

PART I · HEADLINES TO ECONOMY

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“Every Topper's Last Read” — if a card would not survive being the last thing a serious aspirant reads before the exam, it does not belong here.

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§2 Polity & Governance

GS2

Judiciary & Constitutional Bodies — Appointments

23 September 2026 · Source: Supreme Court proceedings (reported)

‘Judges Appoint Judges Is a Myth’: SC’s Collegium Remark Roils the Election Commission Appointment Case

Why in News: On 23 September 2026, hearing the pending constitutional challenge to the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023, Justice Dipankar Datta remarked that the frequently-invoked phrase “judges appoint judges” is a “myth,” since the Collegium’s recommendations are only advisory and the Executive retains final, decisive control. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta used the same logic in reverse — arguing that if “outsiders” are validly excluded from judicial appointments under the Collegium, the Executive cannot be faulted for excluding the Chief Justice of India from the three-member Election Commission selection panel created by the 2023 Act. The exchange reopened the deeper question the Bench must still decide: whether a panel of the PM, a Union Cabinet Minister and the Leader of the Opposition — with no judicial member — satisfies the independence test the Court itself set in *Anoop Baranwal* (2023).

Background: In *Anoop Baranwal v. Union of India* (2023), a five-judge Constitution Bench had held, pending a parliamentary law, that the CEC and ECs would be selected by a committee of the PM, the Leader of the Opposition, and the CJI — a deliberate check on unilateral executive power. Parliament’s subsequent 2023 Act replaced the CJI on that panel with a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the PM, restoring an executive 2:1 majority. EC appointments have never

gone through Collegium-style peer consultation; this case tests whether that design is sustainable given the ECI's Article 324 mandate to conduct free and fair elections.

KEY FACTS

- Case: constitutional challenge to the CEC and Other ECs (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023, heard 23 Sept 2026.
- Anoop Baranwal v. Union of India (2023): 5-judge Constitution Bench; interim panel = PM + LoP + CJI.
- The 2023 Act replaced the CJI with a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the PM — restoring an executive 2:1 majority.
- Justice Dipankar Datta: Collegium recommendations are “recommendatory” only, so “judges appoint judges” is a “myth.”
- SG Tushar Mehta’s counter: if the judiciary excludes “outsiders” from the Collegium, the Executive can equally exclude the CJI from EC selection.
- Article 324 vests “superintendence, direction and control” of elections in the Election Commission.
- The case remains sub judice — no final verdict on the 2023 Act’s constitutionality as of 25 September 2026.
- This is the same constitutional thread that produced the 2023 Act after the Anoop Baranwal interim order — fresh oral arguments this week.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Institutional design: can a selection panel with no judicial/non-partisan member deliver the independence Art. 324 demands, given the CEC’s control over the model code, EVM/VVPAT and delimitation-adjacent processes?
- The judiciary’s own contested legitimacy: using the Collegium’s ‘recommendatory-only’ character to defend a different body’s design risks a category error — different constitutional functions.
- Federalism/rule-of-law angle: EC independence directly affects State election credibility and the conduct of the model code.
- Comparative angle: contrast with the UK Electoral Commission’s cross-party board model.
- Way forward: a fresh constitutional amendment restoring the CJI, or an independent search-cum-selection committee on the CVC/CIC model.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Two ‘myths,’ one exam trap: Collegium = recommendatory (Executive decides); EC panel (2023 Act) = PM + Minister + LoP, no CJI. ‘Judges appoint judges is a myth’ one way; the SG’s mirror-argument runs the other way.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS2 (recurring theme): Analyse the appointment process and the independence of the Election Commission of India relative to the Judiciary's Collegium system, with reference to Anoop Baranwal v. Union of India (2023).

 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The CEC and Other ECs (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023 provides for a selection committee comprising the Prime Minister, a Union Cabinet Minister, and the Leader of the Opposition.
2. In Anoop Baranwal v. Union of India (2023), the Supreme Court's interim direction had included the Chief Justice of India in the Election Commissioner selection panel.
3. Recommendations made through the Collegium system for the higher judiciary are final and binding on the Executive under Article 124.

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 — Collegium recommendations are advisory; the Executive retains a (limited) power to return them, which is the basis of Justice Datta's remark.

GS2

Collegium

Election Commission

Anoop Baranwal

Article 324

GS2

Statutory Bodies — Election Symbols Order, 1968

24 September 2026 · Source: Supreme Court proceedings (reported)

SC Presses ECI for a Timeline on the TMC Name-and-Symbol Freeze, Invoking the Shiv Sena Precedent

Why in News: A Bench led by CJI Surya Kant heard Mamata Banerjee's plea against the Election Commission's 17 September interim order that froze the original "Trinamool Congress" name and symbol pending resolution of a factional dispute with a rival group led by Ritabrata Banerjee, ahead of West Bengal bypolls. The Bench asked the ECI to state how much time it realistically needs for final adjudication under Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 — with Justice Joymalya Bagchi explicitly invoking the delay-driven damage seen in the Shiv Sena symbol dispute as a cautionary precedent.

Background: Paragraph 15 of the Symbols Order, 1968 empowers the ECI, when a recognised party splits, to decide which faction keeps the party's name and reserved symbol — usually applying a "test of majority" among elected representatives and organisational office-bearers. The mechanism has produced slow-moving, high-stakes disputes before: the Shiv Sena split (2022, resolved for the Eknath Shinde faction after prolonged proceedings) and the NCP split

(2023). Delay has repeatedly disadvantaged the faction without the recognised symbol, since symbol recognition is often decisive in first-past-the-post elections.

