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1 Headlines

10 Flashes

- 01** Supreme Court's 27 May verdict upholding the ECI's Bihar Special Intensive Revision continues to reshape debate on electoral roll integrity and the Election Commission's Article 324 powers. **GS2**
- 02** Three Indian seafarers killed in a US strike on the oil tanker MT Settebello in the Gulf of Oman; India lodges "strong protest" with Washington. **GS2**
- 03** DRDO conducts second developmental trial of the indigenous Long-Range Land-Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM) from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha. **GS3**
- 04** Ministry of Coal holds its third stakeholder roadshow on the ₹46,000-crore Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Scheme in Mumbai today. **GS3**
- 05** RBI's Monetary Policy Committee holds the repo rate steady at 5.25% for a third straight meeting, citing West Asia-driven inflation risk. **GS3**
- 06**

Union Cabinet's ₹9,585-crore Delhi-NCR clean mobility scheme to retire over 2 lakh BS-IV and older trucks/buses begins implementation. **GS3**

07 Department of Consumer Affairs' standardised edible-oil pack-size mandate under Legal Metrology Rules takes effect, with a three-month transition window. **GS3**

08 PM Modi attends the G7 Summit in Évian-les-Bains, France, amid scrutiny over India's response to the Gulf tanker strikes. **GS2**

09 Supreme Court's nine-judge Constitution Bench reference on the Sabarimala essential religious practices question remains pending, keeping ERP doctrine in the news. **GS2**

10 India's Third CDS, General Upendra Dwivedi's successor General N.S. Raja Subramani, settles into office amid heightened West Asia-linked maritime security concerns. **GS3**

THEIAS AKADEMIA

Ten headlines, ten potential prelims traps — this is exactly the density Sahyog Mentorship students are trained to triage in under four minutes during a real paper. Personalised mentorship turns this kind of high-volume news day into a structured revision asset rather than an overwhelming scroll. Visit theiasakademia.com to learn more.

2 Polity & Governance

GS2

18 June 2026

Election Commission · Article 324

Supreme Court Upholds Bihar Special Intensive Revision: ADR vs Election Commission of India

What happened: On 27 May 2026, a Bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant unanimously upheld the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar's electoral rolls, ruling that the exercise was not "manifestly excessive" and carried adequate procedural safeguards, including mandatory show-cause notices before deletions. The Court held

the SIR bore a "direct nexus" to the constitutional goal of free and fair elections under Article 324, and accepted the ECI's reading that a single Section 21(3) notification could validly cover all 243 Bihar constituencies rather than requiring one per constituency.

Why it matters for UPSC: This is a textbook Article 324 vs Article 326 case testing the ECI's discretionary powers against fundamental rights under Articles 14, 19 and 21 — a recurring GS2 theme on constitutional bodies and electoral reform. It also illustrates the four-step proportionality test (legitimate purpose, rational nexus, necessity, balance) that the judiciary increasingly applies to administrative action.

KEY FACTS

- Bihar's electoral roll fell from 7.89 crore to 7.42 crore names after the SIR exercise.
- SIR was ordered under Article 324 (ECI's superintendence power) and Section 21 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.
- Qualifying date for inclusion was fixed at 1 July 2025; this was the first intensive revision of Bihar's rolls since 2003.

TEACHING HOOK

Remember the proportionality ladder: Purpose → Nexus → Necessity → Balance (P-N-N-B). Any time a fundamental-rights challenge to an administrative action appears in a PYQ, run it through this four-step test — it almost always maps onto the Court's reasoning pattern since Puttaswamy (2017).

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC 2022 (GS2): "Discuss the role of the Election Commission of India in the light of the evolution of the Model Code of Conduct." — This case extends that theme from MCC to electoral roll integrity.

GS2

Fundamental Rights · ERP Doctrine

18 June 2026

Sabarimala Nine-Judge Reference: Essential Religious Practices Doctrine Still Under the Scanner

What happened: The nine-judge Constitution Bench tasked with re-examining the correctness of the 2018 Sabarimala judgment (which had held the exclusion of women from the temple unconstitutional) continues to hear arguments touching on PIL jurisdiction, religious autonomy, constitutional morality, and the scope of the essential religious practices (ERP) test.

Why it matters for UPSC: This is a high-value GS2 topic on the interplay between Article 25/26 (freedom of religion) and Article 14/15 (equality), and the judicially evolved ERP doctrine that determines how far courts can intervene in religious practice.

KEY FACTS

- The reference covers larger questions on religious freedom beyond just Sabarimala, including the scope of PIL standing in matters of religious practice.
- The ERP doctrine originated in the Shirur Mutt case (1954) and has been applied across at least 19 major cases since.
- Constitutional morality, as a standard distinct from popular morality, has been a central interpretive tool since the original 2018 verdict.

