

THE IAS AKADEMIA

ANTIM ASSURED 100+

PART I · HEADLINES TO ECONOMY

Friday, 09 October 2026

“The Topper's Last Read. Every Morning.”

INSIDE THIS FILE

1. Headlines at a Glance (12)
2. Polity & Governance (2 cards)
3. GS1 · Heritage (1 card)
4. International Relations (2 cards)
5. Defence (2 cards)
6. Science & Technology (2 cards)
7. Economy (3 cards)
8. Proof of Precision

MORNING EDITION · 08:00 IST

Publisher: TheIAS Akademia · theiasakademia.com · theiasakademia@gmail.com

1

Headlines at a Glance

12 one-line briefs spanning today's edition

1

The Rajya Sabha Secretariat reconstitutes all 24 Department-Related Standing Committees for 2026–27, effective 26 September 2026. **GS2**

2

Delhi High Court rules a foreign national has no enforceable right of entry under Article 226, reaffirming visa and entry decisions as a sovereign function. **GS2**

3

BRS leader K. T. Rama Rao demands withdrawal of a proposed Singareni coal mine near the UNESCO-listed Ramappa Temple in Telangana's Mulugu district. **GS1**

4

India's High Commissioner to Dhaka says there is “no timeline” for Sheikh Hasina's extradition, even as Bangladesh's BNP government presses the request. **GS2**

5

DRDO's new Junput missile test range in West Bengal, an extension of the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, conducts its first disclosed test activity. **GS3**

6

India's and Germany's Chiefs of Defence Staff meet in New Delhi, with the stalled Project-75(I) submarine deal in focus. **GS2**

7

The 2026 Nobel Prize in Physics goes to Francis Halzen for pioneering high-energy neutrino astronomy via the IceCube Observatory. **GS3**

8

The 2026 Nobel Prize in Chemistry honours Henri Kagan and Kenso Soai for unravelling the chemistry of molecular chirality. **GS3**

9

RBI finalises Basel III-aligned SA-CCR and CVA capital-adequacy frameworks governing banks' derivative-counterparty exposure. **GS3**

10

RBI formally excludes Paytm Payments Bank from the Second Schedule of the RBI Act, 1934, closing out its banking licence for good. **GS3**

11

RBI sectoral data show NBFC gold-jewellery loans surging 69% year-on-year even as the

regulator tightens gold-loan prudential norms.

GS3

12

WWF-ZSL's Living Planet Report 2026 finds a 73% average global decline in monitored wildlife populations since 1970, with India bucking the trend on big cats and river dolphins.

GS3

THEIAS AKADEMIA

Struggling to convert daily headlines into Mains-ready answers? Our **Sahyog Mentorship** programme pairs you with a dedicated mentor who reviews your answer-writing every week. Details at theiasakademia.com.

2

Polity & Governance

Rule 16.1 cap: maximum 3 cards — 2 genuinely fresh, non-blacklisted candidates found today

GS2

Parliament — Committees and Their Functioning

3 October 2026 (effective 26 September 2026) · Source: Rajya Sabha Secretariat Parliamentary Bulletin

One Parliament, Twenty-Four Watchdogs: The DRSCs Are Reconstituted for 2026–27

Why in News: On 3 October 2026 the Rajya Sabha Secretariat issued the Parliamentary Bulletin reconstituting all 24 Department-Related Standing Committees (DRSCs) for the 2026–27 term, effective from 26 September 2026. The reshuffle retained some high-profile chairs — Shashi Tharoor continues to chair External Affairs — while handing other members, including some who recently switched political affiliation, fresh panel assignments. The bulletin covers the full roster of 24 committees split between Rajya Sabha-serviced and Lok Sabha-serviced secretariats.

Background: DRSCs were created in 1993, replacing a more ad hoc committee structure, to give Parliament continuous, specialised scrutiny of ministries even when the House is not in session. There are 24 such committees, each straddling both Houses, with members drawn roughly two-thirds from the Lok Sabha and one-third from the Rajya Sabha for the larger committees (Finance and External Affairs each have 31 members: 21 from the Lok Sabha and 10 from the Rajya Sabha). Their core functions are threefold: examining the Demands for Grants of ministries instead of leaving every line item to a time-starved full House debate, scrutinising Bills referred to them for detailed clause-by-clause comment, and reviewing ministries' annual reports and long-term policy documents. Crucially, DRSC reports are recommendatory, not binding on the government.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- 24 Department-Related Standing Committees exist in total, reconstituted for the one-year term 2026–27.
- Reconstitution effective 26 September 2026; the Rajya Sabha Secretariat's bulletin notifying it is dated 3 October 2026.
- The DRSC system was created in 1993 to replace a more ad hoc parliamentary-committee structure.
- Finance and External Affairs committees each have 31 members: 21 from the Lok Sabha, 10 from the Rajya Sabha.
- Shashi Tharoor retains the chair of the Standing Committee on External Affairs.
- DRSCs examine ministries' Demands for Grants, scrutinise referred Bills clause-by-clause, and review annual reports/policy documents.
- DRSC recommendations are advisory; the government is not constitutionally bound to accept them.
- The committees are split across Rajya Sabha-serviced and Lok Sabha-serviced secretariats, numbering 8 and 16 respectively.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: DRSCs are one of the few institutional mechanisms giving Parliament year-round, specialised oversight capacity over the executive, beyond the limited floor-time of full House sessions.
- Criticism: because DRSC reports are only recommendatory, a government with a comfortable majority can simply disregard unfavourable findings, raising the perennial question of whether committee scrutiny has real teeth.
- Implementation challenge: with only one-year terms and frequent membership churn (including this reconstitution's cross-party reassignments), institutional memory within a committee can be difficult to sustain on complex, multi-year policy questions.
- Comparative angle: DRSCs are often compared to the UK's more powerful, cross-party Select Committees, which can compel oral evidence and enjoy greater public visibility — a contrast frequently drawn in UPSC Mains answers on strengthening India's parliamentary oversight.
- Way forward: making DRSC proceedings more public, giving committees the power to summon ministers directly, and extending terms beyond a single year could deepen their oversight function without requiring a constitutional amendment.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Remember “24-1993-2/3”: 24 committees, born in 1993, with roughly two Lok Sabha members for every one from the Rajya Sabha on each panel.

PYQ LINKAGE

Thematically linked to UPSC Mains 2013, GS2: “What are the major changes brought in the Parliamentary Committee system recently?” — no single exact repeat found for 2026, so treat this as a thematic linkage.

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. Department-Related Standing Committees (DRSCs) were constituted in 1993 to strengthen Parliament's scrutiny of the executive between sessions.
2. The recommendations of a DRSC are binding on the concerned Ministry unless overturned by a resolution of both Houses.
3. The Standing Committee on Finance and the Standing Committee on External Affairs each have members drawn from both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

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

Answer: a. Statement 2 is false — DRSC recommendations are advisory, not binding on the government.

