

PART I · HEADLINES TO ECONOMY

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INSIDE PART I

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Top 12 Headlines

1. UPI turns 10 — from 1.78 crore transactions (FY17) to over 24,162 crore (FY26), now the world's largest real-time payment system. **GS3**
2. Centre constitutes a high-level committee under ex-Deputy NSA Pankaj Kumar Singh to draft a "permanent political solution" for Gorkhaland. **GS2**
3. 27 children fall ill after a mid-day meal at a government school in Kota, Rajasthan; state orders a probe. **GS2**
4. MoS Commerce Jitin Prasada co-chairs the 7th India-Morocco Joint Commission in Rabat, seeking a wider trade basket. **GS2**
5. IAF wraps twin Indo-Pacific deployments — Exercise Pitch Black (Australia) and Exercise Udara Shakti (Malaysia) — flying Rafales abroad for the first time in a large multilateral drill. **GS3**
6. INS 'Mangrol', the third indigenous Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft, delivered to the Navy by Cochin Shipyard. **GS3**
7. NITI Aayog flags funding crunch and a shortage of young talent as the biggest hurdles to India's R&D ecosystem. **GS3**
8. MeitY formally notifies the ₹62,500-crore Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS) for FY27-FY31. **GS3**
9. India's crude steel output rises 2.6% to 56.3 MT in Apr-Jul FY27; DGFT frees wheat, durum wheat and wheat-flour exports. **GS3**
10. ICAR-NBAGR registers 16 new indigenous livestock and dog breeds, taking India's documented tally to 262. **GS3**
11. A new flowering shrub, *Osbeckia zubeengargiana*, described from Manas National Park's grasslands, named for singer Zubeen Garg. **GS3**
12. Supreme Court directs Tarun Tejpal to surrender within two weeks and file a certificate before his appeal is heard on merits. **GS2**

GS2

Federalism · Centre-State Relations

22 Aug 2026 · Source: PTI / MHA statement

Centre Constitutes High-Level Committee for Gorkhaland's "Permanent Political Solution"

What happened: Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired a tripartite stakeholder meeting at Sukna, in the Darjeeling foothills, on 22 August 2026, attended by Gorkha organisations and the West Bengal government. The meeting announced a high-level committee — chaired by interlocutor and former Deputy National Security Advisor Pankaj Kumar Singh — tasked with drafting the final agreement and modalities for a "permanent political solution" to the decades-old Gorkha identity demand in the Darjeeling hills and adjoining areas. The committee will work within the constitutional framework rather than outside it.

Why it matters for UPSC: This is the third major tripartite milestone on the Darjeeling hills question after the 1988 Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council accord and the 2011 Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) agreement — a live case study in how India manages sub-regional identity assertions short of statehood, and in the limits of sui generis bodies that sit outside the Constitution's Sixth Schedule.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Committee chaired by Pankaj Kumar Singh, former Deputy National Security Advisor.
- Tripartite meeting: Centre (MHA), Government of West Bengal, and Gorkha stakeholder organisations.
- GTA (2011) functions under the West Bengal GTA Act, 2011 — a state-legislated autonomous body, distinct from Sixth Schedule Autonomous District Councils (which apply only to Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram under Article 244(2)).
- Precursor body: Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC), created by a 1988 tripartite accord after the Gorkha National Liberation Front agitation.
- Core demands include constitutional recognition of Gorkha identity and a durable political arrangement, alongside a long-pending parallel demand for Scheduled Tribe status for 11 Gorkha/Nepali-speaking communities.
- Committee's mandate: draft the text and implementation modalities of the final agreement, not merely recommend a solution.

Mains Dimensions:

- Asymmetric federalism: why some hill/tribal regions get Sixth Schedule status while others (like GTA) get bespoke state-legislated arrangements — criteria and consequences.
- Repeated accords (1988 → 2011 → 2026) show incremental trust-building is the norm in identity-based conflict resolution, not a single grand settlement.
- Risk: a fourth committee without durable outcomes could deepen credibility fatigue among Gorkha stakeholders — process design matters as much as intent.
- Comparative angle: Bodoland Territorial Region, Ladakh's Sixth Schedule demand, and Karbi Anglong show a spectrum of autonomy models India has experimented with.

