CURRENT AFFAIRS — 19 NOVEMBER 2026

Thursday, 19 November 2026 • Asia/Kolkata (IST) • Prelims + Mains GS-wise digest

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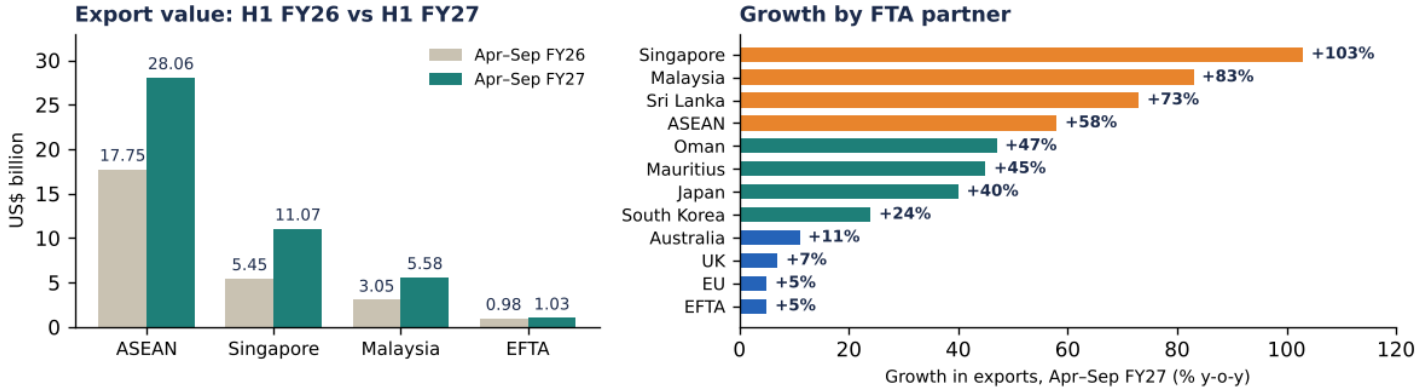
DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR UPSC CSE

TODAY AT A GLANCE — 10 THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Exports to **ASEAN** rose **58%** to **US$28.06 bn** in Apr–Sep FY27; **Singapore +103%**.
- PSBs: H1 FY27 net profit about **₹1.10 lakh crore**; FY26 record **₹1.98 lakh crore**.
- First indigenous **H5N1** chicken vaccine (**clade 2.3.2.1a**) by **ICAR-NIHSAD Bhopal** — dedication on **20 Nov**.
- Draft **NDCT Rules** amendment: antimicrobials need **Central Licensing Authority** nod first.
- **SCS Akvan** to cross between **Narsapur and Puri**, near **Gopalpur**, by noon of **20 Nov**.
- **NIA Anti-Terror Conference** opens in **New Delhi** (19–20 Nov).
- **CPI inflation** for October: **6.09%** — above RBI's **6%** upper tolerance.
- **4th India-Japan 2+2** in **Tokyo** with **Koizumi** and **Motegi**.
- India seeks an equitable **GST-2** at **COP31, Antalya**.
- **ICJ** judgment in **The Gambia v. Myanmar** (Rohingya) due today.

SECTION A • GS-III: SCIENCE & TECH, ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT & SECURITY

India's merchandise exports to FTA partners — first half of FY 2026-27



Data: official commerce figures. ASEAN total includes Singapore and Malaysia.

