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Daily Quiz, August 20, 2026

20 August 2026



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DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED ANSWER KEY

Daily Quiz, August 20, 2026

20 August 2026 · 14 Questions · Answers & Explanations Included

Question 1

of 14

[Source →](#)

The India-Japan Memorandum of Arrangement on Maritime Security Cooperation, signed on August 20, 2026, builds directly on which existing bilateral agreement?

- A** The Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), 2020 ✓
- B** The Quad Security Framework
- C** The Malabar Exercise Charter
- D** The Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Japanese Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi signed a Memorandum of Arrangement on Maritime Security Cooperation in New Delhi on August 20, 2026, covering maritime domain awareness, information sharing, search and rescue, joint exercises, and ship-repair/logistics cooperation, building on the existing India-Japan Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) signed in 2020. **ANALYSIS:** The new MoA extends bilateral cooperation from mutual logistics support (ACSA's focus) into dedicated maritime-security coordination, a meaningful institutional deepening rather than a standalone agreement.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

ACSA (Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement), signed in 2020, enables India and Japan to reciprocally provide logistics support, supplies and services to each other's armed forces during exercises, deployments and disaster relief. The new Maritime Security MoA is a distinct but complementary agreement, focused specifically on maritime domain awareness and information sharing rather than logistics reciprocity.

The signing followed Japanese Defence Minister Koizumi's maiden visit to India, during which he inspected the indigenously built stealth destroyer INS Chennai at Western Naval Command, Mumbai, on August 19, a symbolic naval-cooperation gesture preceding the formal agreement signed the next day in Delhi. India and Japan have steadily layered bilateral defence instruments over the past decade, including a 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue mechanism and a Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation, reflecting a broader trend of India deepening structured defence partnerships with Indo-Pacific democracies short of a formal treaty alliance, consistent with its strategic-autonomy posture.

Q1
 **CONCEPT KIT**
 CROSS-PAPER

GS2 (India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership, Indo-Pacific); GS3 (maritime security, naval cooperation agreements).

 MAINS KEYWORDS

Maritime Security MoA, ACSA 2020, India-Japan defence cooperation.

 COMMON MISTAKE

confusing this MoA with the Quad framework; this is a bilateral India-Japan agreement, not a Quad instrument.

 EXAM TIP

anchor "MoA signed Aug 20, 2026, builds on ACSA 2020" as this agreement's fixed fact set.

 INTERVIEW

how does deepening bilateral maritime-security cooperation with Japan fit within India's broader strategic-autonomy doctrine?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 2

of 14

[Source](#)

The Supreme Court's August 18, 2026 ruling on waste management grounded its holding in Article 21 and which other constitutional provision?

A Article 48A

B Article 51A(g) ✓

C Article 47

D Article 39(b)

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: The Supreme Court held on August 18, 2026 that treating waste disposal as solely the sanitation workforce's responsibility, while citizens generate waste passively without accountability, is constitutionally unethical, grounding the ruling in Article 51A(g) (the fundamental duty to protect and improve the natural environment) and Article 21 (right to life, interpreted to include a healthy environment). **ANALYSIS:** The Court permitted water/power disconnection for repeated Solid Waste Management Rules violations and directed waste-management education be integrated into school curricula, combining an enforcement mechanism with a long-term behavioural intervention.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

Article 51A(g), part of the Fundamental Duties added via the 42nd Constitutional Amendment (1976) on the recommendation of the Swaran Singh Committee, obliges every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment. Unlike Directive Principles (Article 48A, environmental protection as a state obligation), Fundamental Duties are explicitly citizen-facing, making Article 51A(g) the more precise fit for a ruling about citizens' own passive waste-generation behaviour rather than the state's environmental obligations.

The Court's ethics-inflected framing, that unaccountable citizen behaviour unfairly burdens sanitation workers, gives this ruling a distinct GS4 dimension beyond its GS2/GS3 environmental-law content. Fundamental Duties are generally treated as non-justiciable, meaning courts cannot directly enforce them against citizens through penalties, so this ruling's significance lies less in creating new liability and more in using Article 51A(g) as interpretive support for upholding the Solid Waste Management Rules' enforcement provisions, including utility disconnection for repeated violations.

