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DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED

Current Affairs Quiz — May 6, 2026

6 May 2026



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DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED ANSWER KEY

Current Affairs Quiz — May 6, 2026

6 May 2026 · 15 Questions · Answers & Explanations Included

Question 1 of 15

INS Mahendragiri, delivered in April 2026, belongs to which project and what is its significance?

- A Project 15B (Visakhapatnam-class destroyer); India's first stealth destroyer
- B Project 17A (Nilgiri-class frigate); sixth of seven ships with ~75% indigenous content ✓
- C Project 75I (Kalvari-class submarine); India's first air-independent propulsion submarine
- D Project 28 (Kamorta-class corvette); India's first indigenous anti-submarine warfare corvette

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

INS Mahendragiri is the sixth of seven frigates under Project 17A (Nilgiri-class guided missile stealth frigates), delivered on April 30, 2026 at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDSL), Mumbai. Its significance lies in ~75% indigenous content by value — a dramatic improvement from the ~30% of the earlier Project 17 (Shivalik class). The seven ships are being built by two yards: MDSL, Mumbai (4 ships) and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata (3 ships). Designer: Warship Design Bureau of the Indian Navy.

Key systems: BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, MRSAM air-defence (India-Israel), MFSTAR phased-array radar, CODOG propulsion. All P17A ships are named after Indian mountain ranges.

The 7th ship, INS Vindhyagiri (GRSE), is under sea trials. Project 15B is the Visakhapatnam-class destroyer (different class); Project 75I is for submarines; Project 28 is Kamorta-class ASW corvette.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

Project 17A ships: INS Nilgiri, Himgiri, Udaygiri (MDSL); INS Dunagiri, Taragiri, Vindhyagiri (GRSE); INS Mahendragiri (MDSL). CODOG = Combined Diesel or Gas — diesel for cruising, gas turbine for high speed.

BrahMos: India-Russia JV; Mach 2.8; range ~450 km (extended). MRSAM: range ~70 km; intercepts aircraft, missiles, drones.

DMR 249A: indigenously developed warship-grade steel (SAIL). Previous class: Project 17 Shivalik (3 ships: INS Shivalik, Satpura, Sahyadri, 2010–2012).

Q1  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 2 of 15

The RBI's gold repatriation programme has increased India's domestic gold share from 38% (March 2023) to 77% (March 2026). What was the PRIMARY geopolitical trigger for this accelerated repatriation?

- A India's 2021 decision to diversify from the US dollar as part of BRICS de-dollarisation
- B The Western freeze of ~\$300 billion of Russia's foreign exchange reserves after the Ukraine invasion (2022) ✓
- C The Bank of England's announcement of new custodial charges for foreign gold holdings
- D IMF warnings that gold stored abroad carries higher sovereign default risk

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

The PRIMARY catalyst for India accelerating gold repatriation was the 2022 precedent set when Western nations froze approximately \$300 billion of Russia's foreign exchange reserves held at Euroclear (Belgium) and other Western custodians following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This demonstrated that foreign-held central bank reserves can be weaponised as geopolitical tools.

India, observing that its own reserves stored at the Bank of England (London) and BIS (Basel) could theoretically face similar action in a future geopolitical confrontation, accelerated domestic repatriation as a risk-mitigation measure. In FY 2025–26 alone, 168.06 MT was repatriated — the largest single-year transfer.

Total RBI gold: 880.52 MT (March 2026); domestic share: 77% (~677 MT); remaining overseas: 197.67 MT. Gold's share of total forex reserves: 16.7%. Options A, C, D are incorrect or not the primary trigger.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

RBI Gold Timeline: 1991 — India pledged 67 MT to Bank of England during BOP crisis (national humiliation); 2009 — RBI bought 200 MT from IMF at \$1,045/oz; 2022–26 — accelerated repatriation. Three-year repatriation: FY24: 103.68 MT; FY25: 107.21 MT; FY26: 168.06 MT. RBI domestic vaults: primarily Nagpur and Mumbai offices.

De-dollarisation is a secondary/parallel trend, not the primary trigger for repatriation timing.

