



SAMARTHYA IAS · AHMEDABAD

DAILY UPSC COMPANION

Samarthya Current Affairs

Prelims facts · Mains frameworks · Practice MCQs

27 | **September 2026**
SUNDAY

8
TOPICS

13
STORIES

5
MCQS

Your Complete UPSC Current Affairs Companion

5 Things You Must Know

01**GS PAPER II - POLITY & GOVERNANCE**

Election Commission stops physical hearings for voters and initiates fresh enrolment drive

Electoral Governance and Institutional Collegiality of Constitutional Bodies

02**GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Russia reaffirms support for India's permanent seat in expanded UN Security Council

Global Governance Reforms and UN Security Council Expansion

03**GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & ENERGY SECURITY**

United States rejects Iranian seven-day peace roadmap for ending war and reopening Strait of Hormuz

Strategic Conflict Dynamics in West Asia and Energy Security

04**GS PAPER II - HEALTH, GOVERNANCE & SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Public health experts urge targeted interventions to tackle hidden hunger and childhood malnutrition

Public Health Challenges: Combating Hidden Hunger and Neurodegenerative Diseases

05**GS PAPER III - ENVIRONMENT & BIODIVERSITY**

Marine biologists discover specialized deep-sea 'zombie worms' feeding on sunken whale bones

Deep-Sea Marine Biodiversity and Oceanic Carbon Cycling

Topic Index

#	CATEGORY	TOPIC	STORIES
01	GS PAPER II - POLITY & GOVERNANCE	Electoral Governance and Institutional Collegiality of Constitutional Bodies	2
02	GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	Global Governance Reforms and UN Security Council Expansion	2
03	GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & ENERGY SECURITY	Strategic Conflict Dynamics in West Asia and Energy Security	1
04	GS PAPER II - HEALTH, GOVERNANCE & SOCIAL JUSTICE	Public Health Challenges: Combating Hidden Hunger and Neurodegenerative Diseases	2
05	GS PAPER III - ENVIRONMENT & BIODIVERSITY	Deep-Sea Marine Biodiversity and Oceanic Carbon Cycling	1
06	GS PAPER III - DISASTER MANAGEMENT & ENVIRONMENT	Climate Vulnerability and Extreme Weather Preparedness in Northern India	1
07	GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & INDIAN DIASPORA	International Migration Dynamics and Consular Services Bottlenecks	2
08	GS PAPER II & GENERAL AWARENESS - SPORTS GOVERNANCE	Asian Games 2026: India's Sporting Performance and Sports Governance	2

Electoral Governance and Institutional Collegiality of Constitutional Bodies



STORY 1 The Hindu

Election Commission stops physical hearings for voters and initiates fresh enrolment drive

The Election Commission of India announced the complete cessation of physical hearings for unmapped voters and those with logical discrepancies during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision exercise.

Issued by the Election Commission in New Delhi, the regulatory directives apply to voter roll revisions in states including Delhi, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh.

Form 6 declarations are made mandatory solely during the ongoing revision, exempting all subsequent fresh voter registration applicants from submitting additional declarations following the SIR.

The regulatory announcement follows widespread public administrative concerns over voter verification hurdles, seeking to streamline electoral roll cleanup and eliminate unnecessary harassment of legitimate citizens.

Directly relevant to GS Paper II under electoral reforms, constitutional functioning of the Election Commission of India, statutory voting rights, and transparent administrative procedures.



STORY 2 The Hindu

Supreme Court jurisprudence warns against concentration of executive authority in Chief Election Commissioner

Historical Supreme Court judgments warned that treating the Chief Election Commissioner as superior to Election Commissioners risks rendering the multi-member constitutional body non-

functional or ornamental.

Delivered by the Supreme Court bench in New Delhi, the legal jurisprudence interprets Article 324 governing the multi-member composition of the Election Commission of India.

Under Article 324, decision-making authority within the Election Commission is shared equally among the Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners through consensus or majority.

Recent internal procedural disagreements within the poll panel re-ignited institutional debates regarding statutory collegiality, equal voting powers, and executive influence over constitutional functionaries.