KEY FACTS

- Bench: CJI Surya Kant, Justice Joymalya Bagchi, Justice V. Mohana.
- ECI's interim order (17 Sept 2026) froze the "Trinamool Congress" name/symbol pending resolution ahead of West Bengal bypolls.
- Dispute: factions led by Mamata Banerjee and Ritabrata Banerjee.
- Governing provision: Paragraph 15, Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968.
- CJI Kant to ECI: "Find out, for final adjudication, how much time are you expected to take?"
- Justice Bagchi: "We have seen what delay does in Shiv Sena, Sir" — invoking the 2022 precedent.
- ECI clarified its interim allocation is a temporary bypoll measure, not a final Para 15 adjudication.
- Precedent chain: Shiv Sena (2022) and NCP (2023) splits were both resolved via the same Para 15 mechanism after months of litigation.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Para 15's 'test of majority' (legislative + organisational strength) versus alternative designs — does the current test unfairly favour whichever faction currently holds elected office?
- Delay as a substantive harm: symbol recognition shapes voter behaviour directly in FPTP elections, so procedural delay can determine outcomes before any adjudication on merits.
- Judicial oversight of a quasi-judicial constitutional body: how far can courts direct the ECI's internal timelines without encroaching on its Article 324 'superintendence' mandate?
- Recurring institutional flashpoint: three major party splits (Shiv Sena, NCP, now TMC) within four years signal a structural gap in India's intra-party-democracy framework.
- Way forward: a statutory outer time-limit for Para 15 adjudications, or a time-bound fact-finding tribunal feeding into the ECI's final decision.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Para 15 = 'who keeps the name.' Sequence to remember: Shiv Sena (2022) → NCP (2023) → TMC symbol freeze (2026) — three splits, one provision, one lesson: delay decides elections.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS2: Discuss the powers of the Election Commission of India in resolving disputes over recognition of political parties and allotment of symbols, with reference to the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 empowers the Election Commission to decide disputes over a recognised party's name and symbol after a split.
2. Decisions of the Election Commission under Paragraph 15 are subject to judicial review.
3. The 'test of majority' applied under Paragraph 15 considers only the strength of a faction among the party's Members of Parliament.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b). Statement 3 is incorrect — the test of majority weighs both legislative-wing strength AND organisational (office-bearer) support, not MPs alone.

GS2

Election Commission

Symbols Order 1968

Shiv Sena Precedent

GS1/GS2

Centre-State Relations — NEP 2020, Linguistic Federalism

24 September 2026 · Source: Supreme Court proceedings (reported)

SC Nudges CBSE to Defer the Three-Language Formula's Class 6 Rollout — Federalism Question Stays Open

Why in News: The same 24 September Bench suggested CBSE “consider deferring implementation” of the NEP 2020 three-language formula for the current Class 6 batch to the next academic year, after petitioners argued CBSE's seven-day rollout notice left many Delhi-NCR English-medium schools with no real third-language option beyond Sanskrit. Framed “without prejudice to the rights and contentions of the parties,” the order leaves the deeper constitutional question — whether a centrally-mandated third language infringes linguistic federalism — undecided; CBSE agreed only to “consider” it and file a fresh note.

Background: NEP 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE), 2023 embed a ‘third language’ (R3) requirement from Class 6, building on the older three-language formula that has been a Centre-State flashpoint since the 1960s. Tamil Nadu has historically rejected the formula, running a two-language (Tamil + English) policy on the ground that it functions as indirect Hindi imposition. Because language policy sits at the intersection of the Concurrent List (education) and cultural identity, any perceived centralisation of curriculum design reopens this fault line.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Order: SC “suggests” CBSE consider deferring R3 for the current Class 6 batch to 2027-28; framed as non-binding, “without prejudice.”
- CBSE's directive required schools to notify third-language rollout “within 7 days,” leaving Sanskrit as the only option at many Delhi-NCR English-medium schools.

- Grounding instruments: NEP 2020's three-language formula; NCF-SE 2023's R3 structure.
- Tamil Nadu's decades-long position: two-language policy (Tamil + English), rejecting R3 as functional Hindi imposition.
- CBSE's response in court: it would "consider the suggestion and present a fresh note" — no commitment yet.
- The core constitutional issue (does a mandatory third language violate linguistic federalism) remains explicitly undecided — an interim procedural nudge, not a judgment.
- Education sits in the Concurrent List (List III, Seventh Schedule) — both Centre and States can legislate, which is why curriculum mandates like R3 keep triggering disputes.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Distinguish procedural relief (a one-year deferral suggestion) from substantive constitutional adjudication (whether R3 itself is valid) — a common trap in reading court orders.
- Federalism angle: education's Concurrent List placement gives the Centre real curriculum-setting power, but implementation friction repeatedly surfaces as a states'-rights issue.
- Article 350A obliges the State to provide primary education in the mother tongue for linguistic minorities — a related but distinct constitutional anchor from the Eighth Schedule/official-language provisions.
- Comparative note: Tamil Nadu's two-language model versus NEP's three-language model reflect two competing philosophies of managing linguistic diversity.
- Way forward: more State/Board choice in selecting the third language (not defaulting to Sanskrit), paired with adequate lead time for schools to hire qualified teachers.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

R3 = the 'third language' under NEP 2020/NCF-SE 2023. Federalism ladder: Art. 350A (mother-tongue right) → Concurrent List (education) → Policy (NEP 2020) → Framework (NCF-SE 2023) → CBSE circular. Four layers, one Class 6 rollout, no final answer yet.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS1/GS2: The Three-Language Formula has been a recurring source of Centre-State friction since the 1960s. Discuss with reference to recent developments in school curriculum policy.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The National Education Policy 2020 recommends a three-language formula to be implemented from Class 6 onward under the National Curriculum Framework for School Education, 2023.
2. Tamil Nadu has historically followed a two-language policy comprising Tamil and English.

