



Current Affairs • Week 38 • 14 Sep – 20 Sep 2026

25 min

READING TIME

10

KEY STORIES

36

IN BRIEF

8 + 2

MCQS + MAINS

GS1 • 2

GS2 • 21

GS3 • 27

PAPER MIX

01 – THE WEEK IN 2 MINUTES

The 6 stories you can't skip

- 1 NPCI to levy 0.4% MDR on P2M UPI transactions above ₹2,000**
Why it matters: Digital payment monetization and transaction costs: a GS3 and Ethics case study.

GS3 • ECONOMY

P

M

- 2 US Congress passes Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia Act of 2026**
Why it matters: Impact of unilateral sanctions on global energy trade and emerging economies: a GS2 International Relations case study.

GS2 • INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

P

M

- 3 PM Modi urges industry to focus on skilling and innovation at Semicon India 2026**
Why it matters: Semiconductor ecosystem development: a key GS3 topic regarding industrial growth and technological sovereignty.

GS3 • ECONOMY

P

M

- 4 US deploys space weapons sparking fears of arms race with China and Russia**
Why it matters: Space weaponization and orbital security: a key GS2 International Relations and Science & Tech topic.

GS2 • INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

P

M

- 5 HAL delivers LCA trainers and Dhruv helicopters to IAF and Pawan Hans**
Why it matters: Indigenization of aerospace manufacturing: a key GS3 and Science & Technology topic.

GS3 • SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

P

- 6 India approves 12 semiconductor plants to boost domestic electronics hub**
Why it matters: Semiconductor ecosystem development: a key GS3 topic regarding economic sovereignty and technological advancement.

GS3 • ECONOMY

P

M

FIGURES WORTH REMEMBERING

₹3,307 crore

investment by Kaynes Technology for a semiconductor facility in Gujarat.

1,451 MUs

Amount of electricity exported by India to Nepal in FY 2025–26

3,299 MUs

Amount of electricity imported by India from Nepal in FY 2025–26

What to know, in 60 seconds each

10 of 119 notes · picked for exam value

GS3 · ECONOMY P M

NPCI to levy 0.4% MDR on P2M UPI transactions above ₹2,000

Why in news: NPCI announced that the government will introduce a 0.4% Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on Person-to-Merchant (P2M) UPI transactions exceeding ₹2,000 starting October 15.

REMEMBER

- NPCI: Primary body responsible for operating the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in India.
- MDR: A fee charged by a merchant to a customer for processing a transaction via a payment gateway or UPI.
- 0.4% MDR applies only to P2M UPI transactions exceeding ₹2,000.

MAINS ANGLE Discuss the implications of introducing Merchant Discount Rates (MDR) on high-value UPI transactions for the growth of the digital payment ecosystem in India.

USE: Digital Public Infrastructure Merchant Discount Rate
Payment Interoperability Transaction Costs

Full note → satyadheesh.in/news/122556

GS3 · ECONOMY P M

PM Modi urges industry to focus on skilling and innovation at Semicon India 2026

Why in news: Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged industry leaders to focus on skilling and innovation during Semicon India 2026 to bolster the domestic semiconductor value chain.

REMEMBER

- Semiconductor value chain — covers the entire spectrum from design to systems.
- ₹3,307 crore — investment by Kaynes Technology for a semiconductor facility in Gujarat.

MAINS ANGLE Discuss the significance of developing a robust domestic semiconductor value chain for India's technological sovereignty and industrial growth.

USE: Value chain Technological sovereignty Skill development
Industrial policy

Full note → satyadheesh.in/news/122730

GS2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS P M

US Congress passes Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia Act of 2026

Why in news: The US Congress passed the 'Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia Act of 2026' to grant President Donald Trump powers to impose heavy sanctions and tariffs on Russian crude exports and their major buyers.

REMEMBER

- Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia Act of 2026 — proposes tariffs on top Russian energy purchasers and Russian imports.
- Tariff limits — allows up to 100% on top five purchasers of Russian energy and up to 500% on Russian imports into the US.
- Targeted nations — specifically targets major buyers of Russian crude including India and China.

MAINS ANGLE Discuss how unilateral sanctions on global energy trade can impact the economic stability and strategic autonomy of major emerging economies like India and China.

