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Top Stories of The Day

- India Plans ₹45,000 Crore *Border Railway Expansion* to Strengthen Strategic Connectivity Nationwide.
- PM Modi Launches *Nasha Mukta Yuva* Campaign Against Drug Abuse Among Youth.
- Cabinet Approves Expanded *Khelo India Scheme* with ₹36,441 Crore Sports Development Outlay.
- India and Maldives Launch *Favara–UPI Corridor* for Instant Cross-Border Money Transfers.
- *Varsha Ashok Aglawe* Becomes GSI's First Woman Director General Ever.
- *Willie Walsh* Assumes Charge as IndiGo CEO, Succeeding Pieter Elbers Officially.
- Japan and United States Conduct Rare Joint *Yen-Buying Intervention* to Stabilise Markets.
- Government Introduces Bankers' *Books Evidence Bill, 2026* Recognising Digital Banking Records.
- Ramkumar Ramanathan and Vijay Sundar Prashanth Win *Bonn Open Doubles Title Together*.
- Defence Ministry Launches *Indigenous DSC A24* to Boost Indian Navy Underwater Operations.

India Plans ₹45,000 Crore Railway Expansion to Strengthen Border Connectivity



Why is it in News?

- The Government of India is planning a ₹45,000 crore railway infrastructure programme to improve connectivity along the country's borders with China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The proposed projects aim to strengthen strategic mobility, enhance border security, improve civilian connectivity, and support faster movement of defence personnel and equipment in sensitive border areas.

Key Highlights

- India is planning to invest around ₹45,000 crore in railway projects along international border regions.
- The initiative will focus on improving rail connectivity near the China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh borders.
- Several new railway lines and strategic rail links are proposed in border states.
- The projects aim to enable faster deployment of troops, military equipment, and essential supplies during emergencies.

Background

- India has been strengthening infrastructure in border areas following increased security challenges and the need for faster military mobilisation. While roads and bridges have received significant attention in recent years, expanding the railway network has become equally important to ensure efficient logistics

and all-weather connectivity in strategically sensitive regions.

Significance

- The proposed railway expansion will improve national security by enabling rapid troop mobilisation and better logistics. It will also enhance regional development, create employment opportunities, improve access to remote areas, and strengthen India's border infrastructure against emerging security challenges.

Exam Focus Points

• Project: Strategic Border Railway Expansion Programme.
• Proposed Investment: ₹45,000 crore.
• Border Countries Covered: China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.
• Objective: Strengthen border connectivity, national security, and strategic logistics.
• Major Benefits: Faster troop movement, improved supply chains, regional development, and better civilian connectivity.
• Implementing Agency: Ministry of Railways (subject to government approvals).

Political and Supreme Leadership

• Supreme Commander: President Droupadi Murmu (President of India)
• Minister of Defence: Rajnath Singh
• Defence Secretary: Rajesh Kumar Singh

Service Chiefs and Military Command

• Chief of Defence Staff (CDS): General N. S. Raja Subramani (since May 31, 2026)
• Chief of the Army Staff (COAS): General Dhiraj Seth (since June 30, 2026)

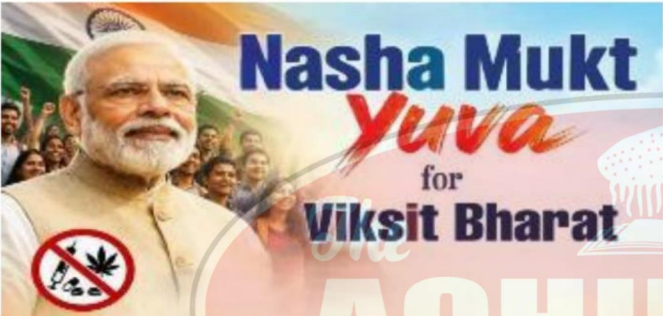
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| • Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS): Admiral Krishna Swaminathan (since June 1, 2026) |
| • Chief of the Air Staff (CAS): Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh (since September 30, 2024) |

Way Forward

- Timely execution of the proposed railway projects, along with better coordination between

the Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Defence, and border infrastructure agencies, will be essential. Integrating rail, road, and air connectivity will further strengthen India's defence preparedness and promote balanced development in border regions.