3. Education is placed exclusively in the State List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a). Statement 3 is incorrect — Education is in the Concurrent List, not the State List, which is exactly why both Centre and States assert competing claims over curriculum.

GS1

GS2

NEP 2020

Linguistic Federalism

CBSE

§3 GS1 — Society & Culture

GS1

Indian Society — Linguistic Diversity

18 September 2026 (Karnataka Cabinet decision), still being explained in 24 September 2026 press coverage ·

Source: Government of Karnataka

Karnataka Grants Tulu ‘Additional Official Language’ Status — But This Is Not the Eighth Schedule

Why in News: On 18 September 2026 the Karnataka Cabinet approved Tulu as an additional official/administrative language in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts alongside Kannada, allocating ₹82 lakh a year for translation and staff training; the decision was still being explained through the week (including a 24 September press explainer on what the ‘official’ tag actually means), because it is widely — and wrongly — conflated with the separate, long-pending demand for Tulu’s inclusion in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution. This is a clean, high-yield UPSC trap: the two statuses rest on entirely different constitutional provisions and authorities.

Background: Under Article 345, a State Legislature may by law adopt any language(s) in use in the State as its official language(s) for State purposes — a State prerogative, exercised here via a Cabinet decision covering only two districts. Inclusion in the Eighth Schedule (Articles 344 and 351), by contrast, is a Union subject requiring a constitutional amendment by Parliament, conferring recognition for Sahitya Akademi support, translation duties in competitive examinations, and symbolic national status. Tulu — spoken by an estimated 1.8-2 million people in coastal Karnataka and parts of Kerala — has campaigned for Eighth Schedule inclusion for decades, a demand that remains pending regardless of this week’s order.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Karnataka Cabinet decision: 18 September 2026; Tulu recognised as additional official/administrative language in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts only — Kannada remains the sole state-wide official language.
- Budgetary allocation: ₹82 lakh per year for translation, staff training and related administrative activities.
- Implementation: carried out by district administrations in the two districts.
- Constitutional basis of THIS decision: Article 345 (State's power to adopt official languages) — a State action, not a Parliamentary one.
- Eighth Schedule inclusion (the separate, still-pending Tulu demand) requires a constitutional amendment under Articles 344 and 351 — a Union Parliament action.
- The Eighth Schedule currently lists 22 languages; the most recent additions (Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Santali) came via the 92nd Amendment Act, 2003.
- Tulu speakers: roughly 1.8-2 million, concentrated in coastal Karnataka (Tulu Nadu) and parts of Kerala (Kasaragod).
- Other pending Eighth Schedule demands include Bhojpuri and Rajasthani — Tulu's case sits within this larger, decades-old queue.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Classic UPSC distinction: 'official language' (Art. 345, State-level) vs 'Eighth Schedule language' (Art. 344/351, Union-level, constitutional-cultural recognition).
- Sub-state multilingualism as a governance tool: Karnataka's district-limited approach shows how States can accommodate linguistic minorities without a Union amendment.
- Political economy of the Eighth Schedule queue: each addition needs Parliamentary consensus and often triggers demands from other unlisted languages.
- Comparative federalism angle: Bodo/Maithili's eventual Eighth Schedule inclusion (sustained political mobilisation) versus Tulu's slower trajectory despite a comparable speaker base.
- Cultural-preservation dimension: district-level official status can support script/literature preservation (Tulu has its own historical Tigalari script) even short of constitutional recognition.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Article 345 = State decides its own official language(s). Article 344/351 = Parliament decides the Eighth Schedule. One Cabinet meeting can do the first (Tulu, 18 Sept); only a constitutional amendment can do the second.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS1 (recurring theme): With reference to the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India, which of the following languages were added by the 92nd Amendment Act, 2003?
[Bodo/Dogri/Maithili/Santali matching-style item]

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. A State Legislature can adopt one or more languages in use in the State as its official language(s) under Article 345 of the Constitution.
2. Inclusion of a language in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution requires a constitutional amendment.
3. Tulu was included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution through the 92nd Amendment Act, 2003.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a). Statement 3 is incorrect — the 92nd Amendment added Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santali, not Tulu; Tulu's Eighth Schedule demand remains pending even after this week's district-level order.

GS1

Article 345

Eighth Schedule

Linguistic Diversity

§4 International Relations

GS2

International Groupings & Institutions — UNSC Reform

23 September 2026 · Source: MEA / G4 Joint Statement, New York

G4 Nations Renew Call for 'Immediate' UNSC Reform at UNGA-81, Citing 18 Years of Stalled Talks

Why in News: On the sidelines of the 81st UN General Assembly in New York, the foreign ministers of India, Brazil, Germany and Japan — the G4 — issued a joint statement declaring the UN Security Council “unable to effectively discharge its core responsibility of maintaining international peace and security,” attributing this to an “anachronistic eight-decades-old architecture,” and demanding expansion in both permanent and non-permanent membership, with explicit support for enhanced representation for Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America/Caribbean. EAM S. Jaishankar framed it as pursuing “reformed multilateralism” and a Council “that reflects today’s global realities,” with a follow-up Director-General-level coordination meeting announced for New Delhi.

Background: The G4 has jointly pursued UNSC reform since the mid-2000s, each member asserting an independent claim to permanent membership based on population, economic weight, and UN/peacekeeping contributions. The Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) framework, the UN’s own reform-discussion mechanism since 2008, has produced no binding

outcome in eighteen years — largely because Charter amendment requires a two-thirds UNGA vote AND ratification by all five existing permanent members (Article 108), several of whom have structural incentives to preserve the status quo.

