

UPSC Current Affairs — 21 July 2026

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Polity & Constitution

Elections, ECI & electoral reforms · Prelims + Mains

Karnataka BLOs Instructed to Flag Voters 85+, ECI Rules Prohibit

Why in news: Booth Level Officers (BLOs) in Karnataka were allegedly instructed to flag voters aged 85+ for verification, potentially violating Election Commission of India (ECI) rules regarding voter categorization.

Key facts: The Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer denied the instructions, but BLOs reported being told to flag voters before discrepancies were established. As of July 2026, Karnataka marked over 4 lakh voters as absent/untraceable and nearly 20 lakh as permanently shifted.

Prelims pointers

- **Body:** Booth Level Officers (BLOs) are the primary field-level workers responsible for voter list maintenance and polling station management.
- **Fact:** Karnataka reported over 4 lakh voters as absent/untraceable and nearly 20 lakh as permanently shifted as of July 2026.
- **Body:** The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) is the state-level authority responsible for the conduct of elections and electoral roll maintenance.

Mains question: *Examine the importance of maintaining the integrity of electoral rolls and the potential risks posed by arbitrary voter categorization in a democratic setup.*

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88634

Panchayati Raj & urban local bodies · Prelims

Rajasthan High Court Gets BJP Schedule for Panchayat Elections by Nov 15

Why in news: The Rajasthan High Court received a revised schedule for Panchayat and local body elections, set for completion by November 15, 2026, following delays in delimitation and OBC Commission reporting.

Key facts: The Rajasthan High Court issued contempt notices to the State Election Commission for failing to meet the initial April 15, 2026 deadline. The new schedule hinges on the submission of an OBC Commission report in August 2026 to facilitate delimitation and voter list revisions.

Prelims pointers

- **Body:** State Election Commission: Constitutional body responsible for conducting and supervising elections to Panchayats and municipalities.
- **Fact:** Election Completion Deadline: November 15, 2026.
- **Fact:** OBC Commission Report Submission: August 2026.
- **Place:** Rajasthan High Court: Judicial body overseeing the legality of the election timeline.

Mains question: *Examine the significance of timely delimitation and voter list revisions in ensuring the integrity of local body elections in India.*

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88509

Social Justice

Education policy · Prelims + Mains

The Union government reiterated its stance on releasing Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

Why in news: The Union government linked the release of Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) funds to the implementation of NEP 2020, creating a friction point with Tamil Nadu over MoU signatures for PM-SHRI schools.

Key facts: The Union government allocated ₹3,041.81 crore for Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) for FY 2026-27. Of this, Tamil Nadu's share is ₹1,216 crore while the Centre's share is ₹1,825 crore. The dispute involves the Right to Education component and the PM-SHRI school initiative.

Prelims pointers

- **Scheme:** Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA): An overarching scheme for the school education sector for universalizing access and equity.
- **Scheme:** PM-SHRI: Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India, a scheme to develop schools as exemplar centers for NEP 2020.
- **Fact:** SSA allocation for Tamil Nadu in FY 2026-27 is ₹1,216 crore.
- **Fact:** Total SSA allocation for the period mentioned is ₹3,041.81 crore.

Mains question: Discuss the challenges in achieving uniform educational standards across states under the National Education Policy 2020 amidst federal friction over funding and implementation.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/88752](https://www.satyadheesh.in/news/88752)

Vulnerable sections (SC/ST, minorities, disabled, elderly, children) · Prelims + Mains

Utkal University Study: Over 53% of Odisha's PVTG Women Suffer from Anaemia

Why in news: A Utkal University study revealed that over 53% of women among Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in Odisha suffer from anaemia, highlighting severe nutritional gaps.

Key facts: The study surveyed 9,222 individuals from 2,041 households across 10 tribes in seven districts of Odisha. It found anaemia prevalence of 37% in adult men and 53% in adult women, with specific high rates in Mankidia (59.18%) and Bonda (56.30%) men.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** Anaemia prevalence among Odisha PVTG women: >53% as per July 2026 study
- **Place:** Mankidia and Bonda: Specific PVTGs identified in Odisha with high anaemia rates
- **Body:** Utkal University: Conducted the interdisciplinary research on tribal health

Mains question: Discuss the socio-cultural and geographical factors contributing to the high prevalence of malnutrition among Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/88569](https://www.satyadheesh.in/news/88569)

International Relations

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains

Iran attacked a tanker in the Strait of Hormuz, forcing its crew

Why in news: Iran and the United States are engaged in escalating military conflict and maritime attacks in the Strait of Hormuz, leading to the collapse of an interim peace deal.

Key facts: The Strait of Hormuz is a critical maritime chokepoint through which approximately 20% of global crude oil and natural gas trade passes. The conflict has resulted in the abandonment of tankers and the targeting of civilian infrastructure, with the US conducting airstrikes for ten consecutive nights.

Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Strait of Hormuz: A strategic waterway connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.
- **Fact:** The Strait of Hormuz facilitates the passage of about one-fifth (20%) of the world's traded crude oil and natural gas.
- **Body:** Pakistan is currently acting as a key mediator in the diplomatic talks between Iran and the United States.

- **Fact:** The US military reported a death toll of 17 American service members since early July in the ongoing conflict.

Mains question: Analyze the geopolitical and economic implications of maritime insecurity in the Strait of Hormuz on global energy security and international trade routes.

Source: NDTV · satyadheesh.in/news/88979

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains

India Pushes Hydropower, Aims to Renegotiate Indus Waters Treaty Amid Terrorism Concerns

Why in news: India is seeking to renegotiate the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) and accelerate hydropower projects on the Chenab River due to persistent cross-border terrorism from Pakistan.

