

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

1

Prime Minister Departs for Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan Ahead of the 26th SCO Summit

The Prime Minister left on August 29, 2026 for a State Visit to Tashkent on August 29 and 30, followed by the 26th SCO Summit at Bishkek from August 31 to September 1.

- Departure: **August 29, 2026**. Duration: four days.
- **Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic: August 31 to September 1, 2026, 26th SCO Summit**, at the invitation of President **Sadyr Zhaparov**.
- Vision pairing: **Viksit Bharat 2047** and Uzbekistan's "**Yangi Uzbekistan**".
- Also scheduled: the opening of the **6th World Nomad Games** in the Kyrgyz Republic.
- Formalised as the **SCO in 2001** when **Uzbekistan** joined.
- **SCO Development Strategy 2035** was adopted at the preceding summit.
- **2017**: India becomes a **full SCO member**.
- The **Shanghai Five (1996)** and the **SCO (2001)** are different things with different membership. Uzbekistan was not in the Shanghai Five.



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SYLLABUS GS2 · Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India or affecting India's interests

GEOGRAPHY

2

The Rasuwa Disaster: A Rock and Ice Collapse, a Barrier Lake, and Why It Was Not a Classic GLOF

A bedrock and glacier collapse on August 26, 2026 dammed the Lhende Khola in Nepal's Rasuwa district; the barrier lake then burst down the Bhotekoshi and Trishuli.

- **August 26, 2026**, around 9 a.m., **Rasuwa district**, north-central Nepal, on the Tibet border.
- Bedrock and glacier failure at about **5,200 metres**; a section roughly **600 metres wide** fell about **1,200 metres**.
- Displaced mass: **100 to 200 million cubic metres**. The collapse registered as an **Ms 5.2** seismic event.
- Impact along roughly **72 kilometres** of valley.
- A second barrier lake of about **2 million cubic metres**, near the **Chhochen Khola and Purepu Tsangpo** confluence, **overflowed on August 28**.
- **Historical** note: a comparable Lhende surge occurred at the same site on **July 8, 2025**.
- Rasuwa 2026 was of the **second type**.
- The **NDMA** classifies about **190 as high-risk**, of which **25** are rated most dangerous, under the **National GLOF Risk Mitigation Programme**.



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SYLLABUS GS1 · Important geophysical phenomena

SOCIAL ISSUES

3

FSSAI Proposes Red Hexagon Warning Labels for High Fat, Sugar and Salt Foods

In a compliance affidavit to the Supreme Court, FSSAI proposed red hexagonal HIGH FAT, HIGH SUGAR and HIGH SALT warnings, moving away from the Indian Nutrition Rating star system that FSSAI had shelved earlier in 2026.

- Filed as a **compliance affidavit before the Supreme Court**, reported **August 28 and 29, 2026**.
- Thresholds aligned to the **ICMR-NIN Dietary Guidelines for Indians, 2024**.
- Filed in compliance with a Supreme Court order **passed in August 2026**, on **August 13**.
- Proposes a threshold warning in place of the **Indian Nutrition Rating (INR)** star-rating model, which FSSAI **put on hold in February 2026**.
- PIL filed by **3S and Our Health Society**, a public charitable trust.
- **Chile, 2016**: the global pioneer, using a **black octagon**, alongside restrictions on child-directed marketing and on sales in schools.
- **WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health (2004)**, the international policy anchor for dietary regulation.
- This is a **proposal in an affidavit**, not a notified regulation. It becomes binding only when notified under the FSS Act.



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SYLLABUS GS2 · Issues relating to the development and management of the social sector relating to health

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

4

India and China Move to Operationalise the Eight-Point Consensus from the 25th SR Talks

The MEA said on August 28, 2026 that India and China are working out how to activate the eight-point consensus reached at the 25th Special Representatives talks on the boundary question.