KEY FACTS

- G4 grouping: India, Brazil, Germany, Japan; ministers present — S. Jaishankar, Mauro Vieira, Johann David Wadephul, Motegi Toshimitsu.
- Joint statement issued 23 September 2026, UNGA-81 sidelines, New York.
- Explicit demand: expansion in BOTH permanent and non-permanent Security Council categories.
- Explicit support named for enhanced representation of Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America/Caribbean.
- IGN (Intergovernmental Negotiations) framework has run 18 years without a binding outcome.
- Charter amendment mechanism: two-thirds UNGA vote AND ratification by all five permanent members (Article 108) — an effective P5 veto over their own dilution.
- Africa's Ezulwini Consensus demands at least two permanent seats WITH veto power — a recurring friction point with the G4's own proposal.
- Next step: a Director-General-level G4 coordination meeting announced for New Delhi.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Structural blockage: an amendment rule requiring unanimous P5 ratification makes self-reform of the Council nearly impossible — a strong institutional-design theme.
- India's twin-track diplomacy: the G4 coalition (self-interest-aligned) versus outreach to Africa's Ezulwini Consensus (values-aligned) — do these tracks reinforce or dilute each other?
- Legitimacy deficit: an 80-year-old five-permanent-member structure increasingly misaligned with 2026's economic and demographic realities.
- Alternative reform models debated: permanent seats without veto versus India's insistence on full veto parity.
- Way forward: incremental confidence-building (longer-term elected-member categories, working-method reforms) as an interim path when full Charter amendment stays blocked.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

G4 = India + Brazil + Germany + Japan, each with its own claim, reforming together. Blocker: Article 108 needs ALL 5 current permanent members to ratify — the P5 effectively vetoes ending their own veto monopoly.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS2 (recurring): Discuss the need for reforms in the UN Security Council and India's efforts towards achieving permanent membership.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The G4 grouping seeking UN Security Council reform comprises India, Brazil, Germany and Japan.
2. Amendment of the UN Charter to expand the Security Council requires ratification by all five permanent members.
3. The Ezulwini Consensus is Africa's common position demanding at least two permanent seats with veto power on an expanded Security Council.

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 — a rare all-true item testing whether candidates recognise the G4, the Article 108 amendment mechanism, and the Ezulwini Consensus as three distinct, accurate elements of the UNSC reform debate.

GS2

UNSC Reform

G4

UNGA-81

Multilateralism

GS2

India's Bilateral Relations — Pakistan; Treaties

24–25 September 2026 · Source: MEA (right of reply, Geneva) / UNGA proceedings, New York

India Rebuts Pakistan at UNHRC and UNGA — On Terrorism, PoK and the Indus Waters Treaty

Why in News: Within a 24-hour window, India used its 'right of reply' at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva (24 September) to reject Pakistan's charges over Kashmir, and then watched reporters at the UN General Assembly in New York (25 September) twice ask Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif when he would prosecute Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed — questions he left unanswered both times. Indian diplomat Kshitij Tyagi told the Council that "Pakistan would better serve its people by focusing on development, rather than by coveting territory of others or exporting terror," adding that neither this nor Pakistan's "theatrics" would help it "repay the loans its economy survives on." Separately, the MEA dismissed Pakistan's claims about an "illegally-constituted" Indus Waters Treaty arbitration court as "malicious propaganda."

Background: India and Pakistan have used UN human-rights and General Assembly forums as a recurring stage for contesting Kashmir, cross-border terrorism, and treaty disputes for decades. The Indus Waters Treaty (1960), brokered by the World Bank, governs sharing of the six Indus-system rivers; India has curtailed elements of treaty cooperation following recent security developments, while Pakistan has sought international arbitration through a forum India disputes, arguing the Treaty's own sequential dispute-resolution design (a Neutral Expert first, a Court of Arbitration only in defined circumstances) was bypassed.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- India's right-of-reply statement at UNHRC Geneva delivered by diplomat Kshitij Tyagi, 24 September 2026.
- Key line: Pakistan's "theatrics" at the Council would not help it "repay the loans its economy survives on."
- India alleged civilians killed in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) since June 2026, and cited student arrests in Islamabad/Rawalpindi.
- MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal separately rejected Pakistan's Indus Waters Treaty arbitration claims as "malicious propaganda."
- At UNGA New York (25 Sept), reporters twice asked PM Shehbaz Sharif when Pakistan would prosecute Hafiz Saeed — unanswered both times.
- This is the 81st session of the UN General Assembly.
- Indus Waters Treaty (1960), World Bank-brokered, governs the Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej.
- IWT dispute mechanism: Neutral Expert first, Court of Arbitration only in defined circumstances — the sequencing India says was bypassed.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- 'Right of reply' as counter-narrative diplomacy — assess its persuasive value at forums where audience states already hold fixed positions.
- Treaty-interpretation dispute: whether Pakistan's arbitration route bypasses the IWT's own sequential dispute-resolution design — a technical, testable treaty-law point.
- Linking terrorism accountability (Hafiz Saeed) to treaty and human-rights diplomacy — India's recurring strategy at multilateral forums.
- Limits of UN-forum diplomacy for bilateral disputes: neither the UNHRC nor UNGA has binding authority over India-Pakistan bilateral treaty or territorial disputes.
- Comparative note: contrast this recurring sparring with the more structured (currently suspended) bilateral/Track-II mechanisms once used to cool tensions.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

IWT dispute path = Neutral Expert first, Court of Arbitration only later, under defined conditions — remember it as 'NE before CoA, not instead of.'

PYQ LINKAGE

GS2: 'Traditional bilateral disputes get little resolved but plenty rehearsed at multilateral human-rights forums.' Discuss with reference to India-Pakistan exchanges at the UN.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Indus Waters Treaty, 1960, was brokered with the involvement of the World Bank.

