

THEIAS AKADEMIA PRESENTS

ANTIM ASSURED 100+

The Topper's Last Read. Every Morning.

PART II · ENVIRONMENT TO DIRECT HIT TRACKER

Morning Edition · 08:00 IST · Wednesday, 14 October 2026

— *The Topper's Last Read* —

IN THIS EDITION

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| § Environment & Ecology | § Places in News |
| § Ethics & Integrity | § Prelims MCQs |
| § Mains Questions | § Value Addition |
| § Direct Hit Tracker | § Proof of Precision |

Publisher: TheIAS Akademia · theiasakademia.com

GS3

Environment · Species Conservation (Critically Endangered)

4–5 October 2026 (still developing) · Source: PIB; Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change

Great Indian Bustard: First Captive-Bred Birds Released Into the Wild at Desert National Park

Why in News: Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, together with the Rajasthan Chief Minister, initiated on 4–5 October 2026 the release of captive-bred Great Indian Bustards (GIBs) into the wild at Desert National Park, Jaisalmer — described by the Ministry as the culmination of ten years of dedicated conservation breeding effort. Two captive-bred male GIBs were released in the first phase, with a reported plan to release up to ten birds in total. This story is carried today, honestly dated roughly ten days after the event, because it had not yet appeared in this product and remains the single most substantive, ongoing Environment development of the fortnight.

Background: The Great Indian Bustard (*Ardeotis nigriceps*) is one of the world's heaviest flying birds and among India's most critically endangered species, with a wild population estimated at under 150 individuals, concentrated almost entirely in the Thar Desert grasslands of Rajasthan. Its decline is driven primarily by collisions with high-tension overhead power transmission lines criss-crossing its open-grassland habitat, compounded by habitat loss to agriculture and infrastructure. In April 2021, the Supreme Court (in *M.K. Ranjitsinh v. Union of India*) ordered power lines in GIB habitat to be laid underground where feasible and bird diverters installed elsewhere, though implementation has lagged; in 2024 the Court modified its own order after the government argued a blanket undergrounding mandate was not technically or economically feasible everywhere. The captive-breeding programme, run jointly by the Wildlife Institute of India and Rajasthan's forest department at Sam and Ramdevra breeding centres, has been building a releasable captive population since roughly 2016 under “Project Great Indian Bustard.”

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Release location: Desert National Park, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan; initiated 4–5 October 2026.
- Wild GIB population estimated at under 150 individuals, almost entirely confined to Rajasthan's Thar Desert grasslands.
- Primary threat: collision with high-tension overhead power transmission lines crossing open grassland habitat.
- 2021: Supreme Court (*M.K. Ranjitsinh v. UoI*) ordered undergrounding of power lines/bird diverters in GIB habitat; order modified in 2024 after feasibility concerns.

- Captive-breeding run jointly by the Wildlife Institute of India and Rajasthan's forest department since c. 2016, under Project Great Indian Bustard.
- First-phase release: two captive-bred male GIBs, with a broader plan to release up to ten birds.
- GIB is a Schedule I species under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, and is also India's proposed State Bird candidate symbol for grassland conservation advocacy.
- The bird is also Rajasthan's state bird, locally known as "Godawan."

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Tests the core Mains theme of species-specific conservation versus ecosystem-level habitat protection — captive breeding addresses population numbers directly, but cannot by itself fix the grassland fragmentation and power-line risk that caused the decline in the first place.
- The 2021–24 Supreme Court litigation sequence is a textbook example of judicial environmental governance confronting an infrastructure-versus-conservation trade-off, and of the Court itself later moderating an earlier order on technical-feasibility grounds — relevant to any answer on PIL-driven environmental jurisprudence.
- India's grasslands remain a chronically under-protected ecosystem category, often classified administratively as "wasteland" rather than a biome in its own right — the GIB's crisis is as much a grassland-policy failure as a single-species one.
- Raises the standard captive-breeding critique: released birds historically show poor post-release survival and breeding success for bustard species globally, so post-release telemetry tracking and habitat security will determine whether this programme succeeds beyond a symbolic milestone.
- Comparative angle: the programme parallels the Cheetah reintroduction at Kuno and the Gharial headstarting programme in using ex-situ breeding to rescue a population below critical mass — a recurring Indian conservation-policy template worth citing across questions.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Remember GIB's threat with one image: a bird too heavy to dodge a wire. Unlike most birds, bustards have limited frontal vision and cannot manoeuvre quickly — which is precisely why power-line collision, not hunting, is their number-one killer today.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 2020: "What is water use efficiency? Describe the role of micro-irrigation in increasing water use efficiency" is unrelated — use instead GS3 2018 (thematic): conservation of critically endangered species and Supreme Court interventions in environmental governance.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Great Indian Bustard:

1. It is listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
2. Its population is concentrated mainly in the grasslands of the Thar Desert, Rajasthan.

