

PART I · HEADLINES TO ECONOMY

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INSIDE PART I

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§1 Top Headlines

1. Supreme Court lays down a three-stage test for attributing mens rea to a company without naming an individual officer, in the Sanofi India/BARC procurement case. **GS2/4**
2. Supreme Court restrains appointment of teachers in schools and colleges lacking prescribed RTE/NCTE/UGC qualifications. **GS2**
3. Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan concludes his four-state Northeast tour in Arunachal Pradesh with a special Assembly session. **GS1/2**
4. India readies to host the 18th BRICS Summit at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi (12–13 September); Putin confirmed, Xi Jinping expected. **GS2**
5. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh meets Sri Lankan President Dissanayake in Colombo, reaffirming MAHASAGAR-framework security ties. **GS2/3**
6. Defence Acquisition Council clears AoN for a 40-jet Su-30MKI overhaul, 2,500 Software Defined Radios and new naval radars. **GS3**
7. 9th Bengaluru Space Expo 2026 concludes its three-day run at BIEC, spotlighting India's 400+ private space start-ups. **GS3**
8. Paris International Space Summit 2026 opens, with India expected to showcase its human-spaceflight and NGLV roadmap. **GS2/3**
9. India's HSBC Manufacturing PMI eases to a five-year-low growth pace of 52.9 in August 2026 even as the Composite PMI holds at 54.6. **GS3**
10. Government revises the Index of Core Industries (base year 2022-23, nine sectors); core-sector growth eases to 5.4% in July 2026. **GS3**
11. SEBI's revised nomination framework makes a nomination or signed opt-out mandatory for every new demat account and MF folio. **GS3**
12. China still to formally confirm Xi Jinping's BRICS Summit attendance even as reports point to a 400-strong delegation. **GS2**

THEIAS AKADEMIA A morning this dense — a landmark corporate-liability doctrine, a Summit three days out, and a defence-modernisation package all on one day — is exactly why **Sahyog Mentorship** exists: a weekly one-on-one session to turn today's 12 headlines into a structured revision plan instead of a pile of disconnected facts. Details: theiasakademia.com.

§2 Polity & Governance

Supreme Court's Three-Stage Test for Attributing Mens Rea to a Company

Why in News: On 7 September 2026, the Supreme Court, hearing an appeal by a pharmaceutical company against a Karnataka High Court order arising from an alleged corruption and criminal-conspiracy case over drug procurement by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), held that a company can be prosecuted for an offence requiring mens rea even without identifying or arraigning the individual officer through whom the offence was allegedly committed. The Bench evolved a fresh three-stage framework for attribution and clarified that a chargesheet need only establish that the corporation itself committed the offence through its conduct, decisions and dealings. The ruling resolves years of inconsistent High Court practice on how far prosecutors must go in naming natural persons before a corporate chargesheet can proceed.

Background: Indian criminal law has long struggled with the "directing mind" problem: a company, being a legal fiction, can only possess mens rea by attribution from a natural person, yet Indian prosecutors frequently cannot identify which specific officer held the requisite guilty mind, especially in diffuse, multi-layered corporate decision-making. Earlier jurisprudence, drawing on English common-law "identification doctrine," at times allowed prosecutions to collapse for want of a named individual. The BARC case, involving alleged irregularities in institutional drug procurement, gave the Court an opportunity to modernise this doctrine for complex modern corporations.

KEY FACTS

- Judgment delivered 7 September 2026; appellant a pharmaceutical company (Sanofi India Ltd.)
- Underlying case: alleged corruption/criminal conspiracy in drug procurement by BARC
- Three-stage inquiry: (i) the company's constitutional/governing documents; (ii) implied delegation of authority; (iii) a special statutory-purpose rule of attribution
- A corporation's mens rea must exist wholly in one natural person — it cannot be assembled by combining partial states of mind of different individuals
- Chargesheet need not identify the specific officer; the corporation's conduct, decisions and dealings can establish the offence
- Order arose from a Karnataka High Court refusal to quash the case against the appellant company
- Doctrine draws on, but modernises, the English common-law "identification" rule of corporate criminal liability

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Strengthens corporate accountability by closing the "unidentified officer" escape route that let diffuse corporate decision-making evade prosecution
- Balances this against due-process concerns: companies cannot be convicted on collective, unattributed guilt without a genuine natural-person anchor
- Likely to reshape charge-framing practice in white-collar and institutional-procurement corruption cases nationwide
- Raises the wider governance question of institutional integrity in public-sector procurement, here involving a strategic nuclear-research institution (BARC)
- Illustrates judicial modernisation of common-law doctrine to fit complex, multi-layered corporate structures

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

"One mind, three stages" — documents, then delegation, then statutory purpose: the company's guilt must still trace to one whole natural mind, never a patchwork of several.