Fig: linked to item 1 — exports to FTA partners, April–September FY27

1. Exports to FTA partners surge in H1 FY27; ASEAN up 58%

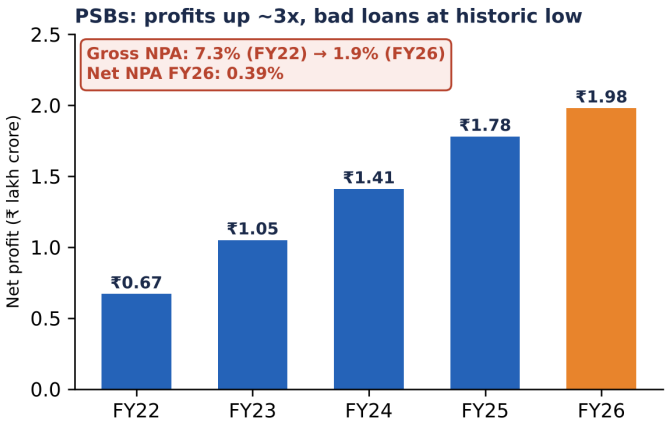
[ECONOMY] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-3**: Indian economy – external sector, trade agreements | Prelims: **ASEAN**, **CECA/CEPA/ECTA**, **EFTA-TEPA**
Context	Official commerce data for **April-September 2026-27** show sharp growth in merchandise exports to India's **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** partners, which the government presents as proof of **geographical diversification** of exports amid global tariff uncertainty.
Key Facts	■ Exports to **ASEAN** rose **58%** from **US$17.75 bn** to **US$28.06 bn**; **Singapore** alone is about **40%** of ASEAN-bound exports. ■ **Singapore +103%** (US$5.45 bn to **US$11.07 bn**); **Malaysia +83%** (US$3.05 bn to **US$5.58 bn**). ■ **Sri Lanka +73%**, **Oman +47%**, **Mauritius +45%**, **Japan +40%** (US$4.10 bn), **South Korea +24%**. ■ Slower growth to developed partners: **Australia +11%**, **UK +7%**, **EU +5%** (US$38.79 bn), **EFTA +5%** (US$1.03 bn).
Way Fwd	Turn tariff access into lasting value chains: raise **FTA utilisation** by MSMEs, use **Export Promotion Mission** support, and watch the import side so deficits with FTA partners do not widen.
Concept	An **FTA** cuts tariffs on most trade; **CECA/CEPA** also cover services and investment. Key pacts: **India-ASEAN TIGA (2010)**, **Singapore CECA (2005)**, **Korea CEPA (2010)**, **Japan CEPA (2011)**, **UAE CEPA (2022)**, **Australia ECTA (2022)**, **EFTA TEPA**, **UK CETA** (operational **15 July 2026**).

2. Public Sector Banks extend record profit run into H1 FY27

[ECONOMY] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-3**: Banking, mobilisation of resources | Prelims: **GNPA/NNPA**, **CRAR**, **4R strategy**, IBC
Context	The Finance Ministry says **PSBs** kept up strong performance in the **first half (April–September) of FY 2026-27**, with combined net profit of about **₹1.10 lakh crore**, building on the record set in FY26.
Key Facts	■ FY26: record net profit **₹1.98 lakh crore** (**+11.1%**), the **fourth straight year** of profit; operating profit **₹3.21 lakh crore**. ■ **Gross NPA** fell from **7.3% (FY22)** to **1.9% (FY26)**; **Net NPA 0.39%** — historic lows. ■ Total business **₹283.3 lakh crore**; deposits **₹156.3 lakh crore**; gross advances **₹127 lakh crore** (**+15.7%**). ■ A **High-Level Committee on Banking for Viksit Bharat** has begun stakeholder consultations on the next round of reforms.
Way Fwd	Use strong balance sheets for **governance and autonomy reforms**, professional boards, cyber resilience and early-warning systems as interest rates rise.
Concept	The **4R strategy** (Recognition, Resolution, Recapitalisation, Reforms) with **IBC 2016** and **EASE** reforms drove the turnaround. **GNPA** = loans overdue more than **90 days** as a share of gross advances; **CRAR** (minimum **9%** in India under Basel III) measures capital strength.



H1 FY27 (Apr-Sep) net profit ≈ ₹1.10 lakh crore

Fig: Public Sector Banks extend record profit run into H1 FY27

3. India's first indigenous H5N1 vaccine for chickens to be dedicated on 20 Nov

[SCI-TECH] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-3**: Biotechnology, animal husbandry | **GS-2**: Health (One Health) | Prelims: **H5N1 clade**, **ICAR-NIHSAD**, zoonoses
Context	Union Agriculture Minister **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** will dedicate India's **first indigenous inactivated H5N1 vaccine** for chickens on **20 November 2026** at **Bhopal**. It targets **clade 2.3.2.1a**, for which no specific commercial vaccine was available.
Key Facts	■ Developed by **ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD), Bhopal**, India's key lab for avian influenza. ■ Since first detection in **2006**, India has reported **500+ outbreaks** of H5N1 and H5N8; mortality in infected flocks can reach nearly **100%**. ■ The **2006 outbreak** caused estimated losses of **₹2,200–3,000 crore**; a major outbreak could cut GDP growth by up to **1.5%** (official estimate). ■ WHO: **1,003 human H5N1 cases** and **479 deaths** in **25 countries** since **2003** — a **One Health** priority.
Way Fwd	Pair vaccination with **surveillance, DIVA testing** and farm biosecurity, settle export-status concerns, and move from pure 'detect-and-cull' to a calibrated vaccinate-and-monitor policy.
Concept	**Avian influenza** is an **Influenza A** virus; **H** (haemagglutinin) and **N** (neuraminidase) are surface proteins. A **clade** is a genetic lineage — the vaccine must match the circulating clade. An **inactivated vaccine** uses killed virus that cannot replicate.

