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Current Affairs Today – June 18, 2026

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CURRENT AFFAIRS TODAY — JUNE 18, 2026

A fast, exam-focused roundup of every story in today's edition. Each item carries the news hook, the key data and the UPSC angle. Detailed deep-dives follow for the six most important developments.

VB-G RAM G ACT REPLACES MGNREGA

The Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission Gramin (VB-G RAM G) Act 2025 will replace the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, with effect from July 1, 2026.

Key Data

The wage-employment guarantee rises from 100 to 125 days per rural household per year. Funding moves to a 60:40 Centre-State split, whereas MGNREGA wages were borne fully by the Centre. An interim allocation of Rupees 95,692.31 crore was released on June 9, 2026. Existing e-KYC Job Cards stay valid until new Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Cards are issued.

UPSC Angle

Right to work, demand-driven social security, **fiscal federalism** (<https://ujyari.com/terms/fiscal-federalism/>) in cost-sharing, and the legal nature of a statutory guarantee versus a scheme.

MGNREGA (2005) was the world's largest work guarantee programme. The new Act keeps the demand-driven, legal-guarantee architecture but expands the day cap and shifts the funding model.

RBI LIFTS CAPS ON FCNR(B) AND NRE DEPOSITS

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The Reserve Bank of India removed interest-rate ceilings on Foreign Currency Non-Resident Bank, FCNR(B), and Non-Resident External, NRE, deposits to attract NRI inflows amid rupee pressure.

Key Data

Effective June 17, 2026 and valid until September 30, 2026. The relaxation applies to fresh FCNR(B) deposits of 3 to 5 years and NRE deposits of 3 years and above. FCNR(B) deposits are held in foreign currency, shielding the depositor from rupee depreciation.

UPSC Angle

External sector management, capital account, tools to defend the rupee, and the difference between NRE, NRO and FCNR(B) accounts.

NRE accounts are rupee-denominated and fully repatriable; FCNR(B) accounts are held in foreign currency; NRO accounts hold income earned in India with limited repatriation.

WPI SHIFTS TO 2022-23 BASE YEAR

The Wholesale Price Index moved to a new 2022-23 base year, from 2011-12, effective with the May 2026 data release.

Key Data

WPI is compiled by the Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The Consumer Price Index, compiled by the NSO (<https://ujivari.com/terms/nso-mospi-statistical-architecture/>) under MoSPI, remains the RBI's inflation anchor. CPI inflation was 3.9% in May 2026, up from 3.5% in April. WPI has no services component.

UPSC Angle

Index methodology, base-year revision rationale, why CPI and not WPI anchors monetary policy (<https://ujivari.com/terms/monetary-policy/>), and inflation measurement.

A base year is updated to reflect the current consumption and production basket. WPI tracks goods at the wholesale level; CPI tracks the retail basket including services.

BANGLADESH CLEARS PADMA BARRAGE AS GANGES TREATY NEARS RENEWAL

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Bangladesh approved Phase 1 of the Tk 34,497 crore Padma Barrage, around 180 km downstream of Farakka, as the 1996 Ganges Water Sharing Treaty heads toward its December 2026 expiry.

Key Data

The Treaty was signed on December 12, 1996 for a 30-year term. The dry season runs January 1 to May 31. If flow at Farakka is 70,000 cusecs or less, the water is shared 50:50; at flows of 70,000 to 75,000 cusecs Bangladesh is guaranteed 35,000 cusecs. Farakka Barrage was commissioned in 1975 in West Bengal to flush silt from the Hooghly for Kolkata port.

UPSC Angle

India-Bangladesh relations, **transboundary** (<https://ujijari.com/vocab/transboundary/>) river management, the no-guarantee-clause gap, and federal concerns of West Bengal.

The 1996 Treaty has no guarantee clause for minimum flow to India in lean years, a long-standing Indian concern. Renewal negotiations are underway.

ANDHRA PRADESH ANNOUNCES LARGER-FAMILY CASH INCENTIVE

Andhra Pradesh announced a cash incentive for larger families to reverse falling fertility, reversing the earlier two-child norm.

