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Current Affairs Today, July 27, 2026

27 July 2026 ·

POLITY**ENVIRONMENT****ECONOMY****GS2****GS3****GS1**

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Current Affairs Today, July 27, 2026

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A consolidated roundup of the news that matters for UPSC and State PCS preparation on July 27, 2026. Parliament dominated the day with three legislative interventions, on examination integrity, on the strength of the Supreme Court and on the legal protection of Vande Mataram. Items that carry a dedicated deep-dive article in today's edition are summarised here in brief; the remaining items are covered in full.

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS (PREVENTION OF UNFAIR MEANS) AMENDMENT BILL, 2026

Union Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Dr Jitendra Singh introduced the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 in the Lok Sabha on July 27, 2026. Speaker Om Birla adjourned the House till 2 pm amid Opposition protest.

Key Data

- Amends the **Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024**, carrying **seven amendments** in all.
- The Bill was **introduced on July 27, 2026 and is pending debate**. It was **not referred to any committee**, and the House agreed to take up the discussion on **July 28, 2026**, for which the **Business Advisory Committee allotted four hours**.
- The Union Cabinet approved the amendments on **Friday, July 24, 2026**.
- Minimum imprisonment raised from **3 years to 5 years**; maximum retained at **10 years**.
- Maximum fine raised from **Rs 10 lakh to Rs 10 crore**.
- Provides for **confiscation and attachment of the assets** of convicts.
- **Fast-track courts in every State**, with **investigation to be completed within 2 months** and the **trial concluded within 3 months of the filing of the chargesheet**, on a day-to-day hearing basis.

PARAMETER	ACT OF 2024	AMENDMENT BILL, 2026
Minimum imprisonment	3 years	5 years
Maximum imprisonment	10 years	10 years
Maximum fine	Rs 10 lakh	Rs 10 crore
Asset action	Not provided	Confiscation and attachment
Trial machinery	Ordinary courts	Fast-track courts in every State
Timeline	Not specified	Investigation 2 months; trial 3 months from chargesheet

Background

The parent Act, the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, is **Act No. 1 of 2024**. It received assent on **February 12, 2024** and was brought into force on **June 21, 2024**, after a run of paper leaks in national recruitment and entrance examinations. It defines unfair means, treats the offences as cognizable, non-bailable and non-compoundable, and targets organised gangs and service providers rather than individual candidates.

UPSC Angle

GS2, statutory mechanisms and government policies for the protection of vulnerable sections and for institutional integrity. The examinable thread is the shift from deterrence by sentence length to deterrence by financial ruin and speed of trial.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS ACT, 2024:

Act No. 1 of 2024; assent February 12, 2024; in force from June 21, 2024.

Offences are cognizable, non-bailable and non-compoundable.

Individual candidates are dealt with under the norms of the examination authority, not under this Act.

Covers UPSC, SSC, RRB, IBPS, NTA and Central Government departmental examinations.

NANDAN NILEKANI TASK FORCE ON NTA REFORM, CHANGE IN THE EDUCATION MINISTRY

The Union Government constituted a six-member high-powered task force on July 26, 2026, chaired by Nandan Nilekani, to reform the National Testing Agency (NTA), days after a change in the Union Education Ministry.

Key Data

- **Members:** Nandan Nilekani (Chair), S. Somanath, Tapan Deka, Prof. V. Kamakoti, Anita Karwal and Amrit Lal Meena.
- **Brief:** the entire NTA examination lifecycle, including **AI and blockchain-based verification**.
- **Dharmendra Pradhan** resigned as Union Education Minister on **July 25, 2026**. **Pralhad Joshi** was given **additional charge** of the Education Ministry on **July 25, 2026** and took over on **July 26, 2026, retaining his existing portfolios** of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, and New and Renewable Energy.
- **NEET-UG 2026** was held on **May 3, 2026**, cancelled after a leak, and a retest was conducted on **June 21, 2026** for **more than 20 lakh** candidates.

Background

The NTA was set up in 2017 as an autonomous testing organisation to conduct entrance examinations for higher education institutions. A previous expert committee on examination reform was chaired by Dr K. Radhakrishnan.

UPSC Angle

GS2, statutory, regulatory and quasi-judicial bodies, and the accountability of the executive. Also relevant to GS4 on ministerial responsibility, which should be discussed as a constitutional convention rather than as a judgement on any individual.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

NTA:

Established 2017; conducts JEE (Main), NEET-UG, UGC-NET, CUET and other examinations.

Registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

S. Somanath is a former Chairman of ISRO; V. Kamakoti is Director of IIT Madras.

SUPREME COURT (NUMBER OF JUDGES) AMENDMENT BILL, 2026

The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026, Bill No. 128 of 2026, moved by Minister of State for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal, was taken up on July 27, 2026.

Key Data

- Raises the sanctioned strength of the Supreme Court from **33 judges to 37 judges excluding the Chief Justice of India**, that is **38 including the CJI**.
- Replaces an **Ordinance promulgated on May 16, 2026** under **Article 123**.

- Amends the **Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956**.
- Constitutional basis: **Article 124(1)**, which allows Parliament to prescribe a larger number of judges by law.

PARAMETER	PRESENT POSITION	AFTER THE BILL
Judges other than the CJI	33	37
Total including the CJI	34	38
Governing statute	Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956	Same Act, as amended

Background

Article 124(1) fixes the original strength at the CJI and not more than seven other judges, until Parliament provides otherwise. Every expansion since has therefore come through an amendment to the 1956 Act rather than a constitutional amendment.

UPSC Angle

GS2, structure, organisation and functioning of the judiciary, and the **ordinance-making power** under Article 123. A high-value pairing: an ordinance must be replaced by an Act of Parliament within six weeks of the reassembly of Parliament.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

SUPREME COURT:

Article 124: establishment and constitution of the Supreme Court.

Article 123: ordinance-making power of the President when Parliament is not in session.

Judges are appointed by the President; the Collegium system flows from the Second and Third Judges Cases.

PREVENTION OF INSULTS TO NATIONAL HONOUR (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026, AND VANDE MATARAM

The Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026, introduced in the Rajya Sabha by Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai on July 24, 2026, was moved for consideration and passing by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on July 27, 2026.

Key Data

- Extends to the **National Song** the protection that the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971** gives the National Anthem, the National Flag and the Constitution.

- Penalty of imprisonment **up to 3 years**, or fine, or both.
- **Vande Mataram** was composed in **1875** by **Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay** and published in the novel **Anandamath (1882)**.
- First sung at the **1896 Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress** by **Rabindranath Tagore**.
- Given **equal status** with Jana Gana Mana by the Constituent Assembly on **January 24, 1950**.

PARAMETER	NATIONAL ANTHEM	NATIONAL SONG
Composition	Jana Gana Mana, Rabindranath Tagore	Vande Mataram, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay
Adopted or recognised	January 24, 1950	Equal status, January 24, 1950
Named in Article 51A(a)	Yes	No
Protected by the 1971 Act	Yes	Proposed by the 2026 Bill

Background

The Constituent Assembly statement of January 24, 1950 by President Dr Rajendra Prasad adopted Jana Gana Mana as the National Anthem and held that Vande Mataram shall be honoured equally with it and shall have equal status.

UPSC Angle

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

NATIONAL SYMBOLS:

Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 covers the Flag, the Constitution and the Anthem.

Anandamath is set against the background of the Sannyasi Rebellion.

Jana Gana Mana was first sung at the 1911 Calcutta session of the Congress.

SARNATH INSCRIBED ON THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST

Sarnath was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List on July 25, 2026 at the 48th session of the World Heritage Committee held at Busan, Republic of Korea.

Key Data

- India's **45th World Heritage property** and **Uttar Pradesh's fourth**.
- Inscribed components: the **Chaukhandi Stupa** and the **Archaeological Remains of Sarnath**, including the **Dhamek Stupa** and the **Dharmarajika Stupa**.
- Sarnath is the site of the Buddha's first sermon, the **Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta**, the setting in motion of the Wheel of the Law.

Background

Sarnath, near Varanasi, is one of the four principal Buddhist pilgrimage sites along with Lumbini, Bodh Gaya and Kushinagar. The Lion Capital of Ashoka recovered from Sarnath was adopted as the State Emblem of India, and the Ashoka Chakra on the National Flag derives from its abacus wheel.

UPSC Angle

GS1, Indian culture covering art forms, architecture and heritage from ancient times. The Prelims-facing angle is the World Heritage Committee, its session venue and India's property count.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

WORLD HERITAGE:

The World Heritage Convention was adopted in 1972; UNESCO is headquartered in Paris.

The World Heritage Committee has 21 States Parties elected from among the members of the Convention.

The Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath is the source of the State Emblem of India.

GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD CHICKS ENTER INDIA'S FIRST REWILDING TUNNEL

Three Great Indian Bustard (GIB) chicks were released into India's first rewilding tunnel at the Godawan Conservation Centre, Ramdevra, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, on July 26, 2026.