- **25th round** of Special Representatives' talks, **Beijing, August 25, 2026**; MEA briefing on operationalisation, **August 28, 2026**.
- **26th round to be held in India in 2027**.
- **Special Representatives (SR) mechanism**: established **2003**, political-level channel on the boundary question.
- **WMCC**: Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs, established **2012**, at official level.
- Nathu La was opened for border trade in **2006**. Lipulekh and Nathu La also serve the **Kailash Mansarovar Yatra**.
- Total length of the India-China boundary as claimed by India: about **3,488 km**.
- The **McMahon Line** was drawn at the **Simla Convention of 1914**; China does not accept it.
- The **WMCC (2012)** is an official-level mechanism and is distinct from the **SR mechanism (2003)**, which is political-level.



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SYLLABUS GS2 · India and its neighbourhood

High-Powered Task Force on Public Examination Reform Invites Public Suggestions

The Centre's High-Powered Task Force chaired by Nandan Nilekani, examining the conduct, security, design and governance of public examinations including those run by the NTA, opened public consultation on August 28, 2026.

- Established 2017 as an **autonomous body** under the **Ministry of Education**.
- Article 14**: equality before the law, the basis of fair and non-arbitrary selection.
- Article 16**: equality of opportunity in matters of public employment.
- Article 21A**: right to education for children aged 6 to 14, inserted by the **86th Amendment, 2002**.
- UPSC** is a **constitutional body** under **Article 315**; the **SSC** and the **NTA** are not. This distinction is frequently tested.
- The **NTA** is an **autonomous society**, not a statutory or constitutional body. **UPSC** is **constitutional (Article 315)**.
- The **2024 Act** does not criminalise the **ordinary candidate** for the offences carrying the heaviest penalties; it targets organised malpractice.
- PARAKH** is the assessment centre proposed under NEP 2020, distinct from the NTA.



Full article

SYLLABUS GS2 : Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and...

Tamil Nadu Notifies Three Elephant Corridors Linking Hosur Forests to Karnataka

Tamil Nadu notified three elephant corridors covering over 10,300 hectares in the Cauvery North Wildlife Sanctuary, the first tranche of 41 corridors the Madras High Court ordered expedited.

- Three corridors**, notified late **August 2026**, in the **Cauvery North Wildlife Sanctuary, Hosur Forest Division**, Tamil Nadu.
- Jawalagiri to Ulibanda to Thaggatti**: 18.50 km, 0.73 to 3.20 km wide, **3,241.53 ha**.
- Jawalagiri to Panai to Anchetty**: 20.90 km, 0.80 to 5.00 km wide, **6,881.47 ha**.
- Billikkal to Jawalagiri**: 2.20 km, 0.66 to 1.50 km wide, **196 ha**.
- Ground-verification study **started in 2025**, on **February 8**, funded by the **State Planning Commission**.
- Schedule I**, Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. **CITES Appendix I**.
- Article 48A**: Directive Principle requiring the State to protect and improve the environment and safeguard forests and wildlife.
- Eco-Sensitive Zones** are notified under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**, not the WLP.



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SYLLABUS GS3 : Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation

National Sports Day 2026: Dhyan Chand at 121, and the Year the Khel Ratna Was Not Given

India marked National Sports Day on August 29, 2026, the 121st birth anniversary of Major Dhyan Chand, days after the women's hockey team recorded its best World Cup finish in 52 years.

- Observed on **29 August**, the birth anniversary of **Major Dhyan Chand**, born **29 August 1905** at Allahabad.
- Instituted in 2012** by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. **2026 marks his 121st birth anniversary**.
- Khelo India Samvaad** addressed by the Prime Minister on **27 August 2026**, with participation from over **5,000 institutes**.
- Olympic hockey **gold in 1928 (Amsterdam), 1932 (Los Angeles) and 1936 (Berlin)**.
- Governing body: **FIH**, the International Hockey Federation, founded **1924**, headquartered at **Lausanne**.
- The first FIH Women's World Cup was held in **1974**.
- Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)**: individualised elite athlete support.
- The **National Sports Governance Act, 2025** governs national sports federations, their elections, athlete representation and grievance redress.



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SYLLABUS GS2 : Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and...

Coal Stocks Turn Critical at 45 Thermal Plants as the Monsoon Runs 13 Per Cent Short

Government data as of August 25, 2026 showed 45 thermal power plants with critically low coal, up from 31 at end-July, against a southwest monsoon running 13 per cent below the long period average.

