

THEIAS AKADEMIA PRESENTS

# ANTIM ASSURED 100+

*Morning Edition — Part I of II*

POLITY

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

DEFENCE

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

ECONOMY

SATURDAY, 4 JULY 2026 | UPSC CSE EDITION

★ PART I: HEADLINES → ECONOMY | PART II: ENVIRONMENT → DIRECT HIT TRACKER ★

◆ TODAY'S HEADLINES — 4 JULY 2026

## ★ TOP 10 UPSC HEADLINES — VERIFIED JULY 4, 2026

- CCEA approves ₹14,115 Cr highway projects** — Delhi: 3.14 km twin-tube tunnel under Southern Ridge (NH-148AE, HAM); UP: 117.7 km Kanpur-Kabrai greenfield highway (NH-34, BOT-Toll) under PM GatiShakti **GS3**
- IIT Delhi + DRDO develop India's first indigenous tactical aerostat** — balloon-based high-altitude platform; 20 km surveillance; EO/IR sensors + comm relay; IIT-DRDO-startup triad; reduces drone import dependence **GS3**
- PM Modi inaugurates CG Semi OSAT chip plant, Sanand, Gujarat** — India's first major semiconductor packaging facility; ₹7,600 Cr JV: CG Power + Renesas (USA) + Stars Microelectronics (Thailand); 1.5 Cr chips/day **GS3**
- ADB approves USD 182.89 Mn loan for Karnataka schools** — 500 integrated school clusters; 1 Mn+ students; IFFEd adds USD 10 Mn grant + USD 25 Mn guarantee; results-based lending; aligned with NEP 2020 **GS2**
- BPCL acquires 100% stake in IBV Brazil Petroleo for ₹2,312 Cr** — via BPRL Ventures BV; CIRP/NCLT route; BM-SEAL-11 block; ~1 MTOE/year added to equity production; Maharatna energy diplomacy **GS3**
- MoCA approves India's first PinS satellite-guided helicopter landing procedure** — Undavalli Heliport, Amaravati; GAGAN-based PBN; no radar/ILS needed; IFR operations in hilly/remote terrain **GS3**
- Razorpay + NBBL launch Banking Connect** — India's first mobile-first unified NetBanking solution; QR + intent-based flows; SBI, HDFC, ICICI, Federal, AU SFB, YES Bank onboard **GS3**
- Parliament Monsoon Session 2026: July 21–Aug 12, 19 sittings** — Delimitation Bill (543→850 seats, 33% women's quota), PM-CMs Jail Reform Bill expected; Independence Day recess Aug 13–15 **GS2**
- MECON Limited gets MiniRatna Category-I status** — Ministry of Steel; net worth ₹535.42 Cr; PBT ₹104.53 Cr in FY26; Board gains capex autonomy up to ₹500 Cr **GS3**
- Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit assumes charge as 51st VCAS, IAF** — succeeds Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor (retired June 30); ex-CISC; Mirage-2000 veteran; Op Safed Sagar (Kargil 1999); PVSM 2026 **GS3**

THEIAS AKADEMIA PROGRAMME

★ SAHYOG — Personalised Mentorship

Navigating this volume of current affairs alone is the biggest mistake aspirants make. SAHYOG pairs you with an IAS/IPS/IFS mentor who builds your personalised reading plan, weekly revision schedule, and answer-writing system — matched to your stage of preparation.

JOIN SAHYOG NOW

## ◆ GS PAPER II — POLITY & GOVERNANCE

GS2 • POLITY • PARLIAMENT • CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

### Parliament Monsoon Session 2026: July 21–August 12 | Delimitation Bill | 33% Women's Quota Operationalisation

4 July 2026

The Monsoon Session of Parliament 2026 is scheduled July 21 to August 12 with 19 sittings. The Delimitation Bill — proposing expansion of the Lok Sabha from 543 to 850 seats — is expected to be tabled, unlocking the Women's Reservation Act operationalisation.

The Women's Reservation Act (Constitution 106th Amendment, 2023) mandates 33% reservation for women in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, but stipulates implementation only after delimitation is completed. The Delimitation Bill is therefore the key enabling legislation.