PM Modi Launches 'Nasha Mukta Yuva' Campaign to Combat Drug Abuse Among Youth



Why is it in News?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the nationwide 'Nasha Mukta Yuva' Campaign to tackle the growing problem of substance abuse among young people. The campaign aims to spread awareness, promote a drug-free lifestyle, and encourage active participation from educational institutions, communities, and government agencies in preventing drug addiction.

- | |
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| • The initiative promotes a healthy, drug-free, and responsible lifestyle among young people. |
| • It complements the Government's broader Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA). |

What is Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA)?

- | |
|---|
| • Launched: 15 August 2020. |
| • Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. |
| • Objective: To reduce drug demand through awareness, counselling, treatment, rehabilitation, and community outreach. |
| • The campaign is implemented in vulnerable districts across India with the support of educational institutions, NGOs, volunteers, and local administrations. |

Key Highlights

- | |
|--|
| • Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the 'Nasha Mukta Yuva' Campaign. |
| • The campaign aims to prevent substance abuse and drug addiction among youth. |
| • It focuses on awareness, prevention, counselling, rehabilitation, and community participation. |
| • Schools, colleges, youth organisations, NGOs, and government departments will participate in the campaign. |

Significance

- The campaign aims to reduce substance abuse among young people, improve public health, strengthen social awareness, and protect the country's demographic dividend. It also encourages community participation in creating a drug-free society.

Exam Focus Points

- | |
|---|
| • Campaign: Nasha Mukta Yuva Campaign. |
| • Launched By: Prime Minister Narendra Modi. |
| • Objective: Prevent substance abuse among youth. |

• Target Group: Youth and students.
• Focus Areas: Awareness, prevention, counselling, rehabilitation, and community participation.
• Related Initiative: Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA).
• NMBA Launched: 15 August 2020.
• Nodal Ministry (NMBA): Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Major Government Initiatives Against Drug Abuse and Substance Addiction in India

Initiative	Launched By / Ministry	Objective
Nasha Mukta Yuva Campaign (2026)	Prime Minister Narendra Modi	To prevent substance abuse among youth through awareness, counselling, rehabilitation, and community participation.
Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) (2020)	Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment	To reduce drug demand through awareness, treatment, rehabilitation, and community outreach.
MANAS National Helpline (14446 / 1-800-891-4416)	Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment	Provides counselling and

referral services for drug de-addiction and mental health support.
• National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) (2018–25) Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment Focuses on preventive education, awareness, treatment, rehabilitation, skill development, and capacity building.
• National Fund for Control of Drug Abuse (NFCDA) Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment Provides financial assistance for programmes related to drug demand reduction and rehabilitation.
• Nasha Mukh Bharat Pakhwada Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment A nationwide awareness drive involving schools, colleges, NSS, NYKS, and local communities against drug abuse.
• Drug-Free India Campaigns by NCB Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Conducts awareness campaigns, anti-drug drives, and public outreach programmes to curb drug abuse and trafficking.
• Project Sunrise (2016) Ministry of Health & Family Welfare Aims to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS among people who inject drugs, especially in North-Eastern states.

Cabinet Approves Expanded Khelo India Scheme with ₹36,441 Crore Outlay



Why is it in News?

- The Union Cabinet has approved an expanded Khelo India Scheme and enhanced Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSFs) with a combined outlay of ₹36,441 crore for the period 2026–27 to 2030–31. The move aims to

strengthen grassroots sports, identify young talent, improve sports infrastructure, and prepare athletes for international competitions.