Directly applicable to GS Paper II syllabus topics covering constitutional bodies, separation of powers, executive accountability, and judicial interpretation of electoral governance.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Analysis of constitutional safeguards under Article 324, administrative transparency during voter list revisions, and Supreme Court directives on collegial decision-making within multi-member constitutional bodies.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Article 324 of the Indian Constitution vests the superintendence, direction, and control of elections in the Election Commission of India.
- Form 6 under ECI guidelines is used specifically for the fresh registration and inclusion of eligible citizens in the electoral roll.
- The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) is a comprehensive administrative audit conducted by the ECI to clean and update voter registries.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: The Election Commission of India (ECI) relies on multi-member consensus and procedural transparency to safeguard democratic mandates and voter access.

DIMENSIONS

- **Institutional Collegiality vs Executive Hegemony:** Ensuring equal decision-making authority among the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners as mandated by judicial rulings.
- **Administrative Procedural Fairness:** Transitioning from physical hearings to systematic digital enrolment drives to prevent voter disenfranchisement during roll revisions.
- **Public Trust and Accountability:** Balancing automated data verification with ground-level transparency to maintain faith in democratic electoral processes.

Way forward: Codify multi-member consensus protocols in ECI statutory rules, establish transparent grievance redressal mechanisms during voter revisions, and enact statutory guidelines for panel appointments.

PYQ LINK

Discuss the role of the Election Commission of India in conducting free and fair elections and evaluate the need for structural reforms in its functioning.

KEY TERMS

Special Intensive Revision (SIR)

Article 324

Collegiality

Form 6

Chief Election Commissioner

Discretionary Powers

ACTS & ARTICLES

Article 324 of the Constitution

Representation of the People Act, 1950

Representation of the People Act, 1951

Election Commissioners (Conditions of Service) Act, 1991

02

GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Global Governance Reforms and UN Security Council Expansion

STORY 1 [Google News](#)

Russia reaffirms support for India's permanent seat in expanded UN Security Council

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov explicitly reaffirmed Moscow's full backing for India securing a permanent seat in an expanded United Nations Security Council.

Statement delivered during the high-level general debate at the UN General Assembly session in New York, addressing international delegates and diplomatic representatives.

India has previously served eight terms as an elected non-permanent member of the 15-member Security Council and actively seeks expansion of permanent membership.

The endorsement underscores durable strategic partnership between Moscow and New Delhi, reflecting growing global consensus on giving developing powers greater multilateral representation.

Relevant to GS Paper II foreign policy topics including UN Security Council restructuring, global governance reform, and India's diplomatic position in multilateral forums.

STORY 2 [Google News](#)

External Affairs Minister addresses UNGA highlighting economic burdens on neutral developing nations

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar invoked Prime Minister Modi's vision at the UN General Assembly, warning that neutral nations far from conflict zones are penalized.

Address delivered at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, targeting global policymakers, international diplomatic delegations, and multilateral governance bodies.

Global food, fertilizer, and energy supply disruptions severely burden over 100 developing economies that bear no direct responsibility for originating geopolitical military conflicts.

The statement critiqued how unilateral trade sanctions and protracted warfare aggravate macroeconomic distress, global debt crises, and food insecurity across the Global South.

Directly relates to GS Paper II syllabus covering multilateral institutions, foreign policy management, Global South diplomacy, and economic impacts of international conflicts.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Examination of institutional paralysis in multilateral organizations, the diplomatic push for UNSC expansion, and the economic fallout of foreign conflicts on neutral developing nations.

PRELIMS FACTS

- The UN Security Council consists of 5 permanent members with veto power and 10 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly.
- Article 108 of the UN Charter dictates that amendments to the Charter require approval by two-thirds of UN General Assembly members, including all P5 permanent members.
- India is a key participant in the G4 alliance alongside Brazil, Germany, and Japan, advocating for permanent seats in an expanded UN Security Council.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Structural reform of the United Nations Security Council is vital to restore multilateral credibility and secure equitable representation for developing economies amidst global crises.