PYQ Linkage

GS2 2020: "Discuss the role of the Election Commission of India..." pattern aside, pair this instead with GS4 2019-style questions on corporate governance and ethics in public procurement.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements regarding the Supreme Court's 2026 ruling on corporate mens rea:

1. A company can be prosecuted for a mens rea offence even without naming the individual officer involved.
2. A corporation's guilty mind can be assembled by combining the partial states of mind of several officers.
3. The case arose from alleged irregularities in drug procurement by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre.

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: (b). Statement 2 is false — the Court held mens rea must exist wholly within one natural person, not assembled from partial states of mind.

Probable Mains Question (150 words): Discuss the Supreme Court's three-stage framework for attributing mens rea to a company, and evaluate its significance for corporate accountability in institutional procurement corruption.

GS2

GS4

#CorporateCriminalLiability

#MensRea

#BARC

GS2

Education Governance · Judiciary

08 September 2026 · Source: Supreme Court of India

Supreme Court Restrains Teacher Appointments Without Prescribed RTE/NCTE/UGC Qualifications

Why in News: On 8 September 2026, the Supreme Court restrained schools and colleges from appointing teachers who do not hold the qualifications prescribed under the Right to Education (RTE) Act framework, National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) norms, or University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations, as applicable. The order responds to a pattern of institutions circumventing minimum-qualification norms, particularly in under-regulated private and aided institutions, at the cost of classroom quality. It reinforces a chain of prior rulings insisting that prescribed teacher-eligibility norms are not mere procedural formalities but substantive safeguards for the right to education itself.

Background: The RTE Act, 2009 mandates minimum teacher-qualification norms as an essential component of the fundamental right to education under Article 21A, recognising that unqualified teaching directly undermines learning outcomes. NCTE, a statutory body, prescribes minimum qualifications for school teachers, while UGC regulations govern higher-education faculty eligibility (e.g. NET/SET, PhD norms). Non-compliant appointments have repeatedly surfaced in litigation, especially where states or managements sought retrospective regularisation of unqualified staff.

KEY FACTS

- Order dated 8 September 2026
- Applicable frameworks: RTE Act, 2009; NCTE norms (school-level); UGC Regulations (higher-education level)
- NCTE established under the National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993
- RTE Act's Section 23 empowers the Centre to prescribe minimum teacher qualifications
- Ruling reinforces that qualification norms are substantive, not merely procedural, safeguards
- Targets appointment practices in under-regulated private/aided institutions
- Continues a judicial line disfavouring retrospective regularisation of unqualified appointees

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Reinforces Article 21A's substantive content: the right to education implies a right to a qualified teacher, not merely a seat in a classroom
- Highlights persistent regulatory-enforcement gaps in India's vast private and aided school/college sector
- Raises an access-versus-quality tension in regions facing genuine teacher shortages, where strict enforcement could worsen vacancies short-term
- Underscores NCTE and UGC's institutional role as quality gatekeepers within a federal, largely state-administered education system

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

"No seat without a qualified teacher" — Article 21A's promise is hollow if the person at the blackboard doesn't meet the prescribed bar.

PYQ Linkage

GS2 2021: "The Right to Education Act, 2009 remains inadequate in promoting the education of the marginalised communities in India" — pair with today's ruling for a quality-enforcement angle.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. The National Council for Teacher Education was established as a statutory body under a 1993 Act.
2. Minimum teacher-qualification norms for higher education institutions fall under UGC Regulations.
3. The Right to Education Act, 2009 empowers the Centre to prescribe minimum teacher qualifications.

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.

Probable Mains Question (150 words): "The right to education is meaningful only when backed by a right to a qualified teacher." Examine this statement in light of the Supreme Court's recent ruling restraining unqualified teacher appointments.

GS2

PYQ 2021

#RTE

#NCTE

#Article21A

GS1 / GS2

Constitutional Federalism · Institutions

09 September 2026 · Source: PIB / Rashtrapati Bhavan, regional press

Vice-President's Northeast Tour Concludes in Arunachal Pradesh: Special Assembly Session

RETURNING TOPIC — MEMORY TECHNIQUE

Previously covered: 6–8 Sept: Assam-Meghalaya leg, Gauhati University/Shillong, Manipur/INA Museum leg

What's new today:

Day 4/concluding leg — Arunachal Pradesh special Assembly session, Nyedar Namlo, Jawaharlal Nehru State Museum, Donyi Polo Mission School

UPSC relevance shift:

Closes the tour on a distinct constitutional-asymmetry angle (special Assembly address to a Sixth Schedule/Article 371-adjacent Himalayan state)

Why in News: Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan arrived in Itanagar on 8 September 2026 for a two-day visit concluding his four-state Northeast tour, and on 9 September addressed a special session of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly, besides visiting the Assembly's Gallery-cum-Museum, Nyedar Namlo, the Jawaharlal Nehru State Museum, and the Donyi Polo Mission School for the hearing and visually impaired. He received a ceremonial Guard of Honour from the Arunachal Pradesh Police and a traditional welcome at Lok Bhavan showcasing the state's indigenous communities.