Key Highlights

- Total outlay: ₹36,441 crore for 2026–27 to 2030–31.
- Covers the expanded Khelo India Scheme and Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSFs).
- Focus on grassroots talent identification, athlete development, coaching, and sports infrastructure.

- Aims to create a clear pathway for athletes from the grassroots to elite international competitions.

About Khelo India

- Launched: 2017–18.
- Ministry: Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- Objective: Promote sports culture, identify young talent, develop sports infrastructure, and improve India's performance in international competitions.
- Major events include Khelo India Youth Games, University Games, Winter Games, Para Games, Beach Games, and Tribal Games.

What are National Sports Federations (NSFs)?

- National Sports Federations are sports-specific governing bodies recognised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. They are responsible for organising national championships, selecting Indian teams, training athletes, and promoting their respective sports.

Significance

- The expanded scheme will strengthen India's sports ecosystem by improving infrastructure, coaching, athlete support, and international competitiveness. It also aligns with India's ambition to emerge as a leading sporting nation and perform better at global events.

Exam Focus Points

- Scheme: Khelo India Scheme.
- Approved By: Union Cabinet.
- Total Outlay: ₹36,441 crore.
- Implementation Period: 2026–27 to 2030–31.
- Ministry: Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- Launched: 2017–18.
- Focus: Grassroots sports, athlete development, sports infrastructure, and support to NSFs.
- Related Scheme: Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSFs).

India and Maldives Launch Favara–UPI Payment Corridor for Instant Cross-Border Money Transfers



Why is it in News?

- India and the Maldives have launched the Favara–UPI Cross-Border Payment Corridor, enabling real-time money transfers from the Maldives to UPI-enabled bank accounts in India. The initiative strengthens digital financial connectivity and deepens economic cooperation between the two countries.

Key Highlights

- The Maldives' instant payment system, Favara, has been integrated with India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
- Individuals in the Maldives can now send money instantly to UPI-linked bank accounts in India through mobile banking apps.
- The service has been launched by the Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA) in partnership with NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL).
- Bank of Maldives and Maldives Islamic Bank are the first participating banks.
- Future phases will include QR-code merchant payments and additional cross-border payment services.

What is UPI?

- The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is a real-time digital payment system developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). It enables instant bank-to-bank transfers using mobile applications and is regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

What is Favara?

- Favara is the instant payment system of the Maldives, developed to enable secure and real-time digital payments within the country.

Significance

- The Favara–UPI corridor will make remittances faster, cheaper, and more secure. It strengthens India–Maldives economic ties, promotes digital payments, supports tourism and trade, and expands the global footprint of India's UPI ecosystem.

Exam Focus Points

- Initiative: Favara–UPI Cross-Border Payment Corridor.

• Countries: India and Maldives.
• India's Payment System: Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
• Maldives' Payment System: Favara.
• Indian Partner: NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL).
• Maldivian Partner: Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA).
• First Participating Banks: Bank of Maldives and Maldives Islamic Bank.
• Objective: Enable real-time cross-border fund transfers and strengthen digital financial cooperation.

Way Forward

- Expanding the Favara–UPI corridor to include merchant payments, additional banks, and more cross-border financial services will enhance regional digital connectivity. The initiative also paves the way for broader international adoption of India's UPI platform.

Varsha Ashok Aglawe Becomes First Woman Director General of GSI in Its 176-Year History



Why is it in News?

- Varsha Ashok Aglawe has become the first woman Director General (DG) of the Geological Survey of India (GSI) in its 176-year history. Her appointment marks a historic milestone for one of India's oldest scientific organisations and reflects the growing role of women in leadership positions in the country's scientific and technical institutions.

Key Highlights

- Varsha Ashok Aglawe has been appointed as the Director General of the Geological Survey of India (GSI).
- She is the first woman to head the organisation since its establishment in 1851.
- GSI is India's premier agency for geological mapping, mineral exploration, and geoscientific research.
- Her appointment is expected to strengthen scientific research, mineral resource exploration, and sustainable management of geological resources.