💡 Let's Remember This Through a Trick

Think "1-2-3 for the Hills": 1988 Hill Council, 2011 GTA (2nd accord), 2026 Permanent Solution Committee (3rd milestone) — same triangle of Centre-State-Hills, each round adding one more layer of institutional trust.

📄 PYQ Linkage

GS2, thematic linkage: Autonomous District Councils and the Sixth Schedule's role in protecting regional/tribal identity in India's federal structure (recurring UPSC Mains theme, North-East governance segment).

#Federalism

#SixthSchedule

#GTA

#Darjeeling

#GS2-PYQ

GS2

Welfare Schemes · Food Safety Governance

25 Aug 2026 · Source: ANI / state government statement

Kota Mid-Day Meal Food-Poisoning Incident Puts PM POSHAN Safety Protocols Under the Scanner

What happened: At least 27 of 110 students who ate the mid-day meal (a pumpkin preparation) at a government school in Kota, Rajasthan, on 25 August 2026 fell ill with headache, dizziness and vomiting within two hours. Twenty-one children were rushed to hospital — 17 to Kota's New Medical College Hospital and four to a private facility — with all reported stable; the state has ordered a probe into food quality and handling.

Why it matters for UPSC: The incident is not an isolated event but the latest in a recurring pattern of mid-day meal food-safety lapses across states, and it tests the institutional architecture — PM POSHAN scheme guidelines, state-level kitchen/vendor inspection, and FSSAI's food-safety standards — that is meant to prevent exactly this kind of failure.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- PM POSHAN (erstwhile Mid-Day Meal Scheme, renamed 2011) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Ministry of Education, covering over 11 crore children in government and government-aided schools.
- Legal backing traces to the National Food Security Act, 2013, which mandates a hot cooked meal for children in classes I-VIII.
- Food safety standards for school meals fall under FSSAI's Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and state-level Standard Operating Procedures for kitchen hygiene and ingredient sourcing.
- 110 of the school's 130 enrolled students were served the meal; 27 showed symptoms roughly two hours after eating.
- All affected children are reported stable; a state government probe into the source of contamination has been ordered.
- Similar mid-day meal food-safety incidents have recurred in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka in recent years, pointing to a systemic monitoring gap rather than a one-off lapse.

Mains Dimensions:

- Implementation gap between a well-designed national scheme (PM POSHAN) and ground-level food safety compliance — a classic "last-mile governance" problem.
- Institutional accountability: who is liable when a state-run welfare scheme causes harm — school authorities, self-help group cooks, or the supervising department?
- Need for real-time third-party food-quality audits and a grievance-redressal/whistleblower mechanism at the school level, not just post-incident probes.
- Nutrition security vs food safety: the scheme's welfare objective can be undermined if safety oversight is treated as secondary.

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

Remember the scheme's evolution as "MDM → PM POSHAN" (2011 rename) — and pair it mentally with FSSAI (safety) + NFSA 2013 (legal right) as the two pillars that must both hold for the scheme to work.

PYQ Linkage

GS2, thematic linkage: Welfare scheme design vs implementation gaps (a recurring UPSC Mains theme across PDS, MGNREGA, and Mid-Day Meal case studies).

#PMPOSHAN

#FoodSafety

#NFSA2013

#Kota

#GS2-PYQ

3 International Relations

GS2

India & its Neighbourhood · Africa Relations

24-25 Aug 2026 · Source: PIB / MEA statement

India-Morocco 7th Joint Commission: Diversifying the Trade Basket, Securing Fertiliser Supply

What happened: Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry (and Electronics & IT) Jitin Prasada undertook a two-day official visit to Morocco (24-25 August 2026), co-chairing the 7th Session of the India-Morocco Joint Commission with Morocco's Secretary of State for Foreign Trade, Omar Hejira. Discussions in Rabat centred on widening the bilateral trade basket beyond fertiliser inputs and improving market access, alongside an India-Morocco Joint Business Forum to explore fresh investment and joint ventures.