Q2  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 3 of 15

The Mission for Cotton Productivity (₹5,659 crore, 2026–31) targets raising India's lint yield from 440 to 755 kg/hectare. What does this comparison reveal about India's position in global cotton?

- A India's lint yield already exceeds the global average of 600 kg/ha — the mission merely aims to consolidate leadership
- B India's lint yield of 440 kg/ha is below the global average of ~770 kg/ha, despite India growing ~21% of global cotton area — revealing a large productivity gap ✓
- C India has the world's highest cotton acreage but lowest yield, making it the least efficient cotton producer globally
- D India's cotton is entirely rain-fed, while major competitors use 100% irrigation — making yield comparison meaningless

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

India grows approximately 21% of global cotton area (~11.4 million hectares) — the largest cotton acreage of any country — yet produces only about 23% of global output. India's lint yield of 440 kg/hectare is significantly below the global average of ~770 kg/ha, and far below China (~1,900 kg/ha) and Brazil (~1,700 kg/ha).

This productivity gap is the core problem the mission targets. The mission targets 755 kg/ha by 2031 — approaching but not yet at the global average.

Key reasons for India's underperformance: fragmented small landholding (average cotton plot: 1–2 ha), pink bollworm infestation (particularly damaging Bt cotton in Maharashtra/Gujarat since 2017), inadequate irrigation, and poor ginning quality (high trash content). The "Kasturi Cotton Bharat" premium brand also targets reducing trash content below 2% — a key quality benchmark for export markets.

Each bale = 170 kg; target: 498 lakh bales by 2031.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

India cotton: 2nd largest producer globally; largest acreage. Major states: Maharashtra, Gujarat, Telangana, Karnataka.

Pink bollworm: *Pectinophora gossypiella* — India's #1 cotton pest; evolved resistance to Bt toxins in some regions. Bt

cotton: introduced in India 2002; transformed yields initially; now resistance issues. "Kasturi Cotton" brand: analogous to Egyptian Cotton (Giza varieties) or US Supima cotton — both command 50–100% price premium.

Textiles exports: ~USD 44 billion (FY25); cotton is the backbone of India's apparel export sector. PM MITRA: 7 Mega Integrated Textile Regions.

Q3  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 4 of 15

Press Note 2 (2026 Series) modified Press Note 3 (2020) to ease FDI rules for Chinese-linked entities. Under the new policy, which of the following correctly describes what is now permitted via the AUTOMATIC FDI route?

- A Any Chinese state-owned company can invest in India without prior approval, up to 49% FDI in any sector
- B A company where Chinese/HK shareholders hold $\leq 10\%$ and have no "control" (per PMLA 2002 definition) can invest via automatic route ✓
- C Chinese investment is now freely permitted in all sectors except defence, space, and atomic energy
- D Companies registered in Singapore with any level of Chinese ownership are now exempt from prior approval

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

Press Note 2 (2026 Series) creates a precise threshold: an overseas company in which Chinese or Hong Kong entities hold up to 10% shareholding WITHOUT exercising "control" over the company — as defined by the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) 2002, which classifies ownership of more than 10% as a "beneficial owner" — may now invest in India through the automatic FDI route (no prior government approval needed). If the Chinese/HK shareholding exceeds 10% OR the Chinese entity exercises control, the government approval route remains mandatory.

The policy change addresses a key problem: many global investors (European, American, Japanese companies) had minor Chinese shareholders (below 5-10%) and were being blocked under the blanket PN3 (2020) rules, deterring "China+1" investments that India desperately wants. China's FDI in India remains tiny: USD 2.51 billion cumulative (0.32% of total; India's 23rd investor).

Also new: AIIB (multilateral bank, China-led) is now exempt from land-border restrictions. FDI processing timeline: 12 weeks for government route.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

PN3 (2020) origin: China's People's Bank of China acquired ~1% stake in HDFC during COVID-19 market crash; India feared opportunistic acquisitions by state-linked entities during the economic crisis; blanket restriction imposed covering all land-border nations. Land-border countries still requiring prior approval: China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Afghanistan.

Framework: FEMA 1999 + NDI Rules 2019; DPIIT is nodal body. Automatic route sectors include manufacturing, IT, infrastructure (up to sectoral caps).