Key Data

Rupees 30,000 for a third child and Rupees 40,000 for a fourth child were announced by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on May 17, 2026. AP's **Total Fertility Rate** (<https://ujijari.com/terms/total-fertility-rate/>) is around 1.5 against the replacement level of 2.1. Perks include free education to age 18 for the third child.

UPSC Angle

Demographic (<https://ujijari.com/vocab/demographic/>) transition, pronatalism, the delimitation worry for southern states, and population policy.

A TFR below 2.1 means a population cannot replace itself across generations. Southern states fear losing parliamentary seats if delimitation (<https://ujijari.com/vocab/delimitation/>) is keyed to population.

NICOBARESE TRIBAL COUNCILS OPPOSE NEW ELECTION RULES

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Nicobarese Tribal Councils opposed the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Tribal Councils (Electoral Rolls and Conduct of Elections) Rules 2026.

Key Data

The Rules were notified in May 2026 with an objection deadline of June 15, 2026. They prescribe five-yearly polls but ignore the Tuhet, the clan or joint-family consensus form of governance. The seven Tribal Councils say they were not consulted. The Nicobarese are a Scheduled Tribe; Andaman and Nicobar is a Union Territory.

UPSC Angle

Tribal self-governance, customary law versus [statutory](https://ujjiyari.com/vocab/statutory/) elections, and consultation rights of indigenous communities.

A Tuhet is a Nicobarese joint-family or clan unit; governance traditionally runs by consensus of Tuhet captains, not by individual ballot.

CBG BLENDING OBLIGATION RISES TO 3%

The Compressed Biogas blending obligation rises to 3% of CNG and PNG in FY27 under the SATAT scheme.

Key Data

The phasing is 1% in FY26, 3% in FY27, 4% in FY28 and 5% from FY29 onward. SATAT stands for Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation. CBG is around 90% methane. The phasing was approved by the National Biofuel Coordination Committee.

UPSC Angle

Energy transition, [circular economy](https://ujjiyari.com/terms/circular-economy/) from waste, import substitution in natural gas, and biofuel policy.

CBG is purified biogas compressed to over 90% methane, made from agricultural residue, cattle dung and municipal waste, and is interchangeable with CNG.

ISRO DEVELOPS LUNAR-NIGHT SURVIVAL TECHNOLOGY

ISRO, with the Department of Atomic Energy, is developing artificial heating to keep landers alive through the roughly 14-Earth-day lunar night.

Key Data

Lunar-night temperatures near the poles fall to around minus 180 degrees Celsius. The target life is 100 to 200 days, against Chandrayaan-3's single lunar-daylight period. The work feeds Chandrayaan-4, a sample-return mission, and the Bharatiya Antariksha Station. Chandrayaan-3 landed near the lunar south pole in 2023 at a site named Shiv Shakti Point.

UPSC Angle

Space technology self-reliance, radioisotope heating, planetary exploration roadmap, and India's lunar programme.

The lunar day and night each last about 14 Earth days. Without internal heating, electronics freeze and batteries fail during the long, cold night.

UPI GOES LIVE IN FRANCE

Unified Payments Interface (<https://ujiyari.com/terms/unified-payments-interface/>) went live at Galeries Lafayette in Nice, France on June 16.

Key Data

UPI is built by the National Payments Corporation of India, NPCI. Overseas UPI acceptance is handled by NPCI International Payments Limited, NIPL. UPI was launched in 2016.

UPSC Angle

Digital public infrastructure exports, soft power, and India's fintech diplomacy.

NIPL is the international arm of NPCI, tasked with taking UPI and RuPay abroad through partnerships with foreign acquirers.

NEW IG APPOINTED TO NIA

Sundarraaj P, a 2003-batch Chhattisgarh-cadre IPS officer and IG of Bastar Range, was appointed Inspector General of the National Investigation Agency on June 16.

Key Data

The NIA was created under the NIA Act 2008 after the 26/11 Mumbai attacks. It is headquartered in New Delhi under the Ministry of Home Affairs. The NIA (Amendment) Act 2019 widened its jurisdiction.

UPSC Angle

Counter-terror architecture, central investigation agencies, and the 2019 jurisdiction expansion.

The NIA is India's central agency to combat terror; the 2019 amendment lets it probe specified offences committed abroad against Indians or Indian interests.

