

TODAY AT A GLANCE — 10 THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **KAL** — India's first indigenous **1,000 km** one-way attack drone tested at **Pokhran**.
- HAL delivered **2 Tejas trainers**, **3 HTT-40** (of **70**) and **4 Dhruv NG** helicopters.
- **Moody's** raised FY27 GDP forecast to **7%** (from 6%); Q1 FY27 growth **7.8%**.
- Core sector grew **4.8%** in Aug 2026; **cement 12.5%**, **electricity 11.6%**.
- **Swachhata Hi Seva 2026: 17 Sept-2 Oct**, theme '**Swachhata Mein Sahbhag**'.

- **3.66 crore MT** legacy waste remediated in 2025; **459 ULBs** fully remediated.
- **Leopardus tilcayo** (Bolivia) — first new wild cat species in **100+** years.
- **11th Ayurveda Day** on **23 Sept**: 'Ayurveda for a Healthier Tomorrow'.
- **UCC** in all **21 NDA-ruled States by 2029**; rooted in **Article 44 (DPSP)**.
- India-Bhutan: **₹4,000 crore LoC**; **Punatsangchhu-II (1,020 MW)** inaugurated.

SECTION A | GS-III: Science & Tech • Economy • Security • Environment

1. KAL: India's first indigenous long-range one-way attack drone clears Pokhran trials

[DEFENCE] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	GS-III: Security; Sci-Tech — indigenisation of technology. Prelims: loitering munitions, GNSS/INS navigation, Pokhran range.
Context	Noida-based private firm IG Defence has tested KAL , billed as India's first indigenous long-range one-way attack (OWA) drone , at the Pokhran Field Firing Range, Rajasthan ; the trials were reported on 21-22 September 2026 .
Key Facts	■ Strike range of about 1,000 km; endurance 7-8 hours; payload 50 kg; ceiling up to 5,000 m. ■ Navigation by multi-band GNSS plus an Inertial Navigation System (INS), enabling autonomous flight even under GPS jamming. ■ Class: loitering munition / kamikaze drone — it is expended on the target, unlike a reusable UCAV. ■ OWA drones have been decisive in the Russia-Ukraine and West Asia conflicts as a low-cost alternative to cruise missiles.
Way Fwd	Fast-track user trials and induction , secure a domestic supply of engines, seekers and chips , and build counter-drone layers in parallel.
Concept	Loitering munition = drone-missile hybrid that 'loiters' over an area before striking. INS uses accelerometers and gyroscopes, independent of satellites. Links: IDEX , Positive Indigenisation Lists , DAP-2020 .

2. HAL hands over Tejas trainers, first HTT-40s and Dhruv NG helicopters

[DEFENCE] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	GS-III: Indigenisation of defence technology, Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Prelims: HTT-40, Dhruv NG, LCA Tejas variants.
Context	At a ceremony in Bengaluru (18 September 2026) attended by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu , HAL delivered trainer aircraft to the IAF and civil helicopters to Pawan Hans Ltd .
Key Facts	■ 2 LCA Tejas twin-seat trainers (FOC standard) handed to the IAF, completing the Mk-1 trainer order. ■ 3 HTT-40 basic trainers — first of a 70-aircraft order; they will augment the Pilatus PC-7 Mk II fleet for stage-I (basic) training. ■ 4 Dhruv NG helicopters to Pawan Hans — India's first indigenous civil helicopter meeting the AS-4 airworthiness standard. ■ Marks a shift from licence-production to indigenous design across the aviation ecosystem.
Way Fwd	Stabilise production rates (engines, avionics supply chains) and use civil variants like Dhruv NG to build export and MRO markets.
Concept	HAL — Maharatna PSU under the Ministry of Defence , HQ Bengaluru . FOC (Final Operational Clearance) follows IOC . Pilot training: Stage-I basic, Stage-II intermediate, Stage-III advanced jet.