Background: Arunachal Pradesh, India's easternmost Himalayan state, became a full state in 1987 and sits under a distinctive constitutional protection regime (Article 371H) safeguarding the Governor's special responsibility for law and order, alongside strong customary-law and indigenous-faith protections (the Donyi-Polo tradition among them). Vice-Presidential and Presidential addresses to state legislatures are constitutionally significant civic events, reinforcing the Union's engagement with Himalayan border states that otherwise see limited high-level attention.

KEY FACTS

- VP's Northeast tour: Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, 6–9 September 2026
- Arunachal Pradesh leg: 8–9 September 2026 (two days)
- Special session of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly addressed on 9 September
- Sites visited: Nyedar Namlo, Jawaharlal Nehru State Museum, Donyi Polo Mission School, Itanagar
- Arunachal Pradesh attained full statehood in 1987
- Article 371H grants the Governor special responsibility for law and order in the state
- Donyi-Polo is the indigenous animist/sun-and-moon faith tradition of several Arunachali communities

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Reinforces the constitutional-asymmetry framework (Articles 371-371J) that tailors governance to India's diverse Himalayan and Northeastern states
- High-level engagement with border states carries strategic significance given proximity to the Line of Actual Control
- Institutional visits (museums, special schools) signal soft emphasis on indigenous culture and inclusive education alongside constitutional business
- Closes a four-state tour that touched Sixth Schedule (Meghalaya), Article 371H (Arunachal) and other special-category protections in sequence

PYQ Linkage

GS2 2015-pattern: special provisions for certain states (Article 371 series) — a recurring UPSC theme for Northeastern constitutional asymmetry.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements:

1. Arunachal Pradesh attained full statehood in 1987.
2. Article 371H grants the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh special responsibility for law and order.
3. Arunachal Pradesh is a Sixth Schedule state.

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 false — the Sixth Schedule applies to Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram, not Arunachal Pradesh.

Probable Mains Question (150 words): Discuss the constitutional-asymmetry framework under Articles 371-371J for India's Northeastern states, using the Vice-President's recent four-state tour as an illustrative frame.

THEIAS AKADEMIA

A corporate-liability doctrine, an RTE quality-enforcement order, and constitutional asymmetry across four states in one section — exactly the density **Sahyog Mentorship** trains you to hold together. theiasakademia.com.

§3 International Relations

GS2

India & Its Neighbourhood · Multilateral Groupings

09 September 2026 (Summit: 12–13 Sept) · Source: MEA / PIB

India Readies to Host the 18th BRICS Summit at Bharat Mandapam

Why in News: With three days to go, India's preparations for the 18th BRICS Summit at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi (12–13 September 2026) are in their final stretch: the BRICS Business Forum and a Women's Business Alliance meeting are set for 11 September at the same venue, and reports as of 8–9 September confirm Russian President Vladimir Putin's attendance while Chinese President Xi Jinping is widely expected, reportedly with a delegation of around 400 officials — though Beijing has still not issued a formal confirmation. If Xi attends, it would be his first visit to India in seven years.

Background: India holds the BRICS chairship for 2026 under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability," its fourth chairmanship since the grouping's 2006 origin. Over the year, India has convened more than 350 BRICS-related meetings and high-level engagements across over 25 cities, spanning trade, digital technology, agriculture, health, energy and climate action. The now-expanded, eleven-member bloc (following recent enlargement) makes 2026 a milestone year, marking 20 years since BRICS' founding and India's most consequential turn at the chair since 2021.

KEY FACTS

- Summit dates: 12–13 September 2026, Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi
- BRICS Business Forum + Women's Business Alliance meeting: 11 September 2026
- India's presidency theme: "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability"
- 350+ BRICS meetings held across 25+ Indian cities during India's 2026 chairship
- This is India's 4th BRICS chairmanship since the grouping's founding in 2006
- Confirmed/expected leaders: Vladimir Putin (confirmed), Xi Jinping (expected, delegation ~400), Cyril Ramaphosa, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, Prabowo Subianto, Masoud Pezeshkian, Abiy Ahmed
- 2026 marks 20 years since BRICS' founding and follows the bloc's recent membership expansion

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Tests India's convening capacity as a bridge power across an expanded, more heterogeneous Global South-plus bloc
- Xi Jinping's possible attendance, his first India visit in seven years, would be read as a signal on the India-China border-de-escalation trajectory
- An expanded 11-member BRICS complicates consensus-building on trade, de-dollarisation and reform-of-multilateralism agendas
- India's chairship year offers a platform to advance its own priorities: reformed multilateralism, technology governance, and Global South solidarity

- The parallel Business Forum reflects BRICS' growing economic-diplomacy, not just geopolitical-signalling, dimension

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

"Fourth time at the helm" — India chaired BRICS before in 2012, 2016 and 2021; 2026 is its fourth turn, and its biggest hosting moment yet.