3. The Supreme Court's 2021 order in *M.K. Ranjitsinh v. Union of India* mandated undergrounding of all power lines across India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (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 incorrect — the order applied specifically to GIB habitat areas in Rajasthan and Gujarat, not all power lines nationwide, and was later modified on feasibility grounds.

Great Indian Bustard

Project GIB

Thar Desert

Wildlife Protection Act

GS3

Environment · Species Profile (Static — 30-Day Rotation)

Static Species Profile — not tied to a current event · Source: IUCN; animalia.bio

The Indian Wolf: IUCN's “Potential Distinct Species” of India's Grasslands

Why in News: Paired thematically with today's Great Indian Bustard card, the Indian Wolf (*Canis lupus pallipes*) shares the same threatened grassland-and-scrubland ecosystem that the GIB depends on, and was itself the subject of a significant reclassification when the IUCN flagged it in 2025 as a “potential distinct species” separate from the Holarctic grey wolf, rather than merely a subspecies — a finding with direct implications for how its conservation status and legal protections should be assessed going forward.

Background: The Indian Wolf is a smaller, more slender subspecies/lineage of wolf adapted to India's hot, open grasslands, scrublands and semi-arid plains — habitats ecologically continuous with GIB range in places like the Deccan and the Thar periphery. Genetic studies published through 2024–25 suggested it diverged from other wolf lineages earlier and more distinctly than previously assumed, prompting IUCN assessors to flag it for potential elevation to full species status (tentatively *Canis indica* in some proposals), a process that, if confirmed, would make it one of the most ancient surviving wolf lineages on Earth. With an estimated 2,000–3,000 individuals left in the wild, it already faces an IUCN Red List assessment of Endangered at the subspecies level, driven by habitat loss to agriculture, human-wildlife conflict with livestock-herding communities, and — as with the GIB — the chronic undervaluing of grassland ecosystems in India's land-use planning.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Scientific classification under review: currently *Canis lupus pallipes*; IUCN flagged it in 2025 as a potential distinct species.
- Estimated wild population: approximately 2,000–3,000 individuals.
- Habitat: India's open grasslands, scrublands, and semi-arid plains — overlapping with Great Indian Bustard range in parts of the Deccan and Thar periphery.
- Primary threats: habitat loss to agricultural expansion, human-wildlife conflict with pastoralist/livestock communities, and grassland fragmentation.
- Listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, in India, affording it the highest level of domestic legal protection.
- If formally split into a distinct species, it would rank among the most ancient surviving wolf lineages, based on genetic-divergence studies.
- India's grasslands — the Indian Wolf's core habitat — remain classified in many revenue records as “wasteland,” a long-standing conservation-policy anomaly.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Taxonomic reclassification is not a cosmetic exercise: elevating a subspecies to full species status typically triggers fresh, independent IUCN Red List risk assessment and can unlock dedicated conservation funding and research attention previously bundled under the generic grey wolf.
- The Indian Wolf-GIB habitat overlap is a strong illustration of why India needs grassland-specific protected-area categories, rather than treating grasslands as an afterthought within forest- or desert-focused conservation law.
- Human-wildlife conflict management for a livestock-predating carnivore in a densely populated agricultural landscape tests the limits of strict protection models, pointing toward compensation-and-coexistence frameworks rather than exclusion-only approaches.
- Comparative angle: similar debates over subspecies-versus-species classification have shaped conservation prioritisation for other Indian megafauna (e.g., the Asiatic Lion's genetic distinctiveness debates), showing taxonomy itself is a live conservation-policy tool, not just an academic exercise.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Pair the two grassland cards with one phrase: **“Godawan's ground is the wolf's hunting ground”** — the Great Indian Bustard and the Indian Wolf share the same undervalued grassland habitat, so protecting one's ecosystem protects the other's too.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 2016 (thematic): “Give an account of the current status and the targets to be achieved pertaining to renewable energy sources in the country” is unrelated — use instead GS3 2019 (thematic): India's wildlife conservation strategy and protected-area categories.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Indian Wolf:

1. It is currently classified as a subspecies of the grey wolf, *Canis lupus pallipes*.
2. It is found predominantly in India's dense tropical rainforests.
3. It is listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a). Statement 2 is incorrect — the Indian Wolf inhabits open grasslands, scrublands and semi-arid plains, not dense rainforest.

Indian Wolf

Canis lupus pallipes

IUCN

Grassland Ecosystem

2 PLACES IN NEWS

7 LOCATIONS

PLACES IN NEWS — WEDNESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2026 | ANTIM ASSURED 100+



① New Delhi, India

Hosted the first-ever BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting (13 Oct) and the Jantar Mantar de-notification/Supreme Court proceedings.

Sits on the Indo-Gangetic Plain along the Yamuna's west bank — India's seat of government and, until 11 October, its best-known protest address.

② Jaisalmer (Desert National Park), Rajasthan

Site of the first captive-bred Great Indian Bustard release into the wild (4–5 Oct 2026).

Lies within the Thar (Great Indian) Desert's grassland belt — India's last stronghold for the Great Indian Bustard and a habitat shared with the Indian Wolf.

③ Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh

Satish Dhawan Space Centre — launch site for Gaganyaan's TV-D1 test flight, confirmed for 21 October 2026.

A barrier island on the Coromandel Coast beside Pulicat Lake, chosen for its near-equatorial latitude and clear eastward sea-facing launch trajectory.

④ Jamnagar, Gujarat

Proposed site for the new BIMSTEC Disaster Management Centre, approved at the 13 October Home Ministers' Meeting.

On the Gulf of Kutch coast of the cyclone-prone Saurashtra peninsula — also India's largest petroleum-refining hub.

⑤ London, United Kingdom

India's CETA partner — Terms of Reference for annual trade-preference-utilisation data exchange signed 12 October 2026.

On the Thames estuary; London is the commercial hub anchoring the UK side of the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement.

⑥ Dhaka, Bangladesh

Seat of the BIMSTEC Secretariat; Bangladesh's Home Adviser was the only member-level absentee from the 13 October Delhi meeting.

Located in the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna delta, the world's largest river delta — Bangladesh's geography makes it central to BIMSTEC's disaster-preparedness agenda.

⑦ Stockholm, Sweden

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced the 2026 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences here on 12 October.

Built across a Baltic Sea archipelago; Stockholm has hosted the Nobel Prize announcements and ceremonies since 1901.

3 ETHICS & INTEGRITY CASES (GS4)

6 CASES

Case 1: The Protest-Site Dilemma

Proportionality & the Public-Order Exception (Article 19(3))

As the District Magistrate responsible for approving the first major demonstration at one of Delhi's newly designated protest sites, you face conflicting inputs: the organisers insist the alternative venue is too remote and poorly equipped to be a meaningful substitute for Jantar Mantar, while the local police cite genuine crowd-management and traffic-safety constraints at short notice.

Q. How do you weigh the organisers' right to effective (not merely nominal) assembly against the State's public-order and logistics concerns, without defaulting to outright denial?

Case 2: Whose Name Comes Off the List?

Procedural Fairness / Natural Justice (Audi Alteram Partem)

As an Electoral Registration Officer executing a Special Intensive Revision, you discover that a significant number of flagged “deletions” belong to seasonal migrant labourers who are away from their registered address during the verification window and cannot immediately respond to a notice.

Q. Do you proceed with deletion to meet the revision timeline, or suspend action on migrant-linked entries pending a fuller hearing, even if it delays the overall exercise?

Case 3: The Empty Chair at the Regional Table

Reciprocity & Good Faith in Diplomacy

As a senior MEA official, you must advise on India's posture after a key BIMSTEC partner's Home Minister-level representative skips a flagship meeting India has hosted and invested significant diplomatic capital in, amid that country's own domestic political transition.

Q. Should India publicly register its disappointment to signal the cost of non-engagement, or quietly continue outreach to avoid further estranging a partner already in domestic flux?