Key facts: The Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) governs the sharing of three perennial rivers: the Indus, Chenab, and Jhelum. India is currently pushing for hydropower development on the Chenab River while seeking a formal review of the treaty's framework.

Prelims pointers

- **Intl. org:** Indus Waters Treaty (IWT): Signed in 1960 between India and Pakistan, mediated by the World Bank.
- **Fact:** Chenab River: One of the three perennial rivers shared under the IWT, primarily used for hydropower and irrigation.
- **S&T:** Qdenga: India's first dengue vaccine, approved for use by Takeda Biopharmaceuticals India.
- **Post:** President Droupadi Murmu: Visited Moldova in 2026 to discuss UNSC reforms and counter-terrorism.

Mains question: Examine the challenges India faces in renegotiating the Indus Waters Treaty while balancing regional water security and counter-terrorism objectives.

Source: Indian Express · satyadheesh.in/news/88905

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains

The US bombed Iran for a tenth consecutive night, causing explosions

Why in news: The US launched a 10th consecutive night of airstrikes on Iran (July 2026), leading to retaliatory strikes by the IRGC on US assets in Bahrain and Kuwait and disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz.

Key facts: On July 21, 2026, US strikes caused explosions in Bandar Abbas, Qeshm Island, Chabahar, and Konarak. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) retaliated by targeting US assets in Bahrain and Kuwait and reporting fires on two tankers in the Strait of Hormuz.

Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Strait of Hormuz: A critical maritime chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman.
- **Place:** Bandar Abbas and Chabahar: Key port cities located in southern Iran near the Strait of Hormuz.
- **Fact:** IRGC: The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is the primary military branch of the Iranian Armed Forces.
- **Fact:** July 21, 2026: Date of the tenth consecutive night of US airstrikes on Iranian territory.

Mains question: Analyze the geopolitical implications of escalating military tensions in the Strait of Hormuz on global energy security and maritime trade routes.

Source: Al Jazeera · satyadheesh.in/news/88571

India's bilateral relations · Prelims

US service members killed in Iranian missile strikes on Jordan air base

Why in news: Iranian ballistic missiles struck the Muwaffaq Salti Air Base in Jordan, resulting in the deaths of three US service members and highlighting escalating regional tensions.

Key facts: Iranian ballistic missiles targeted prefabricated housing units at Muwaffaq Salti Air Base in Jordan. The strikes resulted in the deaths of First Lt. Tyler J. Feehan, Pvt. Isabella Gonzales, and Sgt. Michael Emmanuel Swinton.

Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Muwaffaq Salti Air Base: A military installation located in Jordan.
- **Fact:** Three US service members were killed in the missile strikes during the week of the incident.
- **S&T:** Ballistic missiles: Projectiles that follow a suborbital curved trajectory.

Mains question: Analyze the implications of escalating Iran-US tensions on Middle Eastern regional stability and the security of neighboring sovereign states.

Source: Times of India · satyadheesh.in/news/88948

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains

Saudi Arabia vows to protect ships as Houthi imposes naval blockade

Why in news: Saudi Arabia condemned the Houthi naval blockade of Saudi waters, which threatens global energy supplies and critical shipping routes like the Bab al-Mandeb Strait.

Key facts: The Houthi rebels imposed a maritime embargo in retaliation for a perceived Saudi siege on Yemen. The Bab al-Mandeb Strait is a critical maritime chokepoint through which approximately 25% of the world's oil supply passes.

Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Bab al-Mandeb Strait: A strategic maritime chokepoint connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea.
- **Fact:** The Bab al-Mandeb Strait facilitates the passage of approximately 25% of the world's oil supply.
- **Post:** Houthi: A rebel group in Yemen that has gained significant control over parts of the country, including coastal areas.

Mains question: Analyze the geopolitical and economic implications of maritime blockades in the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandeb Strait on global energy security and trade routes.

Source: Al Jazeera · satyadheesh.in/news/88870

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains

U.K.-India Agreement Aims to Boost Trade and Investment

Why in news: The U.K. and India are pursuing a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) to lower trade barriers and enhance investment flows between the two nations.

Key facts: The CETA aims to provide British companies with greater confidence to expand in India's economy while facilitating easier market access for Indian firms. A key component includes the U.K.-India Infrastructure Financing Bridge to encourage project-based investment.

Prelims pointers

- **Intl. org:** CETA: A proposed comprehensive economic and trade agreement between the United Kingdom and India
- **Fact:** U.K.-India Infrastructure Financing Bridge: A specific initiative designed to facilitate infrastructure investment between the two nations

Mains question: Discuss how bilateral trade agreements like the U.K.-India CETA can serve as catalysts for India's goal of becoming a global manufacturing hub.

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88782

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains

US Central Command Destroys Surveillance Tower at Chabahar Port in Iran

Why in news: US Central Command destroyed a surveillance tower at Iran's Chabahar Port, raising concerns over the security of India's investment in the Shahid Beheshti terminal.

Key facts: India invested USD 500 million in the Shahid Beheshti terminal at Chabahar Port. The port's operations have been managed by India Ports Global Limited (IPGL) since 2018. The US Central Command confirmed the destruction of the tower on July 16, 2024.

Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Chabahar Port: Located in Iran on the Gulf of Oman coastline.
- **Body:** India Ports Global Limited (IPGL): New Delhi-backed entity managing Chabahar port operations since 2018.
- **Fact:** India's investment in Shahid Beheshti terminal: USD 500 million.
- **Intl. org:** JCPOA: Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, a nuclear deal involving Iran and the P5+1 nations.
- **Fact:** India signed a 10-year contract with Iran for Chabahar port operations in 2024.