DIMENSIONS

- **Geopolitical Support vs Veto Deadlocks:** Endorsements from major powers like Russia reinforce India's credentials while highlighting structural gridlock among permanent members.
- **Economic Spillovers on Non-Combatants:** Conflict-driven supply chain disruptions in energy and agriculture disproportionately penalize neutral nations in the Global South.
- **Institutional Paralysis of Multilateralism:** Inability of current global governance frameworks to mediate regional wars underscores the necessity for democratic structural overhaul.

Way forward: Fast-track Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) at the UN, build broader cross-regional alliances among G4 and African Union nations, and introduce text-based negotiations.

PYQ LINK

Critically examine the need for restructuring the UN Security Council to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities, with special focus on India's claim for permanent membership.

KEY TERMS

UNSC Reform

P5 Consensus

Global South

Multilateralism

UN General Assembly

Strategic Autonomy

ACTS & ARTICLES

03

GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & ENERGY SECURITY

Strategic Conflict Dynamics in West Asia and Energy Security

STORY 1 Google News

United States rejects Iranian seven-day peace roadmap for ending war and reopening Strait of Hormuz

United States political leadership officially rejected a seven-day diplomatic roadmap submitted by Iran intended to de-escalate regional hostilities and reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

Diplomatic impasse taking place in West Asia, involving key policy decisions in Washington and Tehran alongside military maritime monitors in the Persian Gulf.

Approximately 20 million barrels of petroleum liquids pass through the narrow Strait of Hormuz daily, representing nearly 20 percent of global crude consumption.

Continued military standoff and failure of diplomatic proposals elevate global oil price volatility, driving up maritime insurance premiums and freight costs along critical trade routes.

Highly relevant to GS Paper II international relations topics including West Asian geopolitics, global energy security, and protection of critical maritime trade chokepoints.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Evaluation of West Asian conflict escalations on critical ocean chokepoints, international maritime transit, global petroleum price stability, and India's energy import reliance.

PRELIMS FACTS

- The Strait of Hormuz connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea, functioning as a vital petroleum trade corridor.
- Roughly 20% to 30% of global total petroleum liquid consumption transits through the Strait of Hormuz daily.
- India imports over 80% of its crude oil requirements, relying heavily on stable maritime transit through Persian Gulf sea lanes.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Diplomatic deadlocks in West Asia heighten military risks around critical maritime transit corridors, threatening international economic stability and national energy security.

DIMENSIONS

- **Vulnerability of Energy Chokepoints:** Threats to the Strait of Hormuz endanger crude oil and LNG supplies, sharply elevating maritime insurance and freight costs.
- **Diplomatic Impasse and Regional Volatility:** Rejection of ceasefire roadmaps prolongs asymmetric conflicts and stalls multilateral de-escalation efforts.
- **Economic Consequences for Import-Dependent Nations:** Rises in crude import bills widen current account deficits and trigger domestic inflationary pressures.

Way forward: Diversify crude oil import sources across regions, expand Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPRs), and deepen maritime diplomatic engagement to secure key sea lanes.

PYQ LINK

The Strait of Hormuz remains a critical chokepoint for global oil supply. Analyze the geopolitical and economic consequences of conflict in West Asia on India's energy security.

KEY TERMS

Strait of Hormuz

Maritime Chokepoints

Energy Security

Diplomatic Roadmap

Escalation Dynamics

ACTS & ARTICLES

UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) Article 37

Foreign Trade Policy Guidelines

Integrated Energy Policy Framework

04

GS PAPER II - HEALTH, GOVERNANCE & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Public Health Challenges: Combating Hidden Hunger and Neurodegenerative Diseases

STORY 1 Google News

Public health experts urge targeted interventions to tackle hidden hunger and childhood malnutrition

Public health and nutritional experts emphasized urgent structural interventions to combat hidden hunger and micronutrient deficiencies that impair early childhood physical and cognitive growth.

Specialized health report published across national media assessing childhood malnutrition patterns across rural and urban vulnerable populations in Indian states.

Over 50 percent of pregnant women and young children in India suffer from anemia and micronutrient deficiencies despite receiving adequate dietary calorie intake.