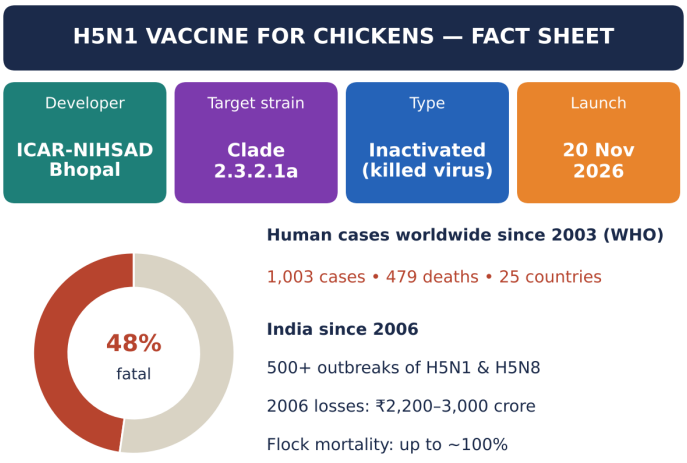


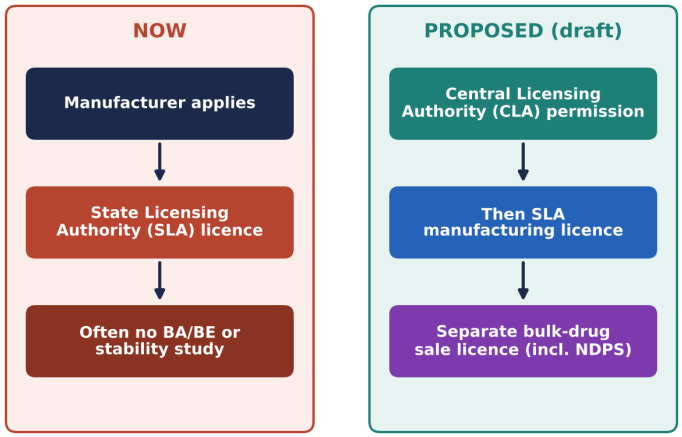
Fig: India's first indigenous H5N1 vaccine for chickens to be dedicated on 20 Nov

4. Antimicrobials to need Central nod: draft amendment to NDCT Rules

[HEALTH] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2/GS3**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-2**: Health, regulatory bodies | **GS-3**: Sci-Tech | Prelims: **CDSCO**, **AMR**, **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**
Context	The **Health Ministry** has proposed amending the **New Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules, 2019** to bring antimicrobials under **Central regulatory oversight**, and the **Drugs Rules, 1945** to create a **separate licence for bulk drugs**. The drafts are open for objections.
Key Facts	■ Makers must first get permission from the **Central Licensing Authority (CLA)** before seeking a manufacturing licence from the **State Licensing Authority (SLA)**. ■ Reason: licences were granted without adequate **bioavailability/bioequivalence** and **stability** studies; substandard antibiotics fuel **AMR**. ■ Bulk drugs to get a **separate sale licence**, covering drugs under the **NDPS Act, 1985**, sold under a **competent person's** supervision. ■ Builds on earlier steps: a proposed **blue vertical strip** on antimicrobial labels and curbs on antimicrobials used in **animals**.
Way Fwd	Build **CDSCO** capacity so the extra step does not delay access, enforce **Schedule H1** prescription sale, and align with the **National Action Plan on AMR** and One Health approach.
Concept	**AMR**: microbes evolve to resist drugs that once killed them. **CDSCO**, headed by the **DCGI**, works under the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**; most manufacturing licences are issued by **State** regulators. The **Red Line Campaign** marks prescription-only antibiotics.