Q2
 **CONCEPT KIT**
 CROSS-PAPER

GS2 (Fundamental Duties, constitutional interpretation); GS3 (Solid Waste Management Rules); GS4 (dignity of sanitation workers, citizen ethics).

 MAINS KEYWORDS

Article 51A(g), Article 21, SWM Rules 2026, passive waste generation.

 COMMON MISTAKE

citing Article 48A (a Directive Principle addressed to the state) instead of Article 51A(g) (a citizen-facing Fundamental Duty), which is the actual basis for this ruling.

 EXAM TIP

anchor "Article 51A(g) + Article 21, ruling Aug 18, 2026" as this case's fixed fact set.

 INTERVIEW

can utility disconnection as an enforcement tool for civic violations be reconciled with the right to water and electricity as basic services?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 3

of 14

[Source →](#)

DoT's enforcement of the nine-SIM-per-person cap through photograph-based verification uses which platform to share subscriber photographs with telecom operators?

- ☐ A Aadhaar Enabled Payment System
- ☐ B National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal
- ☒ C Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP) ✓
- ☐ D Sanchar Saathi Portal

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: The Department of Telecommunications will place subscriber photographs, accessed via its Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP), at the disposal of telecom service providers to enforce the nine-SIM-per-person national cap (reduced to six in J&K, Assam and the Northeastern states), with full operator transition required by November 30, 2026. **ANALYSIS:** Shifting fraud-detection to the point of SIM issuance, rather than after-the-fact cancellation, represents a structural change in India's telecom-fraud prevention approach, addressing bulk fraudulent SIM procurement before it enters circulation.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

The Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP) is DoT's dedicated tool for coordinating fraud-detection efforts among telecom operators, law enforcement and financial institutions, distinct from the separate Sanchar Saathi citizen-facing portal (used for tracing/blocking lost or stolen phones and checking SIMs issued in one's name). The reduced six-SIM cap in border and insurgency-sensitive states (J&K, Assam, Northeast) reflects heightened security screening in these regions compared to the national nine-SIM standard.

This enforcement mechanism operates under the broader legal framework of the Telecommunications Act, 2023, and raises a data-privacy dimension under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, given the use of biometric-adjacent photograph data for verification.

Q3
 **CONCEPT KIT**

CROSS-PAPER

GS3 (cybersecurity, telecom fraud prevention, Telecommunications Act 2023).


MAINS KEYWORDS

Digital Intelligence Platform, nine-SIM cap, point-of-issuance verification.


COMMON MISTAKE

confusing DIP with the Sanchar Saathi portal; DIP is the operator-facing fraud-detection platform, Sanchar Saathi is the citizen-facing service.


EXAM TIP

anchor "DIP, 9-SIM cap (6 in J&K/Assam/NE), deadline Nov 30 2026" as this mechanism's fixed fact set.


INTERVIEW

does using subscriber photographs for fraud prevention require additional safeguards under India's data-protection law?


[Read Full Article →](#)

Question 4

of 14

[Source →](#)

The Railway Ministry's speed upgrade on the Katra-Banihal section of USBRL raised the maximum permissible speed to what level?

- ☐ A 80 kmph
- ☐ B 130 kmph
- ☐ C 110 kmph
- ☒ D 100 kmph ✓

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: The Railway Ministry approved raising the maximum permissible speed on the 111 km Katra-Banihal section of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) to 100 kmph, up from the earlier 75-85 kmph, after the stretch cleared required safety inspections given the challenging Pir Panjal terrain it traverses. **ANALYSIS:** The upgrade follows extensive track and structural stability certification, reflecting the additional safety verification required for a route passing through seismically and geologically sensitive Himalayan terrain, distinct from routine speed upgrades on plains sections.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

The Katra-Banihal section passes through two landmark structures: the Chenab Railway Bridge, the world's highest railway bridge at roughly 359 metres above the riverbed (higher than the Eiffel Tower), and the Anji Khad Bridge, India's first cable-stayed rail bridge. USBRL is the flagship rail-connectivity project integrating the Kashmir Valley with the Indian rail network, carrying implications for freight movement, tourism access, and both commuter and strategic mobility between Jammu and Srinagar.