Government route sectors include defence (>49%), print media, etc.

Q4  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 5 of 15

The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill 2026 proposes to increase the SC's strength to 38 judges (including CJI). Under Article 124 of the Constitution, what majority is required to pass this amendment?

- A Special majority — 2/3 of members present + majority of total membership in each House
- B Simple majority in both Houses of Parliament ✓
- C Constitutional amendment under Article 368 — ratification by at least half the state legislatures
- D Presidential Ordinance — no Parliamentary approval required

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

Crucially, increasing the number of Supreme Court judges does NOT require a constitutional amendment (Article 368). Article 124(1) of the Constitution originally specified the number of judges but empowered Parliament to "by law prescribe a greater number of judges." Since Parliament is simply passing a regular law under this enabling provision — not amending the Constitution itself — only a SIMPLE MAJORITY in both Houses plus Presidential assent is required.

This is a critical distinction that Prelims candidates frequently get wrong, confusing it with Article 368 (special majority + possible state ratification). The bill proposes increasing from 34 total (33 + CJI) to 38 total (37 + CJI).

Historical increases: 1950: 8; 1960: 14; 1977: 18; 1986: 26; 2008: 34 (last increase). SC judges are appointed by the President on recommendation of the Collegium (CJI + 4 senior-most judges) — evolved through Second and Third Judges Cases (1993 and 1998).

All SC expenditure: Charged to Consolidated Fund of India (not subject to Parliament vote). Impeachment of SC judge: special majority REQUIRED — different from increasing strength.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

Article 124(1): SC consists of CJI + up to such number as Parliament prescribes. Article 124(4): Removal of judge only by impeachment — special majority (2/3 present + majority of total membership) in BOTH Houses + Presidential order.

Collegium: CJI + 4 senior judges (Third Judges Case, 1998). NJAC (99th Amendment, 2014): SC struck it down in 2015 as unconstitutional — Collegium restored.

Pendency: ~92,000+ cases before SC (as of December 2025); 5-10 year wait for civil appeals. All SC judges' salaries charged to Consolidated Fund (Article 125).

Q5  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 6

of 15

The Dorjilung Hydroelectric Power Project (1,125 MW) on Bhutan's Kurichhu River is being developed under a PPP model. Which entity holds majority equity and which holds minority equity?

- A India's NTPC holds 60%; Bhutan's Druk Green Power Corporation holds 40%
- B **Bhutan's Druk Green Power Corporation holds 60%; India's Tata Power holds 40% ✓**
- C World Bank holds 51%; Bhutan government holds 49%
- D India's government holds 60% via NHPC; Tata Power holds 40%

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
EXPLANATION

The Dorjilung Hydroelectric Power Project is developed by Dorjilung Hydro Power Limited (DHPL), a Joint Venture between Bhutan's Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC) — which holds 60% equity — and India's Tata Power — which holds 40% equity. This is Bhutan's largest PPP hydropower project and Tata Power's first major entry into Bhutan.

The World Bank provides financing (USD 515 million in concessional loans/credits — IDA + IBRD), but does not hold equity. The project is on the Kurichhu River in eastern Bhutan; 6 Francis turbines; 139.5 m concrete-gravity dam; underground powerhouse; annual generation 4,500+ GWh; ~80% to be sold to India; commissioning: September 2031.

Total project cost: ₹13,100 crore (~USD 1.7 billion). Bhutan's electricity exports to India form ~40% of Bhutan's total exports — a cornerstone of the bilateral relationship.

India's model: historically, India provides grants + concessional loans for Bhutanese hydro (e.g., NHPC for Tala, Chukha); Dorjilung marks a shift toward private sector (Tata Power) participation.

CONCEPT NOTE

Major Bhutan hydro projects: Chukha (336 MW, 1988), Kurichhu (60 MW, 2001), Tala (1,020 MW, 2006), Punatsangchhu I (1,200 MW, ongoing), Punatsangchhu II (1,020 MW, ongoing), Mangdechhu (720 MW, 2019). Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC): Bhutan's state-owned hydro company; manages all major projects.