Mains question: Examine the geostrategic significance of the Chabahar Port for India's connectivity to Central Asia and the challenges posed by Western sanctions.

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains

India's Ajit Doval Meets Saudi Foreign Minister to Discuss Energy Security

Why in news: National Security Advisor Ajit Doval met Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan to discuss energy security and maritime corridor protection amidst Houthi-led maritime embargoes.

Key facts: On July 20, 2026, NSA Ajit Doval visited Riyadh for his third visit of the year. The meeting focused on securing shipping routes threatened by the Houthi rebels' maritime embargo and the broader U.S.-Iran conflict.

Prelims pointers

- **Post:** Ajit Doval: Current National Security Advisor (NSA) of India
- **Place:** Riyadh: Capital of Saudi Arabia
- **Fact:** July 20, 2026: Date of the high-level security meeting in Riyadh
- **Fact:** Houthi rebels: Group in Yemen declaring maritime embargoes against Saudi Arabia

Mains question: Examine the significance of India's proactive diplomacy in securing maritime corridors and energy supplies amidst escalating geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88702

India's bilateral relations · Prelims

President Droupadi Murmu, on a two-day state visit to North Macedonia

Why in news: President Droupadi Murmu conducted a state visit to North Macedonia to strengthen bilateral ties in agriculture, IT, and trade.

Key facts: President Droupadi Murmu visited North Macedonia on July 19, 2026, as part of a three-nation European tour. She engaged with leaders Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova and Hristijan Mickoski and addressed the India-North Macedonia Business Forum.

Prelims pointers

- **Place:** North Macedonia: A landlocked country in Southeast Europe.
- **Post:** Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova and Hristijan Mickoski: Key political leadership in North Macedonia.
- **Fact:** The visit occurred on July 19, 2026, as part of a multi-nation European tour.

Mains question: Discuss India's strategy to enhance economic and technological cooperation with Eastern European nations to diversify its global trade footprint.

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88549

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains

India Summons Russian Diplomat Over Death of 4 Indian Crew in Ukraine Attack

Why in news: India summoned the Russian Charge d'Affaires to protest the death of four Indian crew members in a Russian attack on the merchant vessel MV Golden Leo near Ukraine.

Key facts: The attack occurred on July 19, 2024, on the Guinea-Bissau-flagged vessel MV Golden Leo departing the port of Odesa. A total of 10 seafarers died, including four Indians and six Syrians, out of a crew of 17.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** MV Golden Leo: A Guinea-Bissau-flagged merchant vessel targeted in the Russia-Ukraine maritime corridor.
- **Place:** Odesa: A major Ukrainian port from which the vessel was departing during the July 19, 2024 attack.
- **Post:** Vladimir Ladanov: The Russian Charge d'Affaires summoned by India to New Delhi.

Mains question: Discuss the challenges faced by India in ensuring the safety of its seafarers and protecting international maritime commerce amidst escalating geopolitical conflicts.

Source: NDTV · satyadheesh.in/news/88703

India's bilateral relations · Prelims

US overhauls student visa system with fixed four-year periods starting September 15

Why in news: The United States is replacing the 'Duration of Status' (D-S) system with fixed four-year visa periods for F-1 and J-1 students to enhance security and curb visa abuse.

Key facts: The new framework applies to F-1 (academic) and J-1 (exchange) visa holders starting September 15. Indian students constitute a significant portion of the US international student body, with over 360,000 students currently enrolled.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** India has over 360,000 students in the United States as of the current reporting period.
- **S&T:** F-1 visa: The standard visa category for international students in the US.
- **S&T:** J-1 visa: The visa category for exchange visitors and scholars in the US.
- **Fact:** The new visa overhaul mandates a fixed four-year period instead of the previous 'Duration of Status' (D-S) model.

Mains question: Discuss how changes in international student visa policies can impact bilateral educational ties and the mobility of human capital between the US and India.

Source: Times of India · satyadheesh.in/news/88848

India's bilateral relations · Prelims

F2A visa backlog eliminated for India, but EB-1 and EB-5 categories remain unavailable

Why in news: The US State Department released the August 2026 visa bulletin, showing the elimination of F2A visa backlogs for India while highlighting continued unavailability for EB-1 and EB-5 categories.

Key facts: The US State Department's August 2026 visa bulletin indicates that the final action date for the F2A category for India is July 2026. Conversely, EB-1 and EB-5 categories remain unavailable for Indian applicants, with EB-2 showing potential retrogression.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** F2A category final action date for India: July 2026
- **Fact:** EB-1 final action date: October 12, 2022
- **Fact:** EB-3 final action date: January 1, 2014
- **Fact:** EB-4 final action date: October 15, 2022
- **Body:** US State Department: Responsible for issuing visa bulletins and managing immigration policy

Mains question: Discuss how visa retrogression and category-specific backlogs impact the mobility of skilled professionals and the socio-economic ties between India and the United States.

Source: Times of India · satyadheesh.in/news/88839

Policies of other countries affecting India · Prelims

Global Hunger Declines to 645 Million in 2025, Report Shows

Why in news: The United Nations released a report indicating a slight decline in global hunger to 645 million people in 2025, highlighting Africa as the most severely affected region.

Key facts: The UN report states that global hunger decreased from 659 million in 2024 to 645 million in 2025. Approximately 32.7 percent of the global population remains unable to afford a healthy diet, with Gaza identified as a zone of catastrophic hunger.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** Global hunger count: 645 million people in 2025
- **Fact:** Global percentage unable to afford healthy diet: 32.7 percent
- **Body:** United Nations (UN) is the body responsible for the hunger monitoring report
- **Place:** Africa: Region housing nearly half of the world's hungry population

Mains question: Analyze the structural and geopolitical factors contributing to persistent food insecurity in Africa and conflict zones despite global efforts to reduce hunger.