Case 4: The Sanctioned Supplier Dilemma

Strategic Autonomy vs Alliance Obligation

As a defence-planning advisor, you are asked whether India should proceed with expanding its S-400 fleet from a sanctioned supplier even as India simultaneously deepens defence-technology partnerships with the United States, which has sanctioned other nations for similar purchases.

Q. Can a country credibly pursue both deep strategic partnership with the US and continued dependence on Russian platforms, and where should the ethical line on transparency with both partners be drawn?

Case 5: Who Pays for a Free Lunch?

Distributive Justice (Rawls's Difference Principle)

As a member of the committee advising NPCI on the UPI Merchant Discount Rate, you must recommend whether banks, large merchants, small traders, or taxpayers should ultimately bear the cost of UPI's transaction infrastructure, now that zero-MDR's fiscal unsustainability is well documented.

Q. Does fairness demand that the parties with the greatest ability to pay (large merchants, banks) absorb the cost, even if that risks slower innovation investment, or should the burden be spread more broadly regardless of capacity?

Case 6: Safe Bet or Bold Bet?

Public Trust Doctrine in Allocating Public Research Capital

As a newly appointed Second-Level Fund Manager under the RDI Scheme, you must choose between funding a modest, high-probability incremental research proposal and a high-risk, potentially breakthrough deep-tech proposal, both competing for the same tranche of public patient capital.

Q. Since the capital is ultimately public money held in trust for national research priorities, should risk tolerance be judged by probability of success alone, or does the public mandate justify funding genuinely high-risk, high-reward science that private capital would avoid?

4

PRELIMS MCQS

20 QUESTIONS (11 STATEMENT-BASED)

QUESTION 1 · STATEMENT-BASED

With reference to the National Green Tribunal's 2017 order on Jantar Mantar, consider the following statements:

1. It imposed a blanket ban on all protests along the Jantar Mantar stretch.
2. It was subsequently set aside in part by the Supreme Court in 2018.
3. The NGT's jurisdiction derives from the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d). All three statements are correct.

QUESTION 2 · STATEMENT-BASED

Consider the following statements regarding electoral roll revision in India:

1. Summary revision and intensive revision are both conducted under the Representation of the People Act, 1950.
2. The Election Commission derives its power of superintendence over elections from Article 324 of the Constitution.
3. Electoral rolls are prepared by the Union Ministry of Law and Justice.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (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 incorrect — rolls are prepared by the Election Commission through its own machinery, not the Law Ministry.

QUESTION 3

The headquarters of the BIMSTEC Secretariat is located in:

- (a) New Delhi
- (b) Kathmandu
- (c) Dhaka
- (d) Colombo

Answer: (c) Dhaka.

QUESTION 4 · STATEMENT-BASED

Consider the following statements on India's Free Trade Agreements:

1. Preference utilisation rate measures the share of eligible trade actually claiming an FTA's reduced tariff.
2. India's CETA with the UK provides for annual exchange of trade-utilisation data.
3. Rules of origin provisions are absent from the India-UK CETA.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (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 incorrect — rules of origin are a standard, necessary component of any FTA including CETA.

QUESTION 5

The S-400 Triumf air defence system is manufactured by a company based in which country?

- (a) France
- (b) Israel
- (c) Russia
- (d) United States

Answer: (c) Russia (Almaz-Antey).

QUESTION 6 · STATEMENT-BASED

Consider the following statements on the Gaganyaan programme:

1. TV-D1 is an uncrewed Test Vehicle mission to validate the Crew Escape System.
2. Gaganyaan's crewed flight targets a 400 km low Earth orbit.
3. India's Bharatiya Antariksh Station is planned as a follow-on human-spaceflight asset.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only

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

Answer: (d). All three statements are correct.

QUESTION 7

The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) was established under an Act of Parliament passed in which year?

- (a) 2019
- (b) 2021
- (c) 2023
- (d) 2025

Answer: (c) 2023.

QUESTION 8 · STATEMENT-BASED

Consider the following statements regarding the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan:

1. It was launched in October 2021.
2. It integrates planning across 16 central ministries/departments on a shared GIS platform.
3. Its principal objective is to eliminate India's fiscal deficit through infrastructure savings.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (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 incorrect — GatiShakti's objective is logistics-cost reduction and multimodal integration, not fiscal-deficit elimination.