Why it matters for UPSC: Morocco holds over 70% of the world's known phosphate rock reserves — making this relationship a direct input into India's fertiliser and food security, not just a routine trade visit; it also fits India's wider strategy of deepening economic ties across Africa beyond aid diplomacy.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Bilateral merchandise trade between India and Morocco stood at approximately USD 4 billion in 2025.
- Fertiliser-linked imports (NPK and other fertilisers, phosphatic fertilisers, phosphoric acid, phosphate minerals) made up about 98% of India's imports from Morocco in FY26.
- India's exports to Morocco include refined petroleum, pharmaceuticals, vehicles, synthetic textiles, food items and spices.
- This is the 7th session of the India-Morocco Joint Commission — a standing bilateral mechanism for reviewing trade and economic cooperation.
- Morocco holds the world's largest known phosphate rock reserves (OCP Group is the dominant global producer).
- The visit included an India-Morocco Joint Business Forum in Rabat for private-sector investment and joint-venture discussions.

Mains Dimensions:

- Fertiliser/critical input diversification: India's over-reliance on a narrow basket of phosphate suppliers (Morocco, Jordan, Saudi Arabia) as a food-security vulnerability.
- India's Africa outreach model — trade and investment diversification versus the historical aid/capacity-building-led approach (India-Africa Forum Summit legacy).
- Opportunity to convert a raw-material relationship into value-added partnership (e.g., joint fertiliser manufacturing, similar to the India-Jordan and India-Israel models).
- Strategic angle: Morocco's Atlantic-facing location and its African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) membership as a gateway for Indian goods into West Africa.

📌 Let's Remember This Through a Trick

Remember Morocco as "India's fertiliser factory next door" — nearly all imports from Morocco (98%) are phosphate-linked, which is why this bilateral relationship punches above its trade-value weight for UPSC.

📄 PYQ Linkage

GS2/GS3, thematic linkage: India's fertiliser import dependence and food-security implications (recurring theme linking IR and Economy answers).

#IndiaMorocco

#Phosphate

#FertiliserSecurity

#Africa

#GS2-PYQ

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Resource-linked diplomacy like the India-Morocco phosphate relationship is a staple of **ANTIM 2027's** IR module — where we map every bilateral visit back to a concrete economic or strategic driver, not just a headline. theiasakademia.com

4

Defence & Security

GS3

Defence Diplomacy · Indo-Pacific

24 Aug 2026 · Source: PIB / Indian Air Force statement

IAF's Twin Indo-Pacific Deployment: Exercise Pitch Black (Australia) & Exercise Udara Shakti (Malaysia)

What happened: The Indian Air Force concluded a back-to-back, dual-nation deployment across the Indo-Pacific, wrapping up its participation in Exercise Udara Shakti 2026 in Malaysia immediately after Exercise

Pitch Black 2026 in Australia. At RAAF Base Darwin, the IAF deployed Rafale multirole fighters for the first time in a large-force multilateral exercise abroad, flying alongside aircrew from over 20 nations.

Why it matters for UPSC: The exercise sequence demonstrates India's long-range expeditionary reach and interoperability with Indo-Pacific partners — a concrete indicator of India's "Act East" and Indo-Pacific strategy moving from diplomatic statements to operational capability.

KEY FACTS

- Exercise Pitch Black is a biennial, Australia-hosted multinational air combat exercise; the 2026 edition drew over 20 participating nations.
- This was the IAF's first deployment of Rafale fighters in a large-force multilateral exercise in the southern hemisphere.
- Exercise Udara Shakti is a bilateral India-Malaysia air exercise, conducted immediately after Pitch Black as part of the same expeditionary sortie.
- The back-to-back format tests aircrew endurance, long-range logistics and multi-theatre interoperability in a single deployment window.
- Both exercises fall within India's broader Indo-Pacific engagement alongside the Quad, IORA and bilateral defence partnerships with Australia and ASEAN states.

Mains Dimensions:

- Defence diplomacy as soft power: joint exercises build interoperability and trust without the commitments of a formal alliance — consistent with India's strategic autonomy doctrine.
- Rafale's deployment abroad signals growing confidence in indigenous logistics/sustainment for extended-range fighter operations.
- Balancing China's presence in the Indo-Pacific: exercises with Australia and ASEAN partners reinforce a rules-based order without explicit bloc alignment.
- Way forward: converting exercise-level interoperability into deeper defence-industrial cooperation (co-production, logistics-sharing agreements).