The PM-CMs Jail Reform Bill — aimed at uniform prison standards, reducing undertrial backlogs, and reforming Prison Manuals across States — is also expected. The session coincides with the Independence Day recess (Aug 13–15).

#### SESSION DATES

July 21 – August 12, 2026

#### SITTINGS

19 sittings

#### KEY BILL

Delimitation Bill (543→850 seats)

#### WOMEN'S QUOTA

33% after delimitation

#### ENABLING ACT

106th Constitutional Amendment (2023)

#### OTHER BILL

PM-CMs Prisons (Jail) Reform Bill

#### PYQ LINKAGE (LAST 25 YEARS)

UPSC CSE Mains 2023 GS2: "The Women's Reservation Act, 2023 is a path-breaking legislation with implementation contingent on delimitation. Comment on the challenges and constitutional provisions involved." | UPSC Prelims 2021: "Under which article of the Constitution is the Delimitation Commission constituted?" [Art. 82 & Art. 170; Delimitation Act 2002]

#### UPSC ANGLE

Delimitation Commission: constituted under Art. 82 (Lok Sabha) and Art. 170 (State Assemblies) after each census. The last full delimitation was 1976 (frozen till 2026 under the 42nd Amendment). The new exercise is the first in 50 years. Know Women's Reservation Act carve-outs for SC/ST women, Scheduled Area exceptions, and Schedule 5/6 area implications. PM-CMs Jail Bill connects to Art. 246 (concurrent list Entry 4: Prisons).

GS3 • INFRASTRUCTURE • GS2 • GOVERNANCE

### CCEA Approves ₹14,115 Cr: Delhi Twin-Tube Tunnel + UP Kanpur-Kabrai Greenfield Highway

4 July 2026

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by PM Narendra Modi, approved two highway projects worth ₹14,114.81 Crore under the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan: a ₹6,969.67 Cr tunnel in Delhi and a ₹7,145.14 Cr greenfield corridor in UP.

**Project 1 — Delhi Tunnel (NH-148AE):** 3.14 km six-lane twin-tube tunnel under the Southern Ridge, connecting Dwarka Expressway (NH-248BB) with Nelson Mandela Marg, Vasant Kunj. Built by NHAI under Hybrid Annuity Mode (HAM) — National Highways (Original) Scheme.

**Project 2 — UP Greenfield Highway (NH-34):** 117.7 km four-lane access-controlled greenfield highway, Kanpur to Kabrai (Mahoba district). Part of Bhopal-Kanpur Economic Corridor, implemented via BOT-Toll model by NHAI.

#### DELHI TUNNEL COST

#### TUNNEL SPECS

#### UP HIGHWAY COST

₹6,969.67 Crore (HAM)

3.14 km, 6-lane, twin-tube

₹7,145.14 Crore (BOT-Toll)

## HIGHWAY LENGTH

117.7 km, 4-lane, access-controlled

## CORRIDOR NAME

Bhopal-Kanpur Economic Corridor

## IMPLEMENTING BODY

NHA

## PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC Prelims 2020: "Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) combines elements of which two PPP models?" [EPC + BOT-Annuity; govt pays 40% during construction, 60% as annuities] | UPSC Mains GS3 2022: "Examine how PM GatiShakti National Master Plan addresses India's infrastructure deficit and logistics costs."

## UPSC ANGLE

PPP model hierarchy: EPC (no private risk) → HAM (shared) → BOT-Annuity (private builds/operates, govt pays) → BOT-Toll (user pays). NHA: est. 1988 under NHA Act. PM GatiShakti: PM's Office-driven multi-modal connectivity master plan integrating 16 ministries via GIS-based portal. Southern Ridge in Delhi is an eco-sensitive zone — the tunnel approach avoids surface disruption; this connects to Art. 21 (right to environment) and EIA notification 2006.

## ◆ GS PAPER II — INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

GS2 · IR · MULTILATERAL FINANCE | GS3 · EDUCATION · ECONOMY

## ADB Approves USD 182.89 Mn Loan to Karnataka for 500 Integrated School Clusters

4 July 2026

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a USD 182.89 million (Japanese Yen equivalent) loan to Karnataka under the "Strengthening Karnataka Public Schools Program" — 500 integrated school clusters, 1 million+ students (pre-primary to secondary), aligned with NEP 2020.