While acute physical stunting has gradually declined, persistent micronutrient gaps hinder cognitive potential, reducing long-term economic productivity and increasing national public health burdens.

Directly applicable to GS Paper II social sector topics including healthcare interventions, eradication of hidden hunger, child development, and human capital formation.

Early diagnosis and public awareness highlighted as key priorities on World Alzheimer's Day

Medical specialists and geriatric health advocates highlighted early diagnostic screening for dementia as essential to improving clinical management and patient quality of life.

Awareness initiatives launched across healthcare institutions on World Alzheimer's Day in Manipur and extended healthcare networks throughout the North-Eastern region.

Dementia currently affects an estimated 8.8 million senior citizens in India, with patient numbers projected to double by 2050 due to rapid demographic aging.

Inadequate diagnostic facilities outside major metropolitan centers lead to delayed clinical detection, placing heavy financial and emotional burdens on informal family caregivers.

Relevant to GS Paper II topics covering public health management, welfare schemes for senior citizens, non-communicable disease policy, and social care infrastructure.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Assessment of dual public health challenges in India: tackling chronic micronutrient malnutrition among youth and expanding diagnostic healthcare infrastructure for an aging population.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Hidden hunger refers to micronutrient deficiency where calorie intake is sufficient, but diets lack critical vitamins and essential minerals.
- Alzheimer's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder leading to cognitive impairment, memory loss, and loss of functional independence.
- World Alzheimer's Day is observed globally on September 21 to generate awareness and reduce societal stigma regarding dementia.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Addressing maternal-child micronutrient deficits alongside expanding geriatric neurological care is essential to strengthen public health resilience and preserve human capital.

DIMENSIONS

- **Impact of Hidden Hunger on Human Capital:** Micronutrient shortfalls hinder childhood cognitive growth and lower long-term economic productivity.
- **Geriatric Health Burden and Care Gaps:** Rapid demographic aging elevates dementia prevalence, exposing gaps in early diagnostic facilities and caregiver support.
- **Inter-Ministerial Policy Convergence:** Integrating dietary fortification under POSHAN 2.0 with primary healthcare infrastructure for lifecycle health delivery.

Way forward: Scale up mandatory food fortification of staple grains, establish dedicated district memory clinics under NPHCE, and empower Anganwadi workers for community monitoring.

Micro-nutrient deficiency, also known as 'hidden hunger', is a major threat to human capital formation in India. Analyze its causes and suggest measures to eliminate it.

KEY TERMS

Hidden Hunger

Micronutrient Malnutrition

Stunting and Wasting

Dementia

Geriatric Health

POSHAN Abhiyaan

ACTS & ARTICLES

Article 47 of the Constitution

National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013

Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007

05

GS PAPER III - ENVIRONMENT & BIODIVERSITY

Deep-Sea Marine Biodiversity and Oceanic Carbon Cycling

STORY 1

Google News

Marine biologists discover specialized deep-sea 'zombie worms' feeding on sunken whale bones

Marine biologists discovered specialized deep-sea Osedax worms ('zombie worms') that secrete bone-dissolving acids to consume nutrient-rich whale skeletons lying on the abyssal seafloor.

Scientific exploration conducted in deep-ocean benthic ecosystems using advanced remotely operated underwater vehicles during oceanographic research expeditions.

A single female Osedax worm can host up to 100 microscopic dwarf males living internally within its body tissue for reproductive functions.

Lacking mouth structures and digestive tracts, Osedax rely on specialized endosymbiotic bacteria to breakdown lipids, serving as key drivers of abyssal ocean carbon recycling.

Directly relates to GS Paper III syllabus topics involving deep-sea marine biodiversity, extreme ecosystem adaptations, scientific oceanography discoveries, and biological carbon cycles.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Understanding specialized benthic marine ecosystems, unique adaptations of deep-sea detritivores, biological carbon cycling, and risks from deep-sea mineral exploration.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Osedax, commonly called 'zombie worms', are specialized deep-sea polychaetes that lack mouths and guts, relying on acid secretions and endosymbiotic bacteria.
- A 'whale fall' creates a nutrient-rich benthic ecosystem in the abyssal zone that supports specialized marine organisms for decades.