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

Pair the names by geography: Pitch Black = Australian outback (Darwin), Udara Shakti = Malaysia ("udara" is Malay for "air") — two exercises, two skies, one continuous IAF deployment.

PYQ Linkage

GS3, thematic linkage: India's defence diplomacy and joint military exercises as instruments of strategic partnership (recurring UPSC Mains theme in the security/IR overlap segment).

#PitchBlack2026

#UdaraShakti

#Rafale

#IndoPacific

#GS3-PYQ

INS 'Mangrol' Delivered — India's Indigenous Anti-Submarine Shallow Water Craft Programme Advances

What happened: 'Mangrol', the third Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC) built by Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Kochi, was delivered to the Indian Navy on 21 August 2026, marking a further milestone in India's programme to indigenise coastal submarine-hunting capability.

Why it matters for UPSC: ASW-SWCs plug a specific capability gap — hunting small, quiet, diesel-electric submarines and underwater threats in shallow coastal and harbour-approach waters, where larger frigates are less effective — making this a niche but strategically important indigenisation success story.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- 'Mangrol' is the third vessel delivered under the ASW-SWC programme, built by Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL).
- ASW-SWCs are designed for shallow-water anti-submarine operations, mine-laying capability, and low-intensity maritime operations in coastal zones.
- The programme is part of India's wider "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" push in warship construction, reducing reliance on imported platforms for coastal defence roles.
- Complements larger indigenous ASW platforms such as the Kamorta-class corvettes built by GRSE for deep-water submarine hunting.
- Coastal ASW capability gained new urgency after the 26/11 Mumbai attacks exposed gaps in India's near-shore maritime domain awareness.

Mains Dimensions:

- Layered maritime defence architecture: ASW-SWCs (shallow/coastal) + Kamorta-class corvettes (deep water) + P-8I aircraft (aerial ASW) form a tiered response to the submarine threat.
- Indigenous shipbuilding as an employment and technology-spillover multiplier for coastal shipyards (CSL, GRSE, Mazagon Dock).
- China's expanding submarine presence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) as the strategic driver behind sustained ASW investment.
- Way forward: export potential for ASW-SWC-class vessels to smaller IOR/friendly navies under India's defence export push.

💡 Let's Remember This Through a Trick

Remember the depth ladder: ASW-SWC = shallow coastal waters, Kamorta-class corvette = deep water, P-8I = the sky above both — three layers, one submarine-hunting net.

PYQ Linkage

GS3, thematic linkage: Indigenisation of defence production and self-reliance in shipbuilding (recurring UPSC Mains theme, defence-economy overlap).

#INSMangrol

#ASW-SWC

#CochinShipyards

#Aatmanirbhar

#GS3-PYQ

THEIAS AKADEMIA

Layered defence systems like the ASW net above are a favourite UPSC diagram-style answer structure — **LAKSHYAM AIR1** drills exactly this kind of multi-platform, multi-layer analytical writing for GS3. theiasakademia.com

5

Science & Technology

GS3

Science Policy · R&D Ecosystem

24 Aug 2026 · Source: NITI Aayog report / ThePrint

NITI Aayog Flags Funding Crunch & Talent Shortage as Hurdles to India's R&D Ecosystem

What happened: A NITI Aayog report released on 24 August 2026 identified a persistent funding crunch, a shortage of young research talent, and long, cumbersome internal institutional processes as the biggest structural hurdles to research and development activity in India, despite recent policy pushes such as the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF).

Why it matters for UPSC: India's Gross Expenditure on R&D (GERD) has stagnated at under 0.7% of GDP for years — far below the USA (~3.5%), China (~2.4%) or Israel (~5%) — making this report a direct data point for any GS3 answer on India's innovation deficit.