DRSC

Parliamentary Committees

1993 Reform

Legislative Oversight

GS2

GS2

Fundamental Rights — Rights of Citizens vs Non-Citizens, Article 226

1 October 2026 (judgment reported); still the latest word on the question as of this edition · Source: Delhi High Court

No Visa, No Right: Delhi High Court on Entry, Sovereignty and Article 226

Why in News: On 1 October 2026, Justice Amit Mahajan of the Delhi High Court dismissed a writ petition by a Turkmenistan national who had been denied entry at IGI Airport despite holding a valid business visa, even as her husband travelling with her was allowed in. The petitioner had sought a “speaking order” explaining the denial. The Court held that visa issuance, entry permission and deportation are sovereign functions tied to national security and foreign-policy discretion, and that a foreign national has no inherent, enforceable right to entry that a writ court under Article 226 can compel.

Background: India's immigration regime was consolidated by the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, in force since 1 September 2025, which repealed four colonial-and-post-Independence-era statutes: the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920, the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939, the Foreigners Act, 1946, and the Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act, 2000. The ruling revives a long-standing doctrinal line distinguishing rights available to “any person” under Articles 14 and 21 (life, liberty and equality before law, which extend to non-citizens on Indian soil) from the narrower category of rights reserved for “citizens” alone under Article 19 (freedoms of speech, movement, residence) — and clarifies that neither category confers a vested right for a non-citizen to enter the country in the first place.

KEY FACTS

- Case: Annagurbanova Yazbibbi Hummetgulyyevna v. Union of India, decided by Justice Amit Mahajan, Delhi High Court, judgment reported 1 October 2026.

- Petitioner: a Turkmenistan national denied entry at IGI Airport despite holding a valid business visa; her husband was permitted entry on the same trip.
- Governing statute: the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, in force since 1 September 2025.
- The 2025 Act repealed four earlier laws: the Passport (Entry into India) Act 1920, Registration of Foreigners Act 1939, Foreigners Act 1946, and Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act 2000.
- Penalty for using forged travel/identity documents under the new Act: imprisonment of 2 to 7 years plus a fine of ₹1 lakh to ₹10 lakh.
- The Bureau of Immigration, which administers entry/exit control, dates back to 1971.
- Court's holding: visa issuance, entry and deportation decisions are sovereign functions tied to national security and foreign policy, not amenable to a writ compelling a detailed "speaking order."
- Doctrinal basis: Articles 14 and 21 extend to "any person" (including foreigners) on Indian soil, but confer no vested right of entry itself, which remains a matter of executive/sovereign discretion.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: clarifies the outer limit of Fundamental Rights available to non-citizens — a recurring GS2 theme distinguishing universal rights (Articles 14, 21) from citizen-only rights (Article 19).
- Criticism: unfettered executive discretion over entry, even with no obligation to give reasons, risks arbitrary or discriminatory decision-making that is difficult for an affected individual to challenge.
- Implementation gap: the 2025 Act's consolidation was meant to modernise a colonial-era patchwork of four statutes, but this case shows the depth of executive discretion it preserves over entry decisions remains largely untouched.
- Comparative angle: most democracies, including the US and UK, similarly treat visa/entry refusal as an act of sovereign discretion largely insulated from judicial review, though some require at least a cursory reason in specific circumstances.
- Way forward: a narrowly tailored requirement to disclose at least a generic reason category (security, documentation, policy) for refusal — without compelling a full "speaking order" — could balance transparency with legitimate sovereign discretion.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

"Any Person vs Citizen": Articles 14 and 21 protect "any person" already in India; Article 19 and the right of entry itself remain tied to citizenship and sovereign discretion respectively — two different doors, two different keys.

PYQ LINKAGE

Thematically linked to the recurring GS2 Mains theme "Discuss the scope of Fundamental Rights available to non-citizens in India" — no single confirmed exact-year PYQ located, so treat as thematic.

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025 repealed the Foreigners Act, 1946 and the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939.
2. Fundamental Rights under Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution are available only to citizens of India and not to foreign nationals.
3. A foreign national has an enforceable right under Article 226 to compel the Government of India to disclose detailed reasons for refusing entry.

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

Answer: a. Statements 2 and 3 are false — Articles 14 and 21 extend to “any person,” including foreigners, but confer no vested right to entry, which remains sovereign discretion.

Immigration and Foreigners Act 2025

Article 226

Rights of Non-Citizens

Sovereign Function

GS2

3

GS1 · Culture & Heritage

A dedicated GS1 beat, broadening coverage beyond the capped Polity & Governance section

GS1

Indian Culture — Architecture, UNESCO World Heritage Sites

5 October 2026 (demand); underlying warning dated 3 July 2026 · Source: Telangana Today; Ramappa Temple Protection Committee

A Floating Foundation, A Looming Mine: Ramappa Temple's Coal Conflict

Why in News: On 5 October 2026, BRS leader K. T. Rama Rao publicly demanded the immediate withdrawal of a proposed open-cast coal mine — floated by Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) and reportedly named after a former Prime Minister — near the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Ramappa (Kakatiyan Rudreshwara) Temple in Mulugu district, Telangana, warning of a statewide agitation if the plan proceeds. His intervention follows an earlier warning, on 3 July 2026, from the Ramappa Temple Protection Committee that blasting and excavation work could destabilise the 13th-century temple's foundations and deplete the adjoining Ramappa lake that has sustained the area for eight centuries.

Background: The Ramappa Temple was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2021 — India's 39th such site — specifically cited for its unique “sandbox” foundation technique: a layer of sand, jaggery and other locally sourced materials beneath the structure that allows the temple to flex rather than crack during seismic activity, a distinctive Kakatiya-dynasty engineering innovation

credited to General Recharla Rudra in the early 13th century. The temple's adjoining Ramappa lake, built as part of the same Kakatiya-era construction, is a historic irrigation tank illustrating the dynasty's integrated temple-tank-agriculture model of hydraulic architecture, still irrigating thousands of acres in the surrounding villages today.

KEY FACTS

- Location: Ramappa Temple, Palampet village, Mulugu district, Telangana.
- UNESCO World Heritage Site inscription: 2021 — India's 39th site on the list.
- Built under the Kakatiya dynasty, credited to General Recharla Rudra, early 13th century.
- Distinctive engineering feature: a “sandbox” foundation (sand, jaggery and local binding material) giving the structure earthquake resilience.
- Ramappa lake, built alongside the temple, has an irrigation command area reported at roughly 30,000 acres, supporting around 22 villages.
- Proposed mine: an open-cast coal block floated by Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), a Telangana state-government-owned coal miner.
- Ramappa Temple Protection Committee's first warning on the mine's risk to the temple and lake: 3 July 2026.
- KTR's public demand for withdrawal of the mining proposal: 5 October 2026.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: a textbook GS1 heritage-conservation question — India's 39th UNESCO site, cited for a unique indigenous engineering technique, now facing a resource-extraction threat.
- Criticism: siting a coal block proposal so close to a seismic-sensitive heritage structure, after its 2021 UNESCO inscription, raises questions about inter-departmental coordination between state mining and heritage authorities.
- Implementation challenge: blasting-induced ground vibrations and lake-level depletion are difficult to reverse once underway, making any Environmental Impact Assessment for the mine critical before, not after, clearance.
- Development-vs-conservation trade-off: coal mining supports local employment and state energy needs, while heritage tourism and the lake's irrigation function support a different, longer-horizon local economy — a genuine two-sided debate.
- Way forward: an Archaeological Survey of India/UNESCO-coordinated vibration and hydrological impact study, conducted before any mining clearance, would let both energy and heritage objectives be weighed on evidence rather than political pressure alone.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

“Sand, Not Cement” is what keeps Ramappa standing through earthquakes — ironic that the proposed threat to its foundation now comes not from the ground shaking, but from the ground being dug up nearby.