A higher permissible speed on this stretch directly reduces end-to-end travel time on one of India's most geologically challenging rail corridors. The full USBRL project, conceived in the 1990s and declared a National Project for accelerated execution, became fully operational only in 2025 after decades of construction delays caused by the region's difficult Himalayan terrain, seismic activity and security considerations, making incremental operational upgrades like this speed increase a continuing, closely watched process rather than a one-time achievement.

Q4
 **CONCEPT KIT**

CROSS-PAPER

GS1 (Himalayan/Pir Panjal physical geography); GS3 (transport infrastructure, strategic connectivity).


MAINS KEYWORDS

USBRL, Katra-Banihal, Chenab Bridge, Anji Khad Bridge.


COMMON MISTAKE

confusing the Chenab Bridge (world's highest railway bridge) with the Anji Khad Bridge (India's first cable-stayed rail bridge); these are two distinct structures on the same section.


EXAM TIP

anchor "Katra-Banihal, 111 km, upgraded to 100 kmph" as this section's fixed fact set.


INTERVIEW

how does USBRL's completion change Jammu & Kashmir's economic integration and strategic connectivity calculus?


[Read Full Article →](#)

Question 5

of 14

[Source →](#)

In *Purna Singh Bindra v. Union of India* (order dated August 17, 2026), the Supreme Court asked the Centre to consider banning which elephant drive-out methods?

A "Fireball" and "hulla party" methods ✓

B Trench digging and solar fencing

C Tranquilisation and relocation

D Drone-based crop-guard alerts

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: A Bench led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, with Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V. Mohana, directed a fresh nationwide survey of elephant corridors and ruled that fears of crop damage cannot justify blocking wildlife movement, asking the Centre to consider banning "fireball" and "hulla party" elephant drive-out methods, both of which involve fire or organised crowds to forcibly push elephants away from human settlements. **ANALYSIS:** The order responds to the gap between officially notified elephant corridors and elephants' actual, evolving movement patterns, a gap widened by corridor fragmentation from agriculture, mining and infrastructure expansion.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

Human-elephant conflict has intensified in India as corridor fragmentation from agriculture, mining and infrastructure has narrowed traditional elephant migration routes, making drive-out methods a recurring but often injurious response to elephants entering human settlements. "Fireball" methods use flaming projectiles, and "hulla party" methods use organised, noise-making crowds, both of which frequently cause injury or panic-driven fatalities to elephants and people alike, which is why the Court specifically flagged them for a potential ban rather than drive-out methods generally. This connects to India's Project Elephant (launched 1992 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change) and the Gaj Yatra elephant-corridor-mapping initiative.

Q5
 **CONCEPT KIT**

CROSS-PAPER

GS3 (wildlife conservation, human-wildlife conflict, Wildlife Protection Act 1972).


MAINS KEYWORDS

Prerna Singh Bindra v. Union of India, elephant corridors, Project Elephant.


COMMON MISTAKE

assuming the Court banned all forms of elephant deterrence; it specifically flagged "fireball" and "hulla party" methods for a potential ban, not deterrence measures generally.


EXAM TIP

anchor "order Aug 17, 2026, CJI Surya Kant, bans fireball/hulla party methods" as this case's fixed fact set.


INTERVIEW

how should conservation policy balance agrarian livelihood protection against wildlife corridor connectivity?


[Read Full Article →](#)

Question 6

of 14

[Source](#) →

A Hindu editorial on electoral roll revision argues that international praise for India's voting mechanism addresses which of the following?

- ☐ A The fairness of the Special Intensive Revision process itself
- ☒ B **The technical robustness of the voting mechanism, not the fairness of roll preparation ✓**
- ☐ C The Election Commission's budget allocation
- ☐ D The accuracy of exit poll predictions

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: The Hindu argues that clean, accurate electoral rolls are a legitimate democratic requirement, but insists the process of cleaning rolls through the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) must remain transparent and cross-party, distinguishing international commentary praising India's photo-ID voting mechanism (which addresses the voting mechanism's technical robustness) from the separate, unresolved question of whether the antecedent roll-preparation process was conducted fairly. **ANALYSIS:** The editorial's core move is refusing to let praise for one part of the electoral system (voting) substitute for scrutiny of a different part (roll revision), a distinction with direct relevance to opposition allegations about SIR's neutrality.