KEY FACTS

- India's R&D spend has hovered around 0.64-0.7% of GDP for over a decade, among the lowest in G20 economies.
- Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), established under the ANRF Act, 2023, aims to mobilise ₹50,000 crore over five years, with 70% envisaged from non-government sources.
- Private sector contributes a disproportionately small share of India's R&D spend compared to government labs (CSIR, DRDO, ISRO, ICAR) — the opposite pattern of most advanced economies.

- NITI Aayog's report flags cumbersome fund-disbursal and utilisation-certification processes as a structural drag on research output, independent of the money available.
- Young-talent shortage is linked to limited postdoctoral positions, low research stipends, and brain drain to better-funded systems abroad.

Mains Dimensions:

- India's innovation paradox: strong output in digital public infrastructure and space technology alongside chronically low overall R&D intensity — sector-specific success masking systemic underinvestment.
- Need to shift the funding mix toward private/industry R&D, mirroring economies where corporate R&D dominates public spend.
- Process reform (faster grant disbursal, simplified utilisation certificates) as a lower-cost lever than simply raising the R&D-to-GDP ratio.
- Linking ANRF's mission-mode funding to demographic dividend: India's youth bulge is an opportunity only if research careers become viable.

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

Anchor the number: India spends under 0.7% of GDP on R&D — less than one rupee in a hundred — while China spends over three times that share. One line, one comparison, exam-ready.

PYQ Linkage

GS3, thematic linkage: India's R&D expenditure, innovation ecosystem, and the role of ANRF (recurring UPSC Mains theme on science policy).

#NITIayog

#RnD

#ANRF

#InnovationPolicy

#GS3-PYQ

GS3

Electronics Manufacturing · PLI Successor

21 Aug 2026 · Source: PIB / MeitY notification

MeitY Formally Notifies ₹62,500-Crore Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS)

What happened: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology formally notified the Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS) on 21 August 2026, with a five-year budgetary outlay of ₹62,500 crore running from FY2026-27 to FY2030-31, following the expiry of the earlier mobile-phone Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme on 31 March 2026.

Why it matters for UPSC: MPMS is a direct policy successor to the PLI model, but restructured to explicitly reward domestic value addition and Indian-owned brands — a shift worth tracking as India's electronics-manufacturing strategy matures beyond simple assembly-based incentives.

KEY FACTS

- Total outlay: ₹62,500 crore over five years (FY27-FY31), succeeding the PLI scheme for mobile manufacturing (expired 31 March 2026).
- Two tracks: Target Segment 1 (TS1) for large-scale manufacturers/EMS firms, with incentives of 2.25-5%; Target Segment 2 (TS2) for Indian-owned brands, with a 5% incentive plus an additional 3% for domestic design and R&D.
- An additional incentive of up to 1.5% is available for domestic sourcing of key components and sub-assemblies.
- Objectives: raise Domestic Value Addition (DVA), deepen the local supply chain, and build "technological sovereignty" for Indian mobile brands.
- The scheme was first cleared in principle by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs around mid-July 2026; the 21 August notification operationalises the detailed scheme guidelines.

Mains Dimensions:

- Evolution of India's industrial-policy toolkit: from blanket PLI (assembly-focused) to a segmented scheme rewarding design/R&D and component sourcing — a maturing of Aatmanirbhar Bharat's electronics strategy.
- Risk of continued import dependence on semiconductors and key components even as final assembly is indigenised — DVA metrics need scrutiny beyond headline numbers.
- Complementarity with the Semiconductor Mission (Semicon 2.0) — mobile manufacturing scale creates downstream demand for a domestic chip ecosystem.
- Employment potential in a labour-intensive segment, relevant to India's manufacturing-employment elasticity debate.

MEMORY TECHNIQUE — RETURNING TOPIC

Previously covered: ~16-17 July 2026, as the Cabinet's initial in-principle clearance (CCEA nod)

What's new today:

Formal notification by MeitY on 21 August 2026, with the full TS1/TS2 incentive structure now operational

UPSC relevance shift:

Moves from "a scheme was approved" to "here is exactly how the incentive math works" — the kind of structural detail Prelims statement-based MCQs test

PYQ Linkage

GS3, thematic linkage: Production Linked Incentive schemes and India's electronics manufacturing push (recurring UPSC Mains/Prelims theme, PLI 2020 onward).

