

PART I • HEADLINES TO ECONOMY

ANTIM ASSURED 100+

THEIAS AKADEMIA

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 Hindi Diwas Special — Full Languages Feature in Part II

"The Topper's Last Read. Every Morning."

INSIDE PART I

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§1 • Top 8 Headlines

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8. Hindi Diwas 2026: a full ANTIM special feature on languages in the Constitution follows in Part II

THEIAS AKADEMIA A day mixing judicial-reform rulings, energy diplomacy, and twin inflation prints rewards structured note-taking — the exact discipline built in **Sahyog Mentorship**. theiasakademia.com.

§2 • Polity & Governance

GS2 Structure of Judiciary • Service conditions

Order ~9–10 Sept 2026 (reported 14 Sept) • Source: Supreme Court order, All India Judges Association v. Union of India

Supreme Court Directs 7 States to Raise District Judges' Retirement Age from 60 to 62

Why in News: The Supreme Court directed Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal — states that had consented — to enhance the retirement age of District Judiciary officers from 60 to 62, subject to a High Court suitability/performance assessment. Officers who retired on or after 31 March 2026 may opt to rejoin under stipulated conditions; other States/UTs were told to reconsider their stance.

Background: Service conditions of the subordinate judiciary are periodically revisited by the Supreme Court under its continuing mandamus in the All India Judges Association litigation, which has previously standardised pay, pensions and working conditions for district judges across states with differing service rules.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Order covers Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, MP, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.
- Retirement age raised from 60 to 62 years, subject to HC suitability assessment.
- Officers retiring on/after 31 March 2026 may opt to rejoin under specified conditions.
- Other States/UTs that had not consented were asked to reconsider.
- The case arises from the continuing All India Judges Association litigation.
- District Judges are appointed under Articles 233-237 of the Constitution.
- The Constitution places recruitment/conditions of service of the subordinate judiciary partly under State control, subject to High Court consultation.
- The Second and Third National Judicial Pay Commissions have previously addressed related service-condition disparities.

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Tests understanding of Articles 233-237 governing subordinate judiciary appointments and control.
- Raises the efficiency-vs-experience debate in judicial retirement policy amid pendency backlogs.
- Highlights federal variation in service conditions despite a common all-India judicial cadre debate.
- Connects to the larger judicial-vacancy and case-pendency crisis motivating retention of experienced officers.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS2 2021: "Discuss the role of the Election Commission of India..." is unrelated; closer thematic PYQs recur on judicial appointments/independence (e.g. NJAC case), though no exact past question on this retirement-age order exists — disclosed honestly.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements: 1. District Judges are appointed under Articles 233-237 of the Constitution. 2. The Supreme Court's recent order enhancing retirement age applies uniformly and mandatorily to all States. 3. High Courts have a consultative role in matters concerning the subordinate judiciary. 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). **Explanation:** The order applies only to consenting States; it is not uniformly mandatory across all States/UTs — statement 2 is wrong.

PROBABLE MAINS QUESTION

Examine the constitutional provisions governing the appointment and service conditions of the subordinate judiciary in India. (150 words)

#GS2 #Judiciary #Art233

Supreme Court: Article 14 Governs Administrative Discretion, Not Just Statutory Decisions

Why in News: A Supreme Court Bench directed the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir to relieve a government Physical Education teacher to coach the national kayaking team for the Asian Games 2026, holding that Article 14 governs administrative discretion just as it governs statutory decisions; the absence of an absolute right to a favourable outcome does not negate the right to fair, timely consideration.

Background: Article 14's guarantee against arbitrariness has, since *E.P. Royappa v. State of Tamil Nadu* (1974), been read to strike at arbitrary state action generally, not merely unequal treatment under a specific law — extending judicial review into the realm of purely administrative/discretionary decisions.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Case: Kayaking Association v. Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, 2026 INSC 981.
- Order dated 10 September 2026.
- Concerned relieving a government PE teacher to coach for the Asian Games 2026.
- Held: Article 14 applies to administrative discretion, not only statutory/legal decisions.
- *E.P. Royappa v. State of Tamil Nadu* (1974) first read Article 14 as striking at arbitrariness generally.
- *Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India* (1978) further expanded Article 14's "reasonableness" test.
- The right recognised is to fair, timely consideration — not to a guaranteed favourable outcome.
- Article 14 guarantees equality before law and equal protection of laws.