- 45 plants** at critical stock, up from **31** at end-July. **40 of the 45** are domestic-coal-fired.
- Critical** means stocks **below 25 per cent of normative inventory** or **fewer than three days' fuel**.
- Aggregate stocks: **30.95 million tonnes**, about **10 days** of requirement, against **12 days** in July.
- Monitoring body: **Central Electricity Authority (CEA)**, statutory under the **Electricity Act, 2003**.
- IMD's **Second Stage forecast** placed the season at **90 per cent of LPA**.
- IMD categories: **Normal = LPA ±4 per cent; Below Normal = 90 to 96 per cent of LPA; Deficient = less than 90 per cent of LPA**.
- Target framework: **500 GW of non-fossil capacity by 2030; net zero by 2070**, announced at **COP26 in Glasgow**.
- Buffers: **National Food Security Act, 2013; PM-KISAN; PMFBY** crop insurance; **PMKSY** irrigation; **Atal Bhujal Yojana** for groundwater.



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SYLLABUS GS1 : Climatology, including the Indian monsoon and factors influencing it

Luxury Litigation and the Unequal Cost of Delay

The Economic Times welcomes the Supreme Court's warning against luxury litigation but argues costs alone cannot fix a backlog whose burden falls hardest on the poor.

- Pending more than **twenty years: 11,73,509** cases (Government of India, NJDG data placed before Parliament)
- **Article 14:** equality before the law and equal protection of the laws
- **Article 21:** right to life and personal liberty, from which the **right to a speedy trial** is derived
- **Article 39A:** equal justice and free legal aid, a Directive Principle inserted by the **42nd Amendment, 1976**
- **Article 142:** power to do complete justice, the source of the costs jurisdiction in practice
- **Hussainara Khatoun v. State of Bihar (1979):** speedy trial is part of the right to life under Article 21; the foundational undertrial case
- **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987: NALSA, State and District Legal Services Authorities, and Lok Adalats**
- **Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996**, as amended



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SYLLABUS GS2 · Structure, organisation and functioning of the Judiciary

Saptadhara: Seven Streams, and the Reform Question They Leave Unanswered

Swaminathan Aiyar argues in the Economic Times that Saptadhara restates existing ambitions without naming the politically painful reforms Viksit Bharat would require.

- India's average GDP growth over 25 years: about **6.5 per cent**
- Three years from **2023-24: 7.1, 7.2 and 7.6 per cent**
- RBI projection cited by Aiyar: **6.6 per cent**; the **August 2026 MPC** projection for FY27: **6.7 per cent**, repo held at **5.25 per cent**
- **India-UK Free Trade Agreement:** in force **since 2026**, effective **15 July 2026**
- **India-EU Free Trade Agreement:** **negotiations concluded 27 January 2026; not yet in force**
- Easier **exit for failed firms** (the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 is the existing instrument)
- Pruning the **regulatory thicket** (the Jan Vishwas Act, 2023 is the decriminalisation vehicle)
- **Viksit Bharat 2047:** developed-nation status by the centenary of independence



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SYLLABUS GS3 · Indian economy and issues relating to planning, mobilisation of resources, growth, development and employment

Renew, Do Not Renegotiate: The Refugee Convention at 75 and India's Place in It

At the 1951 Convention's 75th anniversary, Hindustan Times argues reopening the treaty would weaken protection, and that India's non-treaty practice gives it standing to shape reform.

- **Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees**, adopted **28 July 1951**, in force **1954**; **75th anniversary in 2026**
- **Article 33:** non-refoulement
- **Article 31:** non-penalisation for illegal entry
- **UNHCR**, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, established **1950**, HQ **Geneva**; **Nobel Peace Prize in 1954 and 1981**
- **India has been a member of the UNHCR Executive Committee since 1995** despite not acceding to the Convention
- **Not a party** to the 1951 Convention or the 1967 Protocol; **no domestic refugee law**
- Governing statutes: **Foreigners Act, 1946**; **Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939**; **Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920**; **Citizenship Act, 1955**
- **Article 14** and **Article 21** apply to **all persons**, not only citizens; **Article 19** rights are confined to citizens



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SYLLABUS GS2 · Important international institutions, agencies and fora, their structure and mandate

When Doing the Job Becomes Heroism: The Mundhe Crackdown and the Lowered Bar

The Indian Express asks why India celebrates civil servants for ordinary enforcement, and argues the answer indicts the system rather than the officer.