📖 CONCEPT NOTE

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) is a large-scale, periodic roll-correction exercise conducted by the Election Commission of India under its Article 324 constitutional mandate and the Representation of the People Act, 1950. Opposition parties have raised concerns about SIR's neutrality and its effect on specific voter constituencies, concerns amplified around commentary, including former US President Donald Trump's public appreciation of India's photo-ID voting system.

The editorial's proposed remedy is building verifiable, cross-party oversight mechanisms, transparent deletion-reason disclosure and accessible grievance redressal, into the SIR process so it commands trust across the political spectrum. The Election Commission is a three-member body (Chief Election Commissioner plus two Election Commissioners) enjoying constitutional protection of tenure similar to Supreme Court judges, a design intended to insulate it from executive pressure, which is precisely why perceived neutrality in exercises like SIR carries outsized institutional stakes beyond any single election cycle.

Q6
 **CONCEPT KIT**

CROSS-PAPER

GS2 (Election Commission of India, Article 324, electoral reforms).


MAINS KEYWORDS

Special Intensive Revision, Article 324, cross-party oversight.


COMMON MISTAKE

treating international praise for India's voting mechanism as evidence of a fair roll-revision process; the editorial explicitly separates these two questions.


EXAM TIP

anchor "SIR under Article 324, RPA 1950" as this topic's fixed fact set.


INTERVIEW

what specific institutional safeguards would make a mass roll-revision exercise verifiably neutral rather than merely claimed to be neutral?


[Read Full Article →](#)

Question 7

of 14

[Source](#) →

A Hindu op-ed by C.R. Gharekhan on West Asian peace argues that regional stability fundamentally requires the resolution of which unresolved question?

- ☐ A UN Security Council reform
- ☐ B Iran's nuclear programme
- ☒ C Sovereign Palestinian statehood ✓
- ☐ D Gulf currency unification

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: C.R. Gharekhan, India's former envoy to the Middle East Peace Process, argues in The Hindu that West Asia's recurring conflicts trace fundamentally to the continued absence of a sovereign Palestinian state, and that sustained external mediation, chiefly by the United States, remains the only realistic path to creating conditions for viable Palestinian statehood and lasting regional peace. **ANALYSIS:** The op-ed distinguishes symptom (periodic conflict, bilateral normalisation deals) from root cause (unresolved sovereignty), arguing that diplomatic progress on separate tracks cannot substitute for resolving the core Palestinian question.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

The Oslo Accords (1993) established a framework for limited Palestinian self-governance via the Palestinian Authority, but without conferring full statehood, a gap that has persisted through subsequent decades of intermittent negotiation and conflict. Israel-Arab state normalisation agreements have proceeded on separate diplomatic tracks without resolving the Palestinian question, which the editorial argues means such agreements cannot by themselves deliver durable regional stability.

India has historically supported the two-state solution as its official position while also expanding strategic ties with Israel following the 1992 normalisation of India-Israel relations, a balancing act the op-ed's framing implicitly tests. C.R. Gharekhan served as India's Special Envoy for the Middle East Peace Process and earlier as India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, giving his analysis institutional weight drawn from direct engagement with the negotiating history this editorial surveys, rather than purely academic commentary.

Q7 **CONCEPT KIT**

 CROSS-PAPER	GS2 (India's West Asia policy, international relations).
 MAINS KEYWORDS	Palestinian statehood, Oslo Accords, two-state solution.
 COMMON MISTAKE	treating Israel-Arab normalisation agreements as equivalent to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; the editorial explicitly treats these as distinct.
 EXAM TIP	anchor "Oslo Accords 1993, two-state solution, India-Israel ties normalised 1992" as this topic's fixed fact set.
 INTERVIEW	how should India balance normative support for Palestinian self-determination against its strategic partnership with Israel?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 8

of 14

[Source →](#)

A Hindu editorial on the IISER system identifies which specific governance gap as eroding institutional autonomy?

