, Defense Technology (UPSC Mains GS-3), and static/current defense MCQs (SSC/Banking).

India and New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Entry into Force

- **In Detail:** The Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between India and New Zealand enters into force on the occasion of Vijay Dashami.
- **Key Provisions:**
 - Grants **duty-free access (0% tariff)** for 100% of Indian goods exported to New Zealand.
 - Boosts key Indian sectors: Textiles, pharmaceuticals, organic chemicals, agricultural products, and IT services.
 - Strengthens India's trade footprint in the Indo-Pacific region.

2. National News & Governance

Government Caps Trade Margins on 137 Anti-Cancer Medicines at 30%

- **In Detail:** The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, alongside the **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)**, announced a strict cap on trade margins for **137 vital anti-cancer formulations**.
- **Key Provisions:**
 - Trade margins capped at **maximum 30%**.
 - Retail prices expected to drop by up to **70%** for several critical oncology drugs, making life-saving treatments accessible to millions.
 - **Effective Date:** Takes effect in early November 2026.

Proposal to Amend Form 6 by Maharashtra CEO Office

- **In Detail:** The Maharashtra Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) submitted a formal proposal to the **Election Commission of India (ECI)** to amend **Form 6** of the Representation of the People Act.
- **Objective:** Allows voters whose names were accidentally removed during the **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** to re-register without declaring themselves as first-time voters.

3. Economics, Banking & Financial Sector

Pakistan Designated Chair of World Bank & IMF Boards of Governors for 2027

- **In Detail:** Pakistan has been selected to serve as the incoming Chair for the separate Boards of Governors of both the **World Bank Group (WBG)** and the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** for the year 2027.
- **Static Context:** The Board of Governors is the highest decision-making authority in Bretton Woods institutions, comprising one

Governor and one Alternate Governor appointed by each member nation.

BEML Secures ₹5,400-Crore Bullet Train Project Order

- **In Detail:** Public sector undertaking (PSU) **BEML Limited** secured a landmark order worth **₹5,400 crore** linked directly to India's High-Speed Rail Project (Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Corridor).
- **Significance:** BEML will manufacture and supply indigenous high-speed trainsets under the **Make in India / Atmanirbhar Bharat** initiative.

4. Science, Environment & Earth Sciences

Neyveli & Tiruchirappalli Identified as Martian Analogues

- **In Detail:** Planetary scientists have formally identified **Neyveli** and the **Tiruchirappalli Badlands** in Tamil Nadu as terrestrial analogues for Martian surface mineral environments.
- **Key Discoveries:**
 - **Neyveli (TN):** Rich in **Melanterite** (a hydrated iron sulfate mineral).
 - **Tiruchirappalli Badlands (TN):** Rich in **Gypsum**.
- **Scientific Value:** These terrestrial sulphate minerals mimic acidic aqueous conditions and ancient water-rock interactions once prevalent on Mars.

Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl Sighted in Janakikkad Forest, Kerala

- **In Detail:** The first photographic evidence of the rare **Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl** (*Ketupa nipalensis*) was recorded in **Janakikkad Forest**, Kozhikode district, Kerala.

Static GK Highlights:

- **Janakikkad Forest:** Located near the **Kuttiyady River** basin in the ecologically sensitive Western Ghats.
- **IUCN Status:** Least Concern, but subject to strict habitat protection under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

5. Sports News

Asian Para Games 2026 Begins in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan

- **In Detail:** The 5th edition of the **Asian Para Games** officially kicked off in **Aichi-Nagoya, Japan** (October 18-24, 2026).
- **Indian Contingent:** India sent a **168-member athlete delegation** competing across multi-sport disciplines.
- **Historical Context:** In the previous edition, India achieved its highest-ever tally of **111 medals** (27 Gold, 32 Silver, 49 Bronze).

India vs West Indies T20I Series Drawn 2-2

- **In Detail:** The 5-match bilateral T20 International series between India and West Indies ended in a **2-2 draw** after the deciding 5th match in Bengaluru was abandoned due to persistent rain.

6. Appointments, Resignations & Sports Management

- **Mahela Jayawardene Steps Down:** Former Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardene officially stepped down as the Head Coach of IPL franchise **Mumbai Indians (MI)** after a distinguished tenure including 3 IPL title wins.