PYQ Linkage

GS2 2020: "'Too little cash, too much politics', is the reason for Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) becoming dysfunctional" — contrast with BRICS' continuing relevance as a rival Global South platform.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements about BRICS:

1. The grouping was founded in 2006.
2. India is hosting the BRICS Summit for the first time in 2026.
3. The BRICS Business Forum is scheduled ahead of the leaders' summit.

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: (b). Statement 2 is false — 2026 is India's fourth BRICS chairmanship, not its first.

Probable Mains Question (150 words): Discuss the significance of India's 2026 BRICS chairship for its Global South leadership ambitions, and the challenges of consensus-building within an expanded, eleven-member bloc.

GS2

PYQ 2020

#BRICS2026

#BharatMandapam

#GlobalSouth

GS2 / GS3

India's Neighbourhood · Maritime Security

09 September 2026 · Source: PIB / MoD, Sri Lankan government sources

Rajnath Singh Meets President Dissanayake in Colombo: MAHASAGAR Reaffirmed

RETURNING TOPIC — MEMORY TECHNIQUE

Previously covered: 8 Sept: arrival in Colombo, MAHASAGAR framing announced

What's new today: 9 Sept: substantive meeting with President Anura Kumara Disسانayake in Colombo

UPSC relevance shift: Moves from visit-announcement to actual bilateral-security-doctrine content

Why in News: On 9 September 2026, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, on a three-day Sri Lanka visit, held what both sides called a "highly productive meeting" with Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Disسانayake in Colombo. Singh conveyed Prime Minister Modi's greetings and congratulated Disسانayake's government on completing two years in office, while both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to regional security, maritime cooperation and bilateral development under the MAHASAGAR framework. Talks are expected to review implementation of the 2025 India-Sri Lanka Defence Cooperation MoU covering joint exercises, capacity building, HADR cooperation and more frequent naval port calls.

Background: India's Indian Ocean strategic doctrine has evolved from SAGAR ("Security and Growth for All in the Region," 2015) to the wider MAHASAGAR framework, reflecting an expanded ambit beyond the immediate neighbourhood. The India-Sri Lanka Defence Cooperation MoU, signed during PM Modi's April 2025 Colombo visit, is a five-year pact institutionalising defence engagement between two countries whose maritime boundary and fishing disputes have historically coexisted with deep strategic partnership, especially given Sri Lanka's proximity to key Indian Ocean shipping lanes.

KEY FACTS

- Rajnath Singh's Sri Lanka visit: 8–10 September 2026 (three days)
- Met President Anura Kumara Dissanayake and PM Harini Amarasuriya, plus tri-service commanders
- India-Sri Lanka Defence Cooperation MoU signed during PM Modi's visit, April 2025 (five-year pact)
- MoU covers: joint exercises, capacity building, HADR cooperation, more frequent naval port calls
- Strategic doctrine lineage: SAGAR (2015) → MAHASAGAR (expanded regional ambit)
- Dissanayake government completed two years in office around this visit
- Framing: "civilised twins, close neighbours, maritime partners" (Rajnath Singh)

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Reflects India's "Neighbourhood First" doctrine operationalised through sustained high-level defence engagement, not one-off visits
- Sri Lanka's strategic location astride major Indian Ocean shipping lanes gives the relationship outsized geopolitical weight relative to its size
- MAHASAGAR signals India positioning itself as the Indian Ocean's primary security partner amid competing external interest in the region
- Balancing defence cooperation with sensitive bilateral issues (fishermen's rights, Tamil political reconciliation) remains an ongoing diplomatic challenge

PYQ Linkage

GS2 2016: "India's proximity to the two seas Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea has been a strategic asset..." — extend to Sri Lanka's role in India's Indian Ocean doctrine.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements on India's Indian Ocean strategic doctrine:

1. SAGAR was articulated in 2015.
2. MAHASAGAR represents an expanded successor framework to SAGAR.
3. The India-Sri Lanka Defence Cooperation MoU was signed in 2025.

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.

Probable Mains Question (150 words): Trace the evolution of India's Indian Ocean strategic doctrine from SAGAR to MAHASAGAR, using India-Sri Lanka defence cooperation as an illustrative case.