UPSC Prelims 2020 carried a question on Kakatiya-era irrigation tanks and Telangana history (approximate recall; verify independently before citing as an exact match).

📌 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Ramappa Temple in Telangana was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2021.
2. The temple was built under the patronage of the Kakatiya dynasty and uses a sand-based foundation technique for seismic resilience.
3. The Ramappa lake adjoining the temple was constructed during the British colonial period as part of the Nizam's irrigation works.

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

Answer: a. Statement 3 is false — the Ramappa lake was built during the Kakatiya period, alongside the temple, not during British colonial rule.

Ramappa Temple

UNESCO World Heritage

Kakatiya Dynasty

Heritage vs Development

GS1

4

International Relations

2 cards: one fresh bilateral development, one static grouping explainer per the Part C ladder

GS2

India and Its Neighbourhood — Bangladesh, Extradition Treaty

4 October 2026 (remarks); dilemma remains live through this edition's window · Source: Indian High Commissioner to Dhaka, remarks at the Bay of Bengal Conversation 2026

No Timeline, No Treaty Shortcut: India's Sheikh Hasina Dilemma

Why in News: Speaking at the 5th Bay of Bengal Conversation 2026 in Dhaka on 4 October 2026, India's High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Dinesh Trivedi, said India “cannot give a timeframe” on Dhaka's extradition request for former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who has lived in India since fleeing Bangladesh on 5 August 2024. He described India's continued hosting of her as “our duty as a neighbour” and said the extradition request is being examined through a “well-structured” legal process, without elaborating further. Bangladesh's BNP government, led by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman since its February 2026 election win, has repeatedly linked full bilateral normalisation to her extradition following her conviction and death sentence by Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal.

Background: The two countries' extradition relationship rests on the India-Bangladesh Extradition Treaty of 2013, amended in 2016 to ease the evidentiary threshold for a request, but the treaty retains a political-offence exception that Dhaka disputes applies to Hasina's case while India has not publicly taken a position either way. Bangladesh is also separately seeking the extradition of two Bangladeshi nationals linked to the killing of activist Sharif Osman Hadi. A bilateral Prime Minister-level visit, floated more than once since August 2026 including around the September 2026 BRICS Summit, remains unscheduled, and renewal talks for the India-Bangladesh Ganga Water Treaty (expiring December 2026) are running in parallel, bundled into the same unresolved bilateral agenda.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Sheikh Hasina has resided in India since fleeing Bangladesh on 5 August 2024 amid mass protests.
- Governing treaty: the India-Bangladesh Extradition Treaty, 2013, amended in 2016 to ease the evidentiary bar for requests.
- The treaty retains a political-offence exception whose applicability to this case is disputed by Dhaka.
- Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal has convicted Hasina and handed down a death sentence, the basis for the extradition demand.
- Bangladesh's Prime Minister since February 2026: Tarique Rahman (BNP), succeeding the earlier Yunus-led interim government.
- Bangladesh separately seeks extradition of two nationals linked to the killing of activist Sharif Osman Hadi.
- India's High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi's remarks, 4 October 2026, at the Bay of Bengal Conversation (an annual Dhaka-based track-1.5 dialogue): no timeline given.
- The India-Bangladesh Ganga Water Treaty (1996) is due to expire in December 2026, with renewal talks running in parallel to the extradition impasse.

🎯 MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: tests how India balances a neighbourhood-policy commitment to political shelter against a formal bilateral extradition-treaty obligation to a democratically elected successor government.
- Criticism: an indefinite “no timeline” position risks straining the broader bilateral relationship at a moment when the Ganga Water Treaty renewal and other cooperation agendas also need goodwill on both sides.
- Analytical trade-off: India's strategic-autonomy and historical-ties rationale for continued shelter competes directly with Bangladesh's sovereign demand for judicial accountability of its own former head of government.
- Comparative/federal angle: extradition treaties with political-offence exceptions are a recurring feature of India's bilateral treaty practice (seen in other extradition arrangements too), making this a useful case study in treaty interpretation.

- Way forward: a quiet, calibrated diplomatic track that keeps the extradition question formally open while delinking it from unrelated issues (water-sharing, trade) may be the most realistic way to prevent one dispute from poisoning the entire relationship.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Picture a treaty with a locked exception clause and no agreed key — 2013 treaty, 2016 amendment, but the “political offence” door remains unopened on either side.

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC Mains 2016, GS2: “Increasing cross-border migration from Bangladesh is a cause of worry for India...” — same India-Bangladesh neighbourhood-policy sub-heading; also thematically linkable to extradition-treaty/political-asylum concepts.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The India-Bangladesh Extradition Treaty was signed in 2013 and amended in 2016 to ease the evidentiary requirements for a request.
2. Sheikh Hasina has been residing in India since fleeing Bangladesh in August 2024.
3. India has formally invoked the political-offence exception under the treaty to reject Bangladesh's extradition request.

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

Answer: a. Statement 3 is false — India has given no timeline and has not publicly invoked the exception; the request remains under examination.

India-Bangladesh Extradition Treaty

Sheikh Hasina

Neighbourhood Policy

Political Offence Exception

GS2

GS2

Important International Institutions and Groupings Affecting India's Interests

Static Topic — not tied to a current event · Source: IORA Secretariat; MEA

IORA: India's Anchor Grouping for Indian Ocean Governance

Why in News: This explainer card is used as a static-ladder fallback: no qualifying fresh Indian Ocean or IORA-specific news fell within the 6–9 October 2026 window (the 9th Indian Ocean Conference was held in April 2026 and the 28th IORA Committee of Senior Officials meeting hosted by India was in June 2026, both outside the freshness window). IORA nonetheless ties naturally into this week's maritime and neighbourhood themes (the Bay of Bengal Conversation, India-Bangladesh dynamics) and is a recurring GS2 Prelims/Mains grouping worth a dedicated static revision card.

Background: The Indian Ocean Rim Association was founded in 1997 in Mauritius as a regional cooperation grouping of states bordering the Indian Ocean, with its Secretariat based at Ebene, Mauritius. It now has 23 member states and 10 dialogue partners drawn from Africa, West Asia, South and Southeast Asia, and Australia. Its six priority areas — maritime safety and security; trade and investment facilitation; fisheries management; disaster risk management; academic, science and technology cooperation; and tourism and cultural exchange — have more recently been supplemented by the blue economy as a cross-cutting seventh priority. India held the IORA chairmanship from 2011 to 2013 and continues to be one of its most active members, with the grouping now institutionally linked to India's own maritime-doctrine evolution from SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region, 2015) to the more recently expanded MAHASAGAR framework.