7. Defense, Railways & Infrastructure News

Western Railway Builds ₹307-Crore Sabarmati Vande Bharat Maintenance Hub

- **In Detail:** The Ministry of Railways approved a state-of-the-art maintenance depot worth ₹307 crore at Sabarmati, Gujarat.
- **Capacity:** Built under Phase II of the Integrated Coaching Depot (ICD) to handle overhaul and major repairs for **24-coach Vande Bharat express trains**.
- **Direct Rail Route:** Indian Railways launched a direct train connecting **Sabarmati (Gujarat)** to **Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra (J&K)**.

8. Important Days & Anniversaries

World Osteoporosis Day (Observed on 20th October / Pre-event Highlights)

- **Theme / Focus:** Building Stronger Bones Across Lifespans — emphasizing early screening, calcium and vitamin D intake, and resistance exercise.
- **Global Initiative:** Supported by the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) and WHO.

Practice Quiz (MCQs for UPSC, SSC, Banking & Railways)

Q1. Which mineral was identified in Neyveli, Tamil Nadu, as a terrestrial analogue for Martian sulphate environments?

- (A) Jarosite
- (B) Melanterite
- (C) Alunite
- (D) Kieserite

Q2. The AI-guided underwater torpedo system named 'Zam-2.0' was recently unveiled by which country?

- (A) Russia

- (B) North Korea
- (C) China
- (D) Iran

Q3. Which country has been designated to Chair the Boards of Governors of the World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund (IMF) for 2027?

- (A) India
- (B) Bangladesh
- (C) Pakistan
- (D) Egypt

Q4. Janakikkad Forest, recently featured in news for the sighting of the Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl, is located in which state?

- (A) Tamil Nadu
- (B) Kerala
- (C) Karnataka
- (D) Andhra Pradesh

Q5. The Union Government recently capped the maximum trade margin on 137 anti-cancer medicines at what percentage?

- (A) 20%
- (B) 25%
- (C) 30%
- (D) 50%

Answer Key & Explanations

1. **(B) Melanterite** — Identified at Neyveli (hydrated iron sulphate) alongside Gypsum at Tiruchirappalli Badlands as proxies for ancient Martian hydrology.
2. **(B) North Korea** — Zam-2.0 is an AI-guided torpedo incorporating real-time acoustic sensors for course correction.

3. (C) **Pakistan** — Appointed as incoming Chair of the WBG/IMF Board of Governors for 2027 meetings.
4. (B) **Kerala** — Located in Kozhikode district along the Kuttiyady River basin.
5. (C) **30%** — National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority capped trade margins to lower cancer drug costs by up to 70%.

30 Practice Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQs)

Q1. Which country's passport ranked 1st in the Henley Passport Index 2026 with visa-free access to 193 destinations?

- (a) Japan
- (b) Singapore
- (c) South Korea
- (d) United Arab Emirates

Q2. Which country has been appointed to chair the Joint Boards of Governors of the IMF and World Bank Group for 2027?

- (a) India
- (b) Bangladesh
- (c) Pakistan
- (d) Sri Lanka

Q3. Sankoo has recently been declared as the 8th district of which Indian State/UT?

- (a) Jammu & Kashmir
- (b) Ladakh
- (c) Himachal Pradesh
- (d) Uttarakhand

Q4. Under which section of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 did the RBI sanction the merger of Emirates NBD Bank's Indian branches with RBL Bank?

- (a) Section 35A

(b) Section 44A(4)

(c) Section 21

(d) Section 45

Q5. What is the total financial outlay of the "Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses" implemented from 2025-26 to 2030-31?

- (a) ₹8,500 crore
- (b) ₹10,000 crore
- (c) ₹11,440 crore
- (d) ₹15,000 crore

Q6. What is the target production level of pulses under the National Pulses Mission by 2030-31?

- (a) 280 Lakh Metric Tonnes
- (b) 300 Lakh Metric Tonnes
- (c) 350 Lakh Metric Tonnes
- (d) 400 Lakh Metric Tonnes

Q7. Which Indian shooter won Gold in the Women's 10m Air Rifle SH1 event at the 2026 Asian Para Games in Aichi-Nagoya, setting a new record?