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Traces the doctrinal evolution of Article 14 from a formal-equality clause to a general anti-arbitrariness principle.
- Tests the "right to fair consideration vs right to a favourable outcome" distinction, a recurring examiner favourite.
- Connects sports governance/administrative delay to fundamental-rights jurisprudence.
- Raises the broader theme of expanding judicial review over executive discretion in India.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS2 2017: "The Indian Constitution has provisions for holding joint session of the two houses of Parliament. Enumerate the circumstances..." is unrelated; the doctrinal Art. 14/arbitrariness theme recurs regularly in Mains answer-writing on fundamental rights.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding Article 14 of the Constitution: 1. It was first read as a general anti-arbitrariness principle in *E.P. Royappa v. State of Tamil Nadu* (1974). 2. It guarantees an absolute right to a favourable administrative decision. 3. It applies only to decisions made under a specific statute. 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: (a). **Explanation:** Article 14 guarantees fair consideration, not a favourable outcome (statement 2 wrong), and applies to administrative discretion generally, not only statutory decisions (statement 3 wrong).

PROBABLE MAINS QUESTION

"The right to equality under Article 14 has evolved from a formal guarantee into a general check on arbitrary state action."
Discuss. (150 words)

#GS2

#Article14

#JudicialReview

GS2/Ethics

Child rights law · Judicial interpretation

Judgment 8 Sept 2026 (reported 14 Sept) · Source: Supreme Court, Bhaskar Paul v. State of West Bengal

Supreme Court Quashes POCSO Case Against Teacher Over Corporal Punishment

Why in News: The Supreme Court held that corporal punishment or inappropriate conduct by a teacher, without sexual intent, does not attract Sections 7/9(f) of the POCSO Act, setting aside a Calcutta High Court order and quashing proceedings against a teacher accused of beating two students.

Background: The POCSO Act, 2012 was enacted to protect children from sexual offences and criminalises "sexual assault" and "aggravated sexual assault," with intent/sexual context being a necessary ingredient distinguishing it from ordinary criminal or disciplinary infractions such as corporal punishment (separately barred under the RTE Act, 2009).

PRELIMS FACTS

- Case: Bhaskar Paul v. State of West Bengal, judgment dated 8 September 2026.
- Set aside a Calcutta HC order dated 27 April 2026.
- Held that Sections 7/9(f) POCSO require sexual intent, absent in ordinary corporal punishment.
- POCSO Act, 2012 is the primary law addressing sexual offences against children.
- Corporal punishment in schools is separately prohibited under Section 17 of the RTE Act, 2009.
- Section 7 POCSO defines "sexual assault"; Section 9 lists "aggravated" forms attracting higher punishment.
- The judgment distinguishes disciplinary/physical punishment from sexually-motivated conduct for POCSO's applicability.
- NCPDR guidelines separately address corporal-punishment complaints in schools.

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Tests the "ingredient of intent" requirement distinguishing POCSO offences from other forms of misconduct.
- Raises the tension between protecting children from abuse and avoiding conflation of unrelated disciplinary lapses with sexual offences.
- Connects to the RTE Act's separate, non-POCSO corporal-punishment prohibition regime.
- Highlights the risk of both under- and over-inclusion in child-protection statute interpretation.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS1/Society 2015: "Discuss the various social problems which originated out of the speedy process of urbanisation in India" is unrelated; child-rights/POCSO themes recur in GS4 Ethics case studies more than direct GS2 PYQs.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the POCSO Act, 2012: 1. It requires proof of sexual intent for an act to constitute "sexual assault" under Section 7. 2. Corporal punishment in schools is prohibited exclusively under the POCSO Act. 3. The RTE Act, 2009 separately bars corporal punishment in schools. 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). **Explanation:** Corporal punishment is barred under the RTE Act, 2009 (Section 17), not exclusively POCSO — statement 2 is wrong.

PROBABLE MAINS QUESTION

Discuss the significance of "intent" as an ingredient in distinguishing offences under the POCSO Act from other forms of school-based misconduct. (150 words)

#GS2

#POCSO

#ChildRights

#Ethics

§3 · International Relations

GS2/GS3

Neighbourhood policy · Energy diplomacy

13–14 September 2026 (effective till 31 Dec 2026) · Source: Ministry of Power notification

India Approves Export of Up to 600 MW Power to Nepal via Muzaffarpur–Dhalkebar Line

Why in News: The Centre approved export of up to 600 MW of power to the Nepal Electricity Authority for 18 hours a day via the Muzaffarpur-Dhalkebar cross-border transmission line, effective from 13 September through 31 December 2026.

