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DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED

Daily Quiz — February 17, 2026

17 February 2026

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DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED

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17 February 2026 · 10 Questions · Answers & Explanations Included

Q 1 The Great Nicobar Island development project is equidistant from which three major ports?

- A Dubai, Mumbai, and Chennai
- B Port Blair, Kolkata, and Visakhapatnam
- C Colombo, Port Klang, and Singapore ✓
- D Aden, Djibouti, and Colombo

EXPLANATION

The Great Nicobar Island ICTT project is strategically located equidistant from Colombo (Sri Lanka), Port Klang (Malaysia), and Singapore — the three dominant trans-shipment hubs in the Indian Ocean-Pacific region. The NGT approved the Rs 81,000 crore project in February 2026.

CONCEPT

Trans-shipment involves transferring cargo from large vessels to smaller feeder ships. About 75% of India's trans-shipment cargo currently goes to Colombo. The Malacca Strait, adjacent to the Great Nicobar project, handles 85,000 vessels per year carrying ~25% of global trade.

Q 2 The Shompen tribe, affected by the Great Nicobar project, belongs to which category under Indian law?

- A Scheduled Caste
- B Denotified Tribe
- C Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) ✓
- D Forest-Dwelling Community under FRA

EXPLANATION

The Shompen of Great Nicobar Island are classified as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) — one of 75 PVTGs across India. With a population of only ~400 individuals, they are among the most isolated tribal communities with a hunter-gatherer, semi-nomadic lifestyle.

CONCEPT

India has 75 PVTGs across 18 states and 1 UT, identified by: declining or stagnant population, low literacy, pre-agricultural technology, and geographical isolation. The Shompen, Jarawa, and Sentinelese (Andaman Islands) are among the most restricted-contact PVTGs. Protected by the Andaman & Nicobar Islands Protection of Aboriginal Tribes Regulation, 1956.

Q 3

India launched its first CBDC-based Public Distribution System. What does the programmability of e-Rupee tokens mean in this context?

- A Tokens can be transferred to any bank account instantly
- B Tokens are encoded to be used only for food grain purchases at Fair Price Shops ✓**
- C Tokens automatically convert to cryptocurrency if unused
- D Tokens can be used for any government scheme payment

EXPLANATION

Programmability means the e-Rupee tokens issued for PDS are encoded to be used only for food grain purchases at registered Fair Price Shops. They cannot be diverted to other uses, auto-expire if unused, and carry a full audit trail — eliminating PDS leakage.

CONCEPT

India's PDS covers ~81 crore beneficiaries under NFSA 2013. DBT has saved ~₹2.73 lakh crore by eliminating ghost beneficiaries. CBDC is distinct from UPI — CBDC is a direct RBI liability (digital money), while UPI is a payment interface moving existing bank balances.

Q 4

For the first time in India's history, non-fossil fuel electricity capacity surpassed fossil fuel capacity. What was India's total installed power capacity in February 2026?

- A ~350 GW
- B ~450 GW
- C ~521 GW ✓**
- D ~600 GW

EXPLANATION

India's total installed power capacity reached ~521 GW in February 2026, with non-fossil capacity at 271.9 GW surpassing fossil fuel capacity for the first time. India added 52,537 MW in the first 10 months of FY 2025-26, including 34,955 MW solar.

CONCEPT

India's NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution) target under the Paris Agreement: 500 GW non-fossil capacity by 2030. PANCHAMRIT commitments include 50% energy from renewables by 2030 and net-zero by 2070. ISA (International Solar Alliance) was co-founded by India and France at COP21 (2015) and is headquartered at Gurugram.

Q 5 Tarique Rahman was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. Which party does he lead?

A Awami League

B Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) ✓

C Jatiya Party

D National Citizens Party (NCP)

EXPLANATION

Tarique Rahman is the Chairperson of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). BNP and allies won 209 of 297 seats in the 13th Parliamentary Elections. He was sworn in on February 17, 2026, ending the interim period under Muhammad Yunus that began after Sheikh Hasina's ouster in August 2024.

CONCEPT

India-Bangladesh trade (FY25): USD 13.51 billion. Bangladesh imports 1,160 MW electricity from India. Maitree Super Thermal Power Plant (1,320 MW in Khulna) is a joint India-Bangladesh project. India has extended ~USD 8 billion in Lines of Credit to Bangladesh. Key disputes: Teesta water sharing, minority community safety, Northeast insurgent sanctuaries.

