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DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED

# Daily Quiz — May 22, 2026

22 May 2026



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## DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED ANSWER KEY

# Daily Quiz — May 22, 2026

22 May 2026 · 13 Questions · Answers &amp; Explanations Included

**Question 1**

of 13

[Source →](#)

Cyprus, which holds the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first half of 2026, joined the European Union in which year and adopted the Euro in which year?

**A** Joined EU 2004; adopted Euro 2008 ✓

**B** Joined EU 2007; adopted Euro 2009

**C** Joined EU 2004; adopted Euro 2002

**D** Joined EU 2013; adopted Euro 2015

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** Cyprus joined the European Union on May 1, 2004 — part of the largest single enlargement of the EU (along with nine other Central and Eastern European states) — and adopted the Euro on January 1, 2008. **ANALYSIS:** Cyprus's EU membership underpins its role as the eastern-most EU outpost on the IMEC route and gives India a useful interlocutor inside the EU Council during the January-June 2026 presidency, especially for the long-pending India-EU FTA.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

Cyprus became independent in 1960 from British rule under the London-Zurich Agreements. The 1974 Turkish military intervention partitioned the island, and the self-declared "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" (TRNC) is recognised ONLY by Turkey — no other UN member, and not by India.

The capital Nicosia (Lefkosia) remains the world's only divided capital, bisected by a UN Buffer Zone (Green Line). Cyprus has consistently supported India's permanent seat on a reformed UN Security Council and India's positions in the Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth.

The 2026 New Delhi bilateral elevated relations to a Strategic Partnership and announced the "Friends of IMEC" plurilateral grouping.

**Q1**  **CONCEPT KIT**

 <b>CROSS-PAPER</b>	GS2 (India-EU, IR), GS1 (geography of Mediterranean).
 <b>MAINS KEYWORDS</b>	Cyprus EU Presidency, IMEC, Friends of IMEC, India-EU FTA, Strategic Partnership 2026.
 <b>COMMON MISTAKE</b>	Confusing EU accession year (2004) with Euro adoption year (2008) — they are FOUR years apart.
 <b>EXAM TIP</b>	Cyprus = EU May 1, 2004; Euro Jan 1, 2008; capital Nicosia (last divided capital); 1974 partition; TRNC recognised only by Turkey.
 <b>INTERVIEW</b>	Should India weigh in on the Cyprus reunification dispute, or remain studiously neutral given its own Kashmir analogies?

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**Question 2**

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The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) — whose anniversary is marked by the International Day for Biological Diversity on May 22 — was adopted in which year and entered into force in which year?

- A Adopted 1972; in force 1975
- B Adopted 1992; in force 1993 ✓
- C Adopted 2002; in force 2003
- D Adopted 1985; in force 1989

**ANSWER & ANALYSIS**
**✓ EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was adopted on May 22, 1992 at Nairobi, opened for signature at the Rio Earth Summit on June 5, 1992, and entered into force on December 29, 1993. India ratified the CBD on February 18, 1994.

**ANALYSIS:** The UN General Assembly originally observed IDB on December 29 (entry-into-force anniversary) but shifted it to May 22 (adoption anniversary) via UNGA Resolution 55/201 in December 2000 — the date chosen because December 29 falls in many countries' holiday period.






**📌 CONCEPT NOTE**

The CBD has three pillars: (i) conservation of biodiversity; (ii) sustainable use; (iii) fair and equitable Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS). Its two protocols are the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2000; in force 2003) governing transboundary movement of living modified organisms, and the Nagoya Protocol on ABS (2010; in force October 12, 2014) — India ratified Nagoya on October 9, 2012 (the 5th country to ratify).

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) was adopted at CBD COP-15 in Montreal in December 2022 under China's presidency; it has 4 long-term goals and 23 action targets, including the headline 30x30 target (protect 30% of land and sea by 2030). The CBD Secretariat is at Montreal.

The CBD has 196 Parties; only four UN member states are non-Parties — the United States (signed but never ratified), Andorra, South Sudan, and the Holy See — making the US the most significant non-Party.