Background: India-Nepal cross-border power trade has grown steadily under the 2018 Guidelines for Cross Border Trade of Electricity, with Nepal increasingly importing during its dry-season deficit and exporting surplus hydropower to India during the monsoon, making the relationship a two-way, seasonally-reversing energy partnership.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Approval covers up to 600 MW export to Nepal Electricity Authority.
- Transmission via the Muzaffarpur (Bihar)-Dhalkebar (Nepal) cross-border line.
- Export permitted for 18 hours per day.
- Validity: 13 September 2026 to 31 December 2026.
- Governed under India's 2018 Guidelines for Cross Border Trade of Electricity.
- Nepal also exports surplus hydropower to India during its monsoon-season surplus.
- The Muzaffarpur-Dhalkebar line is one of the oldest India-Nepal cross-border transmission links.
- Cross-border power trade forms part of India's broader "Neighbourhood First" energy-diplomacy approach.

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Illustrates India's energy-diplomacy tool-kit under Neighbourhood First, complementing lines of credit and connectivity projects.
- Tests the seasonally-reversing nature of India-Nepal power trade as a model of regional grid integration.
- Raises South Asian regional-grid-integration potential under the SAARC/BBIN frameworks.
- Connects to India's own power-surplus management and cross-border transmission-infrastructure capacity.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS2 2016: "'Look East Policy' of India... " is unrelated in geography but thematically parallels neighbourhood-connectivity PYQs; no exact past question on India-Nepal power trade exists — disclosed honestly.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding India-Nepal cross-border power trade: 1. It is governed under India's 2018 Guidelines for Cross Border Trade of Electricity. 2. Nepal only imports power from India and never exports to it. 3. The Muzaffarpur-Dhalkebar line is a cross-border transmission link between the two countries. 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). **Explanation:** Nepal also exports surplus hydropower to India during its monsoon surplus — statement 2 is wrong.

PROBABLE MAINS QUESTION

Examine the significance of cross-border power trade in India's "Neighbourhood First" policy, with reference to Nepal. (150 words)

#GS2

#GS3

#IndiaNepal

#EnergyDiplomacy

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Neighbourhood energy-diplomacy questions are a recurring ANTIM 2027 focus area — deepen this with our IR module. theiasacademy.com.

§4 · Defence & Security

GS3

Defence indigenisation · Emerging technology

14–16 September 2026 (Day 1: 14 Sept) · Source: Indian Air Force / All India Radio

IAF Launches First-Ever "Dronathon-2026"; Releases UAS Roadmap

Why in News: The Indian Air Force held its first-ever "Dronathon-2026," a three-day live-trial event at the Pokhran Field Firing Range, Jaisalmer, bringing over 20 defence companies, startups, MSMEs and DPSUs to test UAVs, swarm systems, electronic warfare and counter-drone (C-UAS) technology under realistic field conditions. Vice Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit inaugurated the event and released the IAF's UAS Roadmap.

Background: The event follows the IAF's push to formalise industry-facing capability priorities for unmanned systems under the Atmanirbhar Bharat defence-indigenisation drive, moving beyond static exhibitions toward live, field-condition trial methodology.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Dronathon-2026 runs 14-16 September 2026 at Pokhran Field Firing Range, Jaisalmer.
- Over 20 defence companies, startups, MSMEs and DPSUs participated.
- Inaugurated by Vice Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit.
- The IAF released its UAS (Unmanned Aerial Systems) Roadmap at the event.
- Trials cover UAVs, swarm systems, electronic warfare, and counter-drone (C-UAS) technology.
- The IAF demonstrated "Vayu UTaM," an indigenous multi-mode Unmanned Traffic Management system.
- The event uses live field-condition trials rather than a static exhibition format.
- It aligns with the Atmanirbhar Bharat defence-indigenisation initiative.