Francis turbine: most common type for medium-head (50–600 m), medium-to-large flow applications — used at Dorjilung (6 units). Kurichhu flows into Brahmaputra system in Assam.

India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty: 1949 (revised 2007); foundation of hydro cooperation.

Q6  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 7

of 15

Bloomberg's "trAPPed" investigation, which won the 2026 Pulitzer Prize for Illustrated Reporting, exposed which type of cybercrime?

- A Phishing attacks on Indian banking customers using fake UPI interfaces
- B Digital arrest scams where fraudsters impersonate law enforcement and coerce victims into transferring money via video-call ✓
- C Ransomware attacks on Indian government CERT infrastructure from state actors
- D Investment fraud on cryptocurrency exchanges targeting retail investors

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

"trAPPed" documented the epidemic of "digital arrest" scams — a sophisticated cybercrime where perpetrators (often operating from scam compounds in Myanmar's Kokang region, Cambodia's Sihanoukville, and Laos) impersonate Indian law enforcement officers (CBI, ED, police, customs, NCB) and conduct fake "digital arrests" via video call using high-quality props (uniforms, fake police stations). Victims — typically middle-class, educated Indians — are told they are under investigation for money laundering, drug trafficking, or other serious crimes. Under extreme psychological pressure, they are coerced into transferring large sums (sometimes crores of rupees). The Bloomberg investigation revealed: (1) the scale — thousands of crore rupees lost annually; (2) the geography — scam centres use trafficked workers from Southeast Asia and China; (3) the mechanism — VoIP technology, money mule networks, cryptocurrency laundering; (4) India's limited law enforcement reach across international borders. PM Modi warned about digital arrests in his "Mann ki Baat" address in October 2024. Anand RK and Suparna Sharma (Bloomberg) shared the Illustrated Reporting category with Natalie Obiko Pearson (Bloomberg).

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

Pulitzer Prize: Established 1917; Columbia University; 23 categories; USD 15,000 prize per category. 2026 Indian winners: Anand RK + Suparna Sharma (Bloomberg, Illustrated Reporting); Aniruddha Ghosal (AP, International Reporting).
 Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize 2026: Sudanese Journalists Syndicate; UNESCO; May 3, 2026 (World Press Freedom Day).
 Guillermo Cano Isaza: Colombian journalist assassinated December 17, 1986. Cano Prize: established 1997.
 Indian laws on digital arrest fraud: IT Act Sections 66C (identity theft) + 66D (cheating by personation using computer resource); BNS cheating sections.

Q7  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 8

of 15

India and Cambodia held CINBAX-II in May 2026. CINBAX is India's bilateral military exercise with Cambodia. Which Indian regiment participated and what is the exercise's strategic context?

- A Rajputana Rifles Regiment; part of India's QUAD security architecture with Australia, USA, Japan
- B **Maratha Light Infantry Regiment; part of India's Act East Policy deepening defence ties with ASEAN nations** ✓
- C Sikh Regiment; part of India's Indian Ocean Region (IOR) security framework
- D Gorkha Rifles; part of India's BIMSTEC security cooperation initiative

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

CINBAX-II was held at Kampong Speu Province, Cambodia, with India's contingent of 120 personnel drawn from the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment and Cambodia's 160 personnel from the Royal Cambodian Army. The exercise focuses on counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban and jungle terrain, including drone operations, sniper tactics, and mortar handling.

The first edition (CINBAX-I) was held in Pune, India in December 2024. CINBAX is part of India's Act East Policy — the strategic framework for deepening engagement with Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific.

Cambodia is an ASEAN member state; India has significantly deepened military-to-military engagement with ASEAN nations through bilateral exercises (CINBAX with Cambodia, MAITREE with Thailand, SHAKTI with France [Djibouti], SURYA KIRAN with Nepal, GARUDA SHAKTI with Indonesia) to build interoperability and shared counter-terrorism frameworks. CINBAX is not linked to QUAD (Australia, India, Japan, USA) or BIMSTEC (Cambodia is not a member).

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

Act East Policy: Launched by PM Modi at ASEAN Summit 2014 (Myanmar); upgraded from "Look East Policy" (1991).

ASEAN: 10-member bloc — Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam.