KAL | Long-range One-Way Attack Drone

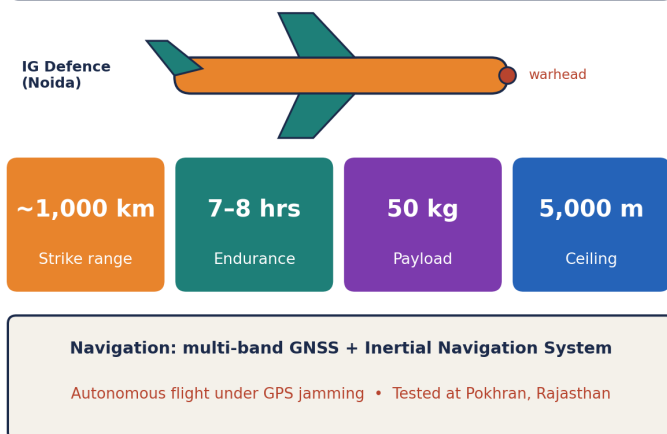


Fig. 1: KAL: India's first indigenous long-range one-way attack drone clears Pokhran trials

HAL deliveries — Bengaluru, 18 Sept 2026



Fig. 2: HAL hands over Tejas trainers, first HTT-40s and Dhruv NG helicopters

3. Moody's lifts India's FY27 growth forecast to 7% after a strong Q1

[ECONOMY] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	GS-III: Growth, development and mobilisation of resources. Prelims: credit rating agencies, sovereign rating grades, inflation targeting.
Context	On 18 September 2026 , Moody's Ratings raised India's FY27 real GDP growth forecast to 7% from 6% , after Q1 FY27 (April-June) GDP grew 7.8% , citing resilient private consumption and investment .
Key Facts	- Q1 growth was led by manufacturing and services; calendar-year H1 2026 growth estimated at 8.2%. - FY27 inflation projected at 4.8% — inside RBI's 2-6% band but above the 4% target. - Moody's forecast is now above RBI's own FY27 estimate of 6.7%. - Sovereign rating retained at Baa3 (stable) — the lowest investment grade. - Risks flagged: energy prices and food inflation amid West Asia tensions.
Way Fwd	Sustain public capex and private investment , manage food supply shocks , and keep fiscal consolidation on track to argue for a rating upgrade.
Concept	Big Three CRAs: Moody's, S&P, Fitch. Moody's investment grade ends at Baa3 (S&P/Fitch: BBB-). Flexible Inflation Targeting: 4% ±2% under Section 45ZA, RBI Act, 1934 .

Context	The Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS) 2026 fortnight (17 Sept-2 Oct ; theme ' Swachhata Mein Sahbhag; Swachh Bharat, Viksit Bharat ') spotlights legacy-dumpsite remediation under SBM-Urban 2.0 , with models from Gorakhpur, Delhi, Nagpur and Raichur .
Key Facts	3.66 crore MT legacy waste remediated in 2025; 459 ULBs in 29 States achieved complete remediation. Bhalswa (Delhi): 99.07 lakh MT cleared by 31 July 2026; Gorakhpur: 40-acre site became the Kachre Se Kanchan Rapti Eco Park. Raichur (Yakalaspura): ~22 acres reclaimed; Miyawaki forest planted on 5 June 2026. Dumpsite Remediation Accelerator Programme (DRAP) launched November 2025; SWM Rules, 2026 in force from 1 April 2026. - Urban India has 68,339 public sanitation facilities, incl. 37,766 public toilets.
Way Fwd	Stop fresh unsegregated inflow , secure RDF offtake by cement kilns , publish third-party verified site data and integrate waste pickers with social security.
Concept	74th Amendment — 12th Schedule, Entry 6: solid waste management is a municipal function (Art. 243W). Biomining = excavation + stabilisation + trommel screening into RDF, bio-soil, recyclables, inerts . Almitra Patel case led to the MSW Rules, 2000 .