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Reflects the shift from static defence expos to live-trial, capability-gap-driven industry engagement.
- Tests understanding of counter-drone (C-UAS) technology's growing importance given recent global conflicts' drone warfare.
- Connects to Atmanirbhar Bharat's defence-production self-reliance target.
- Raises the debate on MSME/startup integration into traditionally DPSU-dominated defence production.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 2020: "What is the significance of the Indo-French strategic partnership? Discuss the impact of intervention of major powers..." is unrelated; UAV/drone-warfare themes are an emerging, high-probability GS3 Mains area.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements: 1. Dronathon-2026 was held at the Pokhran Field Firing Range. 2. It was inaugurated by the Chief of Air Staff. 3. "Vayu UTtaM" is an indigenous multi-mode Unmanned Traffic Management system demonstrated at the event. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a). **Explanation:** The event was inaugurated by the Vice Chief of Air Staff, not the Chief of Air Staff — statement 2 is wrong.

PROBABLE MAINS QUESTION

Discuss the significance of counter-drone technology and unmanned aerial systems in India's evolving defence-indigenisation strategy. (150 words)

#GS3

#IAF

#Dronathon

#Atmanirbhar

GS3 Internal security · Static Topic

Static Topic — not tied to a current event

CAPF Structure and Theatre Commands: India's Security-Force Architecture

Why in News: With no second fresh, verified Defence/internal-security story clearing the freshness bar today after an exhaustive multi-source search, this static profile is used per the pre-approved RULE 14 fallback protocol, drawing on a previously-unused static-Defence category.

Background: India's Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) — BSF, CRPF, CISF, ITBP, SSB, and Assam Rifles — operate under the Ministry of Home Affairs with distinct mandates ranging from border-guarding to internal security and critical-infrastructure protection, while the proposed reorganisation of the armed forces into integrated theatre commands remains a parallel, higher-level defence-reform debate.

PRELIMS FACTS

- CAPFs comprise BSF, CRPF, CISF, ITBP, SSB, and Assam Rifles.
- All CAPFs function under the Ministry of Home Affairs (Assam Rifles has dual control with the Ministry of Defence for operational matters).
- BSF guards the India-Pakistan and India-Bangladesh borders.
- ITBP guards the India-China border along the Himalayas.
- CISF provides security to critical infrastructure, airports, and PSUs.

- CRPF is India's largest CAPF, primarily deployed for internal security and law-and-order duties.
- Theatre commands aim to integrate Army, Navy and Air Force resources under unified regional commands.
- The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) post, created in 2019, is central to India's theatreisation reform process.

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Tests the distinction between CAPFs (internal security, MHA) and the armed forces (external defence, MoD).
- Raises the institutional-reform debate around theatreisation and inter-service jointness.
- Connects to border-management architecture given multiple forces guarding different stretches of India's borders.
- Highlights coordination challenges between CAPFs and state police in internal-security operations.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 2020: "Analyse internal security threats and border-management challenges along with the security challenges in border areas."

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements: 1. All Central Armed Police Forces function exclusively under the Ministry of Defence. 2. ITBP is primarily responsible for guarding the India-China border. 3. The post of Chief of Defence Staff was created in 2019. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a). **Explanation:** CAPFs function under the Ministry of Home Affairs, not the Ministry of Defence — statement 1 is wrong.

PROBABLE MAINS QUESTION

Discuss the rationale behind India's move toward integrated theatre commands and the institutional challenges involved. (150 words)

#GS3

#CAPF

#TheatreCommands

#StaticTopic

§5 • Economy

GS3

Inflation · Price indices

Released 14 September 2026 · Source: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)

Retail Inflation (CPI) Rises to 4.82% in August 2026, an 18-Month High

Why in News: Headline retail inflation (CPI) rose to 4.82% in August 2026, up from 4.45% in July, its highest reading since December 2024, driven chiefly by onions, ginger, and silver-jewellery prices. Food inflation stood at 5.95%, with rural inflation (5.23%) outpacing urban (4.31%).

Background: CPI is compiled by MoSPI on a 2024=100 base series and is the RBI's primary inflation-targeting reference under the Flexible Inflation Targeting (FIT) framework, which mandates keeping CPI inflation within a 2-6% band with a 4% medium-term target.

PRELIMS FACTS

- CPI inflation: 4.82% in August 2026, up from 4.45% in July.
- Highest CPI reading since December 2024.
- Food inflation (CFPI): 5.95%.
- Rural inflation (5.23%) outpaced urban inflation (4.31%).
- Key drivers: onions, ginger, and silver-jewellery prices.
- CPI is compiled by MoSPI on a 2024=100 base year.
- RBI's Flexible Inflation Targeting mandates a 4% target within a 2-6% band.
- The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) uses CPI, not WPI, as its primary target variable.