**Q2**  **CONCEPT KIT**

 <b>CROSS-PAPER</b>	GS3 (environment, biodiversity), GS2 (multilateral environmental agreements).
 <b>MAINS KEYWORDS</b>	CBD, KMGBF, 30x30, ABS, Cartagena Protocol, Nagoya Protocol, megadiverse, hotspots.
 <b>COMMON MISTAKE</b>	Treating CBD as having entered into force on the same date it was adopted — adoption May 22, 1992 vs. entry into force Dec 29, 1993 (18 months apart).
 <b>EXAM TIP</b>	CBD adopted Nairobi May 22, 1992; in force Dec 29, 1993; India ratified Feb 18, 1994; Secretariat Montreal; KMGBF at COP-15 Montreal Dec 2002 — 4 goals, 23 targets, 30x30.
 <b>INTERVIEW</b>	Why has the US not ratified the CBD even three decades on, and what does that say about treaty politics in conservative US politics?

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**Question 3**

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India is one of the world's 17 megadiverse countries and hosts FOUR of the 36 globally recognised biodiversity hotspots. Which of the following correctly lists all four Indian biodiversity hotspots?

**A** Himalaya, Western Ghats-Sri Lanka, Indo-Burma, Sundaland ✓

**B** Himalaya, Eastern Ghats, Indo-Burma, Andaman and Nicobar

**C** Himalaya, Indo-Gangetic Plain, Western Ghats, Sundarbans

**D** Western Ghats, Eastern Himalaya, Vindhyas, Thar Desert

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** India is part of FOUR of the 36 globally recognised biodiversity hotspots — the Himalaya, Indo-Burma, Western Ghats-Sri Lanka, and Sundaland (which extends into India through the Nicobar Islands). **ANALYSIS:** The hotspot framework was conceptualised by Norman Myers (1988) and refined by Conservation International — to qualify, a region must have at least 1,500 endemic vascular plant species AND have lost at least 70% of its primary vegetation.

The Indo-Burma and Western Ghats-Sri Lanka hotspots are among the eight "hottest hotspots" globally.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

The Himalaya hotspot covers the Himalayan range across India, Nepal, Bhutan, China, Pakistan, Myanmar. The Indo-Burma hotspot extends across Northeast India (excluding Assam, which is part of the Eastern Himalaya region) into Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, southern China and Bangladesh.

The Western Ghats-Sri Lanka hotspot is split between Peninsular India's western escarpment and Sri Lanka. Sundaland — primarily Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Philippines — extends into India only through the Nicobar Islands (NOT the Andamans, which are part of the Indo-Burma hotspot).

The Eastern Ghats, Vindhyas, and Indo-Gangetic Plain are NOT classified as hotspots. India also hosts UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (12 in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves) and Ramsar wetlands (~89).

India ratified the CBD on February 18, 1994 and the Nagoya Protocol in October 2014.

**Q3**  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 (environment, biodiversity), GS1 (physical geography).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

biodiversity hotspots, megadiverse, Conservation International, Indo-Burma, Western Ghats-Sri Lanka, Sundaland, Norman Myers.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Including the Eastern Ghats or Sundarbans as a hotspot — neither is a recognised global biodiversity hotspot under Conservation International's framework.

 **EXAM TIP**

India's 4 hotspots = Himalaya + Indo-Burma + Western Ghats-Sri Lanka + Sundaland (Nicobars). 36 global hotspots; 17 megadiverse countries (per Conservation International).

 **INTERVIEW**

Should India lobby for the Eastern Ghats to be recognised as a separate hotspot, given its understudied endemism?

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**Question 4**

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The Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI) — frequently contrasted with ASEAN's AOIP — was launched by India at which platform and in which year?

**A** Shangri-La Dialogue, Singapore, 2018

**B** East Asia Summit, Bangkok, 2019 ✓

**C** Quad Leaders' Summit, Tokyo, 2022

**D** BRICS Summit, Goa, 2016

**ANSWER & ANALYSIS**
 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI) was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the 14th East Asia Summit in Bangkok on November 4, 2019. **ANALYSIS:** IPOI is structured around 7 pillars — Maritime Security; Maritime Ecology; Maritime Resources; Capacity Building & Resource Sharing; Disaster Risk Reduction & Management; Science, Technology & Academic Cooperation; and Trade Connectivity & Maritime Transport. Each pillar is anchored by a different partner country (e.g., Australia leads Maritime Ecology; Japan leads Connectivity).

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

IPOI is complementary to ASEAN's "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific" (AOIP), endorsed at the 34th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok in June 2019. The IPOI underscores India's "Indo-Pacific" formulation — which the US adopted formally in the 2017 National Security Strategy.

The Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) is a distinct Quad initiative, launched at the Tokyo Quad Leaders' Summit on May 24, 2022 — IPMDA provides near-real-time maritime tracking of dark vessels via commercial satellite radar imagery. The Quad's evolution: 2004 Tsunami Core Group (humanitarian relief after the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami); Quad 1.0 was initiated in Manila in 2007 by Japanese PM Shinzo Abe but lapsed in 2008; Quad 2.0 revived in 2017 on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit.