Antimicrobial licensing: now vs proposed



Goal: quality-assured antibiotics → slow AMR

Fig: Antimicrobials to need Central nod: draft amendment to NDCT Rules

5. Severe Cyclonic Storm 'Akvan' heads for the Odisha–Andhra coast

[ENVIRONMENT] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS1/GS3**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-1**: Geography – cyclones | **GS-3**: Disaster management | Prelims: **IMD categories**, **cyclone naming**, Bay of Bengal
Context	IMD says **Severe Cyclonic Storm 'Akvan'** will cross the **north Andhra Pradesh–Yanam and south Odisha** coasts between **Narsapur and Puri**, close to east of **Gopalpur**, by noon of **20 November**, with winds of **90–100 kmph gusting to 110 kmph**.
Key Facts	■ **Red warning** for **5 Odisha districts**: Ganjam, Gajapati, Puri, Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapada; over **46,000** people evacuated. ■ Earlier bulletins projected a **Very Severe Cyclonic Storm** hitting Andhra; the **track shifted north** and the storm may weaken before landfall. ■ The name **'Akvan'** was contributed by **Iran** from the list of the **WMO/ESCAP Panel** of **13** member countries. ■ East Coast Railway rescheduled **23 trains**; Odisha cancelled leave of all officials till **22 November**.

Way Fwd	Retain the **zero-casualty** model (early warning, shelters, community volunteers) and invest in **impact-based forecasting**, power-grid hardening and quick crop-loss compensation.
Concept	IMD scale (kmph): Depression **31–49**, Deep Depression **50–61**, Cyclonic Storm **62–88**, **Severe 89–117**, Very Severe **118–166**, Extremely Severe **167–221**, Super Cyclone **222+**. **RSMC New Delhi** names north Indian Ocean cyclones; a **storm surge** is wind-driven sea-level rise.

INDIA IN NEWS — 19 NOVEMBER 2026



1 Gopalpur coast: Cyclone Akvan landfall zone (20 Nov)
2 Bhopal: ICAR-NIHSAD: H5N1 chicken vaccine
3 New Delhi: NIA Anti-Terror Conference; FICCI AGM
4 Pune: IRRDS-2026 (CWPRS)
5 Kochi: 62nd Int'l Coconut Community session
6 Visakhapatnam: IMNEX-26 naval exercise
7 Mumbai: Earthshot Prize 2026

Map not to scale; boundaries as per India's official position

Fig: Severe Cyclonic Storm 'Akvan' heads for the Odisha–Andhra coast

6. Two-day NIA Anti-Terror Conference opens in New Delhi

[DEFENCE] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-3**: Internal security – terrorism, role of agencies | Prelims: **NIA**, **UAPA**, N-CORD
Context	Union Home Minister **Amit Shah** inaugurates the two-day **Anti-Terror Conference** in New Delhi on **19 November 2026**, organised by the **National Investigation Agency (NIA)** under the **MHA**, in line with the policy of **zero tolerance against terrorism**.
Key Facts	■ Brings together state police and **ATS** chiefs with central agencies to share experience and frame **actionable points** for the year. ■ The **2025 edition** (26–27 Dec) launched the **Organised Crime Network Database** and a **Weapon Database**, and pushed a **uniform ATS structure** for states. ■ Comes days after forces neutralised **Lateef Bhat**, described as **Lashkar's last known active local terrorist** in the Kashmir valley. ■ Four linked forums: **DGP Conference**, Security Strategy Conference, **N-CORD** meetings and the Anti-Terror Conference.
Way Fwd	Focus on **digital anonymity**, terror financing, drones and online radicalisation; deepen data-sharing among states and speed up trials to raise conviction rates.
Concept	**NIA** was set up under the **NIA Act, 2008** after the **26/11 Mumbai attacks**; the 2019 amendment lets it probe scheduled offences abroad. **UAPA, 1967** is the main anti-terror law. **Police** is a **State subject** (Entry 2, List II), so Centre–state coordination is vital.

SECTION B • ECONOMY DATA POINT OF THE DAY

6.09%

CPI (retail) inflation, October 2026

Sept 2026	Food (Oct)	Rural	Urban	Repo rate
5.54%	8.94%	6.63%	5.41%	5.50%

Up from **5.54%** in September; above RBI's **6%** upper tolerance limit for the first time in two years. Food inflation **8.94%**; rural **6.63%** vs urban **5.41%**. The MPC had raised the repo rate by **25 bps to 5.50%** in October.