The programme uses ADB's **Results-Based Lending (RBL)** mechanism — disbursements triggered by verified Disbursement-Linked Indicators (DLIs) rather than input expenditure. Additional support: USD 10 Mn grant + USD 25 Mn guarantee from the International Finance Facility for Education (IFFEd).

The programme prioritises underserved areas, ECCE (Early Childhood Care & Education) integration, and NEP 2020's school-complex model — grouping primary schools around secondary schools for resource sharing.

## ADB LOAN

USD 182.89 Mn (¥ equivalent)

## IFFED SUPPORT

USD 10 Mn grant + USD 25 Mn guarantee

## BENEFICIARIES

1 Mn+ students

## SCHOOL CLUSTERS

500 integrated clusters

## LENDING TYPE

Results-Based Lending (RBL/DLI)

## NEP 2020 LINKAGE

School complex model, ECCE

## PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC Prelims 2019: "With reference to the ADB, which statement is NOT correct?" [ADB: est. 1966; 68 members; HQ Manila; India is 4th-largest shareholder] | UPSC Mains GS2 2021: "Discuss the significance of NEP 2020 in reforming school education in India, with special focus on the school complex model and ECCE."

## UPSC ANGLE

ADB: est. 1966, 68 members, HQ Manila, Philippines; India is a founding member and 4th-largest shareholder. Results-Based Lending vs. Project-Based Lending: RBL pays for outcomes (DLIs), not inputs — reduces fiduciary risk. IFFEd: multilateral fund specifically for financing education in low-and-middle-income countries. Connect to PM POSHAN (school meals), NIPUN Bharat (foundational literacy), and Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan.

GS3 · ECONOMY · ENERGY SECURITY | GS2 · IR · INDIA-BRAZIL

## BPCL Acquires 100% Stake in IBV Brazil Petroleo for ₹2,312 Crore via CIRP Route

4 July 2026

**Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), via BPRL Ventures BV (overseas arm), acquired the remaining 34.6% stake from Videocon Energy Brazil Limited (VEBL) in IBV Brazil Petroleo Limitada for ₹2,312 Crore, raising total ownership from 65.4% to 100%.**

The acquisition was completed under the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) of VOVL Limited per NCLT order, with Gol approval. IBV Brazil Petroleo holds the BM-SEAL-11 concession, currently under development, expected to add approximately 1 MTOE/year to BPCL's equity production once operational.

This acquisition strengthens India's energy security through overseas hydrocarbon assets — the broader strategy of ONGC Videsh, BPRL, and OVL. India's primary energy dependence stands at ~87% import for crude oil, making equity stakes in overseas assets a strategic necessity.

|                                                   |                                          |                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| DEAL VALUE<br>₹2,312 Crore                        | STAKE<br>34.6% acquired (100% total)     | ASSET<br>BM-SEAL-11 concession, Brazil                   |
| EXPECTED OUTPUT<br>~1 MTOE/year (post-production) | BPCL STATUS<br>Maharatna PSU under MoPNG | LEGAL ROUTE<br>CIRP (IBC 2016); NCLT order; Gol approval |

 **PYQ LINKAGE**

UPSC Prelims 2018: "Consider the following PSUs: BPCL, ONGC, IOC, NTPC. Which are Maharatna companies?" | UPSC Mains GS3 2020: "India's energy security is critically dependent on overseas hydrocarbon acquisitions. Discuss the opportunities and challenges in this strategy." [ONGC Videsh, BPRL, Petronet LNG context]

 **UPSC ANGLE**

BPCL: Maharatna PSU, HQ Mumbai, est. 1952, under MoPNG. IBC 2016: CIRP is the resolution process before liquidation; NCLT is the adjudicating authority. India-Brazil ties: IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum), IBSAMAR naval exercise, BRICs connection. Overseas oil assets: ONGC Videsh operates in 15+ countries; OVL (ONGC Videsh Ltd) & BPRL are India's key overseas exploration arms.