Source: Al Jazeera · satyadheesh.in/news/88821

India's bilateral relations · Prelims + Mains

Kremlin Contacts India After Golden Leo Missile Strike Killed 4 Indians, 6 Syrians

Why in news: The Kremlin contacted India following a Russian missile strike on the ship 'Golden Leo' which killed four Indians and six Syrians, leading to a diplomatic protest by New Delhi.

Key facts: On July 19, 2026, a Russian cruise missile strike on the 'Golden Leo' (departing Odesa) resulted in 10 fatalities (4 Indians, 6 Syrians). Russia's Dmitry Peskov confirmed the intent to target vessels providing military aid to Ukraine.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** The 'Golden Leo' was a vessel departing from Odesa, Ukraine.
- **Post:** Dmitry Peskov serves as the Press Secretary for the Kremlin.
- **Fact:** The incident occurred between July 19, 2026, and July 21, 2026.

Mains question: *Examine the challenges India faces in maintaining strategic autonomy while navigating the geopolitical complexities of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.*

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88749

India's bilateral relations · Prelims

Russia attacked the Guinea-Bissau-flagged merchant vessel MV Golden Leo off Ukraine's coast

Why in news: Russia attacked the Guinea-Bissau-flagged MV Golden Leo off Ukraine's coast on July 19, 2026, resulting in the first deaths of Indian seafarers in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Key facts: The MV Golden Leo was a merchant vessel flying the flag of Guinea-Bissau. The attack involved cruise missiles and resulted in 4 Indian fatalities and 1 injury among a crew of 17 from Syria and India.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** MV Golden Leo: Guinea-Bissau-flagged merchant vessel attacked on July 19, 2026
- **Fact:** Casualties: 4 Indian seafarers killed and 1 injured in the Russia-Ukraine conflict incident
- **Post:** India summoned the Russian charge d'affaires on July 21, 2026, to lodge a formal protest

Mains question: *Discuss the implications of maritime security risks in the Black Sea region for Indian merchant shipping and the necessity of international maritime law enforcement.*

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88614

Regional & global groupings (QUAD, BRICS, SCO, G20...) · Prelims

Maritime powers unite: 254 from 26 nations join Operation Southern Readiness in Kochi

Why in news: Operation Southern Readiness 26-2 commenced in Kochi to enhance multinational maritime security cooperation against non-traditional threats.

Key facts: The exercise involves 254 participants from 26 nations and 74 facilitators/experts. It is conducted under the aegis of Combined Task Force 154 (CTF 154) and the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF).

Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Kochi, Kerala, serves as the base for the Southern Naval Command.
- **Body:** Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) is a multinational naval partnership.
- **Body:** Combined Task Force 154 (CTF 154) is a maritime security coalition.
- **Fact:** Operation Southern Readiness 26-2 began on July 20, 2026.

Mains question: *Discuss the significance of multinational maritime security frameworks like CMF in addressing non-traditional maritime threats in the Indian Ocean Region.*

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88589

India's bilateral relations · Prelims

Bangladesh Seeks Extradition of Former Minister for Death Sentence

Why in news: Bangladesh has formally requested India to extradite former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, who was sentenced to death in absentia for crimes against humanity.

Key facts: Bangladesh International Crimes Tribunal (BICT) sentenced Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal to death in absentia. The request was confirmed by Shama Obaed Islam, Bangladesh's State Minister for Foreign Affairs, following the resignation of Sheikh Hasina.

Prelims pointers

- **Body:** Bangladesh International Crimes Tribunal (BICT): Established to prosecute those responsible for crimes against humanity during the 1971 liberation war.
- **Place:** Bangladesh: Neighboring country of India, currently undergoing political transition.
- **Fact:** Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal: Former Home Minister of Bangladesh and aide to ex-PM Sheikh Hasina.

Mains question: *Examine the legal and diplomatic complexities involved in extradition treaties between India and its neighbors, particularly concerning political fugitives and human rights allegations.*

Source: Times of India · satyadheesh.in/news/88526

Economy

Growth, inflation & macro indicators · Prelims

Index of Core Industries updated to include iron ore, now 9 core industries

Why in news: The Index of Core Industries (ICI) was updated to include iron ore as a core industry, expanding the list from eight to nine based on the Praveen Mahto Committee recommendations.

Key facts: The Index of Core Industries (ICI) now includes iron ore, steel (using gross production data), and excludes coal middlings to prevent double counting. The index has been updated to use 2022-23 as the base year for statistical alignment.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** Iron ore production saw a 43.9% surge in June 2025.
- **Body:** The Index of Core Industries (ICI) tracks the output of key industrial sectors in India.
- **Fact:** The base year for the updated Index of Core Industries is 2022-23.
- **Fact:** The number of core industries in the index has increased from eight to nine.

Mains question: Discuss how the inclusion of iron ore in the Index of Core Industries reflects India's shifting industrial priorities and the importance of accurate statistical modeling in economic planning.

Source: Indian Express · satyadheesh.in/news/88783

Monetary policy, RBI & banking · Prelims + Mains

Indian banks raise \$17.40 billion from overseas in new RBI scheme

Why in news: Indian banks raised \$17.40 billion from overseas via a special RBI window for Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) deposits to bolster forex reserves against rupee depreciation.

Key facts: The RBI introduced a special window for Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) deposits on June 8, 2026. As of July 17, 2026, total mobilization under FCNR, OFCB, and ECB schemes reached \$20.71 billion.