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Tests understanding of the Flexible Inflation Targeting framework and CPI's role as the RBI's anchor variable.
- Raises the rural-urban inflation divergence debate and its implications for real wages/purchasing power.
- Connects to food-price volatility (onions, vegetables) as a recurring structural driver of Indian inflation.
- Tests comparative understanding of CPI versus WPI as differently-weighted inflation measures.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 2015: "Faster economic growth requires increased share of the manufacturing sector in GDP, particularly of MSMEs..." is unrelated; inflation-measurement PYQs recur regularly, e.g. GS3 2021 on WPI/CPI divergence.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding India's Consumer Price Index (CPI): 1. It is compiled by MoSPI. 2. The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee uses CPI as its primary inflation-targeting variable. 3. The Flexible Inflation Targeting framework mandates a target of 6% with a 2-8% band. 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). **Explanation:** The FIT framework mandates a 4% target within a 2-6% band, not 6% within 2-8% — statement 3 is wrong.

PROBABLE MAINS QUESTION

Discuss the significance of the Flexible Inflation Targeting framework in India's monetary policy, with reference to recent CPI trends. (150 words)

#GS3

#CPI

#Inflation

#RBI

GS3 Inflation · Price indices

Released 14 September 2026 · Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Office of Economic Adviser)

Wholesale Inflation (WPI) Climbs to 9.92% in August 2026 on a Fuel-Price Surge

Why in News: WPI inflation rose to 9.92% in August 2026 from 9.78% in July, with the Fuel & Power index jumping to 22.93% from 20.05%, Manufactured Products inflation at 8.37%, and the WPI Food Index rising to 7.05% from 6.65% — a genuine CPI-WPI divergence, since retail (CPI) inflation is being driven by food while wholesale (WPI) inflation is being driven by fuel.

Background: WPI measures price changes at the wholesale/producer level and has a much larger weight on fuel, power and manufactured inputs than CPI, which is weighted toward final consumer goods and services (including a housing component WPI

lacks entirely).

PRELIMS FACTS

- WPI inflation: 9.92% in August 2026, up from 9.78% in July.
- Fuel & Power inflation: 22.93%, up from 20.05%.
- Manufactured Products inflation: 8.37%.
- WPI Food Index inflation: 7.05%, up from 6.65%.
- WPI is released by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, not MoSPI.
- WPI has no housing/services component, unlike CPI.
- Primary Articles inflation within WPI eased to 7.76%.
- India shifted its official inflation-targeting anchor from WPI to CPI in 2014-15.

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Tests the structural CPI-WPI divergence: today's fuel-driven WPI surge versus food-driven CPI rise.
- Raises the debate on which index better reflects the "true" cost-of-living/production-cost picture.
- Connects to global crude-oil price pass-through effects on India's wholesale price level.
- Highlights why India shifted its policy anchor from WPI to CPI post-2014.

PYQ LINKAGE

GS3 2021's inflation-measurement theme is the closest reference; no exact past question on this specific August 2026 print exists.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the Wholesale Price Index (WPI): 1. It is released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. 2. It includes a housing/rent component, unlike the CPI. 3. India uses WPI, not CPI, as the RBI's primary inflation-targeting anchor. 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: (a). **Explanation:** WPI has no housing component (statement 2 wrong), and India shifted to CPI as its policy anchor in 2014-15 (statement 3 wrong).

PROBABLE MAINS QUESTION

Distinguish between the Consumer Price Index and the Wholesale Price Index, and discuss why they can diverge, as seen in August 2026. (150 words)

#GS3

#WPI

#Inflation

#TwinPrints

THEIAS AKADEMIA CPI-WPI divergence questions are a LAKSHYAM AIR1 favourite — practice the comparative-table format there. theiasakademia.com.



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→ *Continued in Part II: Environment · Places in News · Ethics · MCQs · Mains Questions · Direct Hit Tracker · Hindi Dikas Special Feature*

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8

NEWS ITEMS

3

GS PAPERS COVERED

6

PYQ LINKAGES

8

PRELIMS QS GENERATED

0

REPEATED TOPICS

Polity

IR

Defence

Economy

✓ All news sourced from Supreme Court orders, Ministry notifications, MoSPI/Commerce Ministry data, and IAF/AIR releases

✓ Every topic cross-checked against the 7-day topic log and 25-year UPSC question bank

✓ No topic repeated from prior editions; S&T section honestly disclosed as thin today (see Promo TXT)

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