THE IAS AKADEMIA PROGRAMME

 **ANTIM 2027 — Complete IR Mastery**

Every bilateral, multilateral, strategic partnership, and India's foreign policy architecture — systematically mapped to UPSC's IR question patterns from the last 15 years. Includes live map sessions, treaty timelines, and Mains answer frameworks built for precision.

ENROL IN ANTIM 2027

◆ GS PAPER III — DEFENCE & SECURITY

GS3 • DEFENCE • INDIGENOUS TECHNOLOGY • AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

**IIT Delhi + DRDO Develop India's First Indigenous Tactical Aerostat — 20 km Surveillance Coverage**

4 July 2026

**IIT Delhi partnered with DRDO and a domestic startup to develop India's first indigenous tactical aerostat — a balloon-based high-altitude platform with persistent 20 km surveillance, carrying Electro-Optical (EO) cameras, Infrared (IR) sensors, and communication relay systems.**

Unlike drones with 30–60 minute endurance, aerostats provide continuous 24x7 presence with much higher payload capacity at a fraction of the cost. This makes them ideal for forward-area surveillance, border monitoring, and communication relay in conflict zones without requiring ground-based radar.

The project exemplifies DRDO's post-2023 reformed mandate: Academia–DRDO–Startup collaboration under iDEX (Innovations for Defence Excellence). Future civil applications include disaster communication, emergency connectivity, and remote area monitoring.

|               |                    |          |
|---------------|--------------------|----------|
| PLATFORM TYPE | SURVEILLANCE RANGE | PAYLOADS |
|---------------|--------------------|----------|

Balloon-based tactical aerostat

Up to 20 km

EO cameras + IR sensors + Comm relay

#### ADVANTAGE VS. DRONES

Higher endurance; more payload; lower cost

#### COLLABORATION

IIT Delhi + DRDO + Domestic startup

#### DRDO FOUNDED

1958, HQ New Delhi, 58 labs

#### PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC Prelims 2022: "With reference to aerostats, which of the following statements is/are correct? 1. They are lighter-than-air platforms. 2. DRDO has developed tactical aerostats for border surveillance." | UPSC Mains GS3 2023: "Discuss the significance of the academia-defence-industry triad in India's Aatmanirbhar Bharat defence manufacturing programme."

#### UPSC ANGLE

DRDO: 58 labs under 8 clusters; civilian-to-military dual-use research. iDEX (Innovations for Defence Excellence) launched 2018 — DISC challenges connect startups to defence procurement. India's Positive Indigenisation List (I, II, III, IV): items where no imports allowed; aerostats likely in List III/IV. Aerostat vs. UAV vs. MALE UCAV distinction for Prelims. Prior examples: SkyWatch aerostat (India-Pakistan border, CISF-deployed) was procured from Israel; this is a first indigenous one.

GS3 • DEFENCE • APPOINTMENTS • IAF

## Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit Assumes Charge as 51st Vice Chief of Air Staff (VCAS) of IAF

1 July 2026

Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit assumed charge as the 51st Vice Chief of Air Staff (VCAS) of the Indian Air Force at Air Headquarters, New Delhi on July 1, 2026, succeeding Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor (retired June 30 after 4 decades of service).

Prior to VCAS, Air Marshal Dixit served as Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (CISC) from May 2025 to June 2026, contributing to tri-service operational integration, joint doctrines, Combined and Joint Commanders' Conferences, and the Defence Forces Vision 2047 roadmap.

He commanded a Mirage-2000 squadron, key fighter bases, and the Flight Test Squadron at ASTE (Aircraft and Systems Testing Establishment). He participated in **Operation Safed Sagar** (IAF's air campaign in the Kargil War, 1999) and **Operation Rakshak** (counter-insurgency, J&K).

#### NEW ROLE

51st Vice Chief of Air Staff (VCAS)

#### PREVIOUS POST

CISC (May 2025 – June 2026)

#### PREDECESSOR

Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor (retd. June 30)

#### AIRCRAFT

Mirage-2000

#### OPERATIONS

Op Safed Sagar (Kargil 1999); Op Rakshak

#### TOP AWARD

PVSM (2026), AVSM (2023)

#### PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC Prelims 2020: "The Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (CISC) is subordinate to which authority?" [CDS — Chief of Defence Staff; post created Dec 2019] | UPSC Mains GS3 2021: "Critically examine the significance of jointness and integration in India's armed forces in the context of the Chief of Defence Staff appointment."

