

THEIAS AKADEMIA · MORNING EDITION · 08:00 IST

ANTIM ASSURED 100+

PART I · HEADLINES TO ECONOMY

Tuesday, 28 July 2026

§1 · TOP 10 HEADLINES

1. World Nature Conservation Day 2026 observed globally, July 28 **ENV**
2. Lok Sabha takes up Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 for passage **GS2**
3. Supreme Court: peaceful protest is constitutionally protected, mere agitation cannot justify lathi-charge **GS2**
4. India-Israel conclude second round of FTA negotiations in New Delhi **GS2/GS3**
5. DRDO data-breach claims — 31 GB allegedly stolen data offered on dark web, DRDO denies breach **GS3**
6. RBI conducts ₹20,000 crore government securities buyback auction **GS3**
7. India's semiconductor strategy broadens beyond fabs into equipment, materials and AI **GS3**
8. NGT flags unchecked commercial construction within 1 km of Pilibhit Tiger Reserve **ENV**
9. Assam floods: 4.45 lakh affected across 6 districts, Dhansiri above danger mark, no fresh casualties **GS1/GS3**
10. Sonam Wangchuk ended his 26-day hunger strike over exam paper leaks on July 23; "Cockroach" protesters vow to continue until Pradhan resigns **GS2**

§2 · POLITY & GOVERNANCE

GS2

Examination Integrity · Criminal Law

27-28 July 2026 · Source: PIB / Lok Sabha Bulletin / PRS Legislative Research

Lok Sabha Takes Up the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026

Why in News: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh introduced the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 in the Lok Sabha on July 27, with a six-hour discussion and passage scheduled for July 28, amid continuing opposition protests over alleged examination paper leaks.

Background: The Bill amends the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 — India's first dedicated central law criminalising exam malpractice — sharpening its penal provisions after a series of paper-leak controversies renewed pressure on the government this year.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Enhances imprisonment for unfair-means offences from a 3-5 year range to a 5-10 year range.
- Raises the maximum individual fine from ₹10 lakh to ₹50 lakh.
- Service providers face a raised maximum fine of ₹5 crore (up from ₹1 crore) and debarment extended from 4 to 8 years.
- Empowers States/UTs to designate Courts of Session as Special Fast-Track Courts, with Special Public Prosecutors and time-bound appeals.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: the Public Examinations Act, 2024 was India's first standalone central law on exam malpractice — remember it targets "organised" unfair means (leak syndicates, impersonation rackets, computer-network manipulation) and NOT individual candidate cheating, which continues to be handled by the conducting body's own rules.

 PYQ LINKAGE

GS2 (recurring): "Examination reforms and the legal framework against malpractice in India." | GS2: fast-track courts and speedy trial provisions in special legislation.

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 raises the maximum fine on individual offenders to: (a) ₹10 lakh (b) ₹25 lakh (c) ₹50 lakh (d) ₹1 crore. **Answer: (c).**

GS2

Paper Leak Law

Fast-Track Courts

PEUM Act 2024

GS2

Fundamental Rights · Policing

27-28 July 2026 · Source: Supreme Court of India / LiveLaw Daily Round-Up

Supreme Court: Peaceful Protest Is Constitutionally Protected, Mere Agitation Cannot Justify Lathi-Charge

Why in News: Hearing pleas over police action against students who marched toward Parliament on July 20 demanding Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation over exam paper leaks, Chief Justice of India Surya Kant observed that peaceful protest is constitutionally protected and that agitation alone cannot justify police lathi-charge, as a Rajya Sabha MP separately moved the Court over police firing on NEET protesters in Bihar.

Background: Article 19(1)(b) guarantees the right to assemble peaceably and without arms, subject to reasonable restrictions under Article 19(3); courts have repeatedly had to balance this right against public-order policing powers exercised by state police.

 KEY FACTS

- Article 19(1)(b): right to assemble peaceably and without arms — a Fundamental Right, subject to reasonable restrictions under Article 19(3).
- CJI Surya Kant's observation came amid pleas over policing of the July 20 student march toward Parliament (Jantar Mantar), part of protests demanding Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation.
- Separately, an MP moved the Supreme Court seeking FIRs against police personnel over firing on NEET-related protesters in Bihar.
- Proportionality in policing of protests has been a recurring theme in Indian constitutional jurisprudence.