India's ASEAN bilateral exercises: CINBAX (Cambodia), MAITREE (Thailand), GARUDA SHAKTI (Indonesia), PRABAL DOSTI (Maldives), SHAKTI (France — Djibouti but Djibouti is French territory near ASEAN zone). Kampong Speu: Province in south-central Cambodia, about 45 km from Phnom Penh.

Maratha Light Infantry: one of oldest regiments of Indian Army; infantry regiment with distinguished combat history.

Q8  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 9

of 15

Indopotamon alipurduarensis, the new freshwater crab species discovered in West Bengal, was found in which specific habitat and what makes its ecology unusual?

- A Fast-flowing Himalayan rivers in Darjeeling — unusual because freshwater crabs typically prefer still water
- B Deep burrows (up to 1.5 m) in muddy rice fields — unusual because it spends most of the year underground, emerging only May–August ✓
- C Mangrove roots in the Sundarbans — unusual because it is the first crab found in both salt and fresh water
- D High-altitude glacial lakes at over 3,000 m — unusual because no freshwater crab was previously known above 2,000 m in India

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

Indopotamon alipurduarensis is a fossorial (burrowing) species, found in deep burrows up to 1.5 metres in muddy rice field soil in the sub-Himalayan Dooars region of Alipurduar district, West Bengal. What makes its ecology unusual is that it is active only during May–August (the monsoon period when rice fields flood) and remains underground in its burrows for the rest of the year — a strategy for surviving dry-season desiccation.

Appearance: greyish shell with vibrant orange-red edges and claws. It is only the SECOND species in the Indopotamon genus; the discovery brings India's total freshwater crab species to 183.

The Dooars (sub-Himalayan foothill zone between Sikkim/Bhutan and the plains) is a biodiversity-rich but understudied region — several rivers (Tista, Jaldhaka, Torsa, Raidak, Sankosh) flow through it. Same day: three new Critically Endangered plant species also described from AP Eastern Ghats: Euphorbia ananthapuramensis, Euphorbia chalamensis, Ceropogia andhriga (leafless during flowering; edible tubers).

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

Indopotamon = genus of freshwater potamid crabs found in the Indo-Gangetic-Himalayan foothill zone. India's freshwater crab diversity: highest in Western Ghats (100+ species), followed by Northeast India; major family = Gecarcinucidae.

Dooars geography: bordering Bhutan and Assam; major wildlife: Jaldapara NP (one-horned rhino), Buxa Tiger Reserve, Gorumara NP. India's total described freshwater crab species now: 183. Fossorial = adapted to burrowing and living underground.

India is one of the world's biodiversity hotspots — 2 of 36 global hotspots (Western Ghats + Eastern Himalayas) overlap with Indian territory.

Q9  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 10 of 15

The Methane Alert and Response System (MARS), operated by UNEP's IMEO, was expanded in May 2026 to include coal mines and waste facilities. At which climate summit was MARS originally launched?

- A COP26 in Glasgow (November 2021)
- B COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh (November 2022) ✓**
- C COP28 in Dubai (December 2023)
- D G20 New Delhi Summit (September 2023)

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

EXPLANATION

MARS (Methane Alert and Response System) was launched at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022. It is operated by UNEP's International Methane Emissions Observatory (IMEO), which was itself launched earlier at the G20 Leaders Summit in 2021.

The MARS pilot phase began in January 2023, initially covering oil and gas sector methane emissions detected by satellites. In May 2026, its coverage was expanded to include coal mines and waste facilities — making it a more comprehensive methane monitoring platform.

MARS operates a data-to-action cycle: satellite detection → alert to relevant country/company → response framework → progress tracking. Methane is approximately 80x more potent than CO₂ as a greenhouse gas over a 20-year period.

The Global Methane Pledge (launched COP26, Glasgow, 2021) committed 150+ countries to reduce methane emissions by at least 30% by 2030 from 2020 levels. MARS aligns with this commitment.

OGMP 2.0 is UNEP's flagship program for oil and gas methane transparency.