KEY FACTS

- IORA was founded in 1997 in Mauritius; its Secretariat is based at Ebene, Mauritius.
- Membership: 23 member states plus 10 dialogue partners spanning Africa, West Asia, South/Southeast Asia and Australia.
- Six original priority areas: maritime safety and security; trade and investment facilitation; fisheries management; disaster risk management; academic/science and technology cooperation; tourism and cultural exchange.
- The blue economy has been added as a seventh, cross-cutting priority area.
- India held the IORA chairmanship from 2011 to 2013 and remains among its most active member states.
- IORA is institutionally distinct from, but complementary to, BIMSTEC (a Bay of Bengal-specific grouping) and IONS (the naval Indian Ocean Naval Symposium).
- IORA links conceptually to India's SAGAR doctrine (2015), more recently expanded into the broader MAHASAGAR framework.
- The India Foundation's track-1.5 Indian Ocean Conference (9th edition held in Mauritius, April 2026) runs alongside IORA's own official track.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: IORA is India's primary multilateral platform for shaping Indian Ocean maritime governance norms, distinct from purely bilateral or naval-only arrangements.
- Criticism: with 23 members and a consensus-based structure, IORA has at times struggled to move from declaratory statements to binding, enforceable cooperation frameworks.
- Analytical angle: the proliferation of overlapping Indian Ocean groupings (IORA, BIMSTEC, IONS, the Colombo Security Conclave) raises a genuine institutional-design question about coordination versus duplication.
- Comparative angle: IORA is often contrasted with the more security-focused Quad in the Indo-Pacific, highlighting India's dual-track approach of economic/governance cooperation (IORA) alongside strategic partnerships (Quad).

- Way forward: deeper integration of IORA's blue-economy priority with India's own MAHASAGAR framework could convert a loosely coordinated grouping into a more operationally useful platform for maritime-domain awareness and disaster response.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

"1997, Mauritius, 23+10": the year IORA was founded, where its Secretariat sits, and today's membership count (23 members, 10 dialogue partners) — a three-number anchor for a frequently tested grouping.

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC Mains 2015, GS2, touched on the Indian Ocean security construct; IORA is also a recurring Prelims distractor alongside BIMSTEC/IONS/Quad.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) was founded in 1997 with its Secretariat based in Mauritius.
2. IORA's priority areas include maritime safety and security, fisheries management and the blue economy.
3. India has never held the chairmanship of IORA.

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

Answer: a. Statement 3 is false — India held the IORA chairmanship from 2011 to 2013.

IORA

Indian Ocean Governance

SAGAR/MAHASAGAR

Blue Economy

GS2

THEIAS AKADEMIA

India's neighbourhood policy and multilateral groupings are a recurring GS2 Mains theme. **ANTIM 2027** batches cover every grouping (IORA, BIMSTEC, QUAD, SCO) with dedicated static-revision modules. theiasakademia.com.

5

Defence

2 cards: genuine fresh MoD/DRDO developments found today — no static fallback needed

GS3

Defence Production and Indigenisation — Testing Infrastructure

Chandipur Gets a Twin: DRDO's New Junput Test Range Goes Live

Why in News: A Notice to Airmen declared a missile-testing danger zone over the Bay of Bengal centred on DRDO's new test range at Junput, Purba Medinipur district, West Bengal, for the window of 6 to 9 October 2026. If conducted as scheduled, this is the first disclosed test activity from Junput since the site moved from construction to operational status, marking the functional expansion of DRDO's eastern-coast missile-testing infrastructure beyond its sole existing facility at Chandipur, Odisha.

Background: Junput was first proposed around 2024 as a satellite extension of DRDO's Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur, roughly 70–74 km away. A parliamentary reply in 2024 had confirmed that land acquisition and basic infrastructure (roads, hard-standing) were complete, though local and administrative issues slowed further progress until state-level approvals reportedly came through around September 2026, allowing construction to resume. A senior DRDO official has described Junput as an extension of the existing Chandipur range rather than an entirely new, standalone establishment — its purpose being to ease the scheduling and testing load on Chandipur as India's missile development and production programmes expand.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Location: Junput, Purba Medinipur district, West Bengal; the test danger zone extends into the Bay of Bengal.
- Distance from the existing DRDO Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur, Odisha: approximately 70–74 km.
- Linking Junput to the Chandipur–Abdul Kalam Island (Wheeler Island) testing corridor could extend the usable sea-testing distance to roughly 150 km, compared to about 74 km between Chandipur and Abdul Kalam Island alone.
- A longer engagement envelope suits testing of interceptor, surface-to-air and long-range missile systems.
- Stated purpose: to ease scheduling and capacity pressure on Chandipur as India's missile development and production activity expands.
- Project history: first proposed around 2024; land and road infrastructure completed early, but local-level delays held up further construction until state approvals came through around September 2026.
- First disclosed test window: 6 to 9 October 2026, per the governing Notice to Airmen.
- DRDO characterises Junput as a capacity-addition extension of Chandipur, not a new, independent missile-testing establishment.

🎯 MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: expands India's indigenous missile-testing infrastructure capacity at a time of rising test frequency across multiple missile and interceptor programmes.

- Criticism/implementation challenge: new test ranges near populated coastal districts require careful evacuation and safety-zone management, and any delay in local administrative clearance (as seen here) can stall strategically useful infrastructure for years.
- Analytical angle: a second, geographically linked test corridor (Chandipur-Junput-Abdul Kalam Island) materially increases the range and type of missile trajectories India can safely test, a direct enabler for longer-range and more complex interceptor trials.
- Comparative angle: most major missile powers (the US, Russia, China) operate multiple dispersed test ranges precisely to avoid single-point scheduling bottlenecks — Junput brings India's own testing architecture closer to that model.
- Way forward: formalising Junput's institutional status (as a standing extension versus purely satellite facility) and publishing a longer-term test-calendar framework would help both coastal administration and defence planners anticipate future test windows.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Picture Chandipur gaining a twin sibling 70 km away: same family (DRDO's ITR), same coastline, but together they stretch the test corridor from 74 km to nearly 150 km.

PYQ LINKAGE

Thematically linked to recurring UPSC interest in DRDO infrastructure and indigenous missile-testing capacity, paralleling past questions on Agni/BrahMos testing infrastructure.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. DRDO's new missile test range at Junput is located in Purba Medinipur district, West Bengal.
2. Junput functions as an extension of the existing Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, Odisha.
3. The Integrated Test Range at Chandipur is operated by the Indian Space Research Organisation, not the DRDO.

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

Answer: a. Statement 3 is false — the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur is a DRDO facility, not an ISRO one.