2. Under the Indus Waters Treaty's dispute-resolution mechanism, a Court of Arbitration can be approached only after recourse to a Neutral Expert in defined circumstances.

3. The UN Human Rights Council has binding authority to adjudicate bilateral treaty disputes between member states.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a). Statement 3 is incorrect — the UNHRC is a deliberative/monitoring body with no binding adjudicatory authority over bilateral treaty disputes such as the IWT.

GS2

India-Pakistan

Indus Waters Treaty

UNHRC

UNGA-81

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Multilateral-institution questions like UNSC reform and treaty diplomacy recur every cycle — ANTIM 2027's IR module tracks each thread across the year so nothing resurfaces as a surprise — **ANTIM 2027**. Learn more at theiasakademia.com.

§5 Defence & Security

GS3

Indigenisation of Defence Production

23 September 2026 · Source: Ministry of Defence

MoD Signs ₹810.79-Crore Contract with Bharat Dynamics for 160 Indigenous SAT-SAAW Glide Bombs

Why in News: The Ministry of Defence signed a ₹810.79-crore contract with Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) on 23 September 2026 for 160 units of the Satellite-Aided Anti-Airfield Weapon (SAT-SAAW), a precision-guided glide bomb designed to neutralise enemy airfields from long stand-off range, launchable from Jaguar, Hawk and Su-30 MKI platforms. Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh was present at the signing, part of a wider push to move stand-off strike capability onto indigenous, DRDO-designed platforms procured under the “Buy (Indian-IDDMM)” category, which mandates Indian design, development and manufacture.

Background: Anti-airfield weapons crater runways and destroy hardened aircraft shelters at a conflict's opening stage, denying an adversary's air force the ability to operate. India has historically imported such stand-off munitions; SAT-SAAW's development by DRDO — roughly 60% indigenous content across sub-systems like the Initial Measurement Unit, Long Impact Delay Fuse and Twin Store Carrier — is part of the broader “Aatmanirbhar Bharat” defence-

manufacturing push shifting major weapons categories from imports to domestic design-and-build contracts under the Defence Acquisition Procedure's indigenous-content categories.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Contract value: ₹810.79 crore (approx. ₹811 crore).
- Quantity: 160 units of SAT-SAAW plus associated ground/support equipment.
- Vendor: Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), a Defence PSU.
- Designer: DRDO — approximately 60% indigenous content, including the Initial Measurement Unit, Long Impact Delay Fuse, and Twin Store Carrier.
- Delivery platforms: Jaguar, Hawk, and Su-30 MKI aircraft.
- Procurement category: "Buy (Indian-IDDMM)" — Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured.
- Deliveries scheduled across 2027-28 and 2028-29.
- Signed in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, 23 September 2026.

🎯 MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- "Buy (Indian-IDDMM)" is DAP's highest indigenisation-preference category — assess its reshaping of India's defence-industrial base since DAP 2020.
- Stand-off/airfield-denial capability as a strategic-deterrence tool: reduces manned-aircraft risk while raising an adversary's air-defence burden.
- PSU-versus-private-sector debate: BDL (a Defence PSU) remains the executing vendor even as policy increasingly courts private players.
- Comparative regional context: airfield-denial weapons are widely pursued among regional air forces, making this a deterrence-parity move.
- Way forward: sustaining/raising indigenous content beyond 60% requires deepening India's critical-component ecosystem (guidance electronics, seekers, propulsion).

🧠 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

SAT-SAAW = Satellite-Aided Anti-Airfield Weapon — a satellite-guided glide bomb that closes airfields, not just bases. Buy (Indian-IDDMM) = the DAP's top tier: Indian Designed, Developed AND Manufactured — all three, not just assembled.

📋 PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (recurring): Discuss the significance of the 'Buy (Indian-IDDMM)' category under India's Defence Acquisition Procedure in achieving self-reliance in defence manufacturing.

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. SAT-SAAW is an air-to-ground precision-guided glide bomb designed by DRDO for anti-airfield strikes.

2. The 'Buy (Indian-IDDM)' procurement category requires that a defence platform be Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured.

3. SAT-SAAW can be launched only from indigenously manufactured Tejas fighter aircraft.

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 — SAT-SAAW is cleared for Jaguar, Hawk and Su-30 MKI platforms, not exclusively Tejas.

GS3

Defence Indigenisation

DRDO

Buy Indian-IDDM

GS3

Security Challenges — Cyber, Drones; Strategic Doctrine

24 September 2026 · Source: News18 Defcon 2026 address, New Delhi

'Security Should Not Be Looked at From Geographical Limits': Rajnath Singh Frames a Fluid-Threat Doctrine at Defcon 2026

Why in News: Addressing the News18 Defcon 2026 platform on 24 September 2026, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh argued that national security "should not be looked at from geographical limits," since "the threat boundary has become fluid even as borders are fixed," explicitly naming cybersecurity and drone warfare as domains where physical borders no longer contain the relevant threats. He dated India's shift in strategic thinking to 2014, invoked Nehru's own retrospective admission of having "lived in a bubble" before the 1962 war, and called for blending "the power of argument" with "the argument of power."

