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**DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED**

# Daily Quiz — January 28, 2026

28 January 2026

CURATED &amp; WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**UPSC Educator & Content Creator • [linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)

## DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED

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28 January 2026 · 10 Questions · Answers &amp; Explanations Included

**Q 1**

The 77th Republic Day 2026 parade had "150 Years of Vande Mataram" as its theme. In which novel was Vande Mataram first published, and who wrote it?

- A Pather Panchali by Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay (1929)
- B Anandmath by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay (1882) ✓
- C Gitanjali by Rabindranath Tagore (1910)
- D Durgeshnandini by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay (1865)

**EXPLANATION**

Vande Mataram was composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in 1876 and first published in his novel Anandmath in 1882. It was first sung at the Indian National Congress session in 1896. It is India's National Song (not National Anthem — Jana Gana Mana is the National Anthem).

**CONCEPT**

Vande Mataram's status: "National Song" (Article 51A(a) — Fundamental Duty to respect). Jana Gana Mana is the National Anthem. Both have equal respect but are different in function. The controversy around later stanzas (Hindu goddess imagery) led to only the first two stanzas being officially adopted. Rabindranath Tagore is associated with Jana Gana Mana, not Vande Mataram.

**Q 2**

Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla received the Ashoka Chakra at Republic Day 2026. What feat made him the recipient of India's highest peacetime gallantry award?

- A He led the first successful interception of a hypersonic missile
- B He became the first Indian to set foot on the International Space Station ✓
- C He was the test pilot for the first flight of Tejas Mark 2
- D He successfully operated DRDO's LR-AShM in a live-fire naval exercise

**EXPLANATION**

Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla (IAF) received the Ashoka Chakra for being the first Indian to set foot on the International Space Station (ISS) as part of Axiom Mission 4 (Axiom-4) — only the second Indian to go to space after Wing Commander Rakesh Sharma (1984, Soyuz T-11).

**CONCEPT**

Gallantry award hierarchy: Param Vir Chakra (highest wartime) > Maha Vir Chakra > Vir Chakra. Peacetime: Ashoka Chakra (highest) > Kirti Chakra > Shaurya Chakra. Axiom Space is a US private space company. Gaganyaan astronauts include Prashanth Balakrishnan Nair (received Kirti Chakra), Ajit Krishnan, Angad Pratap, and Shubhanshu Shukla.

**Q 3**

The DRDO unveiled its Long Range Anti-Ship Hypersonic Missile (LR-AShM) at Republic Day 2026. What is the minimum speed threshold that classifies a missile as "hypersonic"?

- A Mach 2
- B Mach 3
- C Mach 5 ✓**
- D Mach 8

**EXPLANATION**

Hypersonic refers to speeds of Mach 5 or above (5 times the speed of sound). The LR-AShM has an average cruise speed of Mach 5+ (initial acceleration to ~Mach 10) and a range of ~1,500 km. What distinguishes hypersonic weapons is maneuverability during flight, making them nearly impossible to intercept with existing missile defences.

**CONCEPT**

India's hypersonic technology: HSTDV (Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle) was successfully tested in September 2020, enabling LR-AShM. Nations with hypersonic weapons: USA, Russia, China, North Korea, and now India. Mach 1 = speed of sound (~343 m/s at sea level). Mach 1-5 = supersonic; Mach 5+ = hypersonic.

**Q 4**

How many total Padma Awards were announced on the eve of Republic Day 2026 (January 25, 2026)?

- A 111
- B 121
- C 131 ✓**
- D 141

**EXPLANATION**

131 Padma Awards were announced in 2026: 5 Padma Vibhushan + 13 Padma Bhushan + 113 Padma Shri. Of these, 16 were posthumous, 19 went to women, and 6 to international recipients (foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI). State representation: Maharashtra led with 15 recipients.

**CONCEPT**

Padma Awards were instituted in 1954. They are given by the President of India; recommended by Padma Awards Committee (chaired by Cabinet Secretary). Not "titles" under Article 18 of the Constitution (Supreme Court clarification). Three categories: Padma Vibhushan (exceptional service) > Padma Bhushan (distinguished service) > Padma Shri.

**Q 5**

India and the EU formally concluded their FTA in January 2026. In what year were the formal negotiations first launched, under what name?

- A 2004, as the India-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement
- B 2007, as the Broad-Based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) ✓
- C 2010, as the India-EU Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement
- D 2013, as the Comprehensive Trade and Investment Agreement (CTIA)

**EXPLANATION**

India-EU FTA negotiations formally launched in 2007 as the BTIA (Broad-Based Trade and Investment Agreement). Negotiations were suspended in 2013 after 16 rounds, relaunched in 2022 (renamed CTIA — Comprehensive Trade and Investment Agreement), and concluded in January 2026. India is the EU's 22nd FTA partner.

**CONCEPT**

Key sticking points 2007–2022: automobiles (India's 100% duty vs EU auto industry), dairy (India's 75 mn farmers), TRIPS-Plus (pharma patents), Mode 4 services (Indian IT professionals), labour/environment standards. India-EU bilateral trade: ~USD 140 billion/year. EU = India's largest collective trading partner.

**Q 6**

The UNEP "State of Finance for Nature 2026" report found that for every USD 1 invested in nature protection, how much is spent on nature-destructive activities?