- **Tukaram Mundhe**, Commissioner, **Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration**, in charge **since 2026**, from **25 May**
- **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006:** consolidated the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 and other laws; created the **FSSAI** under the...
- **Eat Right India** movement, the FSSAI's demand-side and behaviour-change complement to enforcement
- **Article 311:** protection against dismissal, removal or reduction in rank without inquiry; note that it does **not** protect against transfer
- **Article 310:** doctrine of pleasure
- **Article 312:** All India Services
- **All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968**; **Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964**
- **Right to Information Act, 2005**; **Whistle Blowers Protection Act, 2014** (passed, but its operationalisation remains incomplete)



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SYLLABUS GS2 · Role of civil services in a democracy

Cyclical Cheer, Structural Worry: Reading India's Growth Before the GDP Print

Ahead of the Q1 GDP release, Sajjid Chinoy argues India's resilience is cyclical, and that flat corporate capex and a rising capital-labour ratio are the real constraints.

- **GDP for April to June 2026: scheduled for release 31 August 2026.** Not published as of this edition
- **RBI FY27 projection: 6.7 per cent** (August 2026 MPC)
- **GST rationalisation**, September 2025
- Gross fixed investment: about **32 per cent of GDP**, its decadal average
- Corporate capex: about **10 to 11 per cent of GDP**; no pick-up across the **top 1,000 listed companies** in 2025-26
- **NBFC lending to households: 20 per cent** growth; **banks' unsecured personal lending momentum: 25 per cent**
- **PLFS**: employment rate rising, but a significant share of new jobs **self-employed** rather than **salaried**; mix improved in 2025
- Goods exports: **17 per cent of GDP a decade ago** → **11 per cent** now



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SYLLABUS GS3 · Indian economy and issues relating to planning, mobilisation of resources, growth, development and employment

When a Glacier Bursts: Reframing Himalayan Floods as a Health Emergency

After the Nepal disaster, the Indian Express argues glacial floods must be treated as a climate-health syndemic, not a hydrology problem that ends when the water recedes.

- Glacial lakes in the Indian Himalaya: **well over 7,500**
- **ISRO** inventories show lakes **doubling in extent** over a few decades
- **Kedarnath, June 2013**: Chorabari lake breach compounding extreme rainfall
- **Chamoli, February 2021**: rock and ice avalanche, Rishiganga catchment
- **National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)**: chaired by the **Prime Minister**, established under the **Disaster Management Act, 2005**; **NDRF** is...
- **Central Water Commission (CWC)**: glacial lake monitoring and flood forecasting
- **National Programme on Climate Change and Human Health (NPCCHH)**: launched **2019** under the National Health Mission
- **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)**: launched by India in **2019**



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SYLLABUS GS1 · Important geophysical phenomena

Breaking Manipur's Cycle of Reprisal: A New Fault Line Opens

The Indian Express argues Manipur's conflict has widened from Meitei-Kuki to a Kuki-Naga fault line, and that political representation without social contact cannot stop reprisal killings.

- **May 2026**: Kuki-Thadou church pastors murdered; retaliatory abductions on both sides follow
- **February 2025**: President's Rule imposed under **Article 356**
- Lifeline highways: **NH-2** (Imphal to Dimapur), **NH-37** (Imphal to Jiribam)
- **Article 355**: duty of the Union to protect States against external aggression and internal disturbance
- **Article 356**: President's Rule; imposed February 2025, revoked February 2026
- **Article 371C**: special provision for Manipur; the **Hill Areas Committee** of the Legislative Assembly
- **Article 342**: specification of Scheduled Tribes; the Meitei ST demand runs through this route
- **Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958**: in force in parts of the State



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SYLLABUS GS2 · Federalism

Why the SCO Now Matters More to India Than It Once Did

Ahead of the Bishkek summit, the Indian Express argues India must move from defensive point-scoring at the SCO to a proactive Eurasian agenda.