About the Geological Survey of India (GSI)

- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) is one of India's oldest scientific organisations, established in 1851. It functions under the Ministry of Mines and is responsible for geological mapping, mineral exploration, geoscientific studies, natural hazard assessment, and environmental geology. GSI also provides scientific inputs for mineral policy, infrastructure development, and disaster management.

Significance

- The appointment of Varsha Ashok Aglawe is a landmark achievement for gender representation in India's scientific institutions. It is expected to inspire greater participation of women in geosciences while strengthening the country's efforts in mineral exploration, resource management, and sustainable development.

Exam Focus Points

- Person: Varsha Ashok Aglawe.

Willie Walsh Takes Charge as CEO of IndiGo



- Veteran global aviation executive Willie (William) Walsh has officially assumed charge as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of IndiGo (InterGlobe Aviation Ltd.), succeeding Pieter Elbers.
- Walsh joined the airline after completing his tenure as the Director General of the International Air Transport Association (IATA).
- Former Leadership Roles: CEO of British Airways, Aer Lingus, and International Airlines Group (IAG).

- Appointment: Director General, Geological Survey of India (GSI).
- Achievement: First woman DG in GSI's 176-year history.
- Organisation: Geological Survey of India (GSI).
- Established: 1851.
- Ministry: Ministry of Mines.
- Headquarters: Kolkata, West Bengal.
- Functions: Geological mapping, mineral exploration, geoscientific research, natural hazard assessment, and environmental geology.

Way Forward

- Strengthening research, adopting advanced geospatial technologies, promoting sustainable mineral exploration, and encouraging greater participation of women in geosciences will further enhance GSI's contribution to India's economic development and resource security.

- Focus Areas: Global expansion, operational excellence, network growth, and customer experience.

About IndiGo

- IndiGo, operated by InterGlobe Aviation Limited, is India's largest airline by market share and passenger traffic.
- Parent Company: InterGlobe Aviation Ltd.
- Founded: 2006
- Headquarters: Gurugram, Haryana

About IATA:

- The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is the global trade association representing the airline industry.
- Established: 1945

- Headquarters: Montreal (Canada) and Geneva (Switzerland)

About International Airlines Group (IAG):

- International Airlines Group (IAG) is one of the world's largest airline holding companies.
- Javier Ferrán (Chairman)
- Luis Gallego (CEO)
- Founded: 2011
- Registered office: Madrid, Spain
- Major Airlines Under IAG
- British Airways.
- Iberia.
- Aer Lingus.
- Vueling.
- LEVEL.

Major Government Initiatives

- UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik)
- Launched in 2016.
- Enhances regional air connectivity.
- Makes air travel affordable.
- National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP), 2016

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA):

- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Director General: Vir Vikram Yadav

Airports Authority of India (AAI):

- Established: 1995
- chairman: Vipin Kumar
- Headquarters: New Delhi

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

- Established: 1944 (Chicago Convention)
- Headquarters: Montreal, Canada
- Secretary General: Juan Carlos Salazar Gómez
- Council President: Toshiyuki Onuma

Exam Focus points:

- New CEO of IndiGo: Willie (William) Walsh.
- Succeeded: Pieter Elbers.
- Former Position: Director General of IATA.
- Former CEO: British Airways, Aer Lingus, and IAG.
- Airline: IndiGo (InterGlobe Aviation Ltd.).
- Headquarters of IndiGo: Gurugram.
- Global Aviation Body: IATA.
- Civil Aviation Regulator in India: DGCA.
- Airport Infrastructure Agency: Airports Authority of India (AAI).
- Related Policy: National Civil Aviation Policy, 2016.

Japan and U.S. Confirm Rare Joint Yen-Buying Intervention



- Japan and the United States have confirmed a rare coordinated intervention in the foreign

exchange market to support the Japanese yen, which had fallen to its weakest level in nearly 40 years against the U.S. dollar.