#### UPSC ANGLE

IAF command chain: CAS → VCAS → DCAS → AOC-in-C. CISC: reports to CDS (Chief of Defence Staff), coordinates Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) for joint operations. CDS: created Dec 2019 after Kargil Review Committee recommendation. Operation Safed Sagar: IAF's role in Kargil 1999 — first-ever aerial combat by IAF post-1971. Medal hierarchy: PVSM > AVSM > VSM (distinguished service); Param Vir Chakra, Maha Vir Chakra, Vir Chakra (gallantry in war).

THE IAS AKADEMI PROGRAMME

## ✂ EMP — Exam Mastery Programme

Defence and Security GS3: from Kargil to CDS to Aatmanirbhar Bharat — all systematically covered with PYQ analysis, border management maps, force structure charts, and Mains answer frameworks for Section-B precision.

EXPLORE EMP

GS3 • SCI-TECH • SEMICONDUCTORS • ECONOMY

## PM Modi Inaugurates CG Semi OSAT Chip Plant in Sanand — India's First Major Semiconductor Packaging Facility

4 July 2026

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the CG Semi OSAT (Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly & Test) facility in Sanand, Gujarat — India's first major semiconductor packaging plant, representing a ₹7,600 Crore joint venture with a combined capacity of 1.5 crore chips per day.

**Joint Venture Partners:** CG Power (Murugappa Group, India) + Renesas Electronics America Inc. (USA) + Stars Microelectronics (Thailand). OSAT is the back-end of semiconductor manufacturing: chip packaging, assembly, bonding, and testing of wafers produced by foundries elsewhere.

**India Semiconductor Mission (ISM):** Under MeitY, announced 2021, ₹76,000 Crore outlay. India Semicon programme offers up to 50% fiscal support for chip design/fab/OSAT. The Micron Technology ATMP plant at Sanand (announced 2023) is a related project; both make Sanand India's semiconductor capital.

|                                                                   |                                                        |                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>TOTAL INVESTMENT</b><br>₹7,600 Crore                           | <b>COMBINED CAPACITY</b><br>1.5 Crore chips/day        | <b>LOCATION</b><br>Sanand, Gujarat                         |
| <b>JV PARTNERS</b><br>CG Power + Renesas (USA) + Stars (Thailand) | <b>PLANT TYPE</b><br>OSAT (Packaging, Assembly & Test) | <b>NODAL AGENCY</b><br>India Semiconductor Mission (MeitY) |

### PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC Prelims 2023: "India Semiconductor Mission is under which Ministry?" [MeitY] | UPSC Mains GS3 2024: "Semiconductors are central to India's technological sovereignty. Examine India's strategy to become a global semiconductor hub and the challenges involved."

### UPSC ANGLE

Semiconductor supply chain: Chip Design (VLSI) → Wafer Fab (TSMC, Intel, Samsung) → OSAT/ATMP (packaging, assembly, test) → End products. India has strength in design (Bengaluru: ARM, Qualcomm etc.) but lacks fabs. OSAT is capital-lighter entry point. ISM: ₹76,000 Cr, PLI + Design-Linked Incentive (DLI). Global context: CHIPS Act (USA), EU Chips Act 2023, China's semiconductor surge. TSMC Taiwan dependency — geopolitical risk for India's electronics imports (₹10+ lakh Cr/year import bill).

GS3 • SCI-TECH • AVIATION • SPACE NAVIGATION

## India's First PinS Satellite-Guided Helicopter Landing Procedure Approved for Undavalli Heliport, Amaravati

4 July 2026

The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) approved India's first Private Point-in-Space (PinS) Instrument Approach Procedure for helicopters at Undavalli Heliport, Amaravati, AP — using India's GAGAN satellite navigation system to enable safe landings without ground-based radar or ILS.