- (a) Avani Lekhara
- (b) Mona Agarwal
- (c) Bhavina Patel
- (d) Rubina Francis

Q8. What is the name of India's first indigenous Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV) commissioned at Karwar, Karnataka?

- (a) INS Vikrant
- (b) INS Samarthak
- (c) INS Tarkash
- (d) INS Nipat

Q9. Which company delivered 450 units of Nagastra-1R loitering munitions to the Indian Army?



- (a) Bharat Electronics Limited
- (b) Solar Defence and Aerospace Limited
- (c) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
- (d) Tata Advanced Systems

Q10. What is the global theme for World Food Day 2026 observed on October 16?

- (a) Right to foods for a better life
- (b) Leave NO ONE behind
- (c) Innovate today. Nourish tomorrow.
- (d) Safe food now for a healthy tomorrow

Q11. Which IIT launched the "\$1 Billion Greater Than Us" campaign to set up a Defence Drone Hub with the Ministry of Defence?

- (a) IIT Bombay
- (b) IIT Kanpur
- (c) IIT Madras
- (d) IIT Delhi

Q12. The DRDO successfully tested its Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) platform at which test site in Odisha?

- (a) Wheeler Island
- (b) Chandipur (PXE)
- (c) Gopalpur
- (d) Puri Coast

Q13. Which emission standard is MoRTH proposing to implement in a phased manner for new cars and SUVs in India?

- (a) BS-V
- (b) BS-VI Stage 2
- (c) BS-VII
- (d) Euro 8

Q14. The CCEA approved the sale of a 60.72% controlling stake in IDBI Bank to a subsidiary of which global firm?

- (a) SoftBank Group
- (b) Fairfax Financial Holdings
- (c) BlackRock Inc.
- (d) Temasek Holdings

Q15. On which day is the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty observed annually?

- (a) 15 October
- (b) 16 October
- (c) 17 October
- (d) 18 October

Q16. Which Indian naval stealth frigate participated in the 9th edition of the IBSAMAR IX exercise hosted by South Africa?

- (a) INS Sahyadri
- (b) INS Tarkash
- (c) INS Teg
- (d) INS Tabar

Q17. How many Indian athletes are competing in the 2026 Asian Para Games held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan?

- (a) 120
- (b) 145
- (c) 168
- (d) 210

Q18. Under the UDISE+ report, how many total students were registered across schools in India?

- (a) 15.2 Crore
- (b) 20.1 Crore
- (c) 24.72 Crore
- (d) 30.5 Crore

Q19. Modhera Sun Temple, highlighted on UNESCO's Tentative List, was built under which dynasty's ruler Bhima I?

- (a) Solanki / Chaulukya
- (b) Chandela
- (c) Rashtrakuta
- (d) Parmar

Q20. According to the Committee on Forestry session in Rome, what percentage of India's total geographical area is covered by forests and trees?

- (a) 21.72%
- (b) 24.56%
- (c) 25.17%
- (d) 33.00%

Q21. Which state in India had the maximum area dedicated to pulse cultivation during 2023-24?

- (a) Madhya Pradesh
- (b) Rajasthan
- (c) Uttar Pradesh
- (d) Maharashtra

Q22. The 70th meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC-70), where India reaffirmed cetacean protection, took place in:

- (a) Geneva, Switzerland
- (b) Hobart, Australia
- (c) Rome, Italy
- (d) Nairobi, Kenya

Q23. Barda Wildlife Sanctuary, developed as a satellite habitat for Asiatic Lions under Project Lion, is situated in which state?

- (a) Rajasthan
- (b) Gujarat
- (c) Madhya Pradesh
- (d) Maharashtra

Q24. What is the target Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education set by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 by the year 2035?

- (a) 40%
- (b) 45%
- (c) 50%
- (d) 60%

Q25. Which Indian company was honored with the Steelie Award for 'Excellence in People' for its Dakshata safety programme?

- (a) JSW Steel
- (b) Tata Steel
- (c) Steel Authority of India (SAIL)
- (d) Jindal Steel & Power

Q26. Which two organizations signed an MoU along with NSDF to invest ₹40 Crore in India's boxing ecosystem?

- (a) SAI and IOCL
- (b) SAI and NTPC
- (c) ONGC and SAI
- (d) Reliance Foundation and SAI

Q27. Which Ministry launched the specialised credit risk policies "SbPCP" and "BCSPS" for the maritime sector?