Key Data

- Facility cost **Rs 9.25 crore**; dimensions about **160 m by 64 m by 14 m**.
- The chicks will spend **four months** inside under CCTV observation before release into the **Desert National Park**.
- Centre population stood at **82 birds as of April 2026**.
- *Ardeotis nigriceps*: **IUCN Critically Endangered**, **Schedule I** of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, and the **State Bird of Rajasthan**.

Background

A rewilding tunnel is a large enclosure that reproduces natural desert conditions so that captive-bred chicks acquire foraging, predator-avoidance and flight behaviour before a soft release into the wild. Power line collision remains the single largest cause of adult GIB mortality.

UPSC Angle

GS3, conservation and biodiversity. The linked issue is the Supreme Court's handling of overhead transmission lines in GIB habitat and the balance between renewable energy expansion and species survival.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD:

Locally called *Godawan*; found mainly in Rajasthan and Gujarat.

Listed in CITES Appendix I and under CMS Appendix I.

Desert National Park is located in Jaisalmer and Barmer districts of Rajasthan.

CABINET APPROVES BHAVYA-RASAYAN CHEMICAL PARKS SCHEME

The Union Cabinet approved **BHAVYA-Rasayan**, the *Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana Rasayan*, on July 24, 2026 to develop world-class chemical parks in India.

Key Data

- Outlay **Rs 3,030 crore**, comprising **Rs 3,000 crore for infrastructure** and **Rs 30 crore for administration**.
- **Three chemical parks**, over **FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31**.
- Central grant of up to **Rs 1,000 crore per park**, against a minimum State contribution of **Rs 500 crore**.
- Selection through a **Challenge Route**; minimum **8 sq km of contiguous, encumbrance-free land**.

PARAMETER	PROVISION
Total outlay	Rs 3,030 crore
Number of parks	3
Period	FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31
Central grant per park	Up to Rs 1,000 crore
Minimum State contribution	Rs 500 crore
Land requirement	Minimum 8 sq km, contiguous and encumbrance-free

UPSC Angle

GS3, growth and development, and effects of liberalisation on industrial location. The chemicals sector is a large contributor to India's import bill, so the scheme is best read as an import-substitution and value-chain localisation measure.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

CHEMICALS SECTOR:

Administered by the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

A Challenge Route means States compete on prescribed criteria rather than receiving allocations by formula.

GUJARAT LAUNCHES CYBER FINANCIAL FRAUD E-ZERO FIR

Gujarat launched the Cyber Financial Fraud e-Zero FIR system at Gandhinagar on July 27, 2026, at the hands of Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister Harsh Sanghavi.

Key Data

- Complaints registered on the national cybercrime helpline **1930** or on **cybercrime.gov.in** will **auto-generate an e-Zero FIR**, routed to the jurisdictional police station.
- Rolled out over the **Gujarat State Wide Area Network (GSWAN)** in coordination with the **Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C)**.
- I4C Chief Executive Officer Rajesh Kumar** joined virtually; **Director General of Police G.S. Malik** was present.
- Statutory basis of the Zero FIR: **Section 173(1) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023**.

Background

A Zero FIR can be registered at any police station irrespective of territorial jurisdiction and is then transferred to the competent station. In cyber-financial fraud the first hour is decisive, because funds move through mule accounts quickly, so automating registration compresses the response window.

UPSC Angle

GS3, internal security challenges through communication networks and cyber security; GS2, e-governance. The BNSS codified the Zero FIR, which earlier rested on judicial direction and the Lalita Kumari precedent.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

CYBER SECURITY ARCHITECTURE:

I4C functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System operates the 1930 helpline.

CERT-In is the national nodal agency for cyber security incidents, under MeitY.

CRPF OBSERVES 88TH RAISING DAY

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) observed its 88th Raising Day on July 27, 2026, drawing greetings from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

Key Data

- Raised as the **Crown Representative's Police** on **July 27, 1939** at **Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh**.
- Renamed the Central Reserve Police Force under the **CRPF Act, 1949**, which came into force on **December 28, 1949**; **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel** gave the Force its charter.
- Motto: "**Seva aur Nishtha**", service and loyalty.
- The **largest Central Armed Police Force (CAPF)**, with roughly **250 battalions** and about **3.25 lakh personnel**.
- The lead force in anti-Left Wing Extremism operations.

Background

The CRPF has raised specialised wings for distinct roles. The **Rapid Action Force (RAF)** was raised in **1992** for riot control and communal-situation management. **CoBRA**, the Commando Battalion for Resolute Action, was raised in **2008** for jungle warfare and anti-Naxal operations. The Force also raised the **first all-women battalion in any CAPF in 1986**.