DRDO

Integrated Test Range Chandipur

Missile Testing Infrastructure

Junput

GS3

GS2

Bilateral Groupings and Agreements — Defence Diplomacy, Procurement

6 October 2026 · Source: Integrated Defence Staff HQ statement

Two Chiefs, One Stalled Submarine: India-Germany Defence Talks and Project-75(I)

Why in News: India's Chief of Defence Staff, General N. S. Raja Subramani, hosted his German counterpart, Chief of Defence General Carsten Breuer, in New Delhi on 6 October 2026, with both sides reaffirming the “enduring India-Germany defence partnership” and discussing deeper military-technological cooperation. The meeting came against the backdrop of the long-stalled Project-75(I) submarine deal, on which Germany's Ambassador to India, Jasper Wieck, said last month that documentation is finalised on Germany's side and now awaits completion of India's own internal approval process.

Background: 2026 marks 75 years of India-Germany diplomatic relations. In September 2026, Prime Minister Modi and Chancellor Merz held a phone call agreeing to deepen the bilateral Strategic Partnership across trade, defence, clean energy and advanced technologies. Project-75(I) is India's programme to build six conventional submarines domestically with foreign technology transfer, and Germany's ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) is one of the shortlisted foreign partners in contention, alongside Spain's Navantia, for the submarine design-and-technology-transfer contract — a procurement process that has already run for several years amid negotiation over technology-transfer terms and liability clauses.

KEY FACTS

- Meeting date: 6 October 2026, New Delhi, with a ceremonial guard of honour for the visiting German CDS.
- Indian side: Chief of Defence Staff General N. S. Raja Subramani; German side: Chief of Defence General Carsten Breuer.
- Stated focus: strengthening military cooperation and deepening strategic/technological engagement between the two countries.
- Project-75(I) context: paperwork reported finalised on the German side; India's internal approvals remain pending, per German Ambassador Jasper Wieck's remarks last month.
- 2026 marks the 75th anniversary of India-Germany diplomatic relations.
- A Modi-Merz phone call in September 2026 covered defence, clean energy, advanced technology and talent mobility.
- Germany's shortlisted submarine partner for Project-75(I) is ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems (TKMS), competing against Spain's Navantia.
- This meeting is one of several bilateral Chief of Defence Staff-level exchanges India has conducted this year as part of its broader defence-diplomacy push.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: Chief of Defence Staff-to-Chief of Defence engagements are a relatively new institutional layer of India's defence diplomacy, reflecting the CDS post's own growing role (created 2019) in coordinating tri-service and international defence cooperation.
- Criticism/analytical angle: the submarine deal's extended delay, despite paperwork being finalised on Germany's side, signals friction within India's own internal procurement and approval process — a recurring critique of India's defence-acquisition timelines more broadly.
- Strategic-autonomy trade-off: deepening defence-technology partnerships with Germany diversifies India's supplier base beyond traditional partners (Russia, France, the US), supporting

the broader strategic-autonomy goal of not over-relying on any single source.

- Comparative angle: Project-75(I)'s technology-transfer-based model echoes India's wider Atmanirbhar Bharat defence-manufacturing push, where foreign partnerships are explicitly conditioned on domestic capability-building, not just equipment purchase.
- Way forward: a transparent, time-bound internal approval process for major procurement decisions like Project-75(I) would reduce the risk of partner countries' goodwill or commercial patience eroding during prolonged negotiation.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

"75 Years, Two Chiefs, One Submarine Still Waiting" — the anniversary year's defence-diplomacy warmth contrasts with Project-75(I)'s procurement delay, a useful memory anchor for the gap between diplomatic optics and acquisition reality.

PYQ LINKAGE

Thematically linked to the strategic-partnership model in defence procurement (Project-75(I)) and India's expanding defence diplomacy with European partners — a recurring GS2/GS3 crossover theme.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. Project-75(I) is a programme to build submarines domestically in India with foreign technology transfer.
2. ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) of Germany is among the entities shortlisted in connection with Project-75(I).
3. The post of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) in India was created before Independence, under British colonial administration.

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

Answer: a. Statement 3 is false — the post of Chief of Defence Staff was created in India only in 2019, not during colonial rule.

Project-75(I)

India-Germany Defence Ties

Chief of Defence Staff

TKMS

GS2

THEIAS AKADEMIA

Defence diplomacy and indigenous testing infrastructure are increasingly Mains-relevant. Our **EMP (Ethics & Moral Philosophy)** programme also covers the ethics of strategic autonomy in procurement decisions. theiasakademia.com.

Ghost Particles, Real Nobel: Neutrino Astronomy Wins Physics 2026

Why in News: The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced on 6 October 2026 that the Nobel Prize in Physics 2026 goes to Francis Halzen of the University of Wisconsin-Madison for pioneering the detection of high-energy astrophysical neutrinos using the IceCube Neutrino Observatory at the South Pole, opening up the field of neutrino- and multi-messenger astronomy. It is the first Nobel recognition in several years of a discovery made through a neutrino telescope of this kind.

Background: Neutrinos are near-massless, electrically neutral particles that interact so weakly with matter that they can travel billions of light-years from violent cosmic sources, such as blazars and supernovae, without being deflected or absorbed — making them uniquely clean astronomical messengers compared to light or charged cosmic rays, which can be bent by magnetic fields en route. IceCube instruments a cubic kilometre of Antarctic ice with photo-sensors that detect the faint Cherenkov radiation produced on the rare occasions a neutrino does interact, allowing scientists to trace the particle's origin back across the universe. India has its own long-pending underground neutrino-physics project, the India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO), planned at Theni in Tamil Nadu, giving this Nobel a direct syllabus linkage to India's own big-science ambitions.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Laureate: Francis Halzen, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Prize citation: pioneering detection of high-energy astrophysical neutrinos.
- Detector: the IceCube Neutrino Observatory, located at the South Pole, Antarctica.
- Detection technique: photo-sensors embedded roughly 1.5–2.5 km deep in Antarctic ice, capturing faint Cherenkov radiation from rare neutrino interactions.
- The discovery helped establish the field of “multi-messenger astronomy,” combining neutrinos with light and gravitational-wave observations.
- Neutrinos are nicknamed “ghost particles” for their extremely weak interaction with ordinary matter.
- Announced 6 October 2026 in Stockholm by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.
- India's analogous planned project: the India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO), proposed for Theni district, Tamil Nadu.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: recognises an entirely new observational window on the universe (neutrino astronomy) alongside the now-established fields of electromagnetic and gravitational-wave astronomy.
- Conceptual value: tests basic understanding of particle physics (neutrino properties, weak interaction) alongside astrophysics (cosmic-ray sources, blazars, supernovae) — a recurring Prelims-friendly intersection.
- Comparative/India angle: India's own big-science neutrino project (INO) has faced years of delay over site-approval and environmental-clearance issues in Tamil Nadu, making this Nobel a useful hook to revisit India's big-science project pipeline (alongside LIGO-India).
- Analytical angle: multi-messenger astronomy exemplifies how combining different detection methods (light, neutrinos, gravitational waves) for the same cosmic event yields far richer scientific understanding than any single method alone.
- Way forward: renewed momentum behind India's own big-science astroparticle projects (INO, LIGO-India) could position Indian researchers to contribute directly to this now Nobel-recognised field.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

“IceCube, Ghost Particles, Multi-Messenger” — a cubic kilometre of Antarctic ice catching near-massless “ghost particles” (neutrinos) is now a Nobel-winning way to see the universe without light.