- The two countries jointly purchased yen and sold U.S. dollars to curb excessive volatility and stabilize financial markets.
- Japan also indicated that it is prepared to undertake further coordinated interventions, if necessary, to prevent disorderly movements in the exchange rate.

- This marks the first joint yen-buying intervention since 2011.

Why Was the Intervention Needed?

- The Japanese yen has weakened significantly due to:

- Large interest rate differential between the United States and Japan.
- Higher U.S. interest rates attracting global capital.
- Japan's prolonged accommodative monetary policy.
- Rising import costs, especially for fuel and food.
- Increased inflationary pressure in Japan.

- The coordinated intervention was intended to restore confidence in the currency and prevent disorderly market movements.

What is Currency Market Intervention?

- A currency market intervention is an action by a country's central bank or government to influence the value of its currency by buying or selling foreign currencies in the foreign

The intervention is important because it:

- Supports stability in global financial markets.
- Reduces pressure on Japan's economy from a weak currency.
- Helps moderate imported inflation.
- Signals close economic coordination between Japan and the U.S.
- May influence expectations regarding future Bank of Japan (BOJ) monetary policy.

Bank of Japan (BOJ):

- The Bank of Japan (BOJ) is Japan's central bank.
- Established: 1882
- Headquarters: Tokyo, Japan
- Governor: Kazuo Ueda

- The BOJ has maintained relatively low interest rates, contributing to the yen's weakness compared with the U.S. dollar.

Foreign Exchange Market (Forex):

- The Foreign Exchange (Forex) Market is the global marketplace for trading national currencies.

Features:

- Largest financial market in the world.
- Operates 24 hours a day.
- Determines exchange rates.
- Facilitates international trade and investment.
- Supports cross-border capital flows.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Exchange Rates

- Under the IMF Articles of Agreement:
- Exchange rates should generally be market-determined.
- Countries should avoid manipulating exchange rates for unfair trade advantage.
- Temporary intervention is permissible to address excessive volatility or disorderly market conditions.

Related International Groupings:

- G7 (Group of Seven)

Members:

- Canada
- France
- Germany
- Italy
- Japan
- United Kingdom
- United States

- The G7 regularly coordinates policies on global financial stability and exchange-rate issues.

- G20 Both India, Japan, and the United States are members of the G20, which promotes international economic cooperation.

Plaza Accord (1985):

- Agreement among the G5 countries.
- Signed at the Plaza Hotel, New York.
- Intended to depreciate the U.S. dollar against the Japanese yen and German Deutsche Mark.
- One of the most significant coordinated currency interventions in history.

2011 Coordinated Intervention:

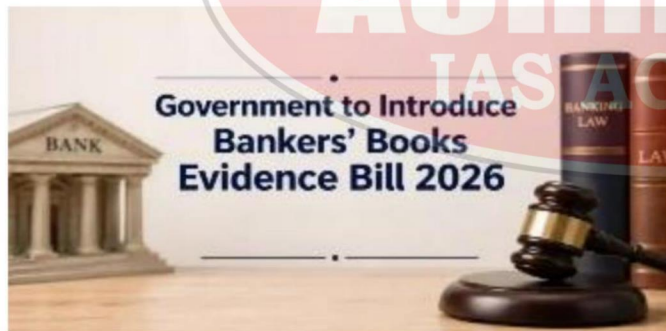
- Conducted after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.
- G7 countries jointly intervened to stabilise the yen.

- The 2026 intervention is the first coordinated yen-buying action since then.

Exam Focus Points:

• Countries: Japan and the United States.
• Action: Joint yen-buying intervention.
• Objective: Stabilise the Japanese yen.
• Reason: Excessive depreciation and market volatility.
• First Since: 2011.
• Central Bank: Bank of Japan (BOJ).
• Related Institution: International Monetary Fund (IMF).
• Related Group: G7.
• Historic Agreement: Plaza Accord (1985).