Background: Classical Indian strategic doctrine has centred on territorial defence — guarding land borders, maritime frontiers, and airspace. The rise of cyber warfare, drone incursions, and grey-zone/hybrid tactics has pushed strategic thinkers globally toward "comprehensive" or "non-traditional" security frameworks that de-emphasise fixed territorial boundaries as the primary unit of threat analysis. Rajnath Singh's remarks situate India's doctrinal evolution within this shift, contrasting it with the pre-1962 "bubble" Nehru himself later acknowledged as a strategic failure of threat perception.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Platform: News18 Defcon 2026, New Delhi, 24 September 2026.
- Core claim: national security "should not be looked at from geographical limits"; "the threat boundary has become fluid even as borders are fixed."
- Named threat domains: cybersecurity and drone warfare, explicitly cited as border-agnostic.
- Historical anchor: dated India's doctrinal shift to "since 2014."
- Invoked Nehru's post-1962 self-critique of having "lived in a bubble" as a cautionary parallel.
- Framed strategy as blending "the power of argument and the argument of power."

- Maps onto the global academic shift toward “comprehensive/non-traditional security” doctrines.
- Delivered on a major policy-platform format, carrying doctrinal rather than ceremonial weight.

📍 MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Conceptual shift: from territorial/border-centric doctrine to a ‘threat-fluid,’ domain-based framework — testable for Essay and GS3.
- Cyber and drone threats as paradigm cases of border-agnostic challenges: neither needs a soldier or missile to cross a frontier to cause strategic damage.
- Historical parallel and its limits: invoking Nehru’s 1962 self-critique is rhetorically powerful but risks conflating a specific historical failure with a generic doctrinal claim.
- Institutional implication: a ‘fluid threat boundary’ doctrine implies closer integration of civilian cyber agencies (CERT-In, NCIIPC), counter-drone systems, and the armed forces.
- ‘Power of argument and argument of power’ reflects India’s stated preference for combining diplomacy with credible deterrent capability.

🧠 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Fixed borders, fluid threats — geography is fixed, the threat boundary isn’t. Cyber and drones are the two named proof-cases: neither needs a soldier to cross a border to do strategic damage.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS3/Essay: ‘The concept of national security has evolved beyond territorial defence to include non-traditional domains such as cyberspace.’ Critically examine with reference to India’s evolving strategic doctrine.

📍 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. Cyberattacks on critical infrastructure and drone-based threats are examples of security challenges that are not confined by fixed territorial borders.
2. India’s National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre functions under the National Technical Research Organisation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c). Both are correct — NCIIPC functions under the NTRO, distinct from CERT-In’s separate mandate under MeitY; the pairing tests whether candidates can distinguish India’s two principal cyber-security institutions.

GS3

National Security Doctrine

Cyber Security

Drone Warfare

§6 Science & Technology

GS3

Indigenisation of Technology — Quantum Technologies

24–25 September 2026 · Source: DRDO / Technology Development Fund (press reports)

DRDO's First Deep-Tech Pact: An Indigenous 20-Millikelvin Dilution Refrigerator for Quantum Computing

Why in News: DRDO's Technology Development Fund (TDF) signed its first high-value deep-tech agreement — with Zero mK India Pvt Ltd, an Alwar (Rajasthan)-based startup — to develop an indigenous dilution refrigerator capable of cooling quantum-computing hardware to around 20 millikelvin, monitored by DRDO's Solid State Physics Laboratory (SSPL). Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh publicly welcomed the pact as a template for future DRDO-startup deep-tech collaborations, framing it as reducing India's dependence on imported cryogenic infrastructure — currently sourced chiefly from Finland, the US and the UK.

Background: Quantum computers rely on qubits that lose their delicate quantum states ('decoherence') unless cooled to near-absolute-zero temperatures; dilution refrigerators, using a helium-3/helium-4 isotope mixture, are the standard enabling technology for this, but are almost entirely imported today — a critical bottleneck for India's National Quantum Mission (approved 2023). DRDO's TDF — a ₹500-crore corpus — is designed to close such enabling-infrastructure gaps rather than fund only finished weapons platforms.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Agreement: DRDO's TDF with Zero mK India Pvt Ltd (Alwar, Rajasthan) — first high-value agreement under the TDF's ₹500-crore corpus.
- Monitoring laboratory: DRDO's Solid State Physics Laboratory (SSPL).
- Target: an indigenous dilution refrigerator reaching approximately 20 millikelvin — a fraction of a degree above absolute zero ($0\text{ K} \approx -273.15^\circ\text{C}$).
- Cooling mechanism: a helium-3/helium-4 isotope mixture, the standard technique for reaching millikelvin-range temperatures.

- Explicit goal: reduce dependence on imported cryogenic infrastructure (mainly Finland, the US, UK) and strengthen the domestic quantum-technology ecosystem.
- Direct link to India's National Quantum Mission (Union Cabinet-approved, 2023) — dilution refrigerators are an enabling-hardware bottleneck for its computing goals.
- No delivery timeline or contract value has yet been publicly disclosed for this pact.
- Represents a DRDO-startup (non-PSU) collaboration model, distinct from its usual PSU/DPSU-anchored procurement route.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Enabling-technology bottlenecks versus headline-mission announcements: import-dependence in 'invisible' infrastructure (cryogenics) can quietly cap mission-level ambition.
- DRDO-startup collaboration as institutional innovation: the TDF model extends indigenisation beyond traditional Defence PSUs to agile deep-tech startups.
- Dual-use significance: quantum-computing infrastructure serves both civilian (drug discovery, materials science) and defence (secure communications, quantum sensing) applications.
- Comparative global context: leading quantum-computing nations have built domestic cryogenic supply chains as a strategic priority — India's move mirrors this from a narrower industrial base.
- Way forward: sustained indigenisation needs parallel investment in the broader cryogenics/vacuum-engineering supply chain, not a single prototype.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Dilution refrigerator = the 'freezer' a quantum computer needs — cools qubits to ~20 millikelvin using a helium-3/helium-4 mix, because heat destroys the fragile quantum state ('decoherence'). No fridge, no functioning quantum computer.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 (extends UPSC Prelims 2023's National Quantum Mission question): Discuss the significance of enabling hardware technologies such as cryogenic cooling systems for developing quantum computing capability in India.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. Dilution refrigerators are used to cool quantum computing hardware to temperatures in the millikelvin range using a mixture of helium-3 and helium-4.
2. India's National Quantum Mission was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2023.
3. DRDO's Technology Development Fund exclusively funds Defence Public Sector Undertakings and does not engage with private startups.