Q 6 Kerala approved India's first graphene policy. Graphene was first isolated at which university, earning its discoverers the Nobel Prize in Physics 2010?

A University of Cambridge

B Massachusetts Institute of Technology

C University of Manchester ✓

D ETH Zurich

EXPLANATION

Graphene was first isolated at the University of Manchester in 2004 by Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov using the 'scotch tape' method on graphite. They were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2010. Kerala's policy includes partnerships with the University of Oxford and University of Manchester, and establishes a Rs 87 crore Graphene Innovation Centre in Kochi.

CONCEPT

Graphene is a single layer of carbon atoms in a hexagonal lattice — the world's strongest material (200x stronger than steel), extremely thin, and an excellent conductor. Applications include batteries (EVs), semiconductors, water filtration, composites, and medical devices. It is considered a critical material for the next industrial revolution.

Q 7

The OI Chiki script was created in 1925 for which Indian language, and was added to the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution by which amendment?

A Gondi — 91st Amendment

B Santhali — 92nd Amendment ✓

C Mizo — 86th Amendment

D Bodo — 92nd Amendment

EXPLANATION

OI Chiki was created by Pandit Raghunath Murmu in 1925 for the Santhali language of the Santhali tribal community. The Santhali language (and OI Chiki script) was added to the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution by the 92nd Constitutional Amendment in 2003, making Santhali the 22nd scheduled language.

CONCEPT

The Eighth Schedule of the Constitution lists 22 scheduled languages. The original Constitution had 14; the count grew through amendments. UPSC examinations are now conducted in Santali (OI Chiki script). President Murmu inaugurated the centenary in February 2026. Raghunath Murmu is known as 'Guru Gomke' (great teacher) among Santhali people.

Q 8

GIFT City (Gujarat International Finance Tec-City) is India's first International Financial Services Centre. Which authority regulates it?

A SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India)

B RBI (Reserve Bank of India)

C IFSCA (International Financial Services Centres Authority) ✓

D NITI Aayog

EXPLANATION

GIFT City is regulated by the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), established in April 2020 under the IFSCA Act 2019. IFSCA provides a unified regulatory framework for all financial services at IFSCs, replacing the earlier multi-regulator approach (RBI+SEBI+IRDAI+PFRDA). Uday Kotak was appointed GIFT City Chairman in February 2026.

CONCEPT

GIFT City at Gandhinagar, Gujarat, is India's first and only IFSC. It allows foreign currency transactions, offshore banking, insurance, capital markets, and fund management with special tax incentives. IFSCA Act 2019 empowers IFSCA to regulate banking, insurance, securities, and other financial products at IFSCs.

Q 9

India's rank in the Henley Passport Index improved from 85th (2025) to 75th (2026). How many visa-free or on-arrival destinations does the Indian passport provide access to?

A 44 destinations

B 56 destinations ✓

C 72 destinations

D 90 destinations

EXPLANATION

As per the Henley Passport Index 2026, India ranked 75th with visa-free or on-arrival access to 56 destinations — up from 85th with 52 destinations in 2025. This represents a significant improvement of 10 ranks and 4 additional destinations in one year.

CONCEPT

The Henley Passport Index ranks passports by the number of destinations their holders can visit without a prior visa. Top ranked in 2026: Singapore, France, Germany, Japan (90+ destinations each). The index reflects a country's bilateral relations, diplomatic relations, and economic standing globally.

Q 10

India's Urban Challenge Fund approved by the Cabinet provides central assistance for urban transformation. What is the total corpus and what percentage does the Centre cover?

A Rs 50,000 crore; Centre covers 50% of costs

B Rs 1 lakh crore; Centre covers 25% of costs ✓

C Rs 2 lakh crore; Centre covers 75% of costs

D Rs 5 lakh crore; Centre covers 100% of costs

EXPLANATION

The Urban Challenge Fund approved by the Cabinet provides Rs 1 lakh crore as central assistance (FY26-FY31, extendable to FY34). The Centre covers 25% of project costs, with at least 50% required from market sources. This leverages public funds to attract private capital for urban infrastructure.

CONCEPT

The Urban Challenge Fund complements AMRUT 2.0 (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation) and Smart Cities Mission. India's urban population is projected to reach 600 million by 2031 (from ~500 million today). The Startup India Fund of Funds 2.0, also approved simultaneously, has a Rs 10,000 crore corpus for VC mobilisation.

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