Government to Introduce Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, 2026 in Lok Sabha



- The Central Government has proposed the Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, 2026 for introduction in the Lok Sabha to replace the Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1891, a colonial-era legislation governing the admissibility of bank records as evidence in judicial proceedings.
- The proposed law seeks to modernise the legal framework by recognising digital banking records, aligning the law with contemporary banking practices, and harmonising it with the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023, which replaced the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.

- The existing Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1891 was enacted when banking transactions were maintained primarily in physical ledgers and registers. With the rapid expansion of core banking systems, internet banking, digital payments, and electronic record-keeping, the government considers it necessary to replace the colonial-era law with legislation that reflects present-day banking technology and digital evidence requirements.

The proposed Bill aims to:

• Recognise electronic banking records as valid evidence.
• Simplify the production of bank records before courts and investigative agencies.
• Reduce dependence on physical registers and paper documents.
• Harmonise banking evidence laws with the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023.
• Improve efficiency in judicial proceedings involving financial transactions.

Why is a New Law Needed?

What are Bankers' Books?

- Bankers' books refer to records maintained by banks relating to customer accounts and banking transactions.

These include:

- Account ledgers.
- Cash books.
- Day books.
- Passbooks.
- Electronic transaction records.
- Digital databases maintained by banks.

- Under the proposed law, certified electronic records are expected to receive legal recognition similar to physical records.

Importance of the Bill

The legislation is expected to:

- Support India's growing digital banking ecosystem.
- Facilitate faster disposal of banking and financial disputes.
- Improve investigation of financial crimes.
- Reduce procedural delays in courts.
- Strengthen the legal framework for electronic evidence.

Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023

- The Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 replaced the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.

Key Features:

- Gives statutory recognition to electronic and digital evidence.
- Recognises emails, digital records, SMS, server logs, and electronic documents.
- Simplifies admissibility of electronic evidence.
- Supports digital governance and e-commerce.

Digital Banking in India:

- India has witnessed rapid growth in digital financial services through initiatives such as:

- Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
- Internet Banking.
- Mobile Banking.
- Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS).
- Digital Rupee (e₹) pilot.

Related Legal Framework:

Banking Regulation Act, 1949:

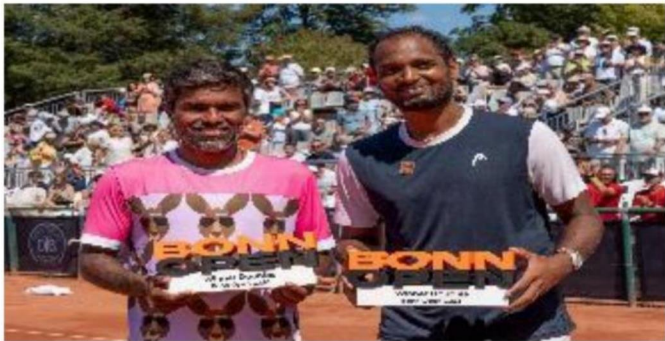
- Regulates banking companies in India.
- Empowers the RBI to supervise banks.
- Governs licensing, management, and functioning of banks.

Information Technology Act, 2000:

- Provides legal recognition to electronic records and digital signatures.
- Forms the legal foundation for electronic governance and e-commerce.

Exam Focus Points:

- Bill: Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, 2026.
- Replaces: Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1891.
- Purpose: Legal recognition of digital banking records.
- Related Law: Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023.
- Related Regulator: Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- Supporting Law: Information Technology Act, 2000.
- Sector: Digital banking and financial evidence.



- Indian tennis pair Ramkumar Ramanathan and Vijay Sundar Prashanth clinched the Bonn Open 2026 ATP Challenger doubles title in Bonn, Germany, marking another significant achievement for Indian tennis on the international circuit.
- The duo displayed excellent teamwork and consistency throughout the tournament to secure the championship, further strengthening India's presence in ATP Challenger doubles events.
- The victory is expected to improve their ATP doubles rankings and boost their prospects in upcoming ATP Tour tournaments and Grand Slam events.