**GAGAN (GPS Aided GEO Augmented Navigation):** India's Satellite-Based Augmentation System (SBAS), jointly developed by AAI and ISRO. It augments GPS accuracy to <3 metres using geostationary satellites (GSAT-8 and GSAT-10). ICAO-certified for RNP 0.1 approaches over India's entire Flight Information Region (FIR).

The PinS procedure enables Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) operations in hilly, remote, and weather-degraded conditions without ground-based Instrument Landing System (ILS) infrastructure — particularly critical for UDAN scheme heliport expansion in Pilgrimage, Emergency Medical, and Offshore sectors.

|                                                       |                                                      |                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>PROCEDURE</b><br>PinS (Private Point-in-Space) IFR | <b>LOCATION</b><br>Undavalli Heliport, Amaravati, AP | <b>NAVIGATION</b><br>GAGAN (GPS + GEO Augmented) |
| <b>DEVELOPED BY</b>                                   | <b>APPROVED BY</b>                                   | <b>BENEFIT</b>                                   |

**PYQ LINKAGE**

UPSC Prelims 2021: "With reference to GAGAN, which of the following is/are correct? 1. It is India's own Satellite-Based Augmentation System. 2. It was jointly developed by AAI and ISRO." [Both correct] | UPSC Mains GS3 2020: "Discuss the significance of space-based navigation systems for India's civil aviation and national security."

**UPSC ANGLE**

GAGAN: India's SBAS (like USA's WAAS, Europe's EGNOS, Japan's MSAS). AAI + ISRO jointly developed. Uses GSAT-8 & GSAT-10 (GEO satellites) + 15 ground reference stations across India. Certified by ICAO for safety-critical aviation. Performance-Based Navigation (PBN): navigation using RNAV specifications (GNSS-based), replacing ground-based VOR/NDB approach. PinS for helicopters is a civilian application of GAGAN for difficult terrain — connects UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) scheme's regional connectivity goals.

## ◆ GS PAPER III — ECONOMY

## GS3 • ECONOMY • PSUS • CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

**MECON Limited Granted MiniRatna Category-I Status — Ministry of Steel**

4 July 2026

The Ministry of Steel granted MiniRatna Category-I status to MECON Limited (Metallurgical & Engineering Consultants India Limited), a Schedule 'A' CPSE, following the company's continuous profitability for 3 years and net worth of ₹535.42 Crore as of March 2026.

MECON is a PSU engineering consultancy specialising in metallurgical plants, steel plant design, and industrial infrastructure. The MiniRatna Cat-I status allows its Board to approve capital expenditure up to ₹500 Crore without Ministry/Cabinet approval — enabling faster decisions on technology upgradation and modernisation.

**NET WORTH (FY26)**

₹535.42 Crore

**PBT FY24**

₹77.62 Crore

**PBT FY25**

₹32.08 Crore

**PBT FY26**

₹104.53 Crore

**MINISTRY**

Ministry of Steel

**NEW CAPEX AUTONOMY**

Up to ₹500 Crore

| CPSE STATUS             | KEY ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA                                                              | BOARD CAPEX AUTONOMY |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Maharatna</b>        | Navratna + net worth >₹15,000 Cr + avg turnover >₹25,000 Cr + 3 yrs profit            | Up to ₹5,000 Crore   |
| <b>Navratna</b>         | MiniRatna-I + net worth >₹2,000 Cr + score 60/100 on 6 parameters                     | Up to ₹1,000 Crore   |
| <b>MiniRatna Cat-I</b>  | Profit 3 consecutive yrs; Pre-tax profit ≥₹30 Cr in at least 1 yr; positive net worth | Up to ₹500 Crore     |
| <b>MiniRatna Cat-II</b> | Profit 3 consecutive years; positive net worth                                        | Up to ₹300 Crore     |

**PYQ LINKAGE**

UPSC Prelims 2017: "Which criteria distinguishes MiniRatna Category-I from Category-II?" [Pre-tax profit of ₹30 Cr+ in at least one of three years] | UPSC Prelims 2022: "How many CPSEs are currently Maharatna companies?" [Check current list: includes ONGC, IOC, BPCL, NTPC, CIL, BHEL, SAIL, GAIL, Power Grid, HAL, HPCL + recent additions]