Prelims pointers

- **Body:** RBI: The central bank of India responsible for regulating the monetary system and foreign exchange.
- **Fact:** FCNR, OFCB, and ECB: Combined mobilization reached \$20.71 billion as of July 17, 2026.
- **Fact:** Target: Indian banks aim to reach a \$50 billion target by the scheme's closure in September 2026.
- **Fact:** Capital Inflow: \$17.40 billion was raised specifically through the new RBI scheme by July 20, 2026.

Mains question: Discuss the significance of diversifying capital inflows and strengthening foreign exchange reserves in maintaining macroeconomic stability amidst global geopolitical volatility.

Source: Indian Express · satyadheesh.in/news/88465

Employment & inclusive growth · Prelims + Mains

Tamil Nadu Employs 43% Women in Electronics, Surpassing Other States

Why in news: Tamil Nadu's female labor force participation in electronics manufacturing surged to 43% by 2023-24, surpassing other industrial states through state-led housing initiatives.

Key facts: MoSPI data reveals Tamil Nadu's female employment in electronics manufacturing rose from 20% in 2013-14 to 43% in 2023-24. The state government and Foxconn inaugurated a Rs 706.5 crore residential complex for women workers in August 2024.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** Tamil Nadu's female employment in electronics manufacturing reached 43% in 2023-24
- **Fact:** MoSPI (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation) is the nodal body for manufacturing employment data
- **Place:** Coimbatore and Madurai are identified as key hubs for female labor force participation in Tamil Nadu
- **Fact:** A Rs 706.5 crore residential complex was inaugurated in August 2024 for women workers

Mains question: Analyze how state-led infrastructure interventions, such as worker housing, can bridge the gender gap in industrial manufacturing and contribute to inclusive economic growth.

Source: Indian Express · satyadheesh.in/news/88815

Microfinance sector rebounds, Gross Loan Portfolio hits Rs 3.25 lakh crore by March 2026

Why in news: The microfinance sector is showing a recovery with the Gross Loan Portfolio projected to reach Rs 3.25 lakh crore by March 2026 due to the implementation of MFIN Guardrails.

Key facts: The Gross Loan Portfolio is expected to reach Rs 3.25 lakh crore by March 2026, reflecting a 3.3% growth. The MFIN Guardrails limit borrowers to a maximum of three lenders and cap total microfinance debt at Rs 2 lakh.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** Gross Loan Portfolio target: Rs 3.25 lakh crore by March 2026
- **Fact:** MFIN Guardrails: Maximum of 3 lenders per borrower
- **Fact:** MFIN Guardrails: Total microfinance debt cap of Rs 2 lakh
- **Body:** MFIN: The body responsible for establishing microfinance guardrails and industry standards

Mains question: Discuss how regulatory guardrails in the microfinance sector balance the need for financial inclusion with the necessity of preventing over-indebtedness among vulnerable populations.

Source: NDTV · satyadheesh.in/news/88746

CM Vijay requests Ford to resume production operations in Tamil Nadu

Why in news: Tamil Nadu CM C. Joseph Vijay met Ford executives to facilitate a ₹3,250 crore investment for engine production and expansion of Global Capability Centres in the state.

Key facts: Ford plans to invest ₹3,250 crore to initiate engine production at its Maraimalai Nagar factory near Chennai. The initiative involves resuming manufacturing projects and expanding Global Capability Centres (GCCs) in Tamil Nadu.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** Ford's planned investment in Maraimalai Nagar is ₹3,250 crore.
- **Place:** Maraimalai Nagar factory is located near Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- **S&T:** Global Capability Centres (GCCs) are hubs for offshore technology and business process services.

Mains question: Discuss how state-led industrial policies and the promotion of Global Capability Centres (GCCs) contribute to India's manufacturing and service export ambitions.

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88694

Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Suresh Gopi told

Why in news: Minister of State Suresh Gopi clarified in Rajya Sabha that the government will not exceed 20% ethanol blending in petrol without scientific studies and stakeholder consultation.

Key facts: India achieved the 20% ethanol blending target five years ahead of schedule. Since 2014-15, this initiative has saved over ₹1.97 trillion in foreign exchange and reduced carbon dioxide emissions by approximately 952 lakh tonnes.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** India achieved the 20% ethanol blending target five years ahead of the original schedule.
- **Fact:** Ethanol blending since 2014-15 saved ₹1.97 trillion in foreign exchange.
- **Fact:** Ethanol production currently utilizes surplus grains to ensure food crop availability.
- **Fact:** E20 fuel (20% ethanol blend) has shown no verified evidence of engine or fuel-pump damage in manufacturer service data.

Mains question: Examine the role of ethanol blending in achieving India's energy security and environmental goals while addressing concerns regarding food security and automotive infrastructure.

Source: NDTV · satyadheesh.in/news/88381

Agriculture

Cropping patterns & irrigation · Prelims

Floods and rain-induced landslips in Assam and Meghalaya claimed six lives

Why in news: Heavy rainfall and floods in Northeast India (Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland) caused significant casualties and infrastructure damage, highlighting the region's vulnerability to monsoon-induced disasters.

Key facts: Floods in Assam affected 3.63 lakh people across 16 districts as of July 2024. Five rivers exceeded danger levels, and Northeast Frontier Railway operations were disrupted in Simaluguri.

Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Sivasagar, Charaideo, and Jorhat: Districts in Assam severely impacted by recent flooding.
- **Fact:** 3.63 lakh people affected across 16 districts in Assam due to floods as of July 2024.
- **Fact:** Northeast Frontier Railway: Railway zone responsible for rail operations in the Northeast region.