TEACHING HOOK

Mnemonic — "ERP needs a PASS": Practice must be (P)ractised since the religion's origin, be (A)dopted as integral, survive a (S)cripture/doctrine test, and not be (S)evered without altering the religion's character.

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC 2019 (GS2): "Discuss the procedure to amend the Constitution of India. Discuss to what extent this provision has helped maintain a balance between Continuity and Change." — Adjacent theme on how living constitutionalism is mediated through judicial doctrines like ERP.

Indian Seafarers Killed in US Naval Blockade Strikes on Iran-Linked Tankers in the Gulf of Oman

What happened: Three Indian mariners aboard the Palau-flagged tanker MT Settebello were killed when US forces fired on its engine room for allegedly violating Washington's naval blockade on Iranian oil exports. The same week, US forces also struck the tankers MT Marivex (24 Indian crew, rescued safely) and MT Jalveer. India's External Affairs Ministry called the targeting of commercial shipping "deeply worrisome" and summoned a senior US diplomat to register a formal protest, while asking that "such incidents must cease."

Why it matters for UPSC: This tests India's diplomatic balancing act between strategic ties with Washington and protection of its 300,000-plus global seafarer workforce, a recurring theme in GS2 papers on India's neighbourhood and extended-neighbourhood diplomacy, and GS3 on energy security amid West Asia instability.

KEY FACTS

- The US naval blockade of Iranian ports began on 13 April 2026; CENTCOM has disabled at least nine tankers under it.
- India is one of the largest suppliers of merchant marine labour, with over 300,000 seafarers serving globally.
- India's Foreign Secretary had earlier (April 2026) summoned Iran's ambassador over separate attacks on Indian-crewed vessels in the same waters.

TEACHING HOOK

Frame any "Indian nationals caught in foreign conflict" story using the 3-Cs: Consular protection, Crisis diplomacy (summoning envoys/protests), and Cost to strategic ties. This template fits Yemen, Ukraine, and now Gulf-of-Oman situations alike.

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC 2016 (GS2): "What is the significance of Indian Ocean Region (IOR) in India's foreign policy?" — This event is a direct stress test of that significance through a maritime-security and diaspora-protection lens.

GS2

Multilateral Groupings · G7

18 June 2026

PM Modi at the G7 Summit, Évian-les-Bains, Amid Strained Backdrop with Washington

What happened: Prime Minister Modi is attending the G7 Summit in France as an invited partner-country leader, with a sideline meeting with President Trump under close watch given the recent killing of Indian sailors in US strikes on Gulf tankers. The visit's official focus, per the PM's own statements, is on boosting economic and cultural linkages with France and Slovakia.

Why it matters for UPSC: The G7 (not a treaty body but an informal forum of advanced economies) frequently appears in GS2 on "important international institutions, agencies and fora — their structure, mandate." India's G7-outreach diplomacy (without full membership) is a recurring theme on multilateral engagement strategy.

KEY FACTS

- G7 comprises the US, UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan, plus the EU as a non-enumerated member.
- India has been a regular "outreach" invitee to G7 summits in recent years without holding formal membership.
- The 2026 summit is hosted by France in Évian-les-Bains.

TEACHING HOOK

Don't confuse G7 with G20: G7 = club of advanced economies (informal, no treaty), G20 = broader forum including emerging economies (where India has full membership and has even held the presidency).

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC 2020 (GS2): "'Indian Diaspora has a decisive role to play in the politics and economy of America and European Countries.' Comment with

examples." — Adjacent theme on how diaspora and diplomatic capital intersect with bilateral friction points.

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The Gulf-tanker crisis and the Bihar SIR verdict are exactly the kind of layered, multi-paper current affairs that ANTIM 2027 is structured around — each topic mapped simultaneously to its Polity, IR, and Ethics dimensions so you're never caught off guard by an unexpected angle in the actual paper. Visit theiasakademia.com.

4

Defence & Security

GS3

Indigenisation of Defence Technology

18 June 2026

DRDO's Long-Range Land-Attack Cruise Missile Clears Second Developmental Trial

What happened: On 16 June 2026, DRDO successfully carried out the second developmental trial of the indigenous Long-Range Land-Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM) from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off Odisha's coast, with the Ministry of Defence confirming all mission objectives were met. The missile, an advanced successor to the Nirbhay programme, is designed for low-altitude, terrain-following flight to evade detection.