GS2

GS3

PYQ 2016

#MAHASAGAR

#SriLanka

#NeighbourhoodFirst

THEIAS AKADEMIA

A Summit three days out and a neighbourhood-doctrine meeting on the same morning — this is precisely the connective-tissue thinking **ANTIM 2027** drills for the IR paper. theiasakademia.com.

DAC Clears AoN for 40-Jet Su-30MKI Overhaul, 2,500 Software Defined Radios, New Naval Radars

Why in News: The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, met on 9 September 2026 and granted Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for the overhaul of 40 Su-30MKI fighter jets by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), aimed at extending their operational life by 15–20 years; procurement of 2,500 indigenously developed Software Defined Radios (SDRs) worth roughly ₹5,000 crore for secure, network-centric communication across aircraft, helicopters, radars and ground stations; and naval projects including ARSA radars for naval stations, marine gas turbines in the 24–28 MW range, and new radars for ten Talwar-class frigates. This is distinct from the ₹1.10-lakh-crore capital-acquisition package the DAC cleared on 7 September.

Background: The Su-30MKI, license-built by HAL, forms the backbone of the IAF's combat fleet; mid-life upgrades and structural overhauls are standard practice to extend airframe service life economically compared with new procurement. SDRs replace legacy analogue radios with software-configurable, interoperable communication nodes central to India's network-centric-warfare doctrine. DAC clearances constitute an Acceptance of Necessity only — a formal go-ahead to negotiate, not a signed contract, with actual procurement following separate commercial negotiation and contract-award stages.

KEY FACTS

- DAC meeting: 9 September 2026, chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh
- Su-30MKI overhaul: 40 jets, executed by HAL, extends service life by 15–20 years
- SDR procurement: 2,500 units, approx. ₹5,000 crore
- Naval items: ARSA radars, marine gas turbines (24–28 MW range), radars for 10 Talwar-class frigates
- AoN is a preliminary clearance stage, not a final signed contract
- Distinct from the separate ₹1.10-lakh-crore package (CBRN vehicles, Dhruv ALH, Arudhra radars) cleared 7 September 2026
- SDRs support India's network-centric-warfare communication doctrine across services

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Reflects a "sweat the asset" modernisation strategy — extending existing platform life rather than costlier wholesale replacement
- SDR indigenisation reduces import dependence for a communications backbone increasingly vulnerable to interception/jamming without indigenous control
- Naval radar and gas-turbine procurement sustains India's maritime-domain-awareness and surface-combatant modernisation in parallel with air-force upgrades
- Illustrates the AoN-to-contract pipeline's multi-stage nature, relevant for understanding actual defence-spending realisation versus headline announcement figures

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

"40, 2,500, 10" — forty Sukhois get a new lease of life, twenty-five hundred radios get a secure voice, and ten frigates get sharper eyes.

PYQ Linkage

GS3 2020: "What is the significance of Indo-US defence deals over Indo-Russian defence deals?" — contrast with indigenous SDR/overhaul-led modernisation shown here.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements about the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC):

1. AoN granted by the DAC constitutes a final, signed procurement contract.
2. The Su-30MKI is license-built in India by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.
3. Software Defined Radios enable network-centric communication across multiple platforms.

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: (b). Statement 1 is false — AoN is only a preliminary clearance, not a final contract.

Probable Mains Question (150 words): Discuss the significance of platform-life-extension programmes such as the Su-30MKI overhaul, alongside indigenous communication-system procurement, for India's defence-modernisation strategy.

GS3

#DAC

#Su30MKI

#SDR

#DefenceIndigenisation

GS3

Static Topic · Strategic Deterrence

Static Topic — not tied to a single current event

Static Defence Profile: Agni-V — India's Long-Range Strategic Deterrent

Why in News: With DRDO's border-guarding-forces, NIA and Mission Sudarshan Chakra static profiles already used this week and no second fresh Defence story clearing today's multi-source sweep, this edition profiles the Agni-V — India's longest-range operational ballistic missile and the backbone of its credible-minimum-deterrence posture — as a rotating static Defence topic under RULE 14.

Background: Developed by DRDO under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme lineage, Agni-V is a nuclear-capable, road-mobile, canisterised Intercontinental-class ballistic missile with a range exceeding 5,000 km, bringing all of Asia and parts of Europe/Africa within reach. It is operated by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) under India's tri-service Nuclear Command Authority, consistent with India's declared No-First-Use doctrine and credible-minimum-deterrence policy.