First virtual Quad Leaders' Summit on March 12, 2021; first in-person summit at the White House on September 24, 2021.

**Q4**  **CONCEPT KIT**

 <b>CROSS-PAPER</b>	GS2 (IR, Indo-Pacific, Act East), GS3 (maritime security).
 <b>MAINS KEYWORDS</b>	IPOI, AOIP, IPMDA, Quad, Indo-Pacific, Act East Policy, East Asia Summit.
 <b>COMMON MISTAKE</b>	Confusing IPOI (India-led, EAS 2019) with IPMDA (Quad-led, Tokyo 2022) — both have "IP" but different organisations and years.
 <b>EXAM TIP</b>	IPOI = EAS Bangkok Nov 4, 2019; 7 pillars; AOIP = ASEAN 2019; IPMDA = Quad Tokyo May 24, 2022.
 <b>INTERVIEW</b>	Does IPOI's pillar-with-anchor architecture serve as an effective coalition-of-the-willing model for the Indo-Pacific?

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**Question 5**

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Which of the following correctly states the headquarters and year of establishment of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe), which has been opening Indian space sector to private industry?

- A Bengaluru; established March 2019
- B New Delhi; established April 2023
- C Bopal, Ahmedabad; established June 2020 ✓
- D Sriharikota; established 1969

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre) was established in June 2020 as an autonomous body under the Department of Space, with its headquarters at Bopal, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Its inaugural Chairman is Dr Pawan Goenka.





**ANALYSIS:** IN-SPACe is the single-window authorisation and promotion agency for all non-government entities in space activities, complementing ISRO (R&D) and NSIL (commercial). The May 22, 2026 announcement of end-to-end PSLV technology transfer to private industry is one of the most significant operationalisations of the Indian Space Policy, 2023.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

The Indian Space Policy was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security on April 6, 2023 — it formally separated the roles of ISRO (research/development), NSIL (commercial operations), and IN-SPACe (regulator-promoter). NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) was incorporated on March 6, 2019 with headquarters in Bengaluru — it serves as the commercial arm of ISRO. FDI rules in the space sector were liberalised in February 2024 — up to 74% automatic in satellite manufacturing and operation, up to 49% automatic in launch vehicles and ground systems, and 100% automatic in satellite components and ground equipment.

India's PSLV achieved its first successful flight on October 15, 1994 with PSLV-D2; the workhorse vehicle has delivered Chandrayaan-1 (2008), Mars Orbiter Mission (2013), and several record multi-satellite missions. India's space economy target is USD 44 billion by 2033 (from ~USD 8 billion currently).

**Q5**  **CONCEPT KIT**

 <b>CROSS-PAPER</b>	GS3 (S&T, space sector, FDI), GS2 (governance, single-window regulation).
 <b>MAINS KEYWORDS</b>	IN-SPACE, Indian Space Policy 2023, NSIL, PSLV, Atmanirbhar Bharat, FDI in space.
 <b>COMMON MISTAKE</b>	Locating IN-SPACE at ISRO HQ in Bengaluru — IN-SPACE is at Bopal, Ahmedabad, not Bengaluru (which hosts ISRO and NSIL).
 <b>EXAM TIP</b>	IN-SPACE = Bopal, Ahmedabad, June 2020; ISRO = Bengaluru, 1969; NSIL = Bengaluru, March 2019; Indian Space Policy = April 6, 2023; PSLV first success Oct 15, 1994.
 <b>INTERVIEW</b>	Should IN-SPACE be reconstituted as a statutory regulator (like SEBI or TRAI) rather than continue as an autonomous body under the Department of Space?

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**Question 6**

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The PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, which has driven India's rooftop solar capacity past 20 GW, was launched in which month-year and has what total outlay?

**A** February 2024; ₹75,021 crore ✓

**B** April 2023; ₹50,000 crore

**C** August 2024; ₹1,00,000 crore

**D** January 2025; ₹25,000 crore

**ANSWER & ANALYSIS**
**EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 15, 2024 with a total outlay of ₹75,021 crore. **ANALYSIS:** The scheme provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) of up to ₹78,000 per household for rooftop solar installations of 3 kW and above, with the objective of providing up to 300 units of free electricity per month to one crore households.






Mercom India data showing 20.8 GW cumulative rooftop solar by end-December 2025 (with 7.1 GW added in 2025 alone) confirms the scheme's strong demand-side push.