CONCEPT NOTE

IMEO: International Methane Emissions Observatory; launched G20 Leaders Summit 2021; operates under UNEP. MARS operational timeline: Launched COP27 Nov 2022 → Pilot Jan 2023 → Oil/gas focus initially → May 2026 expansion to coal mines + waste. Methane sources: fossil fuels (~35%), agriculture (~23%), waste/landfills (~20%), coal (~12%).

Global Methane Pledge: COP26 (Glasgow, 2021); 150+ countries; 30% reduction by 2030 from 2020 levels. Methane vs CO₂: Methane has 20-year GWP of ~80 and 100-year GWP of ~28.

Key satellite platforms detecting methane: ESA's Sentinel-5P, GOSAT (Japan), MethaneSAT (EDF).

Q10  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 11 of 15

The Caracal, recently sighted in Rajasthan's Thar Desert, is listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972 in India. What does Schedule I protection mean and what is the caracal's global IUCN status?

- A Schedule I = lowest protection; IUCN = Critically Endangered
- B Schedule I = highest protection (absolute prohibition on hunting); IUCN = Least Concern globally ✓
- C Schedule I = protected only in national parks; IUCN = Vulnerable
- D Schedule I = requires special permits for capture; IUCN = Near Threatened

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act (WPA) 1972 provides the HIGHEST level of protection in India — it is an absolute prohibition on hunting, capturing, or trading listed species, with the most severe penalties under the Act. The caracal (*Caracal caracal*) is listed under Schedule I, meaning it receives this maximum legal protection in India. However, globally the IUCN Red List classifies it as "Least Concern" because it has a wide distribution across Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and parts of South Asia — and maintains healthy populations in many regions. In India, however, the caracal is extremely rare, found primarily in arid and semi-arid regions of Rajasthan and Gujarat, and faces significant threats from habitat loss and human-wildlife conflict.

Key features: Medium-sized wild cat; speed up to 80 kph; can leap ~3 metres to catch birds mid-air; predominantly nocturnal; known as "siya gosh" (Persian for "black ear"); distinctive black-tufted ears for which it is named (Arabic "karah kulak" = black ear). The Schedule I-VI system under WPA 1972: Schedule I = maximum protection; Schedule II = also high protection; Schedules III-IV = less stringent; Schedule V = vermin (can be hunted); Schedule VI = protected plants.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

Caracal distribution: Sub-Saharan Africa (main range), North Africa, Arabian Peninsula, Middle East, Central Asia, Pakistan, northwestern India. India population: Very small; Rajasthan (Thar Desert), Gujarat; possibly some records from Madhya Pradesh.

WPA 1972 Schedules: I (absolute protection), II (significant protection), III & IV (regulated hunting with permit), V (vermin), VI (protected plants). WPA 1972 amended multiple times; major amendment 2022 (adding CITES provisions).

Other Schedule I animals: Bengal tiger, snow leopard, Indian elephant, one-horned rhinoceros, lion, Indian wolf, Gangetic dolphin. Global caracal: Stable population; no major threat; different from India's local rarity.

Q11  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 12 of 15

"Bulldozer justice" has been criticised by The Hindu and the Supreme Court as unconstitutional. Which FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT is most directly violated by demolishing a person's property as punishment before any judicial conviction?

- A Article 14 (Right to Equality) — demolitions are applied selectively based on religion or community
- B Article 21 (Right to Life and Personal Liberty) — includes right to shelter and dignity; punishment before conviction violates due process ✓**
- C Article 19(1)(f) (Right to Property) — demolitions deprive citizens of property
- D Article 32 (Right to Constitutional Remedies) — bulldozer actions block access to courts

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

The most directly violated right is Article 21 — the Right to Life and Personal Liberty, which the Supreme Court has interpreted expansively to include the right to a dignified life, right to shelter, and crucially, the right to due process before any deprivation of life or liberty. "Bulldozer justice" (state-directed demolitions of properties of accused persons, typically their homes) punishes persons — and often their entire families — before any judicial conviction, treating the accused as guilty. This violates the principle of "nemo debet esse iudex in propria causa" (no one can be judge in their own case) and "audi alteram partem" (hear the other side).

The Rule of Law requires punishment only after judicial process. Article 14 (Equality) is also relevant — demolitions are often alleged to be selectively applied against religious minorities, violating equal treatment.