Mains question: Discuss the geographical and climatic factors contributing to the increasing frequency of floods and landslides in Northeast India and suggest mitigation strategies.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/88560](https://www.satyadheesh.in/news/88560)

Animal husbandry, fisheries & allied · Prelims

The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet on Tuesday approved the purchase of 250 electric

Why in news: The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet approved the procurement of 250 electric buses for UPSRTC to modernize public transport and meet CAQM air quality norms.

Key facts: The project involves 250 electric buses at an estimated cost of Rs 425.50 crore, funded by the state government (Rs 400 crore) and UPSRTC (Rs 25.50 crore). The Cabinet also approved a 500-bed working women's hostel in Varanasi under the Chief Minister Shramjeevi Mahila Chhatravas Yojana.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** Total estimated cost for 250 electric buses in Uttar Pradesh is Rs 425.50 crore.
- **Body:** UPSRTC: Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation.
- **Body:** CAQM: Commission for Air Quality Management (statutory body for NCR and adjoining areas).
- **Scheme:** Chief Minister Shramjeevi Mahila Chhatravas Yojana: State scheme for women's hostels.

Mains question: Discuss the role of public transport electrification in achieving sustainable urban mobility and improving air quality in North Indian states.

Source: Indian Express · [satyadheesh.in/news/88967](https://www.satyadheesh.in/news/88967)

Cropping patterns & irrigation · Prelims

Sikkim CM Reports 8 Dead, 27 Trapped in Teesta Tunnel Collapse, Modi Offers Help

Why in news: A tunnel collapse at the NHPC Teesta Stage VI Hydroelectric Project in Sikkim resulted in 8 deaths and 27 people trapped due to a landslide.

Key facts: The incident occurred at the NHPC Teesta Stage VI Hydroelectric Project in Samardung, Sikkim. The collapse was triggered by a landslide, and rescue efforts were complicated by hazardous gas leaks.

Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Samardung: Location of the Teesta Stage VI Hydroelectric Project in Sikkim
- **Body:** NHPC: National Hydroelectric Project Corporation Limited, a central public sector undertaking
- **Fact:** 8 fatalities and 27 trapped as of July 21, 2026

Mains question: Discuss the geological and engineering challenges in constructing hydroelectric projects in the Himalayan region and suggest measures to mitigate landslide-induced disasters.

Source: The Hindu · [satyadheesh.in/news/88636](https://www.satyadheesh.in/news/88636)

Animal husbandry, fisheries & allied · Prelims + Mains

Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister of Assam, announced Mission Senehjori on July

Why in news: Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma launched Mission Senehjori on July 19, 2026, to convert Muga silk waste into high-value spun yarn to boost employment and resource efficiency.

Key facts: Muga silk is a Geographical Indication (GI) tagged variety and is the costliest of the four commercial silks in Assam (Eri, Paat, Tasar). The state's silk industry supports over 7 lakh households and employs 2.6 lakh families across 10,500 villages, with women making up over 70% of the workforce.

Prelims pointers

- **Place:** Muga silk is a GI-tagged silk variety native to Assam.
- **Fact:** Approximately 40% of Muga silk cocoons currently go to waste.
- **Fact:** Women comprise over 70% of the workforce in Assam's silk industry.
- **Fact:** Mission Senehgori was launched on July 19, 2026, to convert silk waste into spun yarn.

Mains question: Discuss how the promotion of GI-tagged products and waste-to-value initiatives can drive rural employment and sustainable industrial growth in Northeast India.

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88564

Cropping patterns & irrigation · Prelims + Mains

Karnataka farmers trained to produce biochar using crop residue to boost soil fertility

Why in news: The University of Agricultural Sciences - Bangalore is training farmers in 10 Karnataka districts to produce biochar from crop residue to combat declining soil organic carbon.

Key facts: The project is funded by the Union government's Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY). It utilizes portable drum technology for pyrolysis to convert crop residue into biochar, which enhances soil fertility and water retention.

Prelims pointers

- **Scheme:** Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY): A central scheme providing financial support for agricultural development and infrastructure.
- **S&T:** Biochar: A charcoal-like substance produced by thermochemical decomposition of organic material (pyrolysis) in an oxygen-limited environment.
- **Fact:** The initiative targets 100 farmers across 10 districts in Karnataka for the initial training phase.

Mains question: Discuss how the adoption of biochar technology can address the dual challenge of soil degradation and stubble burning in Indian agriculture.

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88432

Science & Technology

IT, AI, semiconductors & computing · Prelims + Mains

State plans AI in schools instead of third language starting 2026-27

Why in news: The Karnataka government plans to replace the third language with Artificial Intelligence (AI) in skill education for 1,652 government high schools starting the 2026-27 academic year.

Key facts: The initiative is being implemented under National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) guidelines. The Samagra Shikshana-Karnataka (SSK) issued the circular to facilitate AI guest teachers and infrastructure preparation.

Prelims pointers

- **S&T:** NSQF: National Skills Qualifications Framework provides a standardized framework for qualifications and skills in India.
- **Fact:** The initiative targets 1,652 government high schools in Karnataka starting the 2026-27 academic year.
- **Body:** Samagra Shikshana-Karnataka (SSK) is the nodal body for school education in the state.

Mains question: Discuss the implications of integrating Artificial Intelligence into school curricula over traditional language subjects in the context of skill development and cultural preservation.

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88672

Nuclear & new energy technology · Prelims

Indian Railways issued a clarification regarding a viral video

Why in news: Indian Railways clarified that a viral video of stone-pelting was old footage of a WAG-12 locomotive, not the newly flagged-off hydrogen train.