- Osedax exhibit extreme sexual dimorphism, where microscopic dwarf males reside inside the body structure of the female.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Discoveries of specialized benthic organisms like Osedax shed light on essential nutrient recycling mechanisms and extreme biological adaptations operating in aphotic oceanic zones.

DIMENSIONS

- **Benthic Carbon and Nutrient Cycling:** Bone-eating detritivores process organic carbon trapped in large marine skeletons, sustaining abyssal food webs.
- **Extreme Evolutionary Adaptations:** Symbiotic interactions between marine invertebrates and lipid-degrading bacteria showcase unique biodiversity mechanisms.
- **Threats from Seabed Exploitation:** Deep-sea mining and polymetallic nodule extraction risk disrupting fragile benthic communities before they are fully documented.

Way forward: Expand Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) under the High Seas Biodiversity (BBNJ) Treaty, fund non-invasive marine research, and enforce strict environmental impact norms.

PYQ LINK

Discuss the significance of deep-sea ecosystems and the impact of ocean exploration on understanding marine biodiversity.

KEY TERMS

Osedax (Zombie Worms)

Benthic Zone

Whale Falls

Heterotrophic Ecosystems

Nutrient Cycling

Deep-Sea Ecology

ACTS & ARTICLES

UNCLOS Seabed Mining Provisions

High Seas Biodiversity Treaty (BBNJ)

Biological Diversity Act, 2002

06

GS PAPER III - DISASTER MANAGEMENT & ENVIRONMENT

Climate Vulnerability and Extreme Weather Preparedness in Northern India

STORY 1 [Google News](#)

Heavy downpours and thunderstorms in Uttar Pradesh claim six lives and damage structural property

Severe rainfall accompanied by lightning strikes killed six persons and severely damaged over 100 residential structures across multiple districts in Uttar Pradesh.

Affected regions across central and eastern Uttar Pradesh, monitored by state disaster management authorities and the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

Over 100 houses were partially or fully damaged, triggering emergency relief allocations and temporary displacement of families.

Late-monsoon convective activity has caused repeated flash floods and structural collapses, highlighting infrastructural vulnerabilities in rural and semi-urban settlements.

Directly relevant to GS Paper III topics involving disaster preparedness, climate change adaptation, monsoonal anomalies, and structural risk mitigation.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Analysis of shifting monsoonal precipitation patterns, extreme convective weather events, rural structural vulnerabilities, and disaster risk reduction mechanisms.

PRELIMS FACTS

- Late-monsoon heavy precipitation in Northern India is frequently caused by the interaction of monsoons with incoming mid-latitude Western Disturbances.
- The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), chaired by the Prime Minister, formulates policy guidelines for national disaster risk mitigation.
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030) highlights the creation of disaster-resilient infrastructure and enhanced emergency response capabilities.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Unseasonal heavy downpours and severe thunderstorms underline growing climate vulnerabilities, demanding resilient infrastructure planning and rapid relief deployment.

DIMENSIONS

- **Monsoonal Shifts and Extreme Events:** Changing precipitation intensity increases localized urban flooding, flash landslides, and rural property destruction.
- **Vulnerability of Rural Housing:** Inadequate storm drainage and fragile kutcha structures magnify life and livelihood losses during extreme weather.
- **Early Warning and Disaster Readiness:** Deploying Doppler radar networks and real-time community alerts is critical to lowering weather-related casualties.

Way forward: Implement disaster-resilient building codes under PMAY-G, expand automated weather networks, and integrate climate adaptation into local development plans.

PYQ LINK

Identify the high-risk disaster zones in India due to extreme rainfall events and evaluate the effectiveness of early warning systems in mitigating damages.

KEY TERMS

Western Disturbances

Monsoon Depressions

Flood Early Warning Systems (FLEWS)

Urban Resilience

Disaster Management Act 2005

ACTS & ARTICLES

07

GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & INDIAN DIASPORA

International Migration Dynamics and Consular Services Bottlenecks



STORY 1 Times of India

US visitor visa interview appointment wait times exceed 11 months in Hyderabad and Mumbai

Official US State Department visa data revealed severe appointment wait times for Indian B-1/B-2 visitor visa applicants, stretching up to one year in key consulates.