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC Prelims/Mains have previously tested basic particle-physics concepts (neutrinos, cosmic rays, the Higgs boson) and India's big-science projects (INO, LIGO-India) — a natural comparative-analytical angle for this year's Physics Nobel.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The IceCube Neutrino Observatory, central to the 2026 Nobel Prize in Physics, is located at the South Pole, Antarctica.
 2. Neutrinos carry an electric charge and are easily deflected by magnetic fields in interstellar space.
 3. The India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO) is a proposed underground facility planned for Theni district, Tamil Nadu.
- (a) 1 and 3 only (b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: a. Statement 2 is false — neutrinos are electrically neutral and pass through matter and magnetic fields largely undeflected, which is precisely what makes them useful as clean astronomical messengers.

GS3

Science and Technology — Developments in Chemistry, Pharmaceutical Regulation

7 October 2026 · Source: Nobel Foundation, Stockholm

Mirror Molecules: The 2026 Chemistry Nobel and the Science of Chirality

Why in News: The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced on 7 October 2026 that the Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2026 is shared by Henri Kagan of France and Kenso Soai of Japan for unravelling the chemistry of chirality, or “mirror molecules” — Kagan for pioneering asymmetric catalysis using chiral ligands and reagents, and Soai for discovering an autocatalytic reaction that spontaneously amplifies a tiny chiral imbalance into near-total one-handedness, now known as the Soai reaction.

Background: Chirality is the property by which certain molecules exist in two non-superimposable mirror-image forms, called enantiomers, that can have very different biological effects despite sharing an identical chemical formula — the thalidomide tragedy of the 1950s–60s, where one enantiomer was therapeutic and the other caused severe birth defects, remains the classic cautionary example taught in pharmacology and regulatory ethics. Kagan's asymmetric-catalysis techniques underpin modern single-enantiomer drug manufacturing, reducing side effects and chemical waste compared to older methods that produced a mixture of both mirror forms. Soai's autocatalytic reaction, meanwhile, bears directly on the origin-of-life question of why biological molecules such as amino acids and sugars are overwhelmingly single-handed (a property called homochirality) rather than an even mix of both forms.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Laureates: Henri B. Kagan (France) and Kenso Soai (Japan), awarded jointly.
- Field of recognition: chirality, or “mirror molecule” chemistry.
- Kagan's contribution: development of chiral catalysts and ligands enabling asymmetric synthesis of single-enantiomer compounds.
- Soai's contribution: discovery of the Soai reaction, an autocatalytic process that amplifies a minute initial chiral imbalance into near-total one-handedness.
- Direct application: single-enantiomer pharmaceutical manufacturing, which reduces side effects and improves drug safety compared to mixed-enantiomer production.
- Historical cautionary case: thalidomide, where one enantiomer was therapeutic and its mirror-image form was teratogenic (birth-defect-causing).
- The Soai reaction is cited in theories explaining biological homochirality — why life's molecules are predominantly single-handed.
- Announced 7 October 2026 by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Stockholm.

- Significance: links a fundamental chemistry concept (stereochemistry/chirality) directly to pharmaceutical safety regulation, a genuinely cross-disciplinary GS3-GS4 theme.
- Conceptual value: chirality and enantiomers are a recurring Prelims-friendly chemistry concept, often tested alongside real-world drug-safety case studies like thalidomide.
- Ethics/GS4 linkage: the thalidomide case is a textbook example in pharmaceutical-ethics discussions on informed consent, pre-market drug testing rigour, and regulatory accountability.
- Analytical angle: Soai's work on the origin of biological homochirality intersects with broader origin-of-life science, illustrating how a narrow chemistry discovery can carry much larger scientific implications.
- Way forward: India's own pharmaceutical regulatory framework (CDSCO, the New Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules, 2019) increasingly mandates single-enantiomer purity testing for new drug approvals, a direct policy echo of this year's Chemistry Nobel.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

"Same Formula, Mirror Image, Different Fate" — thalidomide's two enantiomers, one a cure and one a catastrophe, is the one-line version of why this year's Chemistry Nobel matters for drug safety.

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC has previously tested drug/pharmaceutical chemistry concepts and Nobel-linked science items; chirality ties into both GS3 (science and technology/pharma) and GS4 Ethics (drug-testing safety, informed consent via the thalidomide case).

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. Enantiomers are non-superimposable mirror-image forms of the same molecule that can have different biological effects.
2. The thalidomide tragedy is an example where one enantiomer of a drug was therapeutic while its mirror-image form caused severe birth defects.
3. The Soai reaction described in the 2026 Chemistry Nobel citation refers to a process that equalises the proportion of both mirror-image forms of a molecule.

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

Answer: a. Statement 3 is false — the Soai reaction amplifies a chiral imbalance toward near-total one-handedness, it does not equalise the two forms.

Nobel Prize Chemistry 2026

Chirality

Thalidomide

Asymmetric Catalysis

GS3

7

Economy

3 cards: RBI's Basel III reforms, the PPBL schedule exclusion, and the NBFC gold-loan surge

GS3

Indian Economy — Banking Regulation, International Financial Architecture

7 October 2026 · Source: Reserve Bank of India, Press Releases

Closing a Basel Gap: RBI Finalises the SA-CCR and CVA Capital Frameworks

Why in News: On 7 October 2026, alongside its Monetary Policy Committee statement, the Reserve Bank of India issued final Directions replacing the decades-old Current Exposure Method (CEM) for computing banks' derivative counterparty exposure with the Basel Committee-aligned Standardised Approach for Counterparty Credit Risk (SA-CCR), and simultaneously finalised a new Credit Valuation Adjustment (CVA) capital-charge framework. Both instruments had circulated as draft directions earlier in 2026 (the SA-CCR draft on 10 June 2026 and the CVA draft on 7 August 2026) before becoming binding this week.

Background: India's earlier capital-adequacy rules for derivative exposure, based on the Current Exposure Method and the 2011-era CVA rules, were built on pre-2017 Basel standards; a 2016 SA-CCR guideline had been drafted but deferred and never implemented. The Credit Valuation Adjustment charge covers potential losses a bank could suffer from deterioration in a counterparty's credit quality on a derivative trade — a risk category distinct from outright default risk itself, which is covered separately. This revamp brings India's capital rules for the derivatives market in line with the finalised global Basel III framework, the post-2008 financial-crisis regulatory architecture coordinated by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- SA-CCR (Standardised Approach for Counterparty Credit Risk) replaces the older Current Exposure Method (CEM) for computing derivative exposure.
- Applies to both banking-book and trading-book derivative exposures, with separate rules for multiple margin agreements and netting sets.
- Separate guidance is provided for banks acting as clearing members on SEBI-recognised exchanges.
- The CVA (Credit Valuation Adjustment) Directions let banks use the Basic Approach (BA-CVA), in full or reduced form, to compute the capital charge.