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 — this very pact, with a private startup, demonstrates that the TDF explicitly engages non-PSU vendors.

GS3

Quantum Technology

National Quantum Mission

DRDO

GS2/GS3

E-Governance — Digital Health Infrastructure

24–25 September 2026 · Source: National Health Authority, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Arogya Manthan 2026: India Launches a National Health Claims Exchange and a ‘Secure Data Environment’ for Health Data

Why in News: Marking eight years of Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY and five years of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda inaugurated Arogya Manthan 2026 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, unveiling the National Healthcare Providers Registry (NHPR) mobile app, an Implementation Guide for the National Health Claims Exchange (NHCX), a Guidebook for a Model Digital Health Facility, a ‘Secure Data Environment’ (SDE) built with IISc Bengaluru, and a Framework for Auto-Adjudication of Claims under PM-JAY — pushing India’s digital-health architecture from record-keeping toward automated, interoperable claims processing.

Background: ABDM (launched 2021) built the technical backbone — the ABHA ID system and a federated architecture linking hospitals, labs and insurers — while PM-JAY (launched 2018) provides health insurance cover to economically vulnerable households. As both scaled, claims processing and privacy-preserving data governance emerged as the next bottlenecks; NHCX aims to standardise how insurers and hospitals exchange claims, while the SDE offers a sandboxed mechanism for approved researchers to analyse de-identified data without downloading raw records.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Event: Arogya Manthan 2026, Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi; inaugurated by Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda; organised by the National Health Authority (NHA).
- Marks 8 years of PM-JAY (launched 2018) and 5 years of ABDM (launched 2021).
- New launches: NHPR mobile app; NHCX Implementation Guide for Payers; Model Digital Health Facility Guidebook; Secure Data Environment (SDE); Auto-Adjudication of Claims Framework.
- SDE, built with IISc Bengaluru, restricts researchers to de-identified data or an isolated NHA sandbox, with outputs vetted before release.
- PM-JAY scale: 60+ crore beneficiaries; 13+ crore hospital admissions; treatment value exceeding ₹2 lakh crore; Oct 2024 expansion added ~6 crore senior citizens aged 70+.
- ABDM scale: 97.8+ crore ABHA IDs created; 121+ crore health records linked; 5.6 lakh registered health facilities; 11 lakh registered healthcare professionals.

- NHCX sits at the interface of NHA (health-scheme regulator) and IRDAI-regulated insurers — a cross-regulatory digital-claims standard.
- Auto-Adjudication Framework aims to automate end-to-end insurance-claim processing under PM-JAY.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Interoperability versus privacy trade-off: standardising health-data exchange (NHCX) while protecting privacy (SDE's sandboxed access) are two simultaneous, partly-competing goals.
- The SDE model as a template for AI-governance-compliant access to sensitive public datasets, relevant to the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 compliance debate.
- Claims-automation as a fintech-health regulatory hybrid: NHCX creates a standard between NHA and IRDAI, raising institutional-coordination questions.
- Scale-versus-outcome distinction: ABHA enrolment (97.8+ crore) is an input metric — whether it reduces actual out-of-pocket health expenditure is a separate, unresolved question.
- Comparative angle: India's federated, ID-linked digital-health model versus centralised national health-record systems abroad, relevant to India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) advocacy.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Remember the '8-5' anchor: 8 years PM-JAY (insurance, since 2018), 5 years ABDM (digital backbone, since 2021). NHCX = claims exchange for insurers. SDE = secure data environment for researchers.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS2: Discuss the role of digital public infrastructure in strengthening health-service delivery in India, with reference to the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission uses the ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Health Account) ID as the basis for linking an individual's health records.
2. The National Health Claims Exchange is designed to standardise the exchange of insurance-claims data between hospitals and insurers.
3. The Secure Data Environment launched under Arogya Manthan 2026 permits researchers to download raw, identifiable patient records for analysis.

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 SDE explicitly restricts researchers to de-identified data or an isolated sandbox; it does not permit raw identifiable record downloads.

§7 Economy

GS3

Indian Economy — Growth, Mobilisation of Resources

23 September 2026 · Source: OECD Interim Economic Outlook

OECD Raises India's FY27 Growth Forecast to 7.1% — Highest Among Major Agencies

Why in News: The OECD's Interim Economic Outlook, released 23 September 2026, raised its India growth forecast for FY27 to 7.1% — an 80-basis-point upward revision from its own June 2026 projection of 6.3% — citing “resilient domestic demand and government policies that cushioned households and firms from the impact of higher energy prices.” The revised figure is now the highest among major forecasters, ahead of the ADB, S&P and Moody's (7.0% each), Fitch (6.9%), and even the RBI's own more conservative projection of 6.7%, though the OECD cautioned that “reduced purchasing power is also expected to weaken growth” in H2 FY27.