WING	YEAR	PRIMARY ROLE
Rapid Action Force	1992	Riot and communal situation control
CoBRA	2008	Jungle warfare, anti-Naxal operations
First Mahila battalion	1986	First all-women battalion in any CAPF

Police Commemoration Day, observed on **October 21**, honours the CRPF patrol ambushed at **Hot Spring, Ladakh, in 1959**, and remains the single most examinable CRPF-linked date after the Raising Day itself.

UPSC Angle

GS3, various security forces and agencies and their **mandate**, and challenges to internal security from extremism. GS2 is engaged through the Union List entry on Union armed forces and the deployment of central forces in States, which touches Centre-State relations.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

CENTRAL ARMED POLICE FORCES:

The seven CAPFs are the CRPF, BSF, CISF, ITBP, SSB, Assam Rifles and NSG.

All CAPFs function under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The CRPF is the lead force for internal security duties and election security.

MALVI CAMEL DECLARED ENDANGERED, NRCC BEGINS CONSERVATION BREEDING

*Reports on July 27, 2026 confirmed that the Malvi or white camel is down to **102 animals**, and that the National Research Centre on Camel (NRCC), Bikaner, has begun a scientific conservation breeding programme for the breed.*

Key Data

- NRCC has procured **12 Malvi camels**, comprising **3 males and 9 females**, to start the breeding programme.
- Breeds with fewer than **300 breeding females** are treated as at risk; **Malvi, Mewari and Mewati** fall in the endangered category.
- The Malvi is found in the **Malwa region of western Madhya Pradesh** and adjoining parts of Rajasthan.

- India's camel population fell about **37 per cent** between the **2012 and 2019 Livestock Censuses**.
- **Rajasthan holds over 80 per cent** of India's camels, made the camel its **State Animal in 2014**, and enacted the **Rajasthan Camel Act, 2015** restricting movement of camels out of the State.

India recognises **nine camel breeds**: Bikaneri, Jaisalmeri, Kachchhi, Mewari, Mewati, Marwari, Malvi, Kharai and Jalori. The **Kharai of Kachchh** is the world's only swimming camel, adapted to browse on mangroves in coastal creeks.

PARAMETER	DETAIL
Malvi population	102 animals
Animals procured by NRCC	12, that is 3 males and 9 females
At-risk threshold	Fewer than 300 breeding females
Endangered breeds	Malvi, Mewari, Mewati
Decline in camel numbers	About 37 per cent, 2012 to 2019 Livestock Census

Background

NRCC Bikaner was established in **1984** under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Camel numbers have fallen as mechanised transport displaced camel carts and as common grazing land shrank, so the animal lost its economic function faster than conservation policy could respond. The FAO observed **2024 as the International Year of Camelids**.

UPSC Angle

GS3, animal rearing and conservation; GS1, distribution of key natural resources and the human geography of arid regions. The instructive point is that a State animal tag and a movement-restricting statute did not by themselves reverse the decline, because the driver was loss of economic utility rather than poaching.

FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

CAMELS IN INDIA:

Nine recognised breeds; Kharai is the only swimming camel in the world.

NRCC Bikaner, established 1984, functions under ICAR.

Rajasthan declared the camel its State Animal in 2014; the Rajasthan Camel Act was passed in 2015.

FAO observed 2024 as the International Year of Camelids.

CCEA APPROVES BALLARI-GUNTAKAL THIRD AND FOURTH RAILWAY LINES

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the construction of third and fourth railway lines between Ballari and Guntakal on July 24, 2026.

Key Data

- Cost **Rs 1,264 crore**, length about **46 km**, target completion **2028-29**.
- Spans **3 districts** across **Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh**.
- Provides connectivity to about **99 villages** and roughly **7 lakh people**.
- Adds freight capacity of **16.22 million tonnes per annum**.
- Commodities carried: **iron ore, dolomite, limestone, iron and steel, coal, fertilisers and foodgrains**.
- Planned under the **PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan**, launched on **October 13, 2021**.

PARAMETER	DETAIL
Cost	Rs 1,264 crore
Length	About 46 km
States	Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh
Districts	3
Target year	2028-29
Additional freight	16.22 million tonnes per annum

Background

Ballari and Guntakal lie on one of the busiest mineral freight corridors in southern India, serving the iron ore and steel belt around Ballari and Hospet. Adding a third and fourth line on an already doubled section is a capacity-augmentation measure rather than a new-connectivity measure, so its benefit is measured in throughput and reduced detention rather than in route kilometres.