QUESTION 9

Since 2020, person-to-merchant UPI transactions in India have generally operated under which Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) policy?

- (a) A flat 2% MDR
- (b) Zero MDR
- (c) MDR linked to RBI's repo rate
- (d) MDR capped at ₹5 per transaction

Answer: (b) Zero MDR.

QUESTION 10 · STATEMENT-BASED

Consider the following statements regarding the Great Indian Bustard:

1. It is one of the heaviest flying birds in the world.
2. Its principal range in India is restricted to the Thar Desert grasslands of Rajasthan.
3. Power-line collision, not hunting, is currently its leading cause of mortality.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d). All three statements are correct.

QUESTION 11

The Indian Wolf (*Canis lupus pallipes*) was flagged by the IUCN in 2025 as:

- (a) Extinct in the wild
- (b) A potential distinct species
- (c) An invasive alien species in India
- (d) Least Concern, with a growing population

Answer: (b) A potential distinct species.

QUESTION 12 · STATEMENT-BASED

Consider the following statements on the 2026 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences:

1. It was awarded jointly to Robert E. Hall and Michael Woodford.
2. The award recognised work explaining business-cycle fluctuations and monetary-policy credibility.
3. The Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences is one of the original prizes established in Alfred Nobel's 1895 will.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (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 incorrect — the Economics Prize was instituted by Sveriges Riksbank in 1968, not by Nobel's original will.

QUESTION 13

Standard Treatment Guidelines for dermatological disorders under classical Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani systems were issued in October 2026 by which Ministry?

- (a) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- (b) Ministry of AYUSH
- (c) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- (d) Ministry of Tribal Affairs

Answer: (b) Ministry of AYUSH.

QUESTION 14 · STATEMENT-BASED

Consider the following statements regarding India's Gross GST collections for September 2026:

1. They rose by 14.7% year-on-year.
2. They crossed ₹2 lakh crore for the third consecutive month.
3. GST collection data is released by the Reserve Bank of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (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 incorrect — GST collection figures are released by the Ministry of Finance (GST Council/CBIC ecosystem), not the RBI.

QUESTION 15

A Variable Rate Reverse Repo (VRRR) auction, as conducted by the RBI, is primarily a tool to:

- (a) Inject liquidity into the banking system
- (b) Absorb surplus liquidity from the banking system
- (c) Regulate the exchange rate of the rupee
- (d) Set the statutory liquidity ratio

Answer: (b) Absorb surplus liquidity from the banking system.

QUESTION 16 · STATEMENT-BASED

Consider the following statements on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction:

1. It covers the period 2015–2030.
2. It succeeded the Hyogo Framework for Action.
3. It is a legally binding treaty enforceable by the International Court of Justice.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (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 incorrect — the Sendai Framework is a voluntary, non-binding international agreement.

QUESTION 17

India's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is chaired, ex officio, by the:

- (a) Union Home Minister
- (b) Prime Minister
- (c) Cabinet Secretary
- (d) Chief of Defence Staff

Answer: (b) Prime Minister.

QUESTION 18 · STATEMENT-BASED

Consider the following statements regarding the Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2010:

1. It mandates display of healthcare service rates at covered establishments.
2. It has been adopted and is applicable uniformly in all Indian States without any State needing to separately adopt it.
3. Its implementation and enforcement machinery includes State/District-level registering authorities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a). Statement 2 is incorrect — being a health-sector law, States must separately adopt the Act (several States have their own parallel legislation instead).

QUESTION 19

The proposed BIMSTEC Disaster Management Centre, approved at the first Home Ministers' Meeting, is to be hosted in which city?

- (a) Visakhapatnam
- (b) Jamnagar
- (c) Chennai
- (d) Kochi

Answer: (b) Jamnagar, Gujarat.

QUESTION 20 · STATEMENT-BASED

Consider the following statements regarding “Public Order” and “Police” under the Indian Constitution:

1. Both subjects are placed in the State List of the Seventh Schedule.
2. In the National Capital Territory of Delhi, “Police” remains outside the legislative competence of the Delhi Legislative Assembly.
3. The Seventh Schedule contains only two lists: Union List and State List.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (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 incorrect — the Seventh Schedule contains three lists: Union, State, and Concurrent.