Background: The OECD's Interim Economic Outlook is a lighter, twice-yearly update to its full biannual Economic Outlook, tracking near-term macroeconomic momentum; India, though not an OECD member, is tracked as a major non-member economy given its size and growth contribution. Growth forecasts have diverged meaningfully across agencies this cycle — a spread partly explained by differing weight given to resilient consumption data against inflation and currency-related headwinds.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- OECD FY26 estimate: 7.8%; FY27 forecast: 7.1% (up from 6.3% in June 2026, an 80-bps revision); FY28 forecast: 6.5%.
- Comparative FY27 forecasts: ADB, S&P, Moody's — 7.0% each; Fitch — 6.9%; RBI — 6.7% (most conservative).
- OECD's stated reason: “resilient domestic demand and government policies that cushioned households and firms from the impact of higher energy prices.”
- OECD's caveat: “reduced purchasing power is also expected to weaken growth” later in FY27.
- OECD's 2026 average inflation projection for India: 4.7%.
- The report flags a possible temporary policy-rate hike to offset inflationary pressure.

- “Interim Economic Outlook” is a lighter, twice-yearly update distinct from the OECD’s full biannual Economic Outlook.
- India, though not an OECD member, is tracked as a major non-member partner economy in these reports.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Forecast divergence as an analytical lens: differing weight on consumption resilience versus inflation/currency risk explains much of the spread across agencies.
- Growth-inflation trade-off: the OECD’s own caveat shows the forecast isn’t unambiguously optimistic — a nuanced reading beats a headline-only take.
- Comparative institutional format: why an ‘Interim’ Outlook differs from a full Outlook is itself testable on how agencies structure forecasting cycles.
- India’s macro-resilience narrative: multiple agencies revising upward suggests genuine consumption-driven momentum, worth cross-referencing against GST/core-sector data as it emerges.
- Policy angle: a possible ‘temporary policy-rate hike’ links to RBI’s independent monetary-policy mandate and the inflation-targeting framework (4% $\pm$ 2% band).

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Ladder from most to least optimistic on India’s FY27 growth: OECD (7.1%) > ADB/S&P/Moody’s (7.0%) > Fitch (6.9%) > RBI (6.7%). The RBI is deliberately the most conservative forecaster of its own economy.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS3: Critically examine the divergence in growth projections for the Indian economy made by various domestic and international agencies, and the factors underlying such divergence.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The OECD’s Interim Economic Outlook (September 2026) revised India’s FY27 growth forecast upward to 7.1%, higher than the Reserve Bank of India’s own projection.
2. The OECD’s Interim Economic Outlook is published annually, replacing its full biannual Economic Outlook.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (a). Statement 2 is incorrect — the Interim Outlook is a lighter, twice-yearly UPDATE alongside (not replacing) the full biannual Economic Outlook.

22–23 September 2026 · Source: DPIIT / PIB (five-year anniversary release)

National Single Window System Completes Five Years — 327 Central and 3,452 State Approvals Now on One Portal

Why in News: The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) marked five years of the National Single Window System (NSWS) — launched 22 September 2021 — with an institutional stock-take showing the platform now integrates 327 Central and 3,452 State-level approvals across 32 Central Ministries/Departments and 34 States/UTs, facilitating an average 2.26 lakh approvals a year out of roughly 3.06 lakh applications, with 5.69 lakh business entities onboarded; the anniversary release cautioned that “the platform carries the paperwork; the statutory power to approve stays with the regulator.”

Background: Before the NSWS, an investor often had to separately identify, apply to, and track approvals across dozens of disconnected Central and State portals — a fragmentation repeatedly cited as a drag on India’s Ease of Doing Business climate. NSWS was conceived as a single digital front-end routing applications to the relevant regulator while giving applicants one unified tracking dashboard — distinct from actual regulatory simplification, since each approval’s substantive requirements remain set by its respective regulator.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Launched: 22 September 2021; this marks its fifth anniversary.
- Coverage: 32 Central Ministries/Departments + 34 States/Union Territories.
- Integrated approvals: 327 Central + 3,452 State approvals on one portal.
- Throughput: average 3.06 lakh applications/year → 2.26 lakh approvals facilitated/year.
- Onboarding: 5.69 lakh business entities registered on the platform to date.
- Recent integrations: Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum (IEM), Industrial Licence (IL), Foreign Investment Facilitation Portal, and PESO’s 74 licensing modules — its first complete transaction-level integration.
- Institutional framing: “the platform carries the paperwork; the statutory power to approve stays with the regulator.”
- Nodal department: DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

🎯 MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Procedural consolidation versus substantive deregulation: NSWS speeds up and unifies the application process but does not change any regulator’s underlying approval criteria.
- Federal cooperation in practice: onboarding 34 States/UTs onto one Central digital platform is a cooperative-federalism achievement in its own right.
- PESO’s integration (74 modules) is a concrete case study of bringing a specialised safety regulator onto a horizontal digital-governance platform.

- Throughput gap: roughly 26% of applications do not result in a facilitated approval within the same cycle — useful for examining persistent bottlenecks.
- Comparative angle: single-window mechanisms are a globally common EoDB tool; India's distinguishing feature is scale (66+ regulators, 34 States/UTs).

🧠 LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

NSWS's own five-year message: 'the platform carries the paperwork; the power stays with the regulator.' Digitising the front door isn't the same as simplifying what's behind it.

📄 PYQ LINKAGE

GS3: 'Digital single-window platforms improve the ease of doing an approval, but not necessarily the ease of the underlying regulation.' Examine with reference to India's National Single Window System.

🎯 PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The National Single Window System integrates approvals from both Central Ministries and State Governments on a single digital platform.
2. The National Single Window System has the statutory power to grant regulatory approvals independent of the concerned Central or State regulator.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (a). Statement 2 is incorrect — statutory approval power remains with each respective regulator; NSWS is a procedural front-end, exactly as the anniversary release itself clarified.

GS3

Ease of Doing Business

NSWS

DPIIT

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§8 Proof of Precision — Part I

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News Items (Part I)

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GS Papers Covered

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PYQ Linkages

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Prelims MCQs
Generated

0

Repeated Topics

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