UPSC Angle

GS3, infrastructure covering railways and multi-modal connectivity. PM Gati Shakti is the standing framework question: it is a digital platform that brings 16 Ministries onto a common GIS-based planning layer to end siloed project sanction.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

RAIL AND CONNECTIVITY:

PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan was launched on October 13, 2021.

Guntakal is a major junction in Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh; Ballari is in Karnataka.

Rail freight carries a lower carbon intensity per tonne-kilometre than road, so capacity addition also serves India's emission-intensity target.

VISWANATHAN ANAND BECOMES FIDE INTERIM PRESIDENT

Viswanathan Anand assumed charge as Interim President of the International Chess Federation (FIDE) on July 24, 2026, after incumbent President Arkady Dvorkovich of Russia voluntarily suspended his powers on being included in the European Union sanctions list linked to the Russia-Ukraine war.

Key Data

- Elevation is under **Article 19.2 of the FIDE Charter**, under which the **Deputy President acts as Interim President**.
- Anand has been **FIDE Deputy President since August 2022**.
- He is the **first Indian to head world chess**.
- **Dvorkovich**, a former Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, has been FIDE President since **2018**.
- **FIDE** was founded in **Paris on July 20, 1924**, has the motto "**Gens una sumus**", we are one people, is headquartered in **Lausanne**, and is recognised by the **International Olympic Committee**.

MILESTONE	YEAR
India's first Grandmaster	1988
First Indian Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna	1991-92
World Champion	2000, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2012
Padma Vibhushan	2007
FIDE Deputy President	August 2022
FIDE Interim President	July 2026

Background

The suspension is voluntary and temporary, tied to the duration of the restrictive measures, so this is an interim charge rather than a change of elected leadership. Anand's five world titles came across the knockout, match and tournament formats of the world championship cycle.

UPSC Angle

GS2, important international institutions and their structure and mandate, read with the effect of sanctions regimes on the governance of non-state sporting bodies. GS3 links to the reach of secondary and listing-based sanctions.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

FIDE AND ANAND:

FIDE founded in Paris, July 20, 1924; headquarters Lausanne, Switzerland.

Motto: Gens una sumus.

Anand became India's first Grandmaster in 1988 and the first recipient of the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna in 1991-92.

MIRABAI CHANU COMPLETES COMMONWEALTH GAMES GOLD HAT-TRICK

Saikhom Mirabai Chanu won the women's 48 kg weightlifting gold at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow on July 26, 2026, delivering India's first gold of the Games and completing a hat-trick of Commonwealth Games titles.

Key Data

- Total **190 kg**, comprising an **85 kg snatch** and a **105 kg clean and jerk**, breaking Games records in the **snatch, the clean and jerk and the total**.
- Third consecutive Commonwealth Games gold, after **Gold Coast 2018** and **Birmingham 2022**, added to a **silver at Glasgow 2014**.
- She is the **Tokyo 2020 Olympic silver medallist** and the **2017 World Champion**, is from **Manipur**, and received the **Khel Ratna and the Padma Shri in 2018**.
- Other Indian results the same day: **Rishikanta Singh** silver in the men's 60 kg, **Raja Muthupandi** silver in the men's 65 kg, and **Jhandu Kumar** bronze in heavyweight powerlifting.

GAMES	YEAR	RESULT
Glasgow	2014	Silver
Gold Coast	2018	Gold
Birmingham	2022	Gold
Glasgow	2026	Gold

Background

The Commonwealth Games 2026 are being held at **Glasgow, Scotland, from July 23 to August 2, 2026**, in a scaled-down format after Victoria withdrew as host in 2023. The Games began in **1930 at Hamilton, Canada**, as the British Empire Games; **India first participated in 1934**, and **India will host the 2030 centenary edition at Ahmedabad**.

UPSC Angle

GS2 for the institutional side, the Commonwealth as an association of member states and the hosting economics that forced the Glasgow downsizing. Prelims value lies in the host cities, the 1930 origin and the 2030 Ahmedabad edition.

FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

COMMONWEALTH GAMES:

First held in 1930 at Hamilton, Canada, as the British Empire Games.

India first participated in 1934; India hosted the 2010 edition at New Delhi.

The 2030 centenary edition is to be hosted by Ahmedabad, India.

Mirabai Chanu is from Manipur; she won Olympic silver at Tokyo 2020.

ESHA SINGH WINS 25M PISTOL GOLD AT THE ISSF WORLD CUP, HANGZHOU

Esha Singh of Hyderabad won the women's 25m pistol gold at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup at Hangzhou, China on July 27, 2026.