**CONCEPT NOTE**

PM Surya Ghar replaces and consolidates earlier rooftop solar programmes (Phase II of the Grid-Connected Rooftop Solar Programme of MNRE). Implementing agency: REC Limited (formerly Rural Electrification Corporation) and IREDA — coordinated by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).

The subsidy structure is: ₹30,000 for 1 kW; ₹60,000 for 2 kW; ₹78,000 for 3 kW and above (capped). India's total renewable energy capacity stood at approximately 274.68 GW by end-March 2026, with solar at ~150.26 GW. India ranks 3rd globally in installed renewable capacity (after China and the US) per the IRENA 2026 Renewable Capacity Statistics. India's Panchamrit commitments at COP-26 Glasgow (November 2021) included 500 GW non-fossil capacity by 2030, 50% RE in the energy mix by 2030, a 45% reduction in carbon intensity (against 2005 base) by 2030, and net-zero by 2070.

**Q6**  **CONCEPT KIT**

 <b>CROSS-PAPER</b>	GS3 (renewable energy, climate, economy), GS2 (welfare schemes).
 <b>MAINS KEYWORDS</b>	PM Surya Ghar, rooftop solar, Panchamrit, 500 GW, CFA, MNRE, IRENA.
 <b>COMMON MISTAKE</b>	Confusing PM Surya Ghar (rooftop, residential) with PM-KUSUM (agricultural solar) — both MNRE but different sectors.
 <b>EXAM TIP</b>	PM Surya Ghar — Feb 15, 2024; ₹75,021 cr; CFA up to ₹78,000; 300 free units/month; 1 crore households. Panchamrit (COP-26 Glasgow Nov 2021) — 500 GW non-fossil by 2030; net-zero 2070.
 <b>INTERVIEW</b>	Is the CFA-plus-loan model adequate to overcome the upfront cost barrier for lower-income households, or is a financing innovation (like third-party ownership) needed?

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**Question 7**

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In the context of India's electric mobility policy, which of the following correctly states the outlay of the FAME-II scheme and the year it ended?

**A** ₹10,000 crore; ended March 31, 2024 ✓

**B** ₹895 crore; ended March 31, 2019

**C** ₹18,100 crore; ended March 31, 2024

**D** ₹10,900 crore; ended March 31, 2026

**ANSWER & ANALYSIS**
**EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The FAME-II (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles in India — Phase II) scheme was launched on April 1, 2019 with an outlay of ₹10,000 crore (later enhanced) and ended on March 31, 2024.

**ANALYSIS:** FAME-II was succeeded by the PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) Scheme launched in September 2024 with an outlay of ₹10,900 crore for two years; the PLI for Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage, approved in May 2021, has an outlay of ₹18,100 crore.

**CONCEPT NOTE**

FAME-I was launched on April 1, 2015 with an outlay of ₹895 crore and ran until March 31, 2019. FAME-II is the most relevant scheme historically because it directly subsidised consumer purchases — particularly of electric two-wheelers, three-wheelers, four-wheelers, and electric buses — and is widely credited with kick-starting India's electric two-wheeler market.






India's EV30@30 target was announced at the Clean Energy Ministerial 2017 in Beijing — 30% EV sales by 2030.

Karnataka was the FIRST Indian state to issue an EV Policy (2017).

The Battery Waste Management Rules were notified in August 2022 — establishing an Extended Producer Responsibility regime. Odisha's May 21, 2026 directive making 100% EV procurement mandatory for new government vehicles (effective June 1, 2026) makes it the first Indian state to impose such a mandate.

India's crude oil import dependence stands at approximately 87% (PPAC FY25 data), providing a strategic rationale for the EV transition.

**Q7**  **CONCEPT KIT**

 <b>CROSS-PAPER</b>	GS3 (energy transition, EVs, climate), GS2 (cooperative federalism, state policies).
 <b>MAINS KEYWORDS</b>	FAME-II, PM E-DRIVE, PLI ACC, EV30@30, Battery Waste Management Rules, crude import dependence.
 <b>COMMON MISTAKE</b>	Confusing the FAME-II outlay (₹10,000 cr) with the PM E-DRIVE outlay (₹10,900 cr) — they differ by only 9% but are entirely different schemes.
 <b>EXAM TIP</b>	FAME-I = ₹895 cr (2015-19); FAME-II = ₹10,000 cr (2019 to March 31, 2024); PM E-DRIVE = ₹10,900 cr (Sept 2024); PLI ACC = ₹18,100 cr; EV30@30 = 2017; Karnataka first state EV policy 2017.
 <b>INTERVIEW</b>	Should EV subsidies be technology-neutral (treating hybrids and EVs alike) or strictly battery-electric, given India's grid emission factor?