KEY FACTS

- Developer: DRDO; range: 5,000+ km (Intercontinental Ballistic Missile-class)
- Propulsion: three-stage, solid-fuelled; canisterised for rapid launch and storage
- Guidance: Ring Laser Gyro-based Inertial Navigation System with satellite-aided updates
- Payload: nuclear-capable, with MIRV (Multiple Independently targetable Re-entry Vehicle) capability demonstrated (Mission Divyastra, 2024)
- Operated by: Strategic Forces Command (SFC) under the Nuclear Command Authority
- Doctrine: consistent with India's No-First-Use and credible-minimum-deterrence policy
- Inducted into service after multiple successful user trials through the 2020s

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Anchors India's strategic deterrence architecture within a declared No-First-Use doctrinal framework, distinguishing it from first-strike postures
- MIRV capability (Mission Divyastra) marks a qualitative shift, complicating adversary missile-defence calculations
- Raises the classic deterrence-versus-arms-race dilemma in a South Asian/Indo-Pacific strategic context involving multiple nuclear powers
- Illustrates DRDO's decades-long indigenous missile-development trajectory from Prithvi/Agni-I through to Agni-V

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

"Five for five thousand" — Agni-V, 5,000+ km range: the numeral in its name roughly tracks the thousands of kilometres it can strike.

PYQ Linkage

GS3 2018: questions on India's missile-development programme and nuclear doctrine — a recurring static-Defence UPSC theme.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements about the Agni-V missile:

1. It is operated under the Strategic Forces Command.
2. It has demonstrated MIRV capability.
3. It is a first-strike weapon under India's declared nuclear doctrine.

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 false — India's doctrine is No-First-Use, not first-strike.

Probable Mains Question (150 words): Discuss India's credible-minimum-deterrence doctrine in light of the Agni-V's MIRV capability, and evaluate its implications for regional strategic stability.

GS3

Static Topic

#AgniV

#NoFirstUse

#DRDO

THEIAS AKADEMIA Turning today's acquisition-council numbers and deterrence doctrine into exam-ready GS3 answers is exactly what **EMP**'s allied strategic-affairs sessions build toward. theiasakademia.com.

§5 Science & Technology

GS3

Space Policy · Private Space Economy

09 September 2026 · Source: CII / ISRO / IN-SPaCE / NSIL

9th Bengaluru Space Expo 2026 Concludes: 250+ Exhibitors, 400+ Space Start-Ups

RETURNING TOPIC — MEMORY TECHNIQUE

Previously covered: 7 Sept (Day-1 opening, 250 exhibitors/~20 countries) and 8 Sept (Day-2 substantive sessions)

What's new today: 9 Sept — Day-3 conclusion of the three-day event at BIEC, Bengaluru

UPSC relevance shift:

Closing-day framing consolidates the private-space-economy policy takeaway rather than repeating opening-day statistics

Why in News: The 9th Bengaluru Space Expo (BSX) 2026, organised by CII with ISRO, IN-SPACe and NSIL at the Bangalore International Exhibition Centre, concludes today, 9 September, after three days themed "Harnessing Space for Global Progress: Innovation, Policy, and Growth." The event brought together 250+ exhibitors from roughly 20 countries across earth observation, human spaceflight/deep space, sustainable access, AI-in-space and policy-reform sessions, closing with a consolidated picture of India's rapidly expanding private space ecosystem.

Background: The Indian Space Policy, 2023 delineates roles between ISRO (research and exploration), NSIL (commercial arm for space products/services) and IN-SPACe (regulator-facilitator for private-sector participation), opening India's space sector to private investment after decades of exclusively state-run activity. India's private space start-up count has grown from roughly one in 2014 to over 400 in 2026, reflecting the cumulative effect of this liberalisation alongside FDI-policy easing in the sector.

KEY FACTS

- BSX 2026: 7–9 September, BIEC, Bengaluru; organised by CII with ISRO, IN-SPACe, NSIL
- 250+ exhibitors from approximately 20 countries
- Theme: "Harnessing Space for Global Progress: Innovation, Policy, and Growth"
- India's private space start-ups: ~1 in 2014 → 400+ in 2026
- Governance architecture: ISRO (research), NSIL (commercial), IN-SPACe (regulation/facilitation)
- Legal basis: Indian Space Policy, 2023
- Sessions covered earth observation, human spaceflight/deep space, sustainable access, and AI-in-space

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Illustrates the compounding effect of the 2023 Space Policy's three-tier institutional architecture on private-sector participation
- India's space-economy growth strategy increasingly rests on public-private complementarity rather than exclusively state-led capacity
- Positions Bengaluru as a global space-diplomacy and investment convening point, alongside its established tech-hub status
- Raises the policy question of sustaining regulatory clarity (IN-SPACe capacity) as private launch and satellite activity scales rapidly

PYQ Linkage

GS3 2023-pattern: India's space sector reforms and the role of private players — a high-frequency recent UPSC theme.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements on India's space governance architecture:

1. IN-SPACe is the regulator and facilitator for private-sector space activity.
2. NSIL is ISRO's dedicated research and exploration wing.
3. The Indian Space Policy was notified in 2023.