- ☐ A Insufficient central government funding
- ☐ B Declining student enrolment
- ☐ C Lack of international research collaborations
- ☒ D Prolonged interim appointments and directors holding multiple concurrent charges ✓

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: The Hindu argues that prolonged interim appointments, unfilled leadership vacancies, and administrators holding multiple simultaneous posts across the Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) are eroding the institutional autonomy and scientific-culture vision the IISERs were founded on, calling for India's pool of accomplished scientists to be drawn on more directly for leadership. **ANALYSIS:** The editorial's structural argument is that interim or overstretched leadership typically defers major institutional commitments, meaning the IISERs' capacity for long-term strategic vision is constrained precisely when sustained leadership attention is most needed to cultivate their distinctive research culture.

📖 CONCEPT NOTE

The IISER system was established beginning in 2006, with IISER Kolkata and IISER Pune among the first, under the Ministry of Education, with a mandate to build a research-intensive undergraduate science education model distinct from conventional Indian university education. The editorial's proposed remedy, drawing more directly on India's broader pool of accomplished scientists, implies the current selection process may be too slow or insufficiently attractive to fill vacancies before they become prolonged governance gaps.

A genuine counter-consideration is that finding qualified, willing scientist-administrators for every institution simultaneously reflects a real talent-pipeline constraint, not simply an administrative failure. The IISER network has since expanded to seven institutes across India (Kolkata, Pune, Mohali, Bhopal, Thiruvananthapuram, Tirupati and Berhampur), each governed by its own Board of Governors with a Director as chief academic and administrative officer, meaning a vacancy at even one institute has disproportionate effect given the network's still-relatively-small overall size.

Q8
 **CONCEPT KIT**
 CROSS-PAPER

GS2 (higher education governance, institutional autonomy); GS3 (science and technology institution-building).

 MAINS KEYWORDS

IISER system, interim leadership, institutional autonomy.

 COMMON MISTAKE

confusing IISERs with IITs; IISERs specifically combine undergraduate science education with integrated research training, a distinct model from the engineering-focused IIT system.

 EXAM TIP

anchor "IISER system established 2006, Ministry of Education" as this topic's fixed fact set.

 INTERVIEW

should scientists be given stronger incentives to take on institutional leadership roles even at the cost of their own research output?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 9

of 14

[Source →](#)

An Indian Express editorial on caste enumeration methodology attributes the 2011 Socio-Economic and Caste Census's unusable caste data to what specific failure?

A Inadequate coding and classification of unstandardised, self-reported caste names ✓

B Insufficient sample size across rural districts

C Political interference in the release process

D A missed constitutional deadline for data publication

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: Indian Express explains that the 2011 Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) recorded an implausibly large number of distinct caste and sub-caste names, running into the lakhs, due to unstandardised, uncoded self-reporting, making the raw data effectively unusable for policy purposes and leading to it never being officially released, a failure India's current caste enumeration addresses through an open-ended question format paired with more robust post-enumeration coding methodology. **ANALYSIS:** The editorial's key distinction is that the 2011 SECC's failure was in classification, not collection, meaning simply re-running the same collection approach without fixing the coding stage would not solve the underlying problem.

📖 CONCEPT NOTE

The 2011 SECC was conducted alongside the regular decennial Census, the first attempt at full caste enumeration since the 1931 Census. While its socio-economic data component was released and used for welfare-scheme beneficiary identification, the caste component alone was withheld entirely due to the classification failure. India's current enumeration exercise adopts an open-ended question format, allowing free self-reported response rather than selection from a constrained list, but caste nomenclature's significant regional variability means even this improved format requires sophisticated regional coding expertise to produce genuinely comparable, usable national data. Beyond the 2011 SECC, the Union Government has historically maintained that caste enumeration beyond SC/ST categories was administratively complex and policy-sensitive, making the current exercise's decision to proceed with a more rigorous methodology a notable shift, one several states had separately attempted through their own state-level caste surveys in recent years.