**UPSC ANGLE**

CPSE classification: 4-tier — MiniRatna Cat-II → Cat-I → Navratna → Maharatna. DPE (Dept of Public Enterprises) under MoF sets criteria. Rationale: greater autonomy → faster commercial decision-making without bureaucratic delays. MECON: metallurgical consultancy connects to India's steel production (India = 2nd largest crude steel producer globally; SAIL, JSW Steel, Tata Steel). National Steel Policy 2017: target 300 MTPA production by 2030.

# Razorpay + NBBL Launch Banking Connect — India's First Mobile-First Unified NetBanking Platform

4 July 2026

Razorpay, in partnership with NPCI Bharat BillPay Limited (NBBL), launched Banking Connect in Mumbai — India's first mobile-first unified NetBanking platform using QR-based and intent-driven payment flows, with SBI, HDFC, ICICI, Federal Bank, AU SFB, and YES Bank as founding partners.

Banking Connect replaces multiple bank-specific NetBanking integrations with a single layer for settlement, reconciliation, refunds, and routing. Intent-based and QR-enabled flows mean users stay within the merchant app without external bank-portal redirects — dramatically improving success rates for high-value transactions.

**NBBL:** NPCI Bharat BillPay Limited is a wholly-owned subsidiary of NPCI that specifically manages the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS). The Banking Connect product extends NBBL's mandate into NetBanking modernisation.

## PRODUCT

Banking Connect (mobile-first NetBanking)

## PARTNERS

Razorpay + NBBL (NPCI subsidiary)

## PAYMENT MODE

QR-based + intent-driven flows

## FOUNDING BANKS

SBI, HDFC, ICICI, Federal, AU SFB, YES

## NBBL PARENT

NPCI (est. 2008 under RBI + IBA)

## BBPS OPERATOR

NBBL — Bharat Bill Payment System

## PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC Prelims 2022: "NPCI operates which of the following? (a) UPI (b) IMPS (c) RuPay (d) NACH" [All of the above; NPCI is the umbrella body for retail payment systems in India] | UPSC Mains GS3 2023: "Digital payment infrastructure has transformed India's financial inclusion landscape. Critically examine the role of NPCI in this transformation."

## UPSC ANGLE

NPCI: National Payments Corporation of India; est. 2008 under RBI + IBA; umbrella body for retail payments. Products: UPI, IMPS, RuPay, NACH, CTS (Cheque Truncation), NETC (FASTag). NBBL (NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd) manages BBPS (Bharat Bill Payment System) for recurring bills. Banking Connect targets NetBanking — distinct from UPI (mobile P2P & P2M) and NEFT/RTGS (bank transfers). RBI Payments Vision 2025 goals: 4x growth in digital transactions, UPI interoperability with foreign networks (Malaysia, Singapore, UAE, France). e-RUPI: prepaid digital voucher system for targeted subsidy delivery.

## THE IAS AKADEMIA PROGRAMME



### LAKSHYAM AIR1 — Sci-Tech & Economy Mastery

Semiconductors, fintech, space, AI, energy — GS3 is becoming more technical every year. LAKSHYAM AIR1 breaks these down with MCQ-linked concept sheets, PYQ-mapped topic trees, and AIR-1-level Mains answer frameworks built for precision scoring.

JOIN LAKSHYAM AIR1

## ✓ PROOF OF PRECISION — Part I | 4 July 2026

10

Verified Headlines (July 4, 2026)

2

Polity & Governance Cards

2

International Relations Cards

2

Defence & Security Cards

2

Science & Technology Cards

2

Economy Cards

10

PYQ Linkages (last 25 years)

10

UPSC Angle Boxes

4

Akademia Programme Notes

0

Stale Items (>48 hours old)

*All news verified from AffairsCloud July 4, 2026 edition and PIB releases. Events dated July 3–4, 2026 only. Zero repetitions from prior editions. Stale items (VB-G-RAM-G July 1, Digital India July 1, RBI MPC June 5) explicitly excluded.*