- Banks with insignificant non-centrally-cleared derivative volumes may set their CVA charge at 100% of their counterparty-credit-risk charge, a simplified compliance route.
- SA-CCR draft directions were first circulated on 10 June 2026; the CVA draft followed on 7 August 2026; both were finalised 7 October 2026.
- Both final Directions were issued the same day as the RBI's October Monetary Policy Committee statement, 7 October 2026.
- The reform aligns India's banking regulation with the globally finalised Basel III framework, the post-2008 crisis international regulatory standard.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: moves India's derivative-exposure capital rules from a decades-old, pre-2017 methodology to the internationally standardised Basel III-aligned framework, closing a long-pending regulatory gap.
- Conceptual value: distinguishes counterparty credit risk (the risk a derivative counterparty itself defaults) from credit valuation adjustment risk (the risk of a counterparty's credit quality merely deteriorating, without outright default) — a genuinely testable GS3 banking concept.
- Implementation challenge: banks will need updated risk-management systems and staff capacity to compute SA-CCR and CVA charges correctly, especially smaller banks with limited derivatives-desk sophistication.
- Comparative angle: aligns India with other G20 economies that have already implemented SA-CCR/CVA frameworks as part of their own post-crisis Basel III compliance, strengthening India's standing in international financial-regulatory fora.
- Way forward: a phased compliance timeline with regulatory sandboxing for smaller banks could help smooth the transition without triggering unintended capital-adequacy stress in the near term.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

“CEM Retires, SA-CCR Arrives” — remember the swap: Current Exposure Method out, Standardised Approach for Counterparty Credit Risk in, with CVA as its risk-sensitive companion rule.

PYQ LINKAGE

Thematically linked to the recurring GS3 banking-reform theme of Basel III norms and India's compliance with international financial regulatory standards.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Standardised Approach for Counterparty Credit Risk (SA-CCR) replaces the Current Exposure Method for computing banks' derivative exposure.
2. The Credit Valuation Adjustment (CVA) capital charge covers the risk of a counterparty's outright

default, not the risk of its credit quality merely deteriorating.

3. Both the SA-CCR and CVA Directions were finalised by the RBI on 7 October 2026.

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

Answer: a. Statement 2 is false — the CVA charge specifically covers losses from a counterparty's credit-quality deterioration, a risk distinct from outright default.

Basel III

SA-CCR

CVA Framework

RBI Banking Regulation

GS3

GS3

Indian Economy — Banking Regulation, Payments Banks, Financial Inclusion

7 October 2026 · Source: Reserve Bank of India, Press Release

The Final Entry: RBI Removes Paytm Payments Bank from the Second Schedule

Why in News: On 7 October 2026 the Reserve Bank of India formally excluded Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL) from the Second Schedule of the RBI Act, 1934 — the concluding administrative step that closes out its banking licence, months after the RBI had cancelled PPBL's banking licence on 24 April 2026. This marks the final chapter in a multi-year supervisory action against one of India's best-known payments banks.

Background: PPBL had been included in the Second Schedule, conferring “scheduled bank” status, in December 2021. The RBI first barred new customer onboarding in 2022, then imposed curbs on deposits, credits and wallet top-ups in 2024, before finally cancelling the licence outright on 24 April 2026 under Sections 22(3)(b), (c), (e) and (g) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 — citing harm to depositors' interests, concerns over management conduct, the absence of a public-interest case for continuance, and non-compliance with licence conditions. Payments Banks themselves are a differentiated banking category introduced in 2015 to extend financial inclusion to underserved segments, permitted to accept deposits and offer payments/remittance services but barred from lending.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Exclusion from the Second Schedule of the RBI Act, 1934 dated 7 October 2026.
- PPBL's banking licence was cancelled by the RBI on 24 April 2026, effective close of business that day.
- PPBL had been granted scheduled-bank status (inclusion in the Second Schedule) in December 2021.
- RBI's regulatory timeline: 2022 — freeze on new customer onboarding; 2024 — curbs on deposits, credits and wallet top-ups; 24 April 2026 — licence cancellation.
- Grounds for cancellation invoked: Banking Regulation Act, 1949, Section 22(3)(b), (c), (e) and (g).

- Second Schedule status under Section 42(6)(a) of the RBI Act, 1934 gives a bank access to RBI liquidity facilities and specific Cash Reserve Ratio treatment — its removal ends PPBL's scheduled-bank privileges.
- Payments Banks are a differentiated banking licence category introduced in 2015, permitted to accept deposits and provide payments/remittance services but barred from lending.
- The Bureau of Immigration/RBI's Bureau designations are unrelated; this action concerns only PPBL's scheduled-bank status under the RBI Act.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: closes the regulatory lifecycle of a major fintech-linked payments bank, illustrating the RBI's graduated supervisory-action model (restriction → curbs → licence cancellation → schedule exclusion).
- Conceptual value: tests understanding of the differentiated banking-licence architecture (payments banks, small finance banks, universal banks) introduced progressively since 2014–15 to widen financial inclusion.
- Analytical angle: the case illustrates the tension between fostering fintech-led financial inclusion and maintaining strict prudential/compliance standards for institutions holding public deposits.
- Comparative angle: Payments Banks were meant to serve migrant labourers, low-income households and small businesses; PPBL's regulatory troubles raise questions about whether the category's lighter compliance expectations were ever fully consistent with deposit-safety requirements.
- Way forward: clearer, earlier-stage RBI supervisory benchmarks for payments banks (capital adequacy, KYC compliance, related-party transaction limits) could help prevent a slow-motion regulatory unwind of this kind in future cases.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

“Scheduled In 2021, Cancelled in 2026, Closed Out in October” — PPBL's full regulatory arc in one line: in, restricted, cancelled, and now formally excluded.

PYQ LINKAGE

Thematically linked to the Payments Banks concept (introduced 2015, a differentiated banking licence) and the RBI's regulatory/supervisory powers over banks under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. Paytm Payments Bank Limited's banking licence was cancelled by the RBI on 24 April 2026.
2. Payments Banks in India are permitted to extend loans and credit cards to retail customers, similar to universal banks.
3. Inclusion in the Second Schedule of the RBI Act, 1934 confers access to certain RBI liquidity facilities on a bank.

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

Answer: a. Statement 2 is false — Payments Banks are barred from lending; they may only accept deposits and offer payments/remittance services.

Paytm Payments Bank

RBI Act 1934

Payments Banks

Banking Regulation Act 1949

GS3

GS3

Indian Economy — NBFC Regulation, Shadow Banking, Financial Inclusion

6 October 2026 · Source: Reserve Bank of India, Sectoral Deployment of Credit by NBFCs

Gold Rush: NBFC Gold Loans Surge 69% Even as RBI Tightens Norms

Why in News: RBI's latest sectoral credit data, released 6 October 2026, show NBFC retail lending growth accelerating sharply to 22.0% year-on-year in August 2026 (up from 13.6% a year earlier), driven chiefly by a 69.1% jump in gold-jewellery loans — even as the RBI has separately been tightening prudential norms for NBFC gold lending. Total NBFC credit grew 15.8% to roughly ₹60.64 lakh crore over the same period.