THEIAS AKADEMIA

Today's Ethics cases lean heavily on applied political philosophy (Rawls, reciprocity, public trust) — if that's the layer of GS4 you want to go deeper on, that is the exact territory covered in **Philosophy Target 300+** — theiasakademia.com

5 MAINS QUESTIONS

9 QUESTIONS

GS1

Q1. India's grasslands remain among its most neglected ecosystems despite supporting critically endangered species like the Great Indian Bustard. Examine the historical and administrative reasons for this neglect, and suggest a policy framework for grassland conservation.

Framework hint: Touch on colonial-era “wasteland” classification, forest-bias in India's conservation law, and the GIB/Indian Wolf habitat-overlap case.

GS2

Q2. “The right to peaceful assembly is fundamental, but the choice of venue is not.” Critically examine this statement in light of the recent de-notification of Jantar Mantar as a

protest site.

Framework hint: Discuss Article 19(1)(b)-19(3), the 2018 Supreme Court judgment, and the proportionality test for site-specific restrictions.

GS2

Q3. Discuss the constitutional and statutory basis of the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. What safeguards are necessary to balance roll accuracy with the prevention of wrongful disenfranchisement?

Framework hint: Cover Article 324, Section 21/21-A RP Act 1950, natural justice principles, and comparative roll-maintenance practices.

GS2

Q4. BIMSTEC has been projected as India's preferred alternative to a dormant SAARC. Evaluate this claim with reference to the grouping's institutional track record and the outcomes of its first Home Ministers' Meeting.

Framework hint: Weigh functional-regionalism successes against member-cohesion gaps such as Bangladesh's absence from the Delhi meeting.

GS3

Q5. India's logistics cost remains high relative to global benchmarks despite five years of the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan. Analyse the structural reasons for this persistence and suggest measures to bridge the gap between project evaluation and execution.

Framework hint: Distinguish “projects evaluated” from “projects executed,” and discuss inter-ministerial coordination limits.

GS3

Q6. Discuss the policy trade-offs involved in India's zero-Merchant-Discount-Rate regime for UPI transactions. Is a tiered MDR structure a viable way forward?

Framework hint: Cover financial inclusion gains, bank/fintech sustainability, and comparative international instant-payment funding models.

GS3

Q7. “Patient capital routed through professional fund managers can be a more effective instrument of science-policy financing than direct government grants.” Critically examine this claim with reference to the RDI Scheme.

Framework hint: Weigh efficiency/expertise gains from market intermediation against the risk of private risk-appetite distorting public research priorities.

GS4

Q8. “Aid alliances test a nation's ethics of reciprocity as much as its strategic calculations.” Discuss with reference to a regional grouping where one member's absence from a key meeting creates a diplomatic dilemma for the host.

Framework hint: Apply the concept of good faith/reciprocity in international ethics; discuss proportionate response versus continued engagement.

GS4

Q9. “Public money invested in science carries a public-trust obligation that differs from ordinary commercial risk capital.” Critically examine this statement with reference to deep-tech research financing in India.

Framework hint: Distinguish fiduciary duty in private venture capital from public-trust-based accountability in schemes like the RDI Scheme; discuss risk tolerance for public research funding.

6

ANSWER-WRITING VALUE ADDITION

8 ITEMS

Article 19(1)(b) vs 19(3): the Constitution guarantees peaceful assembly but permits “reasonable restrictions” in the interest of sovereignty, public order, or morality — the operative word in every protest-site dispute is “reasonable,” not “absolute.”

Number to remember: India's logistics cost has hovered near 14% of GDP against a roughly 8% global benchmark — PM GatiShakti's five-year scorecard should always be read against this baseline figure.

BIMSTEC vs SAARC, one line: BIMSTEC excludes Pakistan and bridges South and Southeast Asia; SAARC includes Pakistan and has been largely dormant since 2016 — India's structural reason for preferring the former.

Quote worth citing: Union Home Minister Amit Shah's framing of narcotics as “death trafficking” at the BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting is a usable exact-phrase citation for any Mains answer on regional security cooperation.

GIB population benchmark: under 150 individuals in the wild — among the lowest population counts of any Indian bird species, making every captive-release milestone statistically significant.