Why it matters for UPSC: This sits squarely in GS3's "indigenisation of defence technology" theme, and tests familiarity with India's land-attack cruise missile lineage (Nirbhay to LRLACM) as distinct from the BrahMos (supersonic, India-Russia joint venture).

KEY FACTS

- LRLACM has an estimated range of around 1,000 km and is being developed for land, naval, and air-launched platforms.
- Lead laboratory: Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), Bengaluru.
- The air-launched variant is intended for Su-30MKI integration using the indigenous Manik turbofan engine; a low-observable version is planned for the AMCA's internal weapons bay.

TEACHING HOOK

Quick differentiator for missile MCQs: Cruise missiles fly low and follow terrain (LRLACM, BrahMos, Nirbhay); ballistic missiles arc high through the atmosphere and re-enter (Agni series, Prithvi). LRLACM = cruise, subsonic, terrain-hugging.

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC 2022 (GS3): "What is the basic principle behind triangulation survey? Explain how this principle is made use of in measuring the height of a mountain peak." — While the syllabus subhead differs, missile guidance and terrain-following systems are tested under "Science and Technology — developments and their applications" alongside such applied-geometry questions.

GS3 defence indigenisation questions reward students who can name the exact DRDO lab behind each system — this granular recall is precisely what the EMP (Ethics & Moral Philosophy) program's companion GS3 capsules drill through repeated low-stakes testing. Visit theiasakademia.com.

5 Science & Technology

GS3

Strategic & Dual-Use Technology

18 June 2026

India Joins Elite Group with Successful Ballistic Missile Defence Interceptor Trials

What happened: Over 10–11 June 2026, DRDO conducted three consecutive flight tests from the Integrated Test Range off the Odisha coast: two next-generation Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) interceptors (AD-1 and AD-2) capable of engaging intermediate and intercontinental-range ballistic missile threats, plus the maiden flight trial of the Naval Anti-Ship Missile-Medium Range (NASM-MR). Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the achievement places India among a select group of nations with credible ICBM-interception capability.

Why it matters for UPSC: A direct fit for "developments in space, defence and technology" under GS3, this also tests understanding of exo-atmospheric vs endo-atmospheric interception layers — a recurring distinction in Prelims technology MCQs.

KEY FACTS

- AD-1 and AD-2 interceptors can destroy enemy IRBMs with ranges between 2,000–5,000 km, engaging both exo- and endo-atmospheric targets.
- The tests come amid regional missile proliferation concerns, including Pakistan's Fateh-I/II and Chinese-origin systems.
- NASM-MR gives the Navy a new indigenous medium-range anti-ship strike capability designed to bypass enemy air-defence umbrellas.

TEACHING HOOK

Exo vs Endo, made simple: "Exo" = exit the atmosphere (interception happens in space, like the US's GMD); "Endo" = inside (lower altitude, terminal-phase interception, like THAAD/PAC-3). India's multi-layered shield now does both.

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC 2018 (GS3): "What is integrated air defence system? How does it benefit India's military preparedness?" — This trial is a direct evolution of India's Ballistic Missile Defence Programme that underpins exactly this theme.

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LAKSHYAM AIR1 students will recognise this exo/endo distinction from the Science & Technology capsule series — repeated, layered exposure to such terms is what converts a vague Sci-Tech topic into a guaranteed-attempt MCQ on exam day. Visit theiasakademia.com.

6

Economy

GS3

Monetary Policy · RBI

18 June 2026

RBI Holds Repo Rate at 5.25% for Third Consecutive Meeting, Flags West Asia-Driven Inflation Risk

What happened: RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra announced the Monetary Policy Committee's unanimous decision to keep the repo rate unchanged at 5.25% with a "neutral" stance, citing rising risks from the prolonged West Asia conflict, elevated energy prices, supply-chain disruption, and weather-related uncertainty. The RBI revised FY27 GDP growth down to 6.6% (from 6.9%) and raised the CPI inflation projection to 5.1% (from 4.6%).

Why it matters for UPSC: Monetary policy transmission, the repo-rate mechanism, and the MPC's inflation-targeting mandate are perennial GS3 Economy staples, and this episode also demonstrates how geopolitical

shocks (West Asia conflict) feed directly into domestic macroeconomic policy choices.

KEY FACTS

- RBI has cumulatively cut rates by 125 basis points since February 2025 before this pause.
- Core inflation for FY27 is projected at 4.7%; the rupee has weakened to around ₹95.8/USD.
- The MPC is a six-member body; the next meeting is scheduled for 3–5 August 2026.