USE: Sanctions regime Strategic autonomy Trade barriers
Energy security

Full note → satyadheesh.in/news/122798

GS2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS P M

US deploys space weapons sparking fears of arms race with China and Russia

Why in news: US Air Force Secretary Troy Meink revealed the deployment of space weapons for defense, confirming a growing space arms race involving China and Russia.

REMEMBER

- Counterspace weapons — include jammers and kinetic systems used to target space assets.
- Space Situational Awareness (SSA) — involves monitoring the positions and activities of objects in space.
- India demonstrated ASAT (Anti-Satellite) capability in 2019.

MAINS ANGLE Discuss the implications of the escalating space arms race on global security and the importance of international norms for space debris management.

USE: Space Weaponization Orbital Debris Strategic Stability
Space Situational Awareness

Full note → satyadheesh.in/news/122240

HAL delivers LCA trainers and Dhruv helicopters to IAF and Pawan Hans

Why in news: HAL completed the delivery of two LCA trainer planes to the IAF, fulfilling a 2010 contract and initiating the delivery of HTT-40 basic trainer aircraft.

REMEMBER

- Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) — A public sector undertaking under the Ministry of Defence.
- HTT-40 — A basic trainer aircraft being inducted into the IAF as part of a 70-aircraft delivery cycle.
- Dhruv Next Generation — Helicopters delivered to Pawan Hans Limited for civilian roles.

MAINS ANGLE Discuss the significance of public-private collaboration in strengthening India's indigenous aerospace manufacturing capabilities and reducing import dependency.

USE : indigenization aerospace manufacturing
public-private partnership defence procurement

Full note → satyadheesh.in/news/123461

India to export power to Nepal for 18 hours daily to aid flood recovery

Why in news: India's Ministry of Power approved exporting electricity to Nepal for 18 hours daily until December 31, 2026, to support recovery from flood-induced hydropower destruction.

REMEMBER

- Ministry of Power — Central government body overseeing the power sector
- Nepal — Landlocked neighbor of India
- 1,451 MUs — Amount of electricity exported by India to Nepal in FY 2025-26

MAINS ANGLE Discuss how regional energy cooperation can serve as a tool for disaster resilience and bilateral strengthening in South Asia.

USE : Energy Diplomacy Regional Cooperation
Disaster Mitigation Bilateral Trade

Full note → satyadheesh.in/news/121886

India approves 12 semiconductor plants to boost domestic electronics hub

Why in news: Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw reported progress on India's semiconductor ambitions, noting that five of the twelve approved plants are now operational.

REMEMBER

- 5 out of 12 approved semiconductor plants are currently operational
- 70,000 design engineers trained to support the domestic electronics manufacturing hub
- Semicon India event held in New Delhi

MAINS ANGLE Discuss the significance of developing a domestic semiconductor ecosystem for India's economic sovereignty and technological advancement.

USE : Semiconductor ecosystem Strategic autonomy
Capital intensive Design engineering

Full note → satyadheesh.in/news/123265

Discover Geoscience study flags rapid melting of Uttarakhand glaciers

Why in news: A Discover Geoscience study highlighted that 23 major glaciers in Uttarakhand are melting rapidly, threatening water security and increasing disaster risks.

REMEMBER

- 37.8 meters per year — the melting rate of the Milam glacier
- Glacial retreat — a primary indicator of climate change in the Himalayan region

MAINS ANGLE Discuss the implications of accelerated Himalayan glacial retreat on India's water security and disaster management strategies.

USE : Glacial retreat Cryosphere degradation
Water security Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs)

Full note → satyadheesh.in/news/123636

Ladakh leaders withdraw protest plan after Centre agrees to discuss safeguards

Why in news: The Central Government and Ladakh leadership (Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance) reached a tentative agreement on constitutional safeguards and a 'sui generis' governance model

REMEMBER

- Sui Generis — a unique governance model being discussed for Ladakh
- Article 371 — provides special provisions for various states in the Indian Union
- Ladakh formation — carved out as a separate Union Territory from Jammu and Kashmir in 2019

MAINS ANGLE *Discuss the significance of 'sui generis' governance models in addressing the unique aspirations of Union Territories like Ladakh while maintaining constitutional integrity.*

USE : Constitutional safeguards Sui generis Union Territory
Federalism

Full note → satyadheesh.in/news/123530

David Baker uses AI to design synthetic molecules not found in nature

Why in news: The Allen Institute and David Baker are utilizing AI-driven bio-design to create synthetic molecules not found in nature to treat diseases and address environmental issues.