- (a) Ministry of Finance
- (b) Ministry of Defense
- (c) Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways
- (d) Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Q28. Which three specific pulse crops are primarily targeted under the National Pulses Mission?

- (a) Gram, Moong, Soyabean
- (b) Tur (Arhar), Urad, Masoor
- (c) Cowpea, Gram, Rajma

(d) Moong, Moth, Chickpea

Q29. Which state won the SKOCH Silver Award for its Grassroots Football Festival (Baby League)?

- (a) Meghalaya
- (b) Manipur
- (c) Mizoram
- (d) Assam

Q30. According to the current definition used by educational bodies in India, a State/UT is classified as fully literate when its literacy rate reaches:

- (a) 90%
- (b) 95%
- (c) 98%
- (d) 100%

Answers & Explanations

1. **(b) Singapore** — Retained the 1st position globally with access to 193 visa-free destinations.
2. **(c) Pakistan** — Appointed to chair the Joint IMF/World Bank Board of Governors for 2027 after 74 years.
3. **(b) Ladakh** — Sankoo was declared as the 8th district alongside a dedicated hill council.
4. **(b) Section 44A(4)** — Applied by the RBI for approving the branch amalgamation of Emirates NBD Bank with RBL Bank.
5. **(c) ₹11,440 crore** — Total outlay allocated across 6 fiscal years (2025–26 to 2030–31).
6. **(c) 350 Lakh Metric Tonnes** — Target output set to achieve self-sufficiency by 2030–31.
7. **(b) Mona Agarwal** — Clinched Gold in 10m Air Rifle SH1 with 250.0 points, creating a new Asian Para Games record.

8. **(b) INS Samarthak** — India's first indigenous Multi-Purpose Vessel commissioned by Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan.
9. **(b) Solar Defence and Aerospace Limited** — Delivered 450 Nagastra-1R loitering drones to the Indian Army.
10. **(c) Innovate today. Nourish tomorrow.** — Official UN FAO theme for World Food Day 2026.
11. **(b) IIT Kanpur** — Partnered with MoD while launching its \$1B campaign to create a defense drone hub.
12. **(b) Chandipur (PXE)** — DRDO demonstrated Quantum Key Distribution on live defense optical lines in Chandipur, Odisha.
13. **(c) BS-VII** — Proposed by MoRTH in alignment with European Union Euro 7 rules.
14. **(b) Fairfax Financial Holdings** — CCEA approved selling 60.72% stake to its arm M/s 10955230 Canada Inc.
15. **(c) 17 October** — International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is observed annually on Oct 17.
16. **(b) INS Tarkash** — Participated in the IBSAMAR IX exercise at Simon's Town, South Africa.
17. **(c) 168** — Total number of Indian athletes representing the country in Aichi-Nagoya.
18. **(c) 24.72 Crore** — Official enrollment count reported by UDISE+ for 2025–26.
19. **(a) Solanki / Chaulukya** — Constructed during 1025–1027 CE under Chaulukya King Bhima I.
20. **(c) 25.17%** — India reported 82.74 million hectares of total forest and tree cover.



21. (b) **Rajasthan** — Accounted for 54.67 lakh hectares out of the total 275 lakh hectares under pulse farming.
22. (b) **Hobart, Australia** — Venue for the 70th International Whaling Commission session.
23. (b) **Gujarat** — Barda Wildlife Sanctuary is being developed as a secondary home for Asiatic Lions.
24. (c) **50%** — NEP 2020 targets raising the Higher Education GER to 50% by 2035.
25. (b) **Tata Steel** — Awarded the World Steel Association's Steelie Award for its Dakshata safety initiative.
26. (a) **SAI and IOCL** — Partnered with NSDF with a ₹40 Crore budget commitment for boxing talent development.
27. (c) **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways** — Sarbananda Sonowal launched SbPCP and BCSPS credit risk policies.
28. (b) **Tur (Arhar), Urad, Masoor** — The core focal pulse crops under the national self-reliance mission.
29. (c) **Mizoram** — Recognized with the SKOCH Silver Award for its Grassroots Football initiative.
30. (b) **95%** — A state/UT in India is officially classified as fully literate upon reaching 95%+ literacy.