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INAUGURAL INDIAN ATHLETIC AWARDS

The first Indian Athletic Awards 2026, organised by the Athletics Federation of India, are set for June 20 in Delhi.

Key Data

The awards span 10 categories. They are distinct from the Khel Ratna and Arjuna awards, which are conferred by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

UPSC Angle

Sports governance, the role of national sports federations, and recognition systems in athletics.

The Athletics Federation of India is the national governing body for track and field, affiliated to World Athletics.

MONSOON ADVANCE FORECAST BY IMD

The India Meteorological Department said on June 17 that the southwest monsoon would advance into more of Telangana, Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar and parts of Chhattisgarh around June 23.

Key Data

The 2026 Kerala onset was on May 24, eight days early and the earliest since 2009, against the normal date of June 1. Full coverage of the country is expected around July 15. IMD functions under the Ministry of Earth Sciences. Onset criteria combine rainfall, the depth of westerlies up to 600 hPa, and outgoing longwave radiation, OLR.

UPSC Angle

Monsoon dynamics, onset declaration criteria, and the link between monsoon timing and agriculture.

The IMD declares monsoon onset over Kerala only when rainfall, wind depth and OLR thresholds are met together, not on rainfall alone.

TELEGRAM AND THE NEET PAPER-LEAK LOOPHOLE

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The Delhi High Court issued notice on a plea linking messaging platforms to exam paper leaks, testing intermediary safe-harbour protection.

Key Data

The hearing is set to continue to June 22. The case tests intermediary safe harbour under Section 79 of the IT Act 2000. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act 2024 criminalises paper leaks. NEET-UG is conducted by the National Testing Agency, NTA.

UPSC Angle

Intermediary liability, the safe-harbour principle, exam integrity, and the 2024 anti-cheating law.

Section 79 of the IT Act grants intermediaries safe harbour from liability for third-party content, subject to due-diligence conditions.

NEW LYNX SPIDER FOUND IN MEGHALAYA

A new lynx spider, Hamataliwa mawlyngot, was described from Mawlyngot village in the East Khasi Hills of Meghalaya.

Key Data

The species was described by the Zoological Survey of India with the University of Calcutta. It is the first Hamataliwa record in Meghalaya. It belongs to the family Oxyopidae, web-less hunting spiders. The site lies in the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot.

UPSC Angle

Biodiversity, biodiversity hotspots, the role of the ZSI, and species discovery in northeast India.

Lynx spiders of the family Oxyopidae do not spin webs to trap prey; they hunt actively, leaping on insects like a lynx.

FACTS CORNERUjiyari Current Affairs - ujiyari.com - Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS**★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA**

VB-G RAM G Act: Replaces MGNREGA from July 1, 2026; guarantee 125 days; 60:40 Centre-State funding.

RBI deposit caps: Removed on FCNR(B) 3-5 yr and NRE 3 yr+ deposits, June 17 to September 30, 2026.

WPI base year: New base 2022-23, from 2011-12, effective May 2026 data; compiled by Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT.

Ganges Treaty: Signed December 12, 1996, 30-year term, expires December 2026; 50:50 share at flows of 70,000 cusecs or less.

AP incentive: Rupees 30,000 for third child, Rupees 40,000 for fourth; AP TFR around 1.5.

Nicobarese: Tuhet consensus governance versus the A&N Tribal Councils Election Rules 2026.

CBG blending: Rises to 3% in FY27 under SATAT; CBG is around 90% methane.

Lunar night: About 14 Earth days; ISRO targets 100 to 200 day lander life; Chandrayaan-3 site is Shiv Shakti Point.

NIA: Created under the NIA Act 2008 after 26/11; jurisdiction widened by the 2019 amendment.

Monsoon: Kerala onset May 24, 2026 (earliest since 2009); full coverage around July 15; IMD under Ministry of Earth Sciences.

NEET case: Tests Section 79 IT Act safe harbour; Public Examinations Act 2024 criminalises leaks.

New spider: Hamataliwa mawlyngot, family Oxyopidae, from Meghalaya in the Indo-Burma hotspot.

Sources: *PIB* (<https://pib.gov.in>), *The Hindu* (<https://www.thehindu.com>), *Indian Express* (<https://indianexpress.com>)

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