SECTION C • GS-II: GOVERNANCE, POLITY & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

7. 4th India–Japan 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue held in Tokyo

[IR] **COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2**

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-2**: Bilateral relations, groupings affecting India's interests | Prelims: **2+2 format**, **Quad**, Indo-Pacific
Context	Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** and EAM **Dr S. Jaishankar** co-chaired the **fourth India–Japan 2+2** in **Tokyo** on **19 November 2026** with Japan's Defence Minister **Shinjiro Koizumi** and Foreign Minister **Toshimitsu Motegi**, reviewing the full spectrum of strategic and defence cooperation.
Key Facts	■ Earlier rounds: **1st** New Delhi (**30 Nov 2019**), **2nd** Tokyo (**8 Sep 2022**), **3rd** New Delhi (**20 Aug 2024**). ■ Held with the **19th India–Japan Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue** and a defence ministers' bilateral; Jaishankar also joins **Raisina Tokyo** (3rd edition). ■ Agenda: maritime security, **defence equipment and technology** cooperation and a **free, open, inclusive, rules-based Indo-Pacific**. ■ Ties are a **Special Strategic and Global Partnership** (since **2014**); India also holds 2+2 dialogues with the **US, Australia and Russia**, among others.
Way Fwd	Turn dialogue into joint **defence-industrial projects**, co-development, supply-chain resilience (semiconductors, critical minerals) and coordinated connectivity in the **Bay of Bengal–Northeast** region.
Concept	**2+2** = joint meeting of the foreign and defence ministers of two countries. **Quad**: India, Japan, Australia, US. India–Japan pacts and drills: **ACSA (2020)** logistics pact, **Malabar**, **JIMEX** (navy), **Dharma Guardian** (army), **Veer Guardian** (air force).

INDIA–JAPAN 2+2: TOKYO, 19 NOV 2026

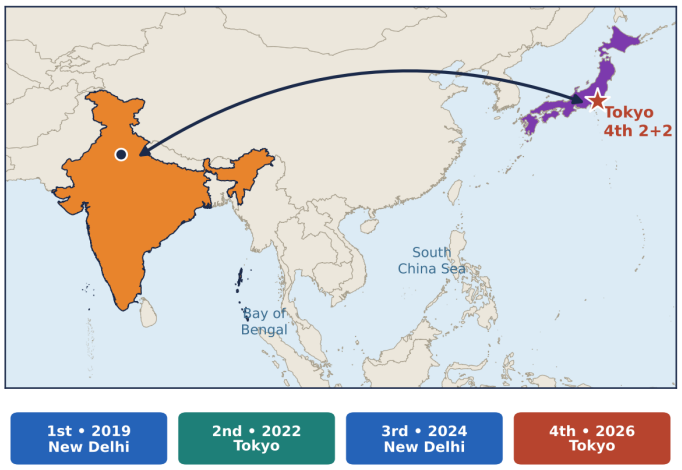


Fig: 4th India–Japan 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue held in Tokyo

8. At COP31 in Antalya, India seeks an equitable second Global Stocktake

[ENVIRONMENT] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2/GS3

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-3**: Climate change negotiations | **GS-2**: International institutions | Prelims: **UNFCCC**, **Paris Agreement Art. 14**, **CBDR-RC**
Context	At **COP31** in **Antalya, Türkiye**, India called for an **open, transparent and equitable** second **Global Stocktake (GST-2)** and for accountability on **climate finance** owed by developed countries.
Key Facts	■ COP31 is led jointly by **Türkiye** (host) and **Australia**; India's opening statement came from MoEFCC Secretary **Narendra Bhooshan**. ■ India aligned with **G77 + China**, the **LMDC** and **BASIC**, stressing **equity, just transition and adaptation**. ■ India upheld **CBDR-RC**; the political phase of **GST-2** is due in **2028**. ■ India and **Sweden** launched **LeadIT 3.0** at COP31 to speed up **low-carbon industrial transition**.
Way Fwd	Push for a finance-centred GST-2 (**Article 9.1** obligations), measurable adaptation indicators under the **Global Goal on Adaptation**, and carbon space for developing countries.
Concept	The **Global Stocktake** (**Article 14**, Paris Agreement) reviews collective progress every **5 years**; **GST-1** ended at **COP28, Dubai (2023)**. **NDCs** are national pledges updated every 5 years. The **NCQG** agreed at **COP29, Baku** set **US$300 bn a year by 2035**.