Note: Article 19(1)(f) (Right to Property) was removed by the 44th Constitutional Amendment (1978) — property is no longer a fundamental right, though Article 300A provides a constitutional right to property (but not a fundamental right). The Supreme Court in *Abhay Nath Yadav* (2024) and subsequent orders has directed that demolitions must follow due process — notice + hearing + municipal procedure.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

Article 300A: "No person shall be deprived of his property save by authority of law" — constitutional right, not fundamental right (since 44th Amendment 1978). Article 21 expansive interpretation (SC cases): *Maneka Gandhi* (1978) — due process required; *Olga Tellis* (1985) — right to livelihood; *Francis Coralie* (1981) — right to dignified life; *PUCL* (1997) — right to food.

Bulldozer actions: widely used in UP, MP, Rajasthan, Delhi against accused criminals; SC repeatedly said due process must be followed even if property is encroachment. The Hindu editorial argues institutional reform (more judges, better courts) is the answer — not executive shortcut.

Q12  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 13 of 15

Academic freedom in India is constitutionally rooted in which Article, and what international framework recognises it as a human right?

- A Article 30 (rights of minorities to establish institutions); UNESCO 1997 Recommendation on Higher Education Personnel
- B **Article 19(1)(a) (Freedom of Speech and Expression); UNESCO 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel ✓**
- C Article 21A (Right to Education); UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- D Article 29 (protection of interests of minorities); V-Dem Institute's Academic Freedom Index

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

Academic freedom in India is constitutionally grounded primarily in Article 19(1)(a) — Freedom of Speech and Expression (which includes freedom of research, publication, and intellectual inquiry), read with Article 21 (Right to Life with Dignity — includes intellectual autonomy). The UNESCO 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel is the primary international instrument that explicitly recognises academic freedom as a human right, including: freedom to teach, research, publish, and criticise institutions without fear of reprisal.

The Hindu editorial (May 6, 2026) draws on V-Dem Institute's 2024 report classifying India as an "electoral autocracy" with academic freedom "completely restricted" — this refers to the V-Dem Academic Freedom Index, not a binding international instrument, but a widely used scholarly metric. Restrictions documented include: funding cuts to autonomous research bodies (like ICSSR), regulatory interference via new education regulations, visa denials to foreign scholars critical of India, and a documented culture of self-censorship in universities.

Article 30 protects minorities' rights to establish educational institutions — relevant but not the primary academic freedom anchor. Article 21A is the Right to Education (6-14 years), not academic freedom.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

V-Dem Institute (Varieties of Democracy): Sweden-based; publishes annual Democracy Report; Academic Freedom Index measures: Research + Teaching freedom, institutional autonomy, campus integrity. UNESCO 1997 Recommendation: Non-binding but authoritative; adopted by UNESCO General Conference; 6 categories of rights for higher education personnel. Key academic institutions facing scrutiny: JNU, Jawaharlal Nehru University (funding cuts, administration interference cited); foreign scholars denied visas. Article 19(2): Reasonable restrictions on free speech — national security, public order, decency, relations with foreign states.

These restrictions must be proportionate (K.S. Puttaswamy 2017 — 9-judge bench proportionality test).

Q13  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 14 of 15

The Raghuram Rajan–Rohit Lamba piece in Indian Express (May 6, 2026) argues India must "produce AI, not become its tenant." What is their core argument about India's existing strength that should form the foundation of AI sovereignty?

- A India's IT export revenue (\$250 billion) and large English-speaking developer workforce
- B India's existing Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) — Aadhaar, UPI, ONDC, DigiLocker — as the data and governance foundation for sovereign AI ✓**
- C India's network of IITs and IISc, which produce more AI engineers than any country except China
- D India's multilingual diversity, which gives it an inherent advantage in building multilingual AI models

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

Raghuram Rajan (former RBI Governor, University of Chicago economics professor) and Rohit Lamba (economist, Princeton) argue that India's greatest competitive advantage for building sovereign AI is its already-deployed Digital Public Infrastructure — the "India Stack." This includes: Aadhaar (1.4 billion biometric IDs), UPI (13+ billion transactions/month), ONDC (open network for commerce), DigiLocker (digital document repository), CoWIN, ABHA (healthcare ID), etc. This DPI generates massive, structured, consent-based data across demographics and sectors — a foundation no other country can replicate easily.