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**Question 8**

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The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) functions under which Union Ministry, and was constituted under which statute?

- A Ministry of Consumer Affairs; Consumer Protection Act, 2019
- B Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 ✓
- C Ministry of Agriculture; Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954
- D Ministry of Commerce; FSSAI Act, 2011

**ANSWER & ANALYSIS**
**✓ EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** FSSAI was established under the Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSA), 2006 and functions under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India. It was formally constituted on September 5, 2008 and became operational on August 5, 2011 (when the FSS Rules and core Regulations came into force), with headquarters at FDA Bhawan, Kotla Road, New Delhi.

**ANALYSIS:** The FSSA 2006 consolidated eight prior food laws — including the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act 1954, the Milk and Milk Products Order 1992, and the Vegetable Oil Products (Control) Order 1947 — into a single regulator-cum-statute architecture. The May 22, 2026 announcement of a centralised food surveillance system represents the regulator's push toward an end-to-end risk-based regime.

**📖 CONCEPT NOTE**

FSSAI operates digital platforms including FoSCoS (Food Safety Compliance System) — launched in 2020 to replace the older FLRS (Food Licensing and Registration System) — and FoSCoRIS (FSS Compliance through Regular Inspections and Sampling). Public-facing programmes include the Eat Right India movement (launched 2018), Project BHOG (Blissful Hygienic Offering to God, for places of worship), and RUCO (Repurpose Used Cooking Oil).

FSSAI publishes the State Food Safety Index (SFSI) annually since 2019, ranking States and Union Territories on food safety performance. World Food Safety Day is observed on June 7 every year since 2019 — designated by UNGA Resolution 73/250 (adopted December 20, 2018) and led jointly by WHO and FAO. The EU equivalent is the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), operational since 1979.

The Codex Alimentarius Commission — a joint FAO/WHO body — sets international food standards; India is a Codex member.

**Q8**  **CONCEPT KIT**

 <b>CROSS-PAPER</b>	GS2 (governance, regulators, public health), GS3 (food safety, S&T, R&D infrastructure).
 <b>MAINS KEYWORDS</b>	FSSAI, FSSA 2006, FoSCoS, Eat Right India, SFSI, RASFF, Codex Alimentarius.
 <b>COMMON MISTAKE</b>	Locating FSSAI under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs (which handles consumer protection generally) — FSSAI is under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
 <b>EXAM TIP</b>	FSSAI = MoHFW; constituted under FSSA 2006; formally established Sept 5, 2008; operational Aug 5, 2011; HQ FDA Bhawan New Delhi; FoSCoS (2020); SFSI annual since 2019; World Food Safety Day June 7 (since 2019).
 <b>INTERVIEW</b>	Should FSSAI be split into a separate "policy" wing and an "enforcement" wing, on the model of the FDA in the United States, to reduce regulatory capture?

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**Question 9**

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The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), launched in 2015 during President Xi Jinping's Islamabad visit, runs from Kashgar in China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region to which Pakistani port, passing through which region whose status India disputes?

- A Karachi Port; passing through Sindh
- B Port Qasim; passing through Punjab
- C Gwadar Port (Balochistan); passing through Gilgit-Baltistan ✓
- D Chittagong Port; passing through Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** CPEC runs from Kashgar in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region to Gwadar Port in Balochistan, Pakistan — passing through the disputed territory of Gilgit-Baltistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK).

**ANALYSIS:** India has formally and consistently protested CPEC since its launch on the ground that PoK and Gilgit-Baltistan are integral parts of India that have been illegally occupied by Pakistan.

India's position is that any infrastructure project routed through these territories without India's consent violates Indian sovereignty under the Instrument of Accession (1947) signed by Maharaja Hari Singh. India boycotted the Belt and Road Forums of 2017 and 2019 explicitly citing CPEC as a sovereignty issue.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

CPEC was inaugurated during President Xi Jinping's state visit to Islamabad on April 20-21, 2015 — originally announced at USD 46 billion and subsequently expanded to a reported USD 62 billion in total investment. Major components include the Karakoram Highway upgrade (the highest paved international road in the world, traversing the Khunjerab Pass at 4,693 m), Gwadar Deep Water Port and Free Zone, multiple energy projects (coal-fired, hydropower, solar), and Special Economic Zones.