Consular operations across India, with longest appointment backlogs recorded in Hyderabad (12 months), Mumbai (11.5 months), New Delhi (10 months), and Chennai.

Hyderabad recorded the longest average B-1/B-2 appointment delay of 11.5 months, whereas student visa (F-1) interview appointments maintained significantly shorter processing periods.

Post-pandemic processing bottlenecks and elevated demand for transnational travel create friction for Indian business executives, academic researchers, and families visiting relatives abroad.

Applies to GS Paper II syllabus topics covering Indian diaspora mobility, bilateral relations with the United States, consular service delivery, and transnational migration dynamics.



Indian-origin woman targeted in theft in Canada highlighting diaspora safety concerns

A 78-year-old Indian-origin woman was robbed of high-value gold jewelry through an elaborate physical distraction scheme while taking an evening neighborhood walk in Canada.

Crime occurred in a suburban neighborhood of Brampton, Ontario, targeting a non-English speaking elderly resident who was approached by an unidentified perpetrator.

Jewelry estimated at \$20,000 in value was stolen after the suspect placed counterfeit jewelry on the victim while surreptitiously unclasping genuine gold necklaces.

Rising incidents of targeted suburban crime against elderly diaspora members have raised major community safety concerns, prompting calls for enhanced local policing and consular guidance.

Relates to GS Paper II topics regarding welfare and security of the Indian diaspora abroad, human security, consular safety advisories, and international civil protection.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Examination of transnational mobility constraints, consular processing delays, Indian diaspora security abroad, and economic implications for global services export.

PRELIMS FACTS

- B-1/B-2 visas are non-immigrant visas issued by the United States for temporary business (B-1) or tourism and medical care (B-2).
- Consular processing times and visa issuance rules are governed under domestic immigration statutes and bilateral consular agreements.
- The Indian diaspora in North America represents one of the largest source communities for technology talent and foreign inward remittances.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: Consular processing backlogs and security concerns in major destination countries restrict human mobility and require dedicated bilateral diplomatic engagement.

DIMENSIONS

- **Consular Processing Delays:** Prolonged wait times stretching to nearly a year for non-immigrant visas create friction for business travel, academia, and family reunions.
- **Diaspora Safety and Protection:** Increasing targeted suburban crime against vulnerable diaspora members underlines the need for stronger local law enforcement support.
- **Impact on Services and Economic Exchange:** Delays in global visa issuance impede professional mobility in technology, healthcare, and trade sectors.

Way forward: Establish bilateral consular working groups to accelerate visa processing, expand interview waiver programs, and strengthen embassy emergency helplines.

The Indian diaspora plays a key role in foreign policy and economic growth. Analyze the institutional challenges faced by Indians abroad in consular access and cross-border mobility.

KEY TERMS

B1/B2 Visas

Consular Backlogs

Diaspora Vulnerabilities

Bilateral Migration Agreements

Transnational Mobility

ACTS & ARTICLES

Passports Act, 1967

Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963

Emigration Act, 1983

08

GS PAPER II & GENERAL AWARENESS - SPORTS GOVERNANCE

Asian Games 2026: India's Sporting Performance and Sports Governance



STORY 1

The Hindu

Sawan Barwal wins historic silver in men's marathon at Asian Games 2026

Distance runner Sawan Barwal secured a historic silver medal in the men's marathon at the 2026 Asian Games, breaking his national record in Japan.

Athletic event held in Nagoya, Japan, representing a standout achievement for the Indian contingent during the 20th edition of the Asian Games.

Sawan Barwal ended a 41-year national medal drought in the men's marathon; teammate Prachi Choudhary won bronze in the women's 400m sprint.

The marathon podium finish highlights substantial progress in national endurance athletics achieved through structured coaching, scientific sports monitoring, and international training exposures.