Q9 **CONCEPT KIT**

 CROSS-PAPER	GS1 (caste as a social category); GS2 (welfare-scheme targeting, Census methodology).
 MAINS KEYWORDS	SECC 2011, open-ended question, post-enumeration coding.
 COMMON MISTAKE	assuming the entire 2011 SECC failed; only its caste component was withheld, while the socio-economic component was released and used.
 EXAM TIP	anchor "SECC 2011, last full caste Census 1931, open-ended format now" as this topic's fixed fact set.
 INTERVIEW	what specific institutional capacity is required to convert an open-ended survey response into policy-usable classified data?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 10

of 14

[Source →](#)

A companion Indian Express editorial cautions that accurate caste data, while valuable, is not by itself sufficient to achieve what?

- ☐ A Constitutional amendment procedures
- ☒ B Reduced structural caste-based inequity ✓
- ☐ C Census cost reduction
- ☐ D International development rankings

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: Indian Express supports collecting caste data through the current enumeration exercise but cautions against treating the count itself as a policy solution, arguing reliable statistics can meaningfully inform welfare targeting and evidence-based policy but cannot, by themselves, resolve entrenched structural caste-based inequities, citing the 2011 SECC data (collected but never released or acted upon) as a cautionary precedent. **ANALYSIS:** The editorial's definitional distinction, between information-gathering and the deliberate political action needed to act on that information, warns against conflating the completion of enumeration with a resolution of the inequity it describes.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

Disaggregated caste data has genuine, specific policy uses, for instance informing OBC sub-categorisation debates (examined by the Justice G. Rohini Commission, constituted in 2017) by revealing disparities within broad caste categories that aggregate data conceals. The editorial's core caution is that data availability does not automatically translate into policy action, a translation requiring separate, deliberate political will and administrative follow-through that data collection alone cannot substitute for.

A genuine counter-risk is that this skepticism about political will could itself become a reason to deprioritise valuable data collection, which the editorial explicitly guards against by continuing to support enumeration. This companion editorial reads as a deliberate counterweight to overly optimistic coverage of the enumeration exercise elsewhere, illustrating how a single newspaper can carry genuinely divergent framings, methodology-focused optimism versus outcome-focused caution, on the same underlying policy question within the same edition.

Q10
 **CONCEPT KIT**

CROSS-PAPER

GS1 (social empowerment, caste and social justice); GS2 (evidence-based welfare policy).


MAINS KEYWORDS

data as policy input, OBC sub-categorisation, structural inequity.


COMMON MISTAKE

reading this editorial as opposing caste enumeration; it explicitly supports data collection while cautioning it is not sufficient alone.


EXAM TIP

anchor "Justice G. Rohini Commission 2017, OBC sub-categorisation" as this topic's fixed fact set.


INTERVIEW

is it ethically sufficient for the state to gather data on inequity without a committed follow-through plan to act on it?


[Read Full Article →](#)

Question 11

of 14

[Source](#) →

An Indian Express editorial frames India's 2026 BRICS Chairship priorities under which stated theme?

A Trade First, Growth Always

B Digital Sovereignty for All

C People and Planet First ✓

D Global South Unity Now

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: Indian Express frames India's 2026 BRICS Chairship as centred on a "people and planet first" approach, highlighting sustainable lifestyles, afforestation and disaster resilience, and circular economy as core chairship priorities, positioning BRICS climate and development cooperation as humanity-centred rather than narrowly economic, alongside BRICS' traditional economic-cooperation focus (trade, the New Development Bank).

ANALYSIS: The framing represents a deliberate agenda broadening, not a replacement, of BRICS' traditional priorities, though translating it into concrete outcomes requires reconciling genuine underlying divergence among BRICS members in development stage and climate positions.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, plus newer members) has historically centred cooperation on economic and financial themes, including the New Development Bank, established in 2014 and headquartered in Shanghai. India's 2026 chairship priorities, as outlined in this editorial, explicitly foreground sustainability alongside these traditional concerns, connecting to the day's separate coverage of the BRICS ICT Track held in Pune.