CPEC is the flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), announced by Xi in 2013. The State Bank of Pakistan's May 20, 2026 announcement of a commemorative Rs 75 coin marks 75 years of Pak-China diplomatic ties — established on May 21, 1951 (Pakistan was one of the first non-communist countries to recognise the People's Republic of China).

According to SIPRI's Arms Transfers Database, China accounts for approximately 70% of Pakistan's major arms imports between 2019-2023, making China by far Pakistan's largest defence supplier — a structural dependence that complicates India's western and northern security calculus simultaneously.

**Q9**  **CONCEPT KIT**

 <b>CROSS-PAPER</b>	GS2 (India-China, India-Pakistan, BRI), GS3 (security, two-front), GS1 (geography of Karakoram).
 <b>MAINS KEYWORDS</b>	CPEC, BRI, PoK, Gilgit-Baltistan, Gwadar, Karakoram Highway, sovereignty.
 <b>COMMON MISTAKE</b>	Stating CPEC terminates at Karachi Port — it terminates at Gwadar Port in Balochistan, NOT Karachi.
 <b>EXAM TIP</b>	CPEC = Kashgar (Xinjiang) to Gwadar (Balochistan) via Gilgit-Baltistan + PoK; launched April 2015 (Xi Islamabad visit); flagship of BRI (2013); India formally protests since 2015; China supplies ~70% of Pakistan's major arms (SIPRI).
 <b>INTERVIEW</b>	Should India elevate its protest of CPEC from diplomatic demarches to formal UN General Assembly resolutions, or would that backfire by hardening Chinese positions?

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**Question 10**

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The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), which decides the policy repo rate, is constituted under the RBI Act, 1934 (as amended in 2016) and has the following composition:

- A 6 members — 4 RBI officials + 2 external members nominated by the Government
- B 6 members — 3 RBI officials + 3 external members nominated by the Government ✓
- C 7 members — 4 RBI officials + 3 external members nominated by the Government
- D 5 members — 2 RBI officials + 3 external members nominated by the Government

**ANSWER & ANALYSIS**
**✓ EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) under the RBI Act, 1934 (as amended in 2016) has 6 members — 3 from the RBI (the Governor as ex-officio Chairperson, the Deputy Governor in charge of monetary policy, and one officer of the Bank nominated by the Central Board) and 3 external members nominated by the Central Government.

**ANALYSIS:** The Governor has a casting vote in case of a tie.

The MPC was constituted to give statutory backing to inflation targeting under the Monetary Policy Framework Agreement, 2015. The CPI inflation target is 4% with a tolerance band of  $\pm 2\%$  (i.e., 2% to 6%) for the period April 1, 2021 — March 31, 2026; the framework has been extended for the next five years.

**📖 CONCEPT NOTE**

The RBI repo rate stood at 5.25% as of May 2026 — reflecting accommodative monetary stance amid moderating CPI inflation. The current RBI Governor is Sanjay Malhotra (since December 11, 2024), who succeeded Shaktikanta Das. The Monetary Policy Framework Agreement was originally signed on February 20, 2015 between the Government of India (Ministry of Finance) and the RBI; statutory backing came via the Finance Act 2016, which amended the RBI Act 1934 to add a new Chapter III-F on the MPC. External members serve for a four-year term, non-renewable. India's Manufacturing PMI has stayed above 50 for approximately 50 consecutive months, reflecting sustained expansion. The PMI is a survey-based diffusion index compiled globally by S&P Global (formerly IHS Markit) since 2005 for India; HSBC has been the sponsor since 2023 (earlier sponsored by Nikkei). A reading above 50 indicates expansion; 50 = no change; below 50 = contraction.

**Q10**  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 (monetary policy, inflation, economy), GS2 (regulators, statutory bodies).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

MPC, RBI Act 1934, inflation targeting, repo rate, CPI band, Monetary Policy Framework Agreement 2015.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Stating that the MPC has 4 RBI + 2 external members — the structure is 3 + 3, with the Governor's casting vote breaking ties.

 **EXAM TIP**

MPC = 6 members (3 RBI + 3 external); Governor chairs with casting vote; CPI target  $4\% \pm 2\%$ ; Monetary Policy Framework Agreement Feb 20, 2015; statutory under RBI Act amendment 2016; PMI >50 = expansion; compiler S&P Global.

 **INTERVIEW**

Has the MPC structure adequately insulated monetary policy from fiscal dominance, or does the Government's power to nominate 3 of 6 members compromise independence?