Relevant to GS Paper II topics including national sports policy evaluation, institutional support for athletic excellence, schemes like TOPS, and international sporting governance.



STORY 2 The Hindu

Indian women's kabaddi team defeats Iran to retain Asian Games gold medal

The Indian women's kabaddi team captured its fourth Asian Games gold medal after securing a thrilling 37-34 victory against Iran in the finals.

Match played in Tokai City, Japan, solidifying India's traditional dominance in Asian Games kabaddi competitions across both men's and women's divisions.

India secured the gold medal with a 37-34 scoreline, winning gold in four out of five Asian Games editions since women's kabaddi was introduced.

The victory demonstrates India's strategic mastery over traditional contact sports, proving the efficacy of rigorous team preparation and mental resilience under high-pressure final conditions.

Directly relates to GS Paper II topics covering sports governance, promotion of indigenous sports, gender inclusivity in athletics, and national achievement on international platforms.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Evaluation of national sports policy frameworks, target athletic funding schemes (TOPS), gender empowerment through sports, and indigenous sports promotion.

PRELIMS FACTS

- The 20th Asian Games in 2026 are held across the Aichi-Nagoya prefecture in Japan.
- Sawan Barwal shattered the national record in the men's marathon to end a 41-year medal drought for India in the discipline at the Asian Games.
- The Indian women's kabaddi team won its fourth Asian Games gold medal by defeating Iran in the final match.

MAINS FRAMEWORK

Intro: India's landmark performances at the 2026 Asian Games reflect the positive outcomes of structured state support under schemes like TOPS and Khelo India.

DIMENSIONS

- **Targeted Support under TOPS:** Financial backing, foreign exposure, and sports science integration have expanded India's podium footprint in track and field.
- **Diversification Beyond Traditional Strongholds:** Historic medals in marathon, shooting, and squash demonstrate broad-based athletic progress across disciplines.

- **Gender Representation and Youth Inclusivity:** Strong performances by female athletes promote gender equality and inspire grassroots sports participation.

Way forward: Strengthen sports infrastructure at district levels through Khelo India, institutionalize sports biomechanics centers, and enforce transparent sports governance.

PYQ LINK

Discuss the objectives and impact of the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) in improving India's medal tally at international multi-sport events.

KEY TERMS

Asian Games 2026

Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)

National Sports Development Code

Kabaddi

Athletics

ACTS & ARTICLES

National Sports Development Code of India, 2011

Khelo India Scheme

Article 51A(j) of the Constitution



Practice MCQs (UPSC Prelims)

Attempt these questions on your own first. The answer key is on the next page.

GS PAPER II - POLITY

Electoral Governance and Institutional Collegiality of Constitutional Bodies

Supreme Court jurisprudence warns against concentration of executive authority in Chief Election Commissioner

Q1. With reference to the Election Commission of India (ECI), consider the following statements: 1. The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) enjoys overarching veto power over decision-making compared to other Election Commissioners. 2. The Constitution of India under Article 324 provides for the superintendence, direction, and control of elections in the ECI. 3. Form 6 is used by citizens specifically for the fresh registration and inclusion of names in the electoral roll. Which of the statements given above are correct?

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| A. 1 and 2 only | B. 2 and 3 only |
| C. 1 and 3 only | D. 1, 2 and 3 |

GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Global Governance Reforms and UN Security Council Expansion

Russia reaffirms support for India's permanent seat in expanded UN Security Council

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and its reform mechanism: 1. Amendments to the UN Charter require approval and ratification by two-thirds of the UN General Assembly members, including all five permanent members. 2. The non-permanent members of the Security Council are elected by the General Assembly for a term of three years. 3. India is a member of the G4 grouping that advocates for permanent seats on an expanded UN Security Council. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| A. 1 and 3 only | B. 2 only |
| C. 1 and 2 only | D. 1, 2 and 3 |

GS PAPER II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Strategic Conflict Dynamics in West Asia and Energy Security

United States rejects Iranian seven-day peace roadmap for ending war and reopening Strait of Hormuz

Q3. The Strait of Hormuz connects which of the following bodies of water?