#MPMS

#MeitY

#PLIsuccessor

#ElectronicsManufacturing

#GS3-PYQ

6 Economy

GS3

Digital Economy · Financial Inclusion

25 Aug 2026 · Source: PIB / NPCI-RBI data

UPI Turns 10 — World's Largest Real-Time Payment System

What happened: The Unified Payments Interface (UPI), launched by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) on 25 August 2016 under RBI's regulatory oversight, completed a decade of operation on 25 August 2026. Annual transaction volume grew from 1.78 crore in FY2016-17 to over 24,162 crore in FY2025-26 — a roughly 13,000-fold surge — with transaction value rising from ₹0.07 lakh crore to nearly ₹314 lakh crore over the same period.

Why it matters for UPSC: The IMF recognises UPI as the world's largest real-time payment system by volume, accounting for nearly half of global real-time payment transactions — making it one of India's clearest Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) success stories and a recurring GS3/Economy answer anchor.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- UPI launched 25 April 2016 (pilot) / went live for public use later that year, built by NPCI under RBI oversight.
- Annual transaction volume: 1.78 crore (FY17) → over 24,162 crore (FY26), a nearly 13,000-fold increase.
- Annual transaction value: ₹0.07 lakh crore (FY17) → nearly ₹314 lakh crore (FY26).
- Number of banks live on UPI rose from 44 (FY17) to 741 by July 2026.
- July 2026 recorded 2,366 crore monthly transactions — UPI's highest monthly volume in its decade-long history.
- IMF recognises UPI as the world's largest real-time payment system, accounting for close to 49% of global real-time payment volumes (2025 estimate).

Mains Dimensions:

- UPI as the flagship of India Stack / Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) — a model now being exported via UPI-linked payment tie-ups with Singapore, UAE, France, Sri Lanka and others.
- Financial inclusion multiplier: near-zero merchant discount rate (MDR) on UPI transactions expanded small-merchant adoption far beyond card-based systems.
- Sustainability question: continued zero-MDR policy versus NPCI's need for a viable revenue model to fund infrastructure upgrades.
- Cybersecurity and fraud-prevention architecture must scale with volume — a live regulatory challenge for RBI/NPCI going forward.

📌 Let's Remember This Through a Trick

Anchor the decade with one ratio: transaction volume grew ~13,000x in 10 years — from 1.78 crore to over 24,000 crore — a number worth memorising cold for Prelims data-recall questions.

📄 PYQ Linkage

GS3, thematic linkage: Digital Public Infrastructure and financial inclusion via UPI (recurring UPSC Prelims/Mains theme since 2018).

#UPI

#NPCI

#DigitalPublicInfrastructure

#FinancialInclusion

#GS3-PYQ

GS3

Industrial Output · Trade Policy

25 Aug 2026 · Source: Ministry of Steel / DGFT

Steel Output Rises 2.6% in Apr-Jul FY27; DGFT Frees Wheat & Wheat-Flour Exports

What happened: The Ministry of Steel reported crude steel production of 56.3 million tonnes for April-July FY2026-27, up 2.6% year-on-year, with finished steel production up 4% to 54.3 MT and consumption up 7.8% to 55.9 MT, driven by infrastructure demand in highways, railways and ports. Separately, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) moved wheat, durum wheat and wheat-flour products (atta, maida, semolina) from the "prohibited" export category to "free".

Why it matters for UPSC: Read together, the two data points capture both sides of India's trade-policy balancing act — supporting industrial capacity utilisation (steel) while carefully calibrating food-grain export policy against domestic price stability (wheat).

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Crude steel production: 56.3 MT in Apr-Jul FY27, up 2.6% year-on-year.
- India's total crude steelmaking capacity stands at 222 MTPA, working toward the National Steel Policy 2017 target of 300 MTPA by 2030.

- Finished steel consumption grew 7.8% to 55.9 MT, reflecting infrastructure-led demand (highways, railways, ports).
- DGFT operates export policy via the ITC(HS) classification — categories are "Free", "Restricted", "Prohibited" or "State Trading Enterprise"-routed.
- Wheat exports had been restricted/prohibited intermittently since May 2022 to manage domestic price stability after the Russia-Ukraine war disrupted global grain supply.
- Freeing wheat-flour product exports signals confidence in current domestic wheat stock and price conditions.