Given BRICS members' substantial collective share of global population and emissions, coordinated action within the grouping carries genuinely global sustainability implications distinct from smaller multilateral groupings, though whether the framing translates into concrete, trackable commitments depends heavily on India's diplomatic effectiveness as chair.

Q11
CONCEPT KIT

CROSS-PAPER

GS2 (India's BRICS Chairship, multilateral groupings); GS3 (circular economy, sustainable development).


MAINS KEYWORDS

"People and planet first," New Development Bank, circular economy.


COMMON MISTAKE

confusing the NDB with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB); the NDB is a BRICS-specific institution, AIIB is a separate, broader-membership China-led bank.


EXAM TIP

anchor "NDB est. 2014, Shanghai; India chairs BRICS 2026" as this topic's fixed fact set.


INTERVIEW

can a multilateral grouping meaningfully commit to shared sustainability goals when member states remain at very different development stages?


[Read Full Article →](#)

Question 12

of 14

[Source →](#)

An Indian Express editorial on the Red Corridor argues that with Left Wing Extremism largely dismantled, the government's harder remaining task is what?

- ☐ A Disbanding all remaining security forces immediately
- ☐ B Merging affected districts into neighbouring states
- ☐ C Relocating affected populations to urban centres
- ☒ D **Building durable roads, schools, livelihoods and functioning institutions ✓**

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: Indian Express argues that with LWE largely dismantled across most of its former stronghold areas, the government's harder and more consequential task now is filling the vacated administrative and developmental space with roads, schools, livelihoods and functioning institutions, transitioning the former Red Corridor from an insurgency-management challenge into a genuine, sustained development corridor. **ANALYSIS:** The editorial's core distinction is between security success (reducing insurgent activity, achieved) and development success (building durable state capacity, largely unaddressed), arguing the latter is inherently slower and requires sustained multi-year investment unlike the more concentrated nature of security operations.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

India's Red Corridor, spanning parts of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha and neighbouring states, traces its instability substantially to the 1967 Naxalbari uprising in West Bengal and the state's historical absence in providing basic governance and economic opportunity in these regions. LWE-affected districts have historically received targeted central assistance through schemes like the Special Central Assistance for LWE-affected districts, though the editorial argues that reduced insurgent activity alone does not translate into improved living conditions without sustained parallel investment in state capacity.

A residual security-vigilance concern remains legitimate even as the primary policy focus shifts toward development. The Ministry of Home Affairs periodically revises its official list of LWE-affected districts, and the count has fallen sharply over the past decade as security operations succeeded, a metric the editorial implicitly uses as evidence that the security phase has substantially run its course and attention must now shift.

Q12 **CONCEPT KIT**

 CROSS-PAPER	GS3 (internal security, Left Wing Extremism); GS2 (state capacity, governance in underdeveloped regions).
 MAINS KEYWORDS	Red Corridor, Naxalbari uprising 1967, development-security nexus.
 COMMON MISTAKE	treating "LWE dismantled" as equivalent to "Red Corridor development challenge resolved"; the editorial explicitly argues these are separate, sequential challenges.
 EXAM TIP	anchor "Naxalbari 1967, Red Corridor states: Chhattisgarh/Jharkhand/Odisha/Bihar" as this topic's fixed fact set.
 INTERVIEW	does the state owe a special developmental obligation to regions it historically neglected, beyond its general obligation to all citizens?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 13

of 14

[Source](#)

A Business Standard editorial on the RBI's monetary policy stance notes that Deputy Governor Poonam Gupta's remarks signalled what shift in market expectations?

A From anticipated rate cuts toward a possible future hike ✓

B From rate hikes toward guaranteed rate cuts

C From flexible inflation targeting toward a fixed exchange-rate regime

D From repo-rate policy toward reserve-ratio policy

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
EXPLANATION

FACT: Business Standard argues the RBI Monetary Policy Committee's decision to hold the repo rate steady was prudent given inflation below target for 16 straight months, but warns that the RBI's own FY27 inflation projection (peaking at 5.9% in Q3) and hawkish remarks from Deputy Governor Poonam Gupta, that "scope for further easing does not seem to exist" and "a case for a hike may emerge", mean market expectations are shifting from anticipated rate cuts toward a possible future rate hike. **ANALYSIS:** The editorial's key insight is that individual MPC member communication can shift market expectations independent of the committee's formal, more neutrally worded decision, making central-bank communication itself a policy-relevant variable.