Key facts: The hydrogen train (Train Nos. 74009/74010) was flagged off by PM Narendra Modi on July 17, 2024. It operates on the 89 km Jind-Sonipat route in Haryana, stopping at 10 stations.

Prelims pointers

- **S&T:** Hydrogen trains: Use hydrogen fuel cells to generate electricity for traction, producing zero tailpipe emissions.
- **Fact:** Jind-Sonipat hydrogen train route: Covers 89 km and operates between Jind Junction and Sonipat.
- **Post:** WAG-12: A high-horsepower heavy-haul electric locomotive used by Indian Railways.

Mains question: Discuss the significance of hydrogen-based rail transport in India's transition towards a net-zero carbon economy by 2070.

Source: Indian Express · satyadheesh.in/news/88462

Environment & Ecology

Climate change & international agreements · Prelims + Mains

Ladakh Soaks in 342% Above-Normal Rain, Facing Flood of Problems Since 2021

Why in news: Ladakh recorded 342% above-normal monsoon rainfall in 2025, highlighting the impact of global warming on moisture-carrying capacity in high-altitude regions.

Key facts: In 2025, Ladakh recorded 342% above-normal monsoon rainfall, with August seeing a record 80.2 mm. Since 2021, the region has faced five consecutive years of above-normal rain due to increased air moisture capacity from global warming.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** Ladakh recorded 342% above-normal monsoon rainfall in 2025.
- **Fact:** August 2025 saw a record rainfall of 80.2 mm in Ladakh.
- **S&T:** Warmer air holds more moisture, increasing the moisture-carrying capacity of air masses over the Himalayas.
- **Place:** Ladakh is a high-altitude cold desert region in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Mains question: Discuss how global warming is altering precipitation patterns in high-altitude regions like Ladakh and its implications for infrastructure and ecological stability.

Source: NDTV · satyadheesh.in/news/88837

Species, protected areas & wetlands · Prelims + Mains

Supreme Court Panel Invites Stakeholder Input on Aravalli Report by August 31

Why in news: The Supreme Court-constituted Aravalli Committee invited stakeholder representations on the Centre's report regarding the Aravalli hill range to ensure balanced environmental and industrial perspectives.

Key facts: The committee was formed on May 25, 2026, and is headed by Kanchan Devi of the Indian Council for Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE). It is tasked with submitting its final report by August 31, 2026, following a review of the Centre's report on the Aravalli range.

Prelims pointers

- **Body:** ICFRE: Indian Council for Forestry Research and Education, a body involved in forestry research and management.
- **Place:** Aravalli Range: A significant mountain range in northern and western India, spanning Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat.
- **Fact:** The committee's final report submission deadline is August 31, 2026.

Mains question: Discuss the conflict between industrial development and ecological preservation in the Aravalli region. How can judicial oversight ensure sustainable management of ecologically sensitive zones?

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88739

Species, protected areas & wetlands · Prelims

Bengaluru Hasirooru: Krishna Byre Gowda Launches Drive to Plant 64,000 Saplings

Why in news: The Karnataka government launched the 'Bengaluru Hasirooru' initiative to plant 64,000 saplings to enhance urban green cover and promote community-led plantation.

Key facts: The initiative involves planting 64,000 saplings in public spaces and distributing 40,000 to the public. A budget of ₹9.64 crore is allocated for maintenance over a four-year period starting August 2024.

Prelims pointers

- **Fact:** Bengaluru Hasirooru: Initiative to plant 64,000 saplings in Bengaluru public spaces.

- **Fact:** Budget: ₹9.64 crore allocated for maintenance over a four-year period starting August 2024.
- **Scheme:** Private-Public-Planting Programme: A model allowing Resident Welfare Associations to submit proposals for plantation drives.

Mains question: Discuss the significance of community-led urban afforestation in mitigating the 'urban heat island' effect and improving air quality in rapidly expanding metropolitan cities like Bengaluru.

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88659

Disaster Management

Disaster management framework (NDMA, SDRF) · Prelims

Indian Army rescues 571 from Assam floods under Operation Jal Rahat

Why in news: The Indian Army launched 'Operation Jal Rahat' to rescue 571 people stranded by Brahmaputra floods in Upper Assam.

Key facts: The operation involved three teams of 45 personnel each from the Spear Corps. Rescue efforts focused on Sivasagar, Charaideo, and Jorhat districts since July 19.

Prelims pointers

- **Body:** Spear Corps: A specialized Indian Army formation involved in flood relief and rescue operations.
- **Fact:** Operation Jal Rahat: Conducted to rescue stranded individuals in Upper Assam due to Brahmaputra flooding.
- **Place:** Sivasagar, Charaideo, and Jorhat: Key districts in Upper Assam affected by the floods.

Mains question: Discuss the role of the Armed Forces in disaster management and the necessity of a coordinated civil-military framework for flood mitigation in the Brahmaputra basin.

Source: NDTV · satyadheesh.in/news/88892

Internal Security

Terrorism & insurgency (J&K, North-East) · Prelims + Mains

Kerala High Court Orders Special Squads for Hit-and-Run Offenders, Criticizes Ineffective Compensation Scheme

Why in news: The Kerala High Court directed the formation of special police squads to tackle hit-and-run cases and criticized the inadequacy of the 2021 compensation scheme.

Key facts: On July 20, 2026, the Kerala High Court ordered the State Police Chief to establish district-level squads for hit-and-run offenders. The court specifically critiqued the 'Compensation to Victims of Hit and Run Motor Accidents Scheme, 2021' for its lack of efficacy in victim relief.