Ramkumar Ramanathan:

Indian professional tennis player.
Specialises in both singles and doubles.
Has represented India in the Davis Cup.
Former ATP Tour doubles title winner.
Known for his powerful serve and attacking style.

Vijay Sundar Prashanth:

Indian doubles specialist.
Winner of multiple ATP Challenger titles.
Won his maiden ATP Tour title at the Hangzhou Open 2024.
Regular member of India's Davis Cup squad.

- Bonn Open 2026 Singles Champion: Jan Choinski (United Kingdom)

About the ATP (Association of Tennis Professionals)

Established: 1972
Headquarters: London, United Kingdom

Davis Cup:

The Davis Cup is the premier international men's team tennis championship.
Started: 1900
India has reached the Davis Cup final three times (1966, 1974, and 1987).

International Tennis Federation (ITF):

Established: 1913
Headquarters: London, United Kingdom

Exam Focus Points:

Tournament: Bonn Open 2026.
Category: ATP Challenger Tour.
Venue: Bonn, Germany.
Champions: Ramkumar Ramanathan and Vijay Sundar Prashanth.
Governing Body: ATP.
International Team Event: Davis Cup.
Global Governing Body: International Tennis Federation (ITF).
Importance: ATP Challenger tournaments award ranking points for ATP Tour qualification.

Defence Ministry Launches Indigenous Diving Support Craft (DSC A24)

- The Ministry of Defence has launched DSC A24, the fifth and final Diving Support Craft

(DSC) of the Indian Navy's indigenous Diving Support Craft project at Titagarh, Kolkata. Built by Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL) under

the 'Make in India' and Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiatives, the vessel is designed to enhance the Navy's capabilities in underwater diving operations, salvage assistance, underwater inspection, and coastal operational support.

- The induction of DSC A24 marks the successful completion of the five-vessel project and significantly strengthens India's indigenous maritime capabilities.



About DSC A24:

- DSC A24 is an indigenously designed and built catamaran-hull diving support craft developed to support the Indian Navy's underwater missions in coastal waters and harbours.

Major Features:

- Designed for diving support and underwater inspection.
- Equipped with state-of-the-art diving equipment.
- Catamaran hull for improved stability and sea-keeping.
- Approximate displacement of 380 tonnes.
- Around 30 metres in length.
- Built under the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) rules and regulations.

Roles and Capabilities:

- DSC A24 will perform a wide range of naval support missions, including:
- Underwater diving operations.
- Salvage assistance for ships and equipment.
- Underwater inspection and repair.
- Support for harbour and coastal operations.

- Assistance in search and rescue missions.
- Support for submarine-related diving tasks.
- Its induction enhances the Navy's ability to undertake complex underwater operations safely and efficiently.

Indigenous Development:

- The project reflects India's growing shipbuilding capability.

Key Facts

- Contract signed between Ministry of Defence and Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL) in February 2021.
- Hydrodynamic analysis and model testing conducted by the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL), Visakhapatnam.
- Approximately 70% indigenous content, supporting domestic defence manufacturing.
- Developed under Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiatives.

About the Indian Navy:

- Established: 26 January 1950 (Royal Indian Navy became Indian Navy)
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- Motto: "Sham No Varunah" ("May the Lord of the Oceans be Auspicious unto Us")
- Chief: Admiral Krishna Swaminathan
- Major Commands:
- Western Naval Command – Mumbai.
- Eastern Naval Command – Visakhapatnam.
- Southern Naval Command – Kochi.

Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL)

- Organisation: DRDO
- Director: Dr Abraham Varughese
- Location: Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

Functions

- Research and development of naval weapon systems.
- Underwater technologies.
- Hydrodynamic testing.
- Torpedo and sonar development.
- Built by Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), Visakhapatnam.
- Designed for deep-sea diving, submarine rescue, and underwater salvage operations.
- Incorporates over 80% indigenous content.