Key Data

- Esha Singh finished with **40 hits** in the eight-woman final, taking her **second consecutive World Cup gold**.
- Manu Bhaker** took the **bronze**; **Yueyue Zhang of China** took the **silver**.

- Esha Singh had earlier set **senior and junior world records with 43 hits** in the final at the **Munich World Cup**.
- Manu Bhaker is India's **first athlete to win two medals at a single post-independence Olympics**, at **Paris 2024**.

Background

The 25m pistol is a precision-plus-rapid event in which the final is scored by hits rather than by decimal points, so a shot either registers as a hit or does not. That format makes finals volatile and explains why shoot-offs are common at the medal margins.

UPSC Angle

Prelims-facing sports current affairs. The institutional anchors are the ISSF, founded in **1907** and headquartered in **Munich**, and the **National Rifle Association of India**, founded in **1951**, which is the national federation for the sport.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGEPEDIA

SHOOTING:

ISSF founded 1907, headquartered at Munich, Germany.

National Rifle Association of India founded in 1951.

Manu Bhaker won two bronze medals at the Paris 2024 Olympics.

ICAR-CMFRI LAUNCHES DEEPDATA APP FOR DEEP-SEA BIODIVERSITY

*The ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) launched **DeepDATA**, a mobile application for the digital documentation and verification of deep-sea fishes, at Kochi on July 23, 2026.*

Key Data

- Developed under the **Deep Ocean Mission** with funding from the **Ministry of Earth Sciences**; available on the **Google Play Store**.
- Combines **expert scientific validation** with **real-time field observations** on a citizen-science model.
- Carries **taxonomy, identifying characteristics, geographical distribution and conservation status** for deep-sea species, feeding a **national digital repository**.
- **ICAR-CMFRI** was established in **1947** and is headquartered at **Kochi**.

Background

The **Deep Ocean Mission** was approved in **June 2021** with an outlay of about **Rs 4,077 crore** and has **six pillars**, including **Samudrayaan** and the **Matsya-6000** crewed submersible designed to carry three persons to a depth of **6,000 m**. India was the **first country designated a Pioneer Investor by the International Seabed Authority, in 1987**, for polymetallic nodules in the **Central Indian Ocean Basin**.

PARAMETER	DETAIL
Approval of Deep Ocean Mission	June 2021
Outlay	About Rs 4,077 crore
Pillars	Six, including Samudrayaan
Crewed submersible	Matsya-6000, for 6,000 m depth
Pioneer Investor status	1987, International Seabed Authority

UPSC Angle

GS3, science and technology developments and their applications, and conservation. The distinctive angle is the use of fisher and citizen observation as a legitimate data stream, since deep-sea species surface as bycatch far more often than they appear in funded survey cruises.

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

OCEAN SCIENCE:

Deep Ocean Mission is implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

The International Seabed Authority, established under UNCLOS, is headquartered in Kingston, Jamaica.

ICAR-CMFRI, established 1947, is headquartered at Kochi, Kerala.

MADURAI MARKS THE 107TH YEAR OF A HERITAGE BANYAN AMID CONSERVATION CONCERNS

Activists and students at Meenakshipuram, Madurai, Tamil Nadu marked on July 27, 2026 the 107th birthday of the last surviving centenarian banyan tree in the locality, as part of an annual campaign against its felling.

Key Data

- The observance is the **Green Nature Festival**, held annually **since 2019** by the **Water Body Protection Movement**, led by its founder **Abubakar**.
- At least **seven other banyan trees** in the locality were removed for **road widening and park construction**.
- Threats cited to the surviving tree: **garbage burning at the base, branch-cutting for overhead electricity lines, and festival firecrackers**.
- *Ficus benghalensis* is **India's National Tree** and a **keystone species**, sustaining frugivores through the **fig-wasp mutualism** in which each fig species is pollinated by its specific wasp.

Background

Urban heritage trees have almost no dedicated statutory protection across most States, so a tree's survival depends on local mobilisation and case-by-case judicial intervention. The relevant policy hooks are the **Maharashtra (Urban Areas) Protection and Preservation of Trees Act, 1975**, amended in **2021** to define a **Heritage Tree** as one aged **50 years or more** and to require compensatory planting keyed to tree age; the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**, whose **Biodiversity Management Committees** at the local body level can document and protect such trees in the People's Biodiversity Register; and the standing orders of the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** on urban tree felling.