Background: NBFCs' rapid gold-loan expansion has drawn sustained RBI supervisory attention, with draft gold-loan and co-lending directions issued over 2025–26 amid concerns about asset-quality and collateral-valuation risk in a rising-gold-price environment. This data release is the first hard evidence of how NBFC lending behaviour is actually responding to the regulatory-tightening proposals — and the sharp gold-loan growth suggests demand has, so far, outpaced any dampening effect from tighter draft norms.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- NBFC retail credit growth: 22.0% year-on-year in August 2026, up from 13.6% a year earlier.
- Gold-jewellery loans: the fastest-growing segment, up 69.1% year-on-year to roughly ₹3.65 lakh crore.
- Housing loans grew 12.1% (versus 3.8% the previous year); vehicle loans grew 15.4%; consumer-durable loans surged 56.4%.
- Agriculture and allied-sector lending grew 17.4% (versus 5.1% previously); services-sector lending growth slowed to 16.2% (from 24%).
- Total NBFC credit: approximately ₹60.64 lakh crore, up 15.8% year-on-year.
- The data sample covers Upper- and Middle-Layer NBFCs plus Housing Finance Companies, roughly 87% of the RBI's reference credit universe.
- RBI had separately issued draft gold-loan and co-lending directions during 2025–26 amid asset-quality and valuation-risk concerns.
- Data release date: 6 October 2026, titled “Sectoral Deployment of Credit by NBFCs — August 2026.”

🎯 MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: offers the first concrete evidence of how NBFC lending patterns are actually behaving in response to the RBI's own regulatory-tightening proposals on gold loans.
- Conceptual value: tests understanding of NBFC/shadow-banking regulation and the structural reasons gold loans remain a popular, quick-disbursal credit product in India's informal and semi-formal economy.
- Analytical angle: a sharp rise in gold-loan volumes alongside regulatory tightening signals strong underlying demand for quick, collateral-based liquidity, especially relevant when formal unsecured credit is harder to access.
- Comparative angle: NBFCs' faster retail-credit growth versus banks in several of these segments reflects their continued role in reaching underserved borrowers that traditional banks are more cautious about serving.
- Way forward: calibrated, rather than blanket, gold-loan tightening — focused on valuation and collateral-management practices rather than loan volumes per se — could preserve financial-inclusion benefits while addressing genuine asset-quality risk.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

"69% Up, Even as the Regulator Tightens" — remember gold loans as the segment that grew fastest precisely while facing the most regulatory scrutiny, a useful demand-versus-regulation contrast.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

Thematically linked to NBFC regulation and shadow banking (a recurring GS3 theme) and the gold-monetisation/financial-inclusion angle.

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. NBFC gold-jewellery loans recorded the fastest year-on-year growth among retail-lending segments in the RBI's August 2026 sectoral data.
2. NBFCs are regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), not the Reserve Bank of India.
3. The RBI had issued draft directions on gold-loan prudential norms for NBFCs prior to this data release.

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

Answer: a. Statement 2 is false — NBFCs are regulated by the Reserve Bank of India, not SEBI.

NBFC Regulation

Gold Loans

Shadow Banking

Financial Inclusion

GS3

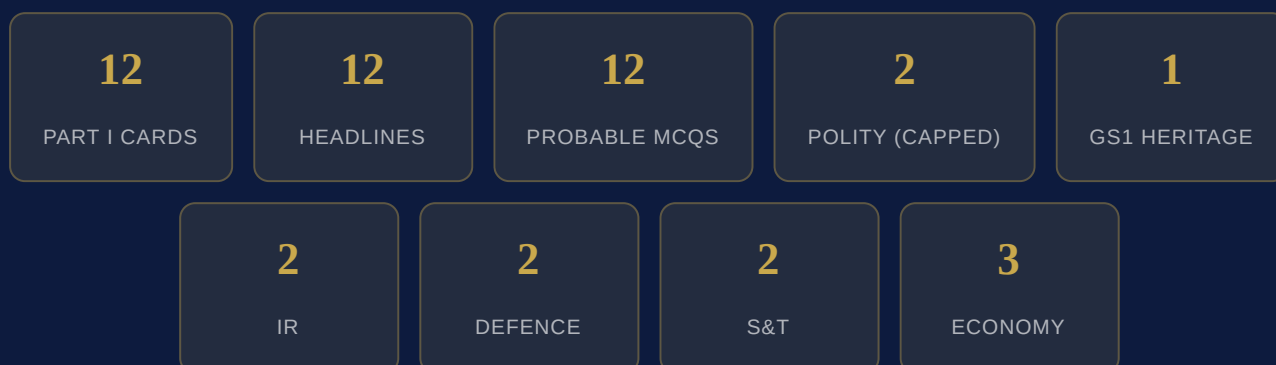
This edition continues in **ANTIM ASSURED PartII_Morning_9Oct2026** — Environment, Places in News, Ethics, MCQs, Mains, Value Addition and the Direct Hit Tracker.

PROOF OF PRECISION — PART I

VERIFIED · PART I

Proof of Precision

Every item mapped. Every claim verified. Operational count for today's edition — not a marketing figure.



- ✓ All 8 Part B sources swept: PIB (multi-ministry), AIR/NewsOnAir, Sansad TV, Hindu/IE (via verification workaround), Down To Earth, ISRO/DST, multilateral bodies, internal cross-check.
- ✓ Every card named against the Substance Test: at least two of Institutional / Conceptual / Data-bearing / Analytical / Syllabus-anchored.
- ✓ Zero disguised 'who-won-which-seat' items; zero bare appointments, awards or anniversaries used as standalone cards.
- ✓ Rule 16.1 compliance: Polity held well under the 3-card cap (1 genuinely fresh, non-blacklisted candidate found); freed capacity absorbed into GS1 heritage.
- ✓ 7-day and 30-day anti-repetition blacklists cross-checked against ANTIM_TopicLog.txt before every topic was finalised.

★ THEIAS AKADEMIA — PROOF OF PRECISION

UPSC CSE Prelims 2026 Results

In what critics called the most unpredictable Prelims paper in a decade —

48

QUESTIONS FROM
ANTIM ASSURED 100+

7

QUESTIONS FROM
A SINGLE DOCUMENT

6

QUESTIONS FROM
A SINGLE CLASS

Our students had seen 48 questions before the paper was opened.

This is not luck. This is TheIAS Akademia.

JOIN ANTIM ASSURED 100+ →

ANTIM ASSURED 100+ is a TheIAS Akademia daily flagship.

Programs: EMP · ANTIM 2027 · Sahyog Mentorship · LAKSHYAM AIR1 · NEEB 300+ · Philosophy Target
300+

theiasakademia.com

ANTIM ASSURED 100+ · Part I · Friday, 09 October 2026

© TheIAS Akademia · theiasakademia.com · theiasakademia@gmail.com · "The Topper's Last Read. Every Morning."