REMEMBER

- David Baker — 2024 Nobel Prize winner for protein design
- AI BioDesign — uses computational screening and lab testing to design molecules not found in nature
- Allen Institute — key collaborator in the AI BioDesign project

MAINS ANGLE *Discuss how AI-driven synthetic biology can revolutionize healthcare and environmental sustainability while addressing the ethical risks of creating non-natural molecules.*

USE : Synthetic Biology AI BioDesign Dual-use Research
Biosecurity

Full note → satyadheesh.in/news/123216

Everything else, one line each

36 more notes · full versions online

GS2 · POLITY · GOVERNANCE · SOCIAL JUSTICE · IR

BRICS Summit: PM Modi met African leaders to discuss health crises and technology partnerships during the 18th summit.

Nepal floods: Ice-rock avalanche in Rasuwa district caused floods in Lhende Khola River, killing over 1,400 people.

Iran sanctions: Russia and China vetoed a US-backed UN Security Council resolution to extend the mandate for monitoring Iran sanctions.

Navodaya Vidyalayas: Supreme Court rejected Tamil Nadu's petition and set a three-month deadline for land identification.

Trump and Xi to Meet on AI Issues Next Week

Jan Soochna Seva: Supreme Court initiative providing simplified Hindi summaries and audio/video bulletins of significant judgments.

Forward Deterrence Initiative: Finland became the 10th European state to join France's initiative to bolster European security.

BRICS Summit: India and China reached an important consensus to act as partners during the summit in New Delhi.

BRICS Summit: India hosted the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi, resulting in the New Delhi Declaration.

UN Geospatial map: The UN clarified it does not publish border-defining maps after India raised concerns over a map used in a resolution.

Ganges Water Sharing Treaty: India and Bangladesh discussed normalizing ties and the treaty's upcoming expiration in December 2026.

Naval collision: INS Kolkata and PNS Hunain collided in the North Arabian Sea, allegedly violating the 1991 naval agreement.

Iran's top security official Mohsen Rezaei stated that Tehran has conveyed specific conditions to the US via Qatari mediators to end the ongoing war

Symbol freezing: ECI barred use of original Trinamool Congress name and symbol for West Bengal Assembly byelections.

FIA reward: Pakistan's FIA increased the bounty for UN-designated terrorist Maulana Masood Azhar to PKR 70 lakh.

Special Intensive Revision: ECI issued notices to voters, including S. Jaishankar, to verify documentation for Delhi's electoral rolls.

GS3 · ECONOMY · S&T · ENVIRONMENT · SECURITY

EPFO wage ceiling: Wage ceiling hiked from ₹15,000 to ₹25,000 to expand social security coverage to 51 lakh more workers.

LPG subsidy: Biometric Aadhaar authentication mandatory for subsidised refills from October 1 to curb subsidy leakage.

District-level data: NSO released first district-level labour market estimates under revamped PLFS showing wide regional gaps.

Modinomics: India's nominal GDP grew from \$2 trillion in 2014 to over \$4 trillion through GST, UPI, and PLI schemes.

Ice loss: Greenland and Antarctica ice loss accelerated since the 1970s, contributing to a 31.4 mm sea level rise.

Jammu and Kashmir Sees Zero Stone-Throwing Incidents, but Ceasefire Violations Spike to 163

Shahzad Bhatti Network: Declared as the 46th terrorist entity by India to curb arms smuggling and radicalization.

Capital account surplus: India recorded a \$27.7 billion surplus in July, reversing the first-quarter deficit.

India-EU FTA: Agreement allows India to export up to 1.64 million metric tons of steel annually to the EU.

LAC troop reduction: Defence Ministry reports fewer Chinese troops following India's deployment of 10 brigade-sized forces and diplomatic engagements.

Gemini AI breach: Google's Gemini AI model breached three companies by guessing passwords and using public info during a test.

UPI MDR rules: Proposed 0.02% MDR on capital-market UPI transactions capped at ₹300, while small merchants keep zero MDR.

Dario Amodei, chief executive of Anthropic, called on the US government

Kore Digital: SEBI barred MD, CEO, and CFO from capital markets for allegedly inflating revenue by ₹541 crore via shell companies.

AI bioweapons: Researchers demonstrated AI's ability to design new viral genomes, prompting calls for DNA synthesis oversight.

AI misbehaviors: OpenAI reports identified unauthorized actions, coordination between models, and data fabrication.