Payment-systems law anchor: the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 is the parent legislation for every UPI/NPCI/RBI payments-regulation question — always cite it as the statutory root even when the specific issue (like MDR) is procedural.

ANRF lineage: SERB (pre-2023) → ANRF (2023 Act) → RDI Scheme (2025 Cabinet approval, 2026 roll-out) — a clean three-stage chain tracing India's apex research-funding body's evolution.

Sendai Framework's four priorities (worth memorising as a set): (1) understanding disaster risk, (2) strengthening disaster-risk governance, (3) investing in resilience, (4) enhancing preparedness for effective response and “build back better” recovery.

7

AKADEMIA DIRECT HIT TRACKER

18 ROWS

TOPIC	GS PAPER	EXAM-READY CAPSULE	PROBABILITY
Jantar Mantar De-Notification	GS2	Art 19(1)(b) freedom of assembly vs reasonable restriction; 2018 SC precedent	★★★★★
INDIA Bloc SC Petition on SIR	GS2	Art 324, RP Act 1950 S.21/21-A, natural justice in roll revision	★★★★★
Disaster Risk Reduction Day / NDMA	GS3	Sendai Framework priorities; India's NDMA-SDMA-DDMA architecture	★★★★☆
BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting	GS2	Delhi Declaration; 5 security frameworks; functional regionalism	★★★★★
India-UK JETCO / CETA Utilisation	GS2/GS3	FTA preference-utilisation gap; rules of origin friction	★★★★☆
S-400 Triumf / Sudarshan Chakra	GS3	Layered air defence; Op Sindoor intercept; CAATSA comparison	★★★★☆
Gaganyaan TV-D1 Test Flight	GS3	Crew Escape System; human-spaceflight safety protocol	★★★★★

ANRF / RDI Scheme Fund Managers	GS3	Patient capital vs direct grants; SERB-ANRF-RDI lineage	★★★★★
PM GatiShakti — 5 Years	GS3	Logistics cost (14% of GDP); 16-ministry GIS integration	★★★★★
UPI MDR Rollout Deferral	GS3	Zero-MDR sustainability; payment-systems regulation	★★★★★
Great Indian Bustard Release	GS3	Captive breeding; power-line collision; SC 2021/2024 orders	★★★★★
Indian Wolf — IUCN Reclassification	GS3	Subspecies-to-species elevation; grassland ecosystem neglect	★★★★★
Nobel Economics 2026 (Hall & Woodford)	GS3	Business-cycle theory; monetary-policy credibility	★★★★★
AYUSH Standard Treatment Guidelines	GS2	Traditional-medicine standardisation; health governance	★★★★★
GST Collections Sept 2026	GS3	₹2.04 lakh crore, +14.7% YoY — indirect-tax buoyancy trend	★★★★★
RBI VRRR Auction	GS3	Liquidity-management instruments; LAF corridor mechanics	★★★★★
IMD Cyclone Decision-Support System	GS1/GS3	WebGIS early-warning tools; post-monsoon cyclone preparedness	★★★★★
Clinical Establishments Act Enforcement	GS2	Healthcare-rate transparency; Centre-State health governance	★★★★★

8

PROOF OF PRECISION — PART II

VERIFIED

★ 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+ →

Environment

Ethics

Polity

Economy

Sci-Tech

IR

9

NEWS ITEMS (BOTH PARTS)

6

ETHICS CASES

20

MCQS GENERATED

9

MAINS QUESTIONS

7

PLACES MAPPED

0

REPEATED TOPICS

- ✓ 2 Environment cards (1 current + 1 static), thematically paired around India's grassland ecosystem.
- ✓ 7 Places-in-News pins, each anchored to a Part I or Part II card with physical-geography context.
- ✓ 6 Ethics cases, each naming its governing ethical concept (proportionality, natural justice, reciprocity, strategic autonomy, distributive justice, public trust).
- ✓ 20 Prelims MCQs (10 statement-based); 9 Mains questions spanning GS1, GS2, GS3 and GS4.

← **Part I** covers: Headlines · Polity & Governance · International Relations · Defence · Science & Technology · Economy

ANTIM ASSURED 100+ · **The Topper's Last Read. Every Morning.** · TheIAS Akademia · theiasakademia.com
· theiasakademia@gmail.com