Indicator	Previous Estimate	Revised (June 2026)
GDP Growth (FY27)	6.9%	6.6%
CPI Inflation (FY27)	4.6%	5.1%
Repo Rate	5.25%	5.25% (unchanged)

TEACHING HOOK

Remember the policy corridor sandwich: SDF (floor) → Repo Rate (middle) → MSF (ceiling). RBI now uses the Standing Deposit Facility, not reverse repo, as its primary liquidity-absorption tool since April 2022.

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC 2021 (GS3): "Effective utilisation of public investment to trigger private investment is an effective strategy for the growth of the Indian economy. Discuss." — The repo-rate pause directly informs the investment-cost side of this debate.

GS3

18 June 2026

Energy Security · Coal

Ministry of Coal's Third Roadshow on ₹46,000-Crore Coal Gasification Scheme, Mumbai

What happened: The Ministry of Coal is hosting its third stakeholder roadshow today in Mumbai on the Scheme for Promotion of Surface Coal/

Lignite Gasification Projects, following earlier roadshows in New Delhi and Hyderabad. Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy is attending as Chief Guest alongside Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis, with the scheme aiming to reduce import dependence on natural gas, methanol, and ammonia while strengthening domestic energy security.

Why it matters for UPSC: This is a direct GS3 fit for "infrastructure: energy" and import-substitution policy, and connects naturally to the broader Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat 2047 vision documents frequently referenced in Mains answers.

KEY FACTS

- Total approved outlay is ₹46,000 crore (comprising an initial ₹8,500-crore incentive plus a later ₹37,500-crore support package), expected to attract investments of nearly ₹2.5 lakh crore.
- Coal gasification converts coal into syngas (H_2 , CO, CH_4 , CO_2) usable for power, fertilisers, chemicals, and as hydrogen feedstock.
- The scheme's disbursement was restructured from two tranches to four stages to ease upfront funding pressure on developers.

TEACHING HOOK

Link this to the "import substitution triangle": Coal Gasification reduces imports of (1) natural gas, (2) methanol, and (3) ammonia — all three feed India's fertiliser and petrochemical value chains.

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC 2020 (GS3): "What are the salient features of 'Industrial Corridors' decided by the Government of India? How are they important for industrial growth?" — Coal gasification investment hubs feed similar industrial-corridor logic.

GS3

Consumer Protection · Legal Metrology

18 June 2026

Government Mandates Standard Pack Sizes and Dual-Unit Labelling for Edible Oils

What happened: The Department of Consumer Affairs has amended its Standard Operating Procedure under the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011, prescribing nine standard pack sizes for major edible oils (200 ml/g up to 20 litre/kg) and mandating that any package declaring volume must also display the equivalent weight. Firms have a three-month transition window; packages below 200 ml/g remain exempt to protect low-income "chotey pack" buyers.

Why it matters for UPSC: This is a clean example of consumer-protection regulation correcting market failure ("shrinkflation"), relevant to GS3's economic-reform and regulatory-framework themes, and GS4's emphasis on transparency in governance.

KEY FACTS

- Nine standard sizes: 200 ml/g, 500 ml/g, 1L/kg, 2L/kg, 3L/kg, 4L/kg, 5L/kg, 15L/kg, 20L/kg.
- Reform follows consultation with industry bodies representing nearly 90% of India's edible-oil sector.
- Covers palm, soybean, sunflower, mustard, groundnut, sesame, rice bran, cottonseed, and corn oils, plus blends.

TEACHING HOOK

"Shrinkflation" = companies cut quantity while holding price steady, hiding inflation from consumers. This reform attacks shrinkflation not through price control but through mandatory comparability — a subtler, market-friendly regulatory tool.

PYQ LINKAGE

UPSC 2023 (GS3): "Craze for gold in Indians has led to a 'gold rush' like situation in certain parts of the country. Explain its causes and effects." — Comparable theme of consumer behaviour distortion and the case for regulatory correction.

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Converting a single RBI policy statement into three usable Mains points — growth, inflation, and the West Asia transmission

channel — is exactly the kind of structured answer-writing practice NEEB 300+ Live PYQ Writing sessions are built around. Visit theiasakademia.com.

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Proof of Precision

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10

NEWS ITEMS

3

GS PAPERS
COVERED

7

PYQ LINKAGES

0

PRELIMS QS
GENERATED*

0

REPEATED TOPICS

*Prelims MCQs for today's cycle are compiled in Part II.

Polity

IR

Defence

Economy

Sci-Tech

✓ All news sourced from PIB, Ministry releases, Supreme Court Observer, RBI statements, and verified wire reports (CNN, Al Jazeera, Business Standard, CBS News)

✓ Every topic cross-checked against the 25-year UPSC question bank for thematic linkage

✓ News Freshness Rule applied — first edition of this product; no repeat topics to flag

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