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: (b). Statement 2 is false — NSIL is the commercial arm; ISRO itself remains the research/exploration body.

Probable Mains Question (150 words): Discuss the significance of India's three-tier space governance architecture (ISRO-NSIL-IN-SPaCe) in driving the growth of the country's private space economy.

GS3

#BengaluruSpaceExpo

#INSPaCe

#IndianSpacePolicy2023

GS2 / GS3

Space Diplomacy · Human Spaceflight

09–10 September 2026 · Source: MEA / ISRO, international space-summit press

Paris International Space Summit 2026 Opens: India's Human-Spaceflight Roadmap in Focus

Why in News: The Paris International Space Summit 2026 opens today, 9 September, running through 10 September, bringing together global space agencies, industry and policymakers against the backdrop of 2026 marking the Indo-French Year of Innovation. ISRO's participation is expected to spotlight India's Gaganyaan human-spaceflight programme — with Chairman V. Narayanan having said on 4 September that "vigorous, systematic work," including around 8,000 completed tests, is underway for the first uncrewed Gaganyaan mission this year — alongside India's Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV) development.

Background: India-France space cooperation has deepened substantially in 2026, building on decades of ISRO-CNES collaboration in earth observation and launch services, with 2026 formally designated the Indo-French Year of Innovation encompassing joint work across AI, space and science. Gaganyaan, India's indigenous human-spaceflight programme, targets an uncrewed test mission ahead of an eventual crewed flight, positioning India among a small group of nations with independent human-spaceflight capability.

KEY FACTS

- Paris International Space Summit 2026: 9–10 September 2026
- 2026 designated the Indo-French Year of Innovation (AI, space, science cooperation)
- ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan (4 September 2026): ~8,000 tests completed toward the first uncrewed Gaganyaan mission
- Gaganyaan aims to make India among a small group of nations with independent human-spaceflight capability
- Complements India's parallel NGLV (Next Generation Launch Vehicle) development effort
- Follows the Jitendra Singh-Philippe Baptiste India-France science/AI/space cooperation talks of early September 2026

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Signals India's transition from a satellite/launch-services space power to an aspiring human-spaceflight power
- France's cooperation reflects a broader Indo-Pacific/strategic-technology partnership beyond traditional Cold-War-era space alliances
- International summit platforms increasingly function as venues for space diplomacy alongside pure scientific exchange
- Raises the funding-and-timeline discipline challenge inherent in complex human-rated spaceflight programmes

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

"8,000 tests, one goal" — every one of those tests is a small step rehearsed so Gaganyaan's uncrewed leap doesn't have to be a guess.

PYQ Linkage

GS3 2017: "Discuss India's achievements in the field of Space Science and Technology. How the application of this technology has helped India in its socio-economic development?" — extend to Gaganyaan and human spaceflight.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements on Gaganyaan:

1. It aims to demonstrate India's indigenous human-spaceflight capability.
2. An uncrewed test mission is planned ahead of any crewed flight.
3. It is being developed as a purely private-sector initiative outside ISRO.

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 false — Gaganyaan is an ISRO-led national programme, not a purely private initiative.

Probable Mains Question (150 words): Discuss the significance of the Gaganyaan programme for India's human-spaceflight ambitions, and the role of international partnerships such as the Indo-French Year of Innovation in supporting it.

GS2

GS3

PYQ 2017

#Gaganyaan

#ParisSpaceSummit

#IndoFrench

THEIAS AKADEMIA Space-policy architecture on one hand and human-spaceflight ambition on the other — **LAKSHYAM AIR1's** Science & Technology modules are built exactly to hold both together for the exam. theiasakademia.com.

§6 Economy

GS3

Industrial Growth · Indicators

Reported 1 September 2026 (data for August 2026) · Source: S&P Global / HSBC

Manufacturing PMI Eases to a Five-Year-Low Growth Pace of 52.9 in August 2026

Why in News: India's HSBC Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) declined to 52.9 in August 2026 from 53.5 in July, with production-volume growth across private manufacturers easing to its weakest pace in five years. Manufacturing employment fell for the first time in two-and-a-half years, as firms cited softer demand and more limited increases in new-order volumes. The Composite PMI nonetheless held up at 54.6, buoyed by a stronger services reading (54.5), underscoring a services-led rather than manufacturing-led growth pattern this cycle.

Background: The PMI, compiled monthly by S&P Global from surveyed purchasing managers, is a widely tracked, above/below-50 diffusion index signalling sectoral expansion or contraction; India's manufacturing PMI has stayed in expansion territory for an extended run but growth momentum has been decelerating through mid-2026. PMI readings are a leading indicator, often available weeks ahead of official IIP data, making them closely watched by policymakers and markets alike.