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**Question 11**

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[Source](#) →

India and Germany formalised a Strategic Partnership in which year, and their Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC) — a Cabinet-level mechanism — have been held biennially since which year?

- A Strategic Partnership 1995; IGC since 2008
- B Strategic Partnership 2000; IGC since 2011 ✓**
- C Strategic Partnership 2007; IGC since 2014
- D Strategic Partnership 2015; IGC since 2017

**ANSWER & ANALYSIS**
**✓ EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** India and Germany elevated their bilateral ties to a Strategic Partnership in May 2000 during the visit of German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to New Delhi. The Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC) — a cabinet-to-cabinet mechanism — were initiated in 2011 during the visit of Chancellor Angela Merkel and have been held biennially since.

**ANALYSIS:** Germany is one of only a handful of countries with which India holds IGCs (others include Japan and Russia, both at summit-level). The 7th IGC was held in New Delhi in October 2024; Chancellor Friedrich Merz's January 12-13, 2026 India visit and the Ahmedabad bilateral with PM Modi advanced the Comprehensive Roadmap on Higher Education.

**📖 CONCEPT NOTE**

The Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement between India and Germany was signed in December 2022 during the 6th IGC in Berlin — it facilitates legal pathways for skilled Indian workers and students. Germany's Opportunity Card (Chancenkarte) — a points-based, employer-independent long-stay visa for skilled workers — was launched on June 1, 2024.

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD — Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst) is headquartered in Bonn and is the world's largest funder of international academic exchange. Indian students in Germany number approximately 50,000+ — making them the largest non-EU student community in Germany; Germany overtook the US in some categories of Indian student inflows during 2023-24.

India-Germany bilateral trade was approximately €30 billion in 2024 — Germany is India's largest trading partner within the EU. Germany hosts approximately 250,000+ persons of Indian origin.

**Q11**  **CONCEPT KIT**

 <b>CROSS-PAPER</b>	GS2 (India-EU, India-Germany IR), GS3 (skilling, mobility, manufacturing).
 <b>MAINS KEYWORDS</b>	India-Germany Strategic Partnership 2000, IGC, Migration & Mobility Partnership, Chancenkarte, DAAD, German Pathway Programme.
 <b>COMMON MISTAKE</b>	Stating the Strategic Partnership year as 2007 or 2015 — these are common decoys; the actual year is 2000 (under Chancellor Schröder).
 <b>EXAM TIP</b>	India-Germany SP = 2000; IGC biennial since 2011; Migration & Mobility Pact Dec 2022; Chancenkarte June 1, 2024; DAAD HQ Bonn.
 <b>INTERVIEW</b>	Should India-Germany migration cooperation move from a "skills" frame to a "demographic complementarity" frame, given Germany's aging crisis and India's youth bulge?

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**Question 12**

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The Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), which recommends anti-dumping duties such as those on imported metallurgical coke, was established in 2018 through the merger of three earlier bodies. It functions under which Union Ministry, and final imposition of duty is the prerogative of which Ministry?

- A** DGTR under Ministry of Commerce; duty imposed by Ministry of Finance ✓
- B DGTR under Ministry of Finance; duty imposed by Ministry of Commerce
- C DGTR under Ministry of Steel; duty imposed by Ministry of Commerce
- D DGTR under Ministry of External Affairs; duty imposed by NITI Aayog

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) functions under the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry. It was constituted in May 2018 by merging the Directorate General of Anti-Dumping and Allied Duties (DGAD), the Directorate General of Safeguards, and the Safeguards (QR) function from the DGFT. Its role is INVESTIGATIVE and RECOMMENDATORY. **ANALYSIS:** The actual notification imposing definitive anti-dumping, countervailing, or safeguard duties is issued by the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue, CBIC) acting on the recommendation of DGTR. This separation between the recommender (Commerce) and the imposer (Finance) provides a check-and-balance against trade-protectionist capture.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

The legal basis for India's trade remedies framework is the Customs Tariff Act, 1975 — Sections 9 (countervailing duty), 9A (anti-dumping duty), and 9B (no levy under both); read with the Customs Tariff (Identification, Assessment and Collection of Anti-dumping Duty on Dumped Articles and for Determination of Injury) Rules, 1995. The multilateral basis is the WTO Agreement on Implementation of Article VI of GATT 1994, commonly known as the Anti-Dumping Agreement. The recent DGTR recommendation is for definitive anti-dumping duties of USD 42.95-128.8/tonne on low-ash metallurgical coke imported from China, Indonesia, Colombia, Japan, and Russia — down from the provisional duties of USD 60.87-130.66/tonne. The investigation period was April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024; the injury period was from April 2020. India is the 2nd largest crude steel producer globally (after China), with current production around 180 mtpa; the National Steel Policy, 2017 targets 300 mtpa by 2030-31. India imports approximately 2.7-3 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of metallurgical coke and approximately 85% of its coking coal requirements.