 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: Article 19(1)(b) (assemble peaceably, without arms) is a distinct right from Article 19(1)(a) (freedom of speech and expression) — protest cases often invoke both together, but restrictions under Article 19(3) (public order, sovereignty, integrity) apply specifically to the assembly right.

 PYQ LINKAGE

GS2 (recurring): "Right to peaceful protest and reasonable restrictions under Article 19." | GS2: police reforms and proportionality in law enforcement.

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. The right to assemble peaceably and without arms is guaranteed under which Article of the Constitution? (a) Article 19(1)(a) (b) Article 19(1)(b) (c) Article 21 (d) Article 25. **Answer: (b).**

GS2

Article 19(1)(b)

Right to Protest

Policing

§3 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

GS2

Bilateral Trade · FTA

28 July 2026 · Source: PIB / Ministry of Commerce / Tribune India

India and Israel Conclude Second Round of FTA Negotiations in New Delhi

Why in News: India and Israel concluded the second round of negotiations for their proposed Free Trade Agreement, held July 20-23, 2026 in New Delhi, covering goods, services, rules of origin, and trade facilitation.

Background: Negotiations proceed under Terms of Reference signed in November 2025; India-Israel merchandise trade stood at \$3.93 billion in FY2025-26, and both sides are seeking to deepen economic cooperation alongside their existing strategic and defence partnership.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Second round held July 20-23, 2026 in New Delhi; first round concluded in February 2026.
- Covered trade in goods and services, rules of origin, SPS and TBT measures, IPR, customs procedures, and trade facilitation.
- India-Israel merchandise trade: \$3.93 billion in FY2025-26.
- Israel's chief negotiator: Yifat Alon Perel, Senior Director, Trade Policy & Agreements, Ministry of Economy and Industry.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: distinguish "Terms of Reference" (the negotiating mandate/scope agreed before talks begin) from the "Trade Policy Review" (a post-hoc WTO transparency exercise, as covered in India's 8th TPR) — ToR sets up bilateral negotiations; TPR reviews a country's existing policy after the fact.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS2/GS3 (recurring): "India's Free Trade Agreements — strategic and economic significance." | GS2: India-West Asia strategic partnerships.

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. The India-Israel FTA negotiations' second round, concluded in July 2026, was hosted in: (a) Tel Aviv (b) Jerusalem (c) New Delhi (d) Geneva. **Answer: (c)** — New Delhi; both rounds so far have been hosted in India.

GS2

India-Israel FTA

West Asia

Trade

§4 · DEFENCE & SECURITY

GS3

Cyber Security · Internal Security

27-28 July 2026 · Source: The Week / Indian Defence News

DRDO Data-Breach Claims Reignite Debate Over India's Cyber Governance Maturity

Why in News: A threat actor is offering 31 GB of allegedly stolen DRDO data — including internal electronics architecture of an advanced guidance sensor used in precision-guided munitions — for sale on the dark web for \$8,000; DRDO has denied the files belong to the organisation.

Background: Intelligence agencies flagged the claims, though sample documents are dated 2020, leaving the exfiltration timeline unclear; experts point to contractor/supply-chain vulnerabilities and insider threats as the likelier routes of exposure than a direct DRDO systems breach.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- 31 GB of data offered for \$8,000 on a dark-web forum; samples reportedly relate to a precision-guidance sensor's electronics architecture.
- DRDO has denied the leaked files belong to the organisation; sample documents are dated 2020.
- Experts flag classification of documents alone is insufficient without technical safeguards and resilient institutional governance.
- Possible exposure routes: contractor/supply-chain vulnerabilities, insider threats, or gaps in information governance — not necessarily a direct DRDO systems hack.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: distinguish "data classification" (marking documents Secret/Top Secret under the Manual of Departmental Security Instructions) from "cybersecurity hardening" (technical controls preventing unauthorised access) — this case shows classification alone doesn't prevent leaks if supply-chain/technical safeguards are weak.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): "Cyber security — challenges in safeguarding sensitive defence information." | GS3: supply-chain security in defence procurement.