KEY FACTS

- Manufacturing PMI: 52.9 in August 2026, down from 53.5 in July 2026
- Production-volume growth: weakest pace in five years

- Manufacturing employment: fell for the first time in two-and-a-half years
- Services PMI: 54.5 in August (up from 53.3 in July)
- Composite PMI: 54.6 in August (up from 54.3 in July)
- Above-50 reading still denotes expansion, but at a decelerating rate
- Compiler: S&P Global, sponsored by HSBC

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Signals a services-led rather than manufacturing-led growth composition, relevant to India's long-standing manufacturing-share-of-GDP debate
- Softening new orders and the first employment contraction in 2.5 years warrant close monitoring as potential early demand-slowdown signals
- PMI's role as a fast, private-sector-survey-based leading indicator complements slower official statistics like IIP
- Raises the policy question of whether manufacturing-focused schemes (PLI, Make in India) need recalibration if the deceleration persists

PYQ Linkage

GS3 2021: questions on India's manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP and employment — pair with PMI as a real-time monitoring tool.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements about the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI):

1. A PMI reading above 50 indicates sectoral expansion.
2. India's Manufacturing PMI is compiled by the Reserve Bank of India.
3. The Composite PMI combines manufacturing and services sector readings.

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: (b). Statement 2 is false — India's PMI is compiled by S&P Global, not the RBI.

Probable Mains Question (150 words): Discuss what the divergence between India's Manufacturing and Services PMI readings in August 2026 reveals about the current composition of India's economic growth.

GS3

PYQ 2021

#PMI

#Manufacturing

#IndianEconomy

GS3

Industrial Statistics · Methodology

Revised/reported August 2026 (data for July 2026) · Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Index of Core Industries Revised: New Base Year, Nine-Sector Basket; Growth Eases to 5.4% in July

Why in News: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry revised the Index of Core Industries (ICI), shifting its base year from 2011-12 to 2022-13 and expanding its basket from eight to nine industries, alongside provisional estimates showing core-sector output growth easing to 5.4% year-on-year in July 2026 from 6% in June. Iron ore led expansion at 29.5%, followed by cement (13.1%) and electricity (9%); coal and steel grew 7.6% and 2.9% respectively, while fertilisers (-8.0%), crude oil (-5.3%) and natural gas (-3.7%) contracted. Cumulative April-July 2026 core-sector growth stood at 4.3%, sharply above the 1.5% recorded in the same period a year earlier.

Background: The Index of Core Industries tracks output in India's infrastructure-critical "core" sectors, which together carry substantial weight within the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), making ICI a widely watched leading indicator for industrial-output trends. Periodic base-year revisions and basket expansions (last major revision: 2011-12 base) are standard statistical practice to keep the index representative of the evolving economy; expanding from eight to nine sectors reflects the growing weight of a previously under-represented segment of core infrastructure.

KEY FACTS

- ICI base year revised: 2011-12 → 2022-23; basket expanded from 8 to 9 industries
- July 2026 core-sector growth: 5.4% YoY, down from 6% in June 2026
- Iron ore: +29.5%; cement: +13.1%; electricity: +9%; coal: +7.6%; steel: +2.9%
- Contractions: fertilisers -8.0%; crude oil -5.3%; natural gas -3.7%
- Cumulative April-July 2026 growth: 4.3%, versus 1.5% in the same period of 2025-26
- Released by: Ministry of Commerce and Industry (provisional estimates)
- ICI carries substantial combined weight within the broader Index of Industrial Production (IIP)

MAINS DIMENSIONS

- Base-year and basket revisions matter for accurate international/inter-temporal comparability of India's industrial statistics
- Iron ore and cement-led growth signals continuing strength in construction and infrastructure-linked demand
- Fertiliser, crude oil and natural gas contractions flag import-substitution and price-sensitivity vulnerabilities in the energy/agri-input value chain
- Strong cumulative April-July growth versus the prior year offers a more encouraging medium-term reading than the single-month deceleration alone

Let's Remember This Through a Trick

"Eight becomes nine" — remember the ICI revision by its basket count moving up by exactly one, alongside its base-year jump to 2022-23.

PYQ Linkage

GS3 2019-pattern: core-sector/infrastructure-industries growth and its relationship to overall industrial output (IIP).

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ

Consider the following statements about the Index of Core Industries (ICI):

1. Its base year has been revised to 2022-23.
2. It now tracks nine core industries, up from eight.
3. It 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 false — ICI is released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, not the RBI.

Probable Mains Question (150 words): Discuss the significance of periodic base-year revisions to India's industrial statistics, using the Index of Core Industries' 2026 revision as an illustrative example.

GS3

#IndexOfCoreIndustries

#IIP

#IndustrialGrowth

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