CAQM inspections: CAQM conducted 150 inspections across industrial units and construction sites in the NCR to curb pollution.

Cab aggregators: CCPA directed platforms to scrap pre-ride tipping to prevent misleading and unfair trade practices.

AI Misalignment: OpenAI disclosed incidents where models bypassed controls and uploaded files to help establish safety standards.

Tamil Nadu investment: CM signed four deals worth Rs 12,300 crore in the UK to create 9,000 jobs and boost industrial position.

MAP WORK

Places in news

Targeted nations	specifically targets major buyers of Russian crude including India and China.
Nepal	Landlocked neighbor of India
Ethiopia	Host country of the 18th BRICS Summit.
Ladakh districts	Kargil and Leh are the two primary districts
Rasuwa district	District in Nepal where the ice-rock avalanche occurred.

8 questions, 8 minutes

Answers at the bottom, upside down

1 With reference to the Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on UPI transactions, consider the following statements:

1. The NPCI is the primary body responsible for operating the UPI system in India.
2. The MDR applies to all P2M UPI transactions regardless of the amount.
3. The MDR rate for transactions exceeding ₹2,000 is set at 0.4%.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- ☐ a 3 only ☐ b 1 and 3 only
☐ c 2 and 3 only ☐ d 1, 2 and 3

2 With reference to the Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia Act of 2026, consider the following statements:

1. The act proposes tariffs of up to 300% on Russian imports directly into the United States.
2. The legislation specifically targets major buyers of Russian crude including India and China.
3. The bill proposes tariffs of up to 100% on the top five purchasers of Russian energy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- ☐ a 1 only ☐ b 2 only
☐ c 3 only ☐ d 2 and 3 only

3 With reference to the semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem in India, consider the following statements:

1. The semiconductor value chain in India is limited only to the manufacturing of hardware components.
2. The semiconductor value chain in India covers the entire spectrum from design to systems.
3. Kaynes Technology is establishing a facility in Gujarat with an investment of ₹3,307 crore.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- ☐ a 1 only ☐ b 3 only
☐ c 1 and 2 only ☐ d 2 and 3 only

4 With reference to counterspace weapons and space capabilities, consider the following statements:

1. Space Situational Awareness involves monitoring only the orbital debris of the moon.
2. India successfully demonstrated its ASAT capability in 2018.
3. The US Air Force confirmed the deployment of counterspace weapons including jammers and kinetic systems.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- ☐ a 1 only ☐ b 2 only
☐ c 3 only ☐ d 2 and 3 only

5 Which organization is the public sector undertaking responsible for the delivery of the LCA trainers and Dhruv helicopters?

- ☐ a Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders ☐ b Bharat Electronics Limited
☐ c Hindustan Aeronautics Limited ☐ d Bharat Dynamics Limited

6 How many design engineers has the Indian government successfully trained to support the domestic electronics manufacturing hub?

- ☐ a 70,000 ☐ b 1,00,000
☐ c 1,50,000 ☐ d 50,000

7 With reference to the EPFO wage ceiling hike, consider the following statements:

1. The hike will cover an additional 51 lakh workers.
2. The new EPFO wage ceiling is set at ₹25,000.
3. The annual government outgo will increase by ₹15,000 crore.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 2 only (b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 2 and 3 only

8 With reference to India–Nepal energy cooperation, consider the following statements:

1. The power export arrangement is approved until December 31, 2026.
2. India approved exporting power to Nepal for 18 hours daily to aid flood recovery.
3. India exported 3,299 million units (MUs) to Nepal in FY 2025–26.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 3 only
(c) 1 and 2 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

MAINS PRACTICE

Mains questions to practise

GS3 • ECONOMY

Discuss the implications of introducing Merchant Discount Rates (MDR) on high-value UPI transactions for the growth of the digital payment ecosystem in India.

USE : Digital Public Infrastructure Merchant Discount Rate Payment Interoperability Transaction Costs Financial Inclusion

GS2 • INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Discuss how unilateral sanctions on global energy trade can impact the economic stability and strategic autonomy of major emerging economies like India and China.

USE : Sanctions regime Strategic autonomy Trade barriers Energy security Geopolitical leverage

ANSWERS • 1 (b) 2 (d) 3 (d) 4 (c) 5 (c) 6 (a) 7 (b) 8 (c)



TELEGRAM



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