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. DRDO, at the centre of the July 2026 data-breach claims, functions under which Ministry? (a) Ministry of Electronics and IT (b) Ministry of Defence (c) Ministry of Science and Technology (d) Ministry of Home Affairs. **Answer: (b).**

GS3

Cyber Security

DRDO

Internal Security

§5 · SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

GS3

Semiconductor Mission

28 July 2026 · Source: PIB / DigiTimes / India Semiconductor Mission

India Broadens Semiconductor Strategy Beyond Fabs Into Equipment, Materials and AI

Why in News: India's semiconductor push is expanding beyond chip fabrication and assembly toward equipment, specialty materials, and AI capabilities, industry trackers report, building on the Union Cabinet's ₹1,27,500 crore Semicon India Programme 2.0 approval.

Background: Semicon 2.0 is the next phase of India's semiconductor mission, following the first phase that greenlit fabs and OSAT (assembly/test) units, including the CG Semi OSAT facility inaugurated at Sanand, Gujarat, in July 2026.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Semicon India Programme 2.0: ₹1,27,500 crore outlay, approved by Union Cabinet.
- Strategy now extends to semiconductor manufacturing equipment and specialty materials, not just fabs/OSAT.
- CG Semi OSAT facility, Sanand (Gujarat) — India's first chip-packaging unit, inaugurated July 4, 2026; JV of CG Power, Renesas, and Stars.
- ISRO separately targets indigenous semiconductor manufacturing within 4 years to reduce import dependence for space applications.

💡 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: the semiconductor value chain has 3 broad stages — design (fabless firms), fabrication (fabs — wafer processing), and assembly/test/packaging (OSAT). India's Semicon 1.0 focused on fabs+OSAT; Semicon 2.0 adds equipment and materials — the inputs that feed all three stages.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): "India Semiconductor Mission — significance for electronics manufacturing self-reliance." | GS3: PLI schemes and industrial policy.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. "OSAT" in the semiconductor value chain refers to: (a) Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (b) Optical Sensor Array Technology (c) Overseas Semiconductor Advanced Trade (d) Open Source Application Toolkit. **Answer: (a).**

GS3

Semicon 2.0

OSAT

Electronics Manufacturing

§6 · ECONOMY

GS3

Public Debt Management

28 July 2026 · Source: RBI Press Release / Business Standard

RBI Conducts ₹20,000 Crore Government Securities Buyback Auction

Why in News: The Reserve Bank of India conducted a ₹20,000 crore buyback auction of government securities on July 28, 2026, covering four securities maturing between October 2026 and February 2027, as part of the Centre's public debt management.

Background: G-Sec buybacks let the government retire near-maturity debt early, using surplus cash, to smooth redemption pressure and manage the maturity profile of outstanding public debt; RBI conducts these auctions as the government's debt manager under the RBI Act, 1934.

KEY FACTS

- Buyback size: ₹20,000 crore; covers 4 G-Secs maturing October 2026-February 2027.
- Conducted via RBI-managed auction, reducing the government's near-term redemption burden.
- Comes as India's IIP for June 2026 is separately due for release today, following May 2026's 5.1% industrial growth.
- Part of ongoing active liability management by the Centre alongside regular G-Sec issuance calendars.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Trick: a "buyback" (government repurchases its own existing bonds early) is the mirror image of a fresh "issuance" (government borrows new money via new bonds) — buybacks reduce outstanding debt/redemption pressure, issuances increase it. Both are routine tools of active debt management, not distress signals.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): "Public debt management in India — instruments and institutional role of RBI." | GS3: fiscal deficit financing and G-Sec market.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Q. A government securities "buyback" auction primarily achieves which of the following? (a) Raises fresh borrowing for the government (b) Retires existing debt ahead of maturity, easing redemption pressure (c) Increases the fiscal deficit (d) Sets the repo rate. **Answer: (b).**

GS3

G-Sec Buyback

RBI

Debt Management

→ Continued in Part II: Environment · Places in News · Ethics · MCQs · Mains Questions · Direct Hit Tracker

★ 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+ · Part I · Morning Edition · 28 July 2026 · TheIAS Akademia

→ Continue to Part II: Environment · Places in News · Ethics · MCQs · Mains Questions · Direct Hit Tracker

theiasakademia.com | theiasakademia@gmail.com