9. Ombudsperson and Appellate Authority guidelines issued under VB-G RAM G Act

[POLITY] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-2**: Governance – welfare schemes, accountability, grievance redressal | Prelims: **VB-G RAM G Act, 2025**, social audit
Context	The **Ministry of Rural Development** has issued **Guidelines for the Ombudsperson and Appellate Authority** under the **VB-G RAM G Act, 2025** — a **district-level** forum where rural workers can complain when denied legal entitlements, backed by **digital tracking** and linked to **social audits**.
Key Facts	■ **VB-G RAM G** (Viksit Bharat–Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin)) **replaced MGNREGA** on **1 July 2026**; the law is **Act No. 36 of 2025** (dated **20 Dec 2025**). ■ **Grievance Redressal Rules, 2026** (notified **2 Nov 2026**): enquiry within **7 working days**, disposal within **15 days** of receipt. ■ Appeals against orders are filed and decided as per **Schedule I** of the Act; the Appellate Authority adds a second tier above the Ombudsperson. ■ The **Audit of Schemes Rules, 2026** (notified **7 Aug 2026**) govern the social audits that feed complaints into the system.
Way Fwd	Keep ombudspersons independent, staffed and time-bound; publish awards openly; protect complainants; and link outcomes with **Gram Sabha** social audits.
Concept	An **Ombudsman** is an independent grievance authority (Swedish origin, **1809**). The right to work echoes **DPSP Article 41**; **social audit** was first made statutory under **MGNREGA, 2005 (Section 17)**. Related law: **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013**.

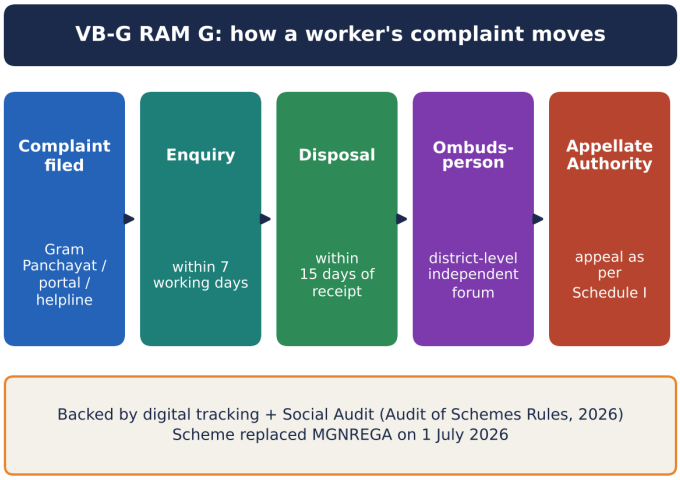


Fig: Ombudsperson and Appellate Authority guidelines issued under VB-G RAM G Act

10. ICJ to deliver judgment in The Gambia v. Myanmar Rohingya genocide case

[IR] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-2**: International institutions, India's neighbourhood | Prelims: **ICJ**, **Genocide Convention 1948**, **OIC**
Context	The **International Court of Justice** at **The Hague** delivers its judgment on **19 November 2026** on whether **Myanmar**, as a state, breached the **1948 Genocide Convention** through the **2017 'clearance operations'** against the **Rohingya** in **Rakhine State**.
Key Facts	■ **The Gambia** filed the case on **11 November 2019**, backed by the **57-member OIC**, under **Article IX** of the Convention. ■ In **July 2022** the Court rejected Myanmar's preliminary objections (**15–1**), accepting that any party can act for the **'common interest'** (erga omnes partes). ■ Over **740,000** Rohingya fled to Bangladesh after **August 2017**; about **1.2 million** now live in camps around **Cox's Bazar**. ■ It is the **first final judgment** among **five genocide cases** pending at the ICJ; rulings are **binding with no appeal**, and enforcement can be sought through the **UN Security Council**.
Way Fwd	Whatever the verdict, safe return needs stability in Rakhine; India's stakes include border security, the **Kaladan** project through Sittwe, and humanitarian aid such as **Operation Insaniyat**.
Concept	**ICJ**: principal judicial organ of the UN (**1945**), **15 judges**, **9-year** terms; settles disputes between **states** — unlike the **ICC** (**Rome Statute**), which tries individuals. India ratified the Genocide Convention in **1959**.