- A USD 5
- B USD 10
- C USD 20
- D USD 30 ✓

**EXPLANATION**

The UNEP report found that USD 30 is spent on nature-destructive activities for every USD 1 invested in nature protection. Total nature-negative spending in 2023 was USD 7.3 trillion (~7% of global GDP). Government environmentally harmful subsidies alone = USD 2.4 trillion/year (primarily fossil fuel subsidies). Nature-based Solutions (NbS) funding needed by 2030 is USD 571 billion — 2.5x the current level of USD 220 billion.

**CONCEPT**

UNEP headquarters: Nairobi, Kenya (established 1972 at UN Conference on Human Environment, Stockholm). CBD 30x30 target: conserve 30% land/waters and restore 30% degraded ecosystems by 2030 (Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, 2022). India's NbS programmes: MISHTI (mangroves), Mission Amrit Sarovar, Green India Mission.

The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) signed an MoU with Jharkhand for vulture conservation.

**Q 7** Which pesticide/drug caused the catastrophic 95-99% collapse of South Asian vulture populations, and in which year was it banned in India?

- A DDT banned in 2001
- B Diclofenac banned in 2006 ✓**
- C Endosulfan banned in 2011
- D Carbofuran banned in 2008

#### EXPLANATION

Diclofenac, an NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug) used in veterinary medicine, caused the catastrophic 95-99% collapse of South Asian vulture populations. Vultures ingested diclofenac when feeding on carcasses of treated livestock. India banned veterinary use of diclofenac in 2006. BNHS (Bombay Natural History Society) was founded in 1883 in Mumbai.

#### CONCEPT

Three vulture species Critically Endangered in India: Oriental White-backed Vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*), Long-billed Vulture (*Gyps indicus*), Slender-billed Vulture (*Gyps tenuirostris*). Vultures are ecosystem engineers — they prevent anthrax spread and reduce rabies risk by rapidly consuming carcasses. Protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972. Related: Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre (JCBC) at Pinjore, Haryana.

**Q 8** National Voters Day is observed every year on January 25 to mark the founding of the Election Commission of India. Which Article of the Constitution establishes the Election Commission of India?

- A Article 315
- B Article 320
- C Article 324 ✓**
- D Article 329

#### EXPLANATION

Article 324 of the Constitution establishes the Election Commission of India (ECI) and vests in it the superintendence, direction, and control of the preparation of electoral rolls and the conduct of elections. ECI was established on January 25, 1950 — just one day before the Constitution came into force (January 26, 1950). National Voters Day has been observed since 2011.

#### CONCEPT

ECI is a constitutional body. The 2023 amendment replaced the previous appointment process for CEC and ECs (earlier: President on PM's advice; now: committee of PM + Leader of Opposition + a Cabinet Minister). Current CEC: Gyanesh Kumar. ECINET: Unified platform integrating 40+ ECI applications, launched at 16th NVD (2026). Article 329: Bar to interference by courts in electoral matters.

International Data Privacy Day is observed on January 28 every year. It commemorates the signing of

**Q 9** Convention 108 — the first binding international data protection treaty. When was Convention 108 signed, and by which body?

- A** January 28, 1981 by the Council of Europe ✓
- B** January 28, 1995 by the European Union
- C** January 28, 2001 by the United Nations
- D** January 28, 2003 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

#### EXPLANATION

Convention 108 — the first binding international data protection treaty — was signed on January 28, 1981 by the Council of Europe. International Data Privacy Day (also called Data Protection Day) is observed globally on January 28 to commemorate this. The Council of Europe is a separate organisation from the EU — it has 46 member states including non-EU countries like Turkey, Ukraine, and Armenia.

#### CONCEPT

India's data protection framework: Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act 2023 + DPDP Rules 2025. Enforcement body: Data Protection Board of India. Based partly on Justice Srikrishna Committee recommendations (2018). Right to Privacy as a Fundamental Right: *K.S. Puttaswamy v Union of India* (2017) under Article 21. GDPR (EU's General Data Protection Regulation): effective May 2018 — the global gold standard for data protection.

Ajit Pawar, Maharashtra's Deputy Chief Minister who died in a Learjet crash at Baramati Airport on

**Q 10** January 28, 2026, co-founded the NCP (Nationalist Congress Party) with Sharad Pawar. In which year was the NCP founded?

- A** 1994
- B** 1997
- C** 1999 ✓
- D** 2002

#### EXPLANATION

The NCP (Nationalist Congress Party) was founded in 1999 by Sharad Pawar, P.A. Sangma, and Tariq Anwar after they were expelled from the Indian National Congress for publicly questioning the leadership of Sonia Gandhi (on grounds of her foreign origin). Ajit Pawar was Sharad Pawar's nephew and a co-founder who later led a faction split in 2023 — his faction was recognised as "NCP" by the Election Commission in February 2024.

#### CONCEPT

Maharashtra politics: NCP split in 2023 — Ajit Pawar faction (joined Eknath Shinde-Devendra Fadnavis government) vs Sharad Pawar faction. Tenth Schedule (Anti-Defection Law) and ECI's power to recognise party splits under the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order 1968. Maharashtra Deputy CM post: Ajit Pawar held this position 6 times — a record.

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## Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

 [linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)

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