INSTRUMENT	PROVISION
Maharashtra Trees Act, 1975, as amended 2021	Defines Heritage Trees as aged 50 years or more
Biological Diversity Act, 2002	Biodiversity Management Committees, People's Biodiversity Register
NGT orders	Scrutiny of permissions for urban tree felling

UPSC Angle

GS3, conservation and **environmental impact assessment**; GS1, urbanisation and its problems. This is a strong Mains illustration that biodiversity loss is not only a forest question, since a single old fig can support more vertebrate frugivores than a hectare of young plantation.

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BANYAN:

Ficus benghalensis, the National Tree of India, spreads through aerial prop roots.

The fig-wasp mutualism is a textbook example of obligate coevolution.

Biodiversity Management Committees are constituted at local body level under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

DAYS OBSERVED ON JULY 27, 2026

Two observances fall on July 27, the CRPF Raising Day in India and Korean War Veterans Armistice Day internationally.

Key Data

- **CRPF Raising Day**, the 88th, is covered in full as a separate item in today's roundup.
- **Korean War Veterans Armistice Day** marks the signing of the **Korean Armistice Agreement at Panmunjom on July 27, 1953**, which ended active fighting in the **Korean War (1950-53)**.
- The Armistice was a **ceasefire, not a peace treaty**, so the two Koreas remain **technically at war** and the Demilitarized Zone remains the de facto boundary.
- **India's role** is the examinable hook. India chaired the **Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC)**, constituted to handle prisoners of war who refused repatriation, under **Lieutenant General K.S. Thimayya**, with Ambassador **B.N. Chakravarty** as Alternate Chairman.
- India also sent the **60 Parachute Field Ambulance**, a medical unit of about **627 personnel** commanded by **Lt Col A.G. Rangaraj**, which treated roughly **220,000 patients** during and after the war.

Background

India was not a combatant. Newly independent and pursuing non-alignment, it took the mediatory route, moving a UN General Assembly resolution on the prisoner-of-war deadlock that broke the negotiating **impasse** and then accepting the chairmanship of the neutral commission because both blocs would accept an Indian chair. The episode is the earliest large demonstration of the Indian peacekeeping and medical-contingent tradition later institutionalised in UN operations.

UPSC Angle

GS2, India and its **bilateral** and international relations, and the role of India in UN peacekeeping. GS1 covers world history after 1945 and the Cold War. The precise pairing to remember is NNRC with Thimayya and 60 Parachute Field Ambulance with Rangaraj.

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KOREAN ARMISTICE:

Signed at Panmunjom on July 27, 1953; the Korean War ran from 1950 to 1953.

No peace treaty has been signed, so the state of war formally persists.

India chaired the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission; the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission was the parallel body supervising the ceasefire terms.

The 60 Parachute Field Ambulance was India's contribution to the UN medical effort in Korea.

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS2 dominates July 27, 2026. Three legislative items sit squarely in the Polity syllabus. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 is a study in how the State escalates **deterrence**, moving from sentence length to asset confiscation and time-bound trial. The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026 is the ideal vehicle for two Prelims-grade facts, Article 124(1) permitting Parliament to prescribe a larger number of judges and Article 123 requiring an ordinance to be replaced by legislation. The Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026 rewards precision: Article 51A(a) lists the Constitution, the National Flag and the National Anthem, and does not name the National Song, which is exactly the distinction an examiner tests.

Governance and internal security. The Nilekani task force on the NTA is an accountability question about a delegated examination body, useful for a Mains answer on regulatory design after institutional failure. Gujarat's Cyber Financial Fraud e-Zero FIR is the best available current example of a statutory reform, Section 173(1) of the BNSS, 2023, being operationalised through technology. CRPF Raising Day supplies the force-structure content on CAPFs, the RAF and CoBRA distinction, and the anti-Left Wing Extremism mandate.

GS3, environment and economy. The Great Indian Bustard rewilding tunnel and the Malvi camel breeding programme are two contrasting conservation models, one for a Critically Endangered wild species threatened by infrastructure, the other for a domesticated breed collapsing because it lost its economic function. The Madurai banyan extends the theme to urban biodiversity and heritage-tree law. On the economy side, BHAVYA-Rasayan and the Ballari-Guntakal rail lines both illustrate the Gati Shakti approach of pairing central capital with State land and freight capacity with industrial demand. DeepDATA links the Deep Ocean Mission to biodiversity documentation and, through the 1987 Pioneer Investor status, to the law of the sea.