- **Shanghai Five** formed **1996**; **SCO** formalised **2001** with Uzbekistan's accession
- **India and Pakistan** admitted as full members **2017**; **Iran 2023**; **Belarus 2024**
- **SCO Development Strategy 2035** adopted at the preceding summit
- **2012**: **Connect Central Asia** policy, 12 points
- **2015**: Prime Minister visits **all five Central Asian republics**
- **2017**: India becomes a **full SCO member**
- **2022**: first **India-Central Asia Summit** (virtual)
- **Bishkek, 31 August to 1 September 2026**: 26th SCO Summit at the invitation of President **Sadyr Zhaparov**



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SYLLABUS GS2 · Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India or affecting India's interests

Not Ethanol, But Policy: Reading the Sugar Price Spiral of 2026

The Indian Express argues the sugar price spike to Rs 65 a kg is a failure of market intelligence and control-era policy, not of the ethanol blending programme.

- Retail sugar: from about **Rs 45 to Rs 65 per kg** within a month, a rise of nearly **45 per cent**
- Gross production: **30.9 million tonnes**
- Initial projection at start of crushing in November: **34.4 million tonnes**
- Shortfall: about **3.5 million tonnes**
- Sugar diverted to ethanol: about **3 million tonnes**, roughly **one-tenth** of production
- Diversion in the four preceding sugar years: **3.5, 2.4, 4.3 and 3.6 million tonnes**
- **Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966**: basis of the **Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP)**, fixed by the Centre on **CACP** recommendation
- **Essential Commodities Act, 1955**: statutory basis for stock limits



Full article

SYLLABUS **GS3** · Issues of buffer stocks and food security

The Chemist Who Refused to Stay in the Lab: Prafulla Chandra Ray and Swadeshi Science

Mint revisits Prafulla Chandra Ray, who held that scientific freedom meant manufacturing what science made possible, and built Bengal Chemical to prove Indians could.

- Born **2 August 1861**, Raruli-Katipara, Jessore district, undivided Bengal (now in Bangladesh)
- Died **16 June 1944**, Calcutta
- Educated at **Presidency College**, Calcutta; **Gilchrist Prize Scholarship, 1882**
- **University of Edinburgh**: **BSc 1885, DSc 1887**
- Honours: **Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire (CIE), 1912; Knight Bachelor, 1919**
- **1902 and 1909**: *A History of Hindu Chemistry*, volumes I and II
- **Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS)**, founded **1876** by **Mahendra Lal Sircar**, where **C. V. Raman** later worked
- **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), 1942**, with **Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar** as first Director



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SYLLABUS **GS1** · Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century

Unkind Cuts: The SIR and the Vanishing Voter in Telangana and Karnataka

The Hindu argues the Special Intensive Revision has deleted a fifth of electors in Telangana and Karnataka, and that ECI opacity makes the scale impossible to audit.

- Telangana: approximately **22 per cent** of electors deleted
- Karnataka: approximately **19.5 per cent** of electors deleted
- **Five** Bengaluru constituencies: more than **50 per cent** of electors deleted
- **Article 324**: superintendence, direction and control of elections and of the preparation of electoral rolls, vested in the ECI
- **Article 325**: no person to be excluded from the roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex
- **Article 326**: adult suffrage as the basis of elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies
- **Representation of the People Act, 1951: Section 62**: only a person whose name is on the roll may vote
- Incumbent CEC: **Gyanesh Kumar**, the 26th CEC, in office **since 2025**, sworn in on **19 February 2025**



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SYLLABUS **GS2** · Constitutional bodies, their powers, functions and responsibilities

Five Years of the Islamic Emirate: Afghanistan Still at a Fork in the Road

The Hindu assesses five years of Taliban rule as a binary of security gains and social regression, and asks what a durable transition would require.

- **April 1978**: Saur Revolution; **December 1979**: Soviet intervention
- **1989**: Soviet withdrawal; civil war follows
- **1996 to 2001**: first Islamic Emirate (IEA 1.0), recognised by only three states
- **March 2001**: destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas
- **11 September 2001**: al-Qaeda attacks; US intervention follows
- **15 August 2021** (historical): Taliban enter Kabul; IEA 2.0 begins
- **August 2026**: five years completed
- **United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)**



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SYLLABUS **GS2** · India and its neighbourhood