CONCEPT NOTE

India's Monetary Policy Committee, established under the RBI Act amendment of 2016, operates under a flexible inflation-targeting framework with a 4% CPI target within a 2-6% tolerance band, and consists of six members, three from the RBI including the Governor as ex-officio chair, and three external members appointed by the Government of India. The tension between current below-target inflation (favouring easing) and the forward projection of a 5.9% Q3 FY27 peak (favouring caution), driven substantially by West Asia crude-price volatility, explains the MPC's cautious hold rather than a definitive move in either direction.

Under the inflation-targeting framework, the RBI is statutorily required to explain to the Government in writing if CPI inflation deviates from the target band for three consecutive quarters, a formal accountability mechanism that adds institutional weight to how seriously the MPC must treat both the current below-target reading and its own forward projections.

Q13 **CONCEPT KIT**

 CROSS-PAPER	GS3 (monetary policy, inflation targeting, RBI functioning).
 MAINS KEYWORDS	Monetary Policy Committee, forward guidance, inflation-targeting framework.
 COMMON MISTAKE	treating the MPC's formal hold decision as the only relevant signal; the editorial's key point is that Deputy Governor Gupta's individual remarks shifted market expectations independently.
 EXAM TIP	anchor "MPC six members, 4% target within 2-6% band, RBI Act 2016 amendment" as this topic's fixed fact set.
 INTERVIEW	how much weight should individual central-bank officials' public remarks carry relative to the institution's formal collective decision?

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Question 14

of 14

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A Down to Earth editorial on menopause identifies which occupational category as facing the most compounded health burden from climate stress and social inequality?

A Formal-sector government employees

B Informal-sector women workers ✓

C Urban corporate professionals

D Registered healthcare workers

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: Down to Earth argues that menopause among India's roughly 150 million affected women is a neglected public-health issue shaped by climate stress, air pollution and social hierarchy, with environmental heat and economic inequality disproportionately burdening informal-sector women workers, who typically lack the workplace accommodations, healthcare benefits, or flexible conditions available in formal employment to manage the compounded effects of menopausal symptoms and environmental heat exposure. **ANALYSIS:** The editorial's intersectional framing shows how a universal biological transition produces unequal lived health outcomes depending on socioeconomic position and occupational sector, a distinct environment-health-equity link.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

Rising ambient heat and increasingly frequent extreme-heat events, a direct consequence of climate change, can measurably worsen menopausal symptoms like hot flashes and thermoregulatory disruption, giving this issue a genuine climate-health dimension beyond conventional women's-health framing. The editorial's proposed interventions, integrating menopause care into primary healthcare, training health workers, and expanding national health surveys (such as the NFHS) to systematically capture this life stage, are framed as comparatively low-cost given they leverage existing Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centre infrastructure rather than requiring entirely new systems. India's female life expectancy has risen substantially in recent decades, meaning a growing share of women now live several decades beyond menopause onset (typically around age 45-55), making the cumulative public-health stakes of neglecting this life stage considerably larger than they would have been a generation ago, a demographic-transition dimension the editorial's framing implicitly rests on.

Q14
 **CONCEPT KIT**
 CROSS-PAPER

GS1 (women's health, social empowerment); GS3 (climate change impacts on health).

 MAINS KEYWORDS

menopause, thermoregulatory disruption, informal-sector vulnerability.

 COMMON MISTAKE

treating this as a purely health-policy issue disconnected from environment; the editorial explicitly links climate-driven heat stress to menopausal health outcomes.

 EXAM TIP

anchor "~150 million menopausal women in India, informal-sector vulnerability" as this topic's fixed fact set.

 INTERVIEW

should public-health policy prioritise a non-life-threatening but widely experienced life-stage transition over more acute health needs?

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