Indian Register of Shipping (IRS):

- The Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) is India's principal ship classification society.

- Executive Chairman: Arun Sharma
- Founded: 1975
- Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra

Functions:

- Classification and certification of ships.
- Inspection of marine structures.
- Safety and quality assurance.
- Technical standards for shipbuilding.
- Related Indigenous Naval Platforms

INS Nistar:

- India's first indigenously designed and built Diving Support Vessel (DSV).

Exam Focus Points:

- Vessel: DSC A24.
- Type: Diving Support Craft.
- Builder: Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL), Kolkata.
- Project: Fifth and final Diving Support Craft.
- Designed For: Diving, salvage, underwater inspection, and coastal operations.
- Testing Agency: Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL), Visakhapatnam.
- Classification: Indian Register of Shipping (IRS).
- Initiatives: Make in India and Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- Related Vessel: INS Nistar.

Lets Revise

- ❖ What is the estimated cost of India's proposed strategic border railway expansion programme? **₹45,000 crore.**
- ❖ What is meant by strategic railway infrastructure? **Railway infrastructure developed to support national security, defence logistics, and connectivity in strategically important areas.**
- ❖ Which campaign was recently launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to combat substance abuse among youth? **Nasha Mukta Yuva Campaign.**
- ❖ Which section of society is the main target of the Nasha Mukta Yuva Campaign? **Youth and students.**

- ❖ Which flagship programme does the Nasha Mukta Yuva Campaign complement?
Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA).
- ❖ What is the full form of NAPDDR? **National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction.**
- ❖ Which scheme has been expanded by the Union Cabinet with a total outlay of ₹36,441 crore? **Khelo India Scheme.**
- ❖ What is the total financial outlay approved for the expanded Khelo India Scheme and Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSFs)? **₹36,441 crore.**
- ❖ Which two countries have launched the Favara–UPI Cross-Border Payment Corridor?
India and the Maldives.
- ❖ Which Indian organisation partnered in launching the Favara–UPI payment corridor?
NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL).
- ❖ Which Maldivian institution partnered with NIPL for the Favara–UPI Payment corridor? **Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA).**
- ❖ Who has become the first woman Director General of the Geological Survey of India (GSI)? **Varsha Ashok Aglawe.**
- ❖ Which organisation has appointed Varsha Ashok Aglawe as its Director General?
Geological Survey of India (GSI).
- ❖ Who has taken charge as the new CEO of IndiGo? **Willie (William) Walsh.**
- ❖ Which two countries recently carried out a joint yen-buying intervention? **Japan and the United States.**
- ❖ Which colonial-era law is proposed to be replaced by the Bankers' Books Evidence Bill, 2026? **Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1891.**
- ❖ Which Indian pair won the Bonn Open 2026 ATP Challenger doubles title?
Ramkumar Ramanathan and Vijay Sundar Prashanth.
- ❖ Which company built the indigenous Diving Support Craft (DSC A24) recently launched by the Ministry of Defence? **Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL), Kolkata.**



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IMPORTANCE OF CURRENT AFFAIRS IN UPSC EXAMINATIONS

Current Affairs hold a crucial place in the preparation for the UPSC Civil Services Examination. A comprehensive understanding of recent national and international developments helps aspirants strengthen their General Studies foundation and develop a well-rounded perspective on important issues. Topics such as government policies, schemes, economy, international relations, science and technology, environment, defence, social justice, governance, reports, indices, appointments, awards, and major global events are highly relevant for both the Prelims and Mains examinations. Regular study of current affairs not only enhances factual knowledge but also improves analytical ability, critical thinking, answer-writing skills, and decision-making aptitude. Since UPSC questions often connect contemporary developments with static subjects, consistent preparation of current affairs enables aspirants to understand issues in depth and present balanced, informed, and relevant answers. It also plays an important role in Essay writing, Ethics, and the Personality Test, giving candidates a strong edge throughout the examination process.

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