Mains Dimensions:

- Steel sector as an infrastructure-capex bellwether — sustained consumption growth signals continued public capital expenditure momentum.
- India's position as the world's second-largest crude steel producer, and the strategic case for the National Steel Policy's 300 MTPA target (energy, iron-ore linkage, decarbonisation via green steel).
- Food-grain export policy as a live instrument of macroeconomic management — balancing farmer income (export access) against consumer price stability (domestic supply).
- WTO angle: India's shifting wheat export stance draws scrutiny given past criticism of export bans at the WTO Agriculture Committee.

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

Steel = "up and building" (capex bellwether), Wheat = "up and released" (price-confidence signal) — same week, opposite policy instruments, one economy.

PYQ Linkage

GS3, thematic linkage: India's core-sector industrial output indicators and agricultural export-policy trade-offs (recurring UPSC Mains theme in Economy answers).

#SteelSector

#NationalSteelPolicy

#DGFT

#WheatExport

#GS3-PYQ

GS3

Agriculture · Animal Genetic Resources

Aug 2026 · Source: ICAR / ICAR-NBAGR press note

ICAR-NBAGR Registers 16 New Indigenous Livestock & Dog Breeds — India's Tally Hits 262

What happened: The ICAR-National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR), Karnal, registered 16 new indigenous livestock, poultry and dog breeds after approval by the Breed Registration Committee in

New Delhi, taking India's total documented animal genetic resources to 262 breeds (258 indigenous plus 4 synthetic), spanning nine species across 13 states and one Union Territory.

Why it matters for UPSC: Livestock breed diversity is a food-security and climate-resilience asset — indigenous breeds are typically better adapted to local disease and heat stress than high-yield exotic crossbreds — and the registration process itself is a concrete, testable institutional fact.

KEY FACTS

- 16 new breeds registered: Umarda, Periyar, Koppal and Mahakaushali cattle; Gomanchali buffalo; Madgyal, Seemanchali, Kow Debar and Asomi sheep; Totapuri and Battisi goat; Kombai dog; Nagal pig; Kashmiri pony; Braj donkey; and Sikkimese yak.
- India's total registered breed count now stands at 262 — 258 indigenous and 4 synthetic breeds.
- ICAR-NBAGR (National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources), headquartered in Karnal, Haryana, is the nodal body for breed characterisation and registration.
- Each registered breed receives a unique accession number, formally documenting its distinct genetic identity.
- The 16 new breeds span 9 species across 13 states and 1 Union Territory, reflecting India's wide agro-climatic and pastoral diversity.
- Registration recognises breeder/community contribution and enables the breed's protection under India's Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights-adjacent animal genetic resource governance.

Mains Dimensions:

- Indigenous breed conservation as a climate-adaptation strategy — local breeds often show superior heat and disease tolerance versus imported high-yield varieties.
- Livelihood angle: formal breed recognition can unlock branding, breeder incentives, and better market access for pastoral and tribal communities.
- Linkage to India's Nagoya Protocol/Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) commitments on genetic resource documentation and community rights.
- Risk of genetic erosion if indigenous breeds are not actively promoted alongside crossbreeding programmes aimed purely at yield maximisation.

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

Remember "9-13-1": 9 species, 13 states, 1 Union Territory — the geographic fingerprint of today's 16 new breed registrations.

PYQ Linkage

GS3, thematic linkage: Animal genetic resource conservation and indigenous breed diversity as a food-security asset (recurring UPSC Prelims theme on agricultural institutions).

[#ICAR](#)[#NBAGR](#)[#IndigenousBreeds](#)[#AnimalGeneticResources](#)[#GS3-PYQ](#)**THEIAS AKADEmia**

Institutional-fact cards like ICAR-NBAGR's breed registry are exactly the kind of "silent Prelims killers" that **NEEB 300+ Live PYQ Writing** drills into muscle memory through daily statement-based practice.
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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.

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