Their argument: India must invest in: (1) sovereign compute (GPU clusters for AI training); (2) open datasets from DPI; (3) open-source large language models in Indian languages; (4) public-private R&D investment. Without this, India risks becoming a "tenant" — using and paying for foreign AI infrastructure (OpenAI, Google, Microsoft) without building ownership or governance capability.

This connects to GS3 (technology policy, AI governance) and GS2 (digital governance, DPI). Option A describes India's IT services strength (real but not the core argument).

Options C and D are partial truths but not Rajan-Lamba's central argument.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

DPI = Digital Public Infrastructure: interoperable, open-standard, public-good digital systems. India Stack: Aadhaar + UPI + DigiLocker + ONDC + Beckn Protocol.

IndiaAI Mission (2024): ₹10,372 crore; aims to build sovereign AI compute (10,000 GPUs initially); supports AI startups and open datasets. Pixxel + Sarvam AI "Pathfinder" satellite (May 5, 2026 context): orbital AI data centre — India's first; Q4 2026 launch.

Sarvam AI: Indian open-source LLM company; building Indian-language AI models. Raghuram Rajan: RBI Governor 2013–16; known for banking reform, inflation targeting (FIT framework), Urjit Patel Committee report on monetary policy.

Q14  **CONCEPT KIT**

Question 15 of 15

Jim Corbett National Park, where tiger Vikram died at 21, holds multiple historical firsts. Which of the following combinations about Corbett is ENTIRELY correct?

- A** India's first national park (1936 as Hailey NP); first Project Tiger site (1973); located in Nainital district, Uttarakhand; main river Ramganga (West) ✓
- B** India's first national park (1924); first UNESCO Biosphere Reserve; located in Dehradun district; main river Ganga
- C** India's oldest tiger reserve (1963); renamed from Corbett Wildlife Sanctuary in 1973; located in Pauri Garhwal; main river Alaknanda
- D** India's first national park (1936 as Ramsay NP); first Project Tiger site (1983); located in Almora; main river Kosi

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

Option A is entirely correct: Jim Corbett National Park was established in 1936 as Hailey National Park (named after then-Governor of UP, Malcolm Hailey) — making it India's FIRST national park. It was renamed Ramganga National Park briefly, then renamed Jim Corbett National Park in 1957 (after the famous hunter-naturalist Jim Corbett who championed its creation).

It became the FIRST site under Project Tiger, launched by PM Indira Gandhi on April 1, 1973. Location: Nainital district (also part of Pauri Garhwal district) in Uttarakhand's Himalayan foothills.

Main river: Ramganga (West branch) flows through the park — it is the dominant river. Other rivers/streams: Sonanadi, Palain, Mandal.

Area: ~1,318 sq km (core zone: ~521 sq km). Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*) is the key species; Corbett also has elephants, leopards, and rich bird diversity (nearly 600 species).

Vikram, the Bengal tiger who died, was 21 years old — exceptionally old for a wild tiger (wild tigers typically live 10-15 years). Option B: Incorrect year (1924), river (Ganga doesn't flow through Corbett), location (Dehradun). Options C and D: Multiple errors.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

Project Tiger: Launched April 1, 1973 by PM Indira Gandhi; first sites: Corbett (UP, now Uttarakhand), Kanha (MP), Ranthambhore (Rajasthan), Manas (Assam), Palamau (Bihar, now Jharkhand), Simlipal (Odisha), Bandipur (Karnataka), Melghat (Maharashtra), Sundarbans (WB). Tiger Task Force 1972 led to Project Tiger.

NTCA (National Tiger Conservation Authority): established 2005 under WPA 1972 (amendment); statutory body. Current tiger count: India has ~3,682 tigers (2022 census) — world's largest tiger population.

Jim Corbett (1875–1955): British hunter-naturalist born in Nainital; wrote "The Man-Eaters of Kumaon"; championed wildlife conservation; park named after him posthumously.

Q15  **CONCEPT KIT**



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