**Q12**  **CONCEPT KIT**

 <b>CROSS-PAPER</b>	GS3 (economy, trade, steel sector), GS2 (WTO, IR, trade diplomacy).
 <b>MAINS KEYWORDS</b>	DGTR, anti-dumping, Article VI GATT 1994, Customs Tariff Act 1975, National Steel Policy 2017, met coke.
 <b>COMMON MISTAKE</b>	Stating that DGTR itself imposes the duty — DGTR only INVESTIGATES and RECOMMENDS; the actual duty notification is issued by the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue, CBIC).
 <b>EXAM TIP</b>	DGTR = May 2018; merger of DGAD + DGS + DG Safeguards; under Commerce; duty imposed by Finance; legal basis Customs Tariff Act 1975 §§9, 9A, 9B + Anti-Dumping Rules 1995; multilateral basis Article VI GATT 1994. India = 2nd largest crude steel; NSP 2017 — 300 mtpa by 2030-31.
 <b>INTERVIEW</b>	Should India's anti-dumping framework introduce a "public-interest test" that explicitly weighs downstream consumer industries, as some Indian steelmakers' AD petitions have hurt MSME steel users?

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**Question 13**

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The Nagoya Protocol — a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity that specifically governs Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) — was adopted in which year and entered into force in which year? When did India ratify it?

- A Adopted 2003; in force 2007; India ratified 2008
- B **Adopted 2010; in force October 2014; India ratified October 2012 ✓**
- C Adopted 1992; in force 1993; India ratified 1994
- D Adopted 2015; in force 2018; India ratified 2019

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (ABS) was adopted at CBD COP-10 in Nagoya, Japan on October 29, 2010, and entered into force on October 12, 2014 (90 days after the 50th ratification). India deposited its instrument of ratification on October 9, 2012, but the Protocol entered into force globally in October 2014.

**ANALYSIS:** The Nagoya Protocol operationalises the third objective of the CBD (fair and equitable benefit sharing) and provides the legal framework against biopiracy — protecting traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, an issue of direct concern to India given cases like turmeric, neem, and basmati.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

India implements the Nagoya Protocol primarily through the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (as amended in 2023) and the Biological Diversity Rules, 2004 (revised periodically). The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) — headquartered in Chennai — administers ABS at the central level; State Biodiversity Boards operate at the state level; and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) function at the panchayat/municipal level.

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety — the OTHER protocol under the CBD — was adopted in 2000 and entered into force on September 11, 2003; India ratified it on January 23, 2003. The Cartagena Protocol governs the transboundary movement, transit, handling, and use of living modified organisms (LMOs).

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) was adopted at CBD COP-15 in Montreal in December 2022, under the presidency of China. The KMGBF has 4 long-term goals (Goals A-D) and 23 action targets (Targets 1-23), with the headline being Target 3 — the 30x30 commitment to protect 30% of terrestrial and marine areas by 2030.

**Q13**  **CONCEPT KIT**

 <b>CROSS-PAPER</b>	GS3 (biodiversity, environment, ABS), GS2 (multilateral agreements), GS1 (traditional knowledge).
 <b>MAINS KEYWORDS</b>	Nagoya Protocol, ABS, biopiracy, traditional knowledge, NBA, Biological Diversity Act 2002, KMGBF.
 <b>COMMON MISTAKE</b>	Confusing the Nagoya Protocol (ABS, 2010) with the Cartagena Protocol (biosafety/LMOs, 2000) — both are CBD protocols but they govern entirely different subject matter.
 <b>EXAM TIP</b>	CBD = adopted May 22, 1992 Nairobi, in force Dec 29, 1993, India ratified Feb 18, 1994. Cartagena Protocol = adopted 2000, in force Sept 2003, India ratified Jan 23, 2003. Nagoya Protocol = adopted Oct 29, 2010 Nagoya, in force Oct 12, 2014, India ratified Oct 2012. KMGBF = COP-15 Montreal Dec 2022; 30x30.
 <b>INTERVIEW</b>	Has India's ABS architecture (Section 6 of the BD Act, requiring NBA approval) inadvertently slowed legitimate bioprospecting research by Indian scientists?

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