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BILLS AND ACTS IN THE NEWS:

Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026: introduced July 27, 2026 and pending debate on July 28, 2026, not referred to any committee; minimum imprisonment 5 years, maximum fine Rs 10 crore, fast-track courts in every State, investigation in 2 months, trial concluded within 3 months of the chargesheet, seven amendments. Parent Act is Act No. 1 of 2024, assent February 12, 2024, in force June 21, 2024.

Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026, Bill No. 128 of 2026: strength raised from 33 to 37 excluding the CJI, that is 38 including the CJI; replaces an Ordinance of May 16, 2026; basis Article 124(1).

Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026: extends the 1971 Act to the National Song; penalty up to 3 years.

CONSTITUTIONAL ARTICLES:

Article 51A(a): duty to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals, the National Flag and the National Anthem.

Article 123: ordinance-making power of the President.

Article 124(1): constitution of the Supreme Court, Parliament may prescribe a larger number of judges.

NATIONAL SYMBOLS:

Vande Mataram: composed 1875 by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, published in Anandamath, 1882, first sung at the 1896 Calcutta Congress session by Rabindranath Tagore, equal status granted January 24, 1950.

Ficus benghalensis, the banyan, is the National Tree of India.

INSTITUTIONS AND BODIES:

NTA: established 2017; task force of July 26, 2026 chaired by Nandan Nilekani, six members.

I4C: Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre, Ministry of Home Affairs; helpline 1930; CEO Rajesh Kumar.

CRPF: raised July 27, 1939 at Neemuch as the Crown Representative's Police; CRPF Act, 1949 in force December 28, 1949; motto Seva aur Nishtha; about 250 battalions and 3.25 lakh personnel; RAF 1992; CoBRA 2008; first all-women CAPF battalion 1986.

NRCC Bikaner: established 1984 under ICAR.

ICAR-CMFRI: established 1947, headquartered at Kochi.

FIDE: founded Paris, July 20, 1924; headquarters Lausanne; motto Gens una sumus; Anand Interim President under Article 19.2 of the FIDE Charter.

ISSF: founded 1907, Munich; National Rifle Association of India founded 1951.

SCHEMES AND PROJECTS:

BHAVYA-Rasayan: Rs 3,030 crore, three chemical parks, FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31, up to Rs 1,000 crore per park, minimum State share Rs 500 crore, Challenge Route, minimum 8 sq km land.

Ballari-Guntakal third and fourth lines: Rs 1,264 crore, about 46 km, 3 districts, 99 villages, 7 lakh people, 16.22 million tonnes per annum additional freight, target 2028-29, under PM Gati Shakti launched October 13, 2021.

Deep Ocean Mission: approved June 2021, about Rs 4,077 crore, six pillars, Samudrayaan and Matsya-6000 for 6,000 m.

SPECIES AND CONSERVATION:

Great Indian Bustard, *Ardeotis nigriceps*: IUCN Critically Endangered, WPA Schedule I, State Bird of Rajasthan; rewilding tunnel at Ramdevra, Jaisalmer, Rs 9.25 crore, about 160 m by 64 m by 14 m; centre population 82 as of April 2026.

Malvi camel: 102 animals; NRCC procured 12, that is 3 males and 9 females; nine Indian camel breeds; Kharai is the only swimming camel; camel numbers fell about 37 per cent between the 2012 and 2019 Livestock Censuses; Rajasthan holds over 80 per cent of India's camels, State Animal 2014, Rajasthan Camel Act 2015.

HERITAGE:

Sarnath inscribed July 25, 2026 at the 48th session of the World Heritage Committee, Busan, Republic of Korea; India's 45th World Heritage property, Uttar Pradesh's fourth; components Chaukhandi Stupa and the Archaeological Remains of Sarnath including the Dhamek and Dharmarajika stupas.

SPORTS:

Mirabai Chanu: CWG 2026 gold, women's 48 kg, total 190 kg, that is 85 kg snatch and 105 kg clean and jerk; third straight CWG gold after 2018 and 2022, silver 2014.

CWG 2026: Glasgow, July 23 to August 2, 2026; Games began 1930 at Hamilton, Canada; India first participated 1934; Ahmedabad hosts the 2030 centenary edition.

Esha Singh: 25m pistol gold at Hangzhou with 40 hits, second successive World Cup gold; Manu Bhaker bronze, Yueyue Zhang of China silver.

DAYS:

July 27: CRPF Raising Day, 88th in 2026.

July 27: Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, marking the Panmunjom signing of 1953; India chaired the NNRC under Lieutenant General K.S. Thimayya and sent the 60 Parachute Field Ambulance under Lt Col A.G. Rangaraj.

Sources: PIB, The Hindu, PRS Legislative Research

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