11. PM meets Prince and Princess of Wales after Earthshot Prize in Mumbai

[IR] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	**GS-2**: India–UK relations, soft power | **GS-3**: Environment (green innovation) | Prelims: **Earthshot Prize**, **India-UK CETA**
Context	PM **Narendra Modi** met **Prince William and Catherine, Princess of Wales** in New Delhi on **18 November 2026**, closing their three-day visit centred on the **sixth Earthshot Prize** awards held in **Mumbai** on **17 November**.

Key Facts	■ It is the couple's **second official visit** to India together (the first was in **April 2016**). ■ The **Earthshot Prize**, founded by Prince William in **2020**, rewards solutions to environmental challenges; **Mumbai** hosted the **2026** ceremony. ■ Talks covered trade, investment, defence, climate and people-to-people ties under the **India–UK Vision 2035**. ■ The **India–UK CETA** became operational on **15 July 2026**; exports to the UK rose **7%** in H1 FY27.

Way Fwd	Use high-level goodwill to deepen green finance, education and technology partnerships (such as the **Technology Security Initiative**) and ease professional mobility.
Concept	**Soft power** (Joseph Nye) means influence through attraction, not coercion. India–UK ties were raised to a **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership** in **2021** with **Roadmap 2030**.

SECTION D • PRELIMS RAPID-FIRE

1. **Indira Gandhi**'s **109th** birth anniversary: born **19 Nov 1917** at Allahabad; India's first woman PM.	2. **19 November** is **World Toilet Day**, a UN-designated day since **2013**.
3. **IMNEX-26**, the **8th** India–Myanmar Naval Exercise, concluded at **Visakhapatnam** (INS **Rana**, INS **Sumedha**, UMS **King Sin Phyu Shin**).	4. **CWPRS Pune** (Jal Shakti) hosts **IRRDS-2026** on integrated river, reservoir and dam systems, **19–20 Nov**.
5. India hosts the **62nd Session** of the **International Coconut Community** at **Kochi**, **17–20 Nov 2026**.	6. PM at the **FICCI AGM**: India remains the **world's fastest-growing major economy**; goal **Viksit Bharat 2047**.

SECTION E • PRACTICE CORNER

Q1. With reference to the India–Japan 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue, consider the following statements: 1. The first round was held in New Delhi in 2019. 2. The fourth round was held in Tokyo in November 2026. 3. India holds 2+2 dialogues only with its Quad partners. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only **(b)** 1 and 2 only **(c)** 2 and 3 only **(d)** 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) — The 1st round was in New Delhi (30 Nov 2019) and the 4th in Tokyo (19 Nov 2026). Statement 3 is wrong: India also holds a 2+2 with Russia, which is not a Quad member.

Q2. Consider the following pairs (IMD cyclone category : maximum sustained wind speed): 1. Cyclonic Storm : 62–88 kmph 2. Severe Cyclonic Storm : 89–117 kmph 3. Super Cyclonic Storm : 167–221 kmph. How many of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

(a) Only one **(b)** Only two **(c)** All three **(d)** None

Answer: (b) — Pairs 1 and 2 are correct. 167–221 kmph is an Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm; a Super Cyclonic Storm is 222 kmph or more. Cyclone Akvan is a Severe Cyclonic Storm (90–100 kmph).

MAINS PRACTICE (GS-3): India's exports to its FTA partners are rising fast, yet trade deficits with several partners persist. Examine how India can make its free trade agreements work better for its exporters. (150 words, 10 marks)

Hint: Intro: H1 FY27 data (ASEAN +58%, Singapore +103%). Body: low FTA utilisation, rules of origin, non-tariff measures, MSME awareness, Export Promotion Mission support, services and mobility in new pacts; risks such as inverted duty and transshipment. Conclusion: periodic FTA reviews plus domestic competitiveness.

ONE-LINE REVISION: Akvan → Gopalpur (SCS); 2+2 → Tokyo (4th); H5N1 vaccine → NIHSAD Bhopal, clade 2.3.2.1a; ASEAN exports +58%; CPI 6.09%; ICJ → The Gambia v. Myanmar.

Compiled & simplified by the **StudyForGS.com Research Team**

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