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. Red Sea and Gulf of Aden | B. Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman |
| C. Black Sea and Sea of Marmara | D. Gulf of Aqaba and Red Sea |

GS PAPER III - ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

Deep-Sea Marine Biodiversity and Oceanic Carbon Cycling

Marine biologists discover specialized deep-sea 'zombie worms' feeding on sunken whale bones

Q4. With reference to the deep-sea organisms known as 'Osedax' (zombie worms), consider the following statements: 1. They are specialized deep-sea marine worms that feed on lipid-rich bones of sunken whale carcasses. 2. They possess a fully developed digestive system and sharp jaws to crush ocean floor detritus. 3. They display extreme sexual dimorphism where microscopic dwarf males live inside the female. Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 1 and 3 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

GS PAPER II & GENERAL AWARENESS

Asian Games 2026: India's Sporting Performance and Sports Governance

Sawan Barwal wins historic silver in men's marathon at Asian Games 2026

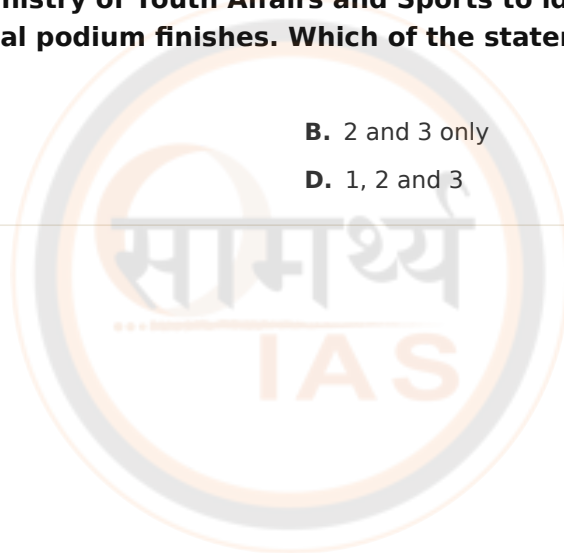
Q5. Consider the following statements regarding the 2026 Asian Games and India's historical performance: 1. The 2026 Asian Games are hosted in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. 2. Sawan Barwal won India's silver medal in the men's marathon, ending a multi-decade medal drought in the event. 3. The Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) was launched by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to identify and groom elite athletes for international podium finishes. Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3



Answer Key — Practice MCQs

Quick reference and explanations for the practice questions on the previous page.

Q1: B**Q2: A****Q3: B****Q4: B****Q5: D**

Q1 Option B · 2 and 3 only

Statement 1 is incorrect: Supreme Court jurisprudence establishes that the ECI operates as a multi-member collegial body where the CEC and Election Commissioners hold equal decision-making authority. Statement 2 is correct: Article 324 vests the superintendence, direction, and control of elections in the ECI. Statement 3 is correct: Form 6 is the statutory form used for fresh voter enrolment.

Q2 Option A · 1 and 3 only

Statement 1 is correct: Under Article 108 of the UN Charter, amendments require a two-thirds vote in the UNGA and ratification by two-thirds of UN members, including all permanent members (P5). Statement 2 is incorrect: Non-permanent members are elected for a term of two years. Statement 3 is correct: India, Brazil, Germany, and Japan form the G4 alliance supporting each other's bids for permanent UNSC seats.

Q3 Option B · Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman

The Strait of Hormuz is a crucial maritime chokepoint situated between Iran and Oman/UAE that connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.

Q4 Option B · 1 and 3 only

Statement 1 is correct: Osedax worms specialize in consuming lipid and collagen reserves from whale skeletons on the seabed. Statement 2 is incorrect: Osedax lack a mouth and digestive tract; they rely on acid secretion and endosymbiotic bacteria. Statement 3 is correct: Osedax exhibit extreme sexual dimorphism, with tiny dwarf males residing inside the female's tube structure.

Q5 Option D · 1, 2 and 3

All three statements are correct: The 20th Asian Games (2026) take place in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. Sawan Barwal shattered his national record to win silver in the marathon, ending a 41-year medal drought. TOPS is the flagship program designed to provide elite training and support to potential medal winners.