Prelims pointers

- **Body:** Kerala High Court: State judiciary body overseeing judicial review of police actions.
- **Scheme:** Compensation to Victims of Hit and Run Motor Accidents Scheme: Launched in 2021 to provide financial relief to victims.
- **Fact:** The court directed the formation of special squads in every district of Kerala.

Mains question: Critically analyze the limitations of current victim compensation schemes for hit-and-run accidents and suggest legislative measures to ensure timely justice and rehabilitation.

Source: The Hindu · satyadheesh.in/news/88644

Practice — Mains questions

1. Analyze the geopolitical and economic implications of maritime insecurity in the Strait of Hormuz on global energy security and international trade routes. · GS2
2. Examine the challenges India faces in renegotiating the Indus Waters Treaty while balancing regional water security and counter-terrorism objectives. · GS2
3. Analyze the geopolitical implications of escalating military tensions in the Strait of Hormuz on global energy security and maritime trade routes. · GS2
4. Analyze the implications of escalating Iran-US tensions on Middle Eastern regional stability and the security of neighboring sovereign states. · GS2
5. Analyze the geopolitical and economic implications of maritime blockades in the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandeb Strait on global energy security and trade routes. · GS2
6. Discuss how the inclusion of iron ore in the Index of Core Industries reflects India's shifting industrial priorities and the importance of accurate statistical modeling in economic planning. · GS3
7. Discuss how bilateral trade agreements like the U.K.-India CETA can serve as catalysts for India's goal of becoming a global manufacturing hub. · GS2
8. Examine the geostrategic significance of the Chabahar Port for India's connectivity to Central Asia and the challenges posed by Western sanctions. · GS2

Prelims quick revision

- **Place:** Strait of Hormuz: A strategic waterway connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.
- **Fact:** The Strait of Hormuz facilitates the passage of about one-fifth (20%) of the world's traded crude oil and natural gas.
- **Body:** Pakistan is currently acting as a key mediator in the diplomatic talks between Iran and the United States.
- **Intl. org:** Indus Waters Treaty (IWT): Signed in 1960 between India and Pakistan, mediated by the World Bank.
- **Fact:** Chenab River: One of the three perennial rivers shared under the IWT, primarily used for hydropower and irrigation.
- **S&T:** Qdenga: India's first dengue vaccine, approved for use by Takeda Biopharmaceuticals India.
- **Place:** Strait of Hormuz: A critical maritime chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman.
- **Place:** Bandar Abbas and Chabahar: Key port cities located in southern Iran near the Strait of Hormuz.
- **Fact:** IRGC: The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is the primary military branch of the Iranian Armed Forces.
- **Place:** Muwaffaq Salti Air Base: A military installation located in Jordan.
- **Fact:** Three US service members were killed in the missile strikes during the week of the incident.
- **S&T:** Ballistic missiles: Projectiles that follow a suborbital curved trajectory.
- **Place:** Bab al-Mandeb Strait: A strategic maritime chokepoint connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea.
- **Fact:** The Bab al-Mandeb Strait facilitates the passage of approximately 25% of the world's oil supply.
- **Post:** Houthi: A rebel group in Yemen that has gained significant control over parts of the country, including coastal areas.
- **Fact:** Iron ore production saw a 43.9% surge in June 2025.
- **Body:** The Index of Core Industries (ICI) tracks the output of key industrial sectors in India.

- **Fact:** The base year for the updated Index of Core Industries is 2022-23.
- **Intl. org:** CETA: A proposed comprehensive economic and trade agreement between the United Kingdom and India
- **Fact:** U.K.-India Infrastructure Financing Bridge: A specific initiative designed to facilitate infrastructure investment between the two nations
- **Place:** Chabahar Port: Located in Iran on the Gulf of Oman coastline.
- **Body:** India Ports Global Limited (IPGL): New Delhi-backed entity managing Chabahar port operations since 2018.
- **Fact:** India's investment in Shahid Beheshti terminal: USD 500 million.
- **Post:** Ajit Doval: Current National Security Advisor (NSA) of India
- **Place:** Riyadh: Capital of Saudi Arabia
- **Fact:** July 20, 2026: Date of the high-level security meeting in Riyadh
- **Place:** North Macedonia: A landlocked country in Southeast Europe.
- **Post:** Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova and Hristijan Mickoski: Key political leadership in North Macedonia.
- **Fact:** The visit occurred on July 19, 2026, as part of a multi-nation European tour.
- **Body:** RBI: The central bank of India responsible for regulating the monetary system and foreign exchange.
- **Fact:** FCNR, OFCB, and ECB: Combined mobilization reached \$20.71 billion as of July 17, 2026.
- **Fact:** Target: Indian banks aim to reach a \$50 billion target by the scheme's closure in September 2026.
- **Fact:** MV Golden Leo: A Guinea-Bissau-flagged merchant vessel targeted in the Russia-Ukraine maritime corridor.
- **Place:** Odesa: A major Ukrainian port from which the vessel was departing during the July 19, 2024 attack.
- **Post:** Vladimir Ladanov: The Russian Charge d'Affaires summoned by India to New Delhi.
- **Place:** Sivasagar, Charaideo, and Jorhat: Districts in Assam severely impacted by recent flooding.
- **Fact:** 3.63 lakh people affected across 16 districts in Assam due to floods as of July 2024.
- **Fact:** Northeast Frontier Railway: Railway zone responsible for rail operations in the Northeast region.
- **Fact:** Total estimated cost for 250 electric buses in Uttar Pradesh is Rs 425.50 crore.
- **Body:** UPSRTC: Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation.

Notes are generated automatically from SatyaDheesh's news feed and mapped to the UPSC CSE syllabus. Check facts against the original report or PIB before using them in an answer.

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