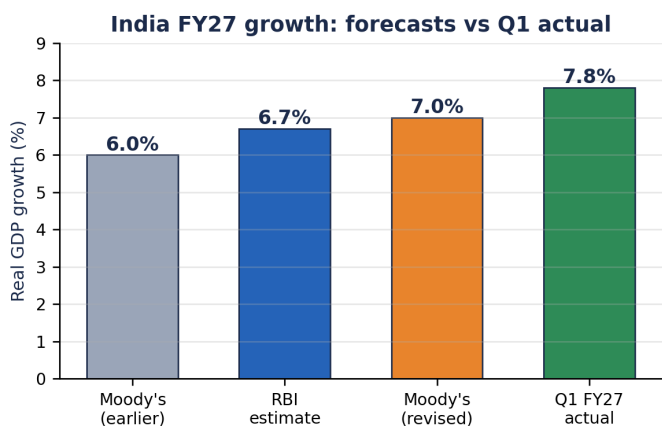


Fig. 3: Moody's lifts India's FY27 growth forecast to 7% after a strong Q1

4. Swachhata Hi Seva 2026: legacy dumpsites turn into parks and forests

[ENVIRONMENT] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

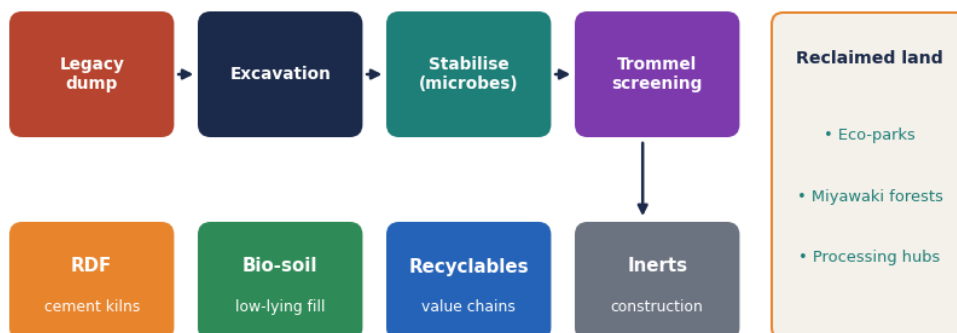
Syllabus Linkage	GS-III: Environment — pollution and waste management. GS-II: Urban local bodies. Prelims: biomining, SWM Rules 2026, Miyawaki method.
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5. Leopardus tilcayo: first new living wild cat species described in over 100 years

[ENVIRONMENT] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	GS-III: Biodiversity and conservation. Prelims: species in news, cloud forests, taxonomy.
Context	A peer-reviewed study (published 17-18 September 2026) described Leopardus tilcayo ('Tilcayo'), a small tiger cat from Bolivia's Yungas cloud forests on the eastern Andean slopes.
Key Facts	- Body length about 46 cm, weight ~1.4 kg — smaller than a house cat; light-brown coat with dark rosettes. - Lineage split from other tiger cats about 1.4 million years ago; genetics show tiger cats are five distinct species. - A new subspecies, Leopardus tigrinus antisuyo, was also identified in Peru's Yungas. - Camera traps suggest nocturnal habits; diet includes small rodents.
Way Fwd	Map its range quickly and protect Yungas habitat from deforestation — newly described species are often already threatened before assessment.
Concept	Leopardus = small Neotropical cats (ocelot, margay, oncilla). Cloud forest = tropical montane forest with persistent low cloud. India's small cats in news: rusty-spotted cat (world's smallest wild cat), fishing cat (State animal of West Bengal).

Biomining: how a legacy dump becomes usable land



2025: **3.66 crore MT** remediated • **459 ULBs** fully remediated

Urban public sanitation (SHS 2026)

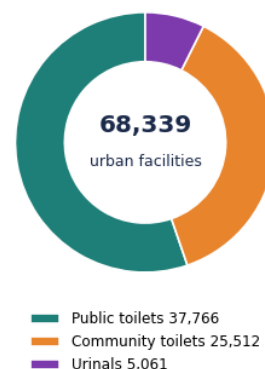


Fig. 4: Biomining process and urban sanitation facilities

SECTION B | Key Economy Data Point of the Day

4.8%

KEY DATA POINT OF THE DAY — CORE SECTOR GROWTH, AUGUST 2026

Down from 5.0% in July (three-month low); April–August 2026 cumulative 4.3% vs 2.4% a year ago. Cement +12.5% and electricity +11.6% were the top gainers; coal fell 3.8%.

6. Core sector growth eases to 4.8% in August; cement and electricity lead

[ECONOMY] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	GS-III: Indian economy — industrial growth, infrastructure. Prelims: Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI), IIP.
Context	Official data released on 21 September 2026 show the Index of Eight Core Industries grew 4.8% in August 2026 , easing from 5.0% in July — a three-month low .
Key Facts	■ Cement +12.5% and electricity +11.6% (a 27-month high) led growth. ■ Iron ore +5.5%, steel +3.4%, refinery products +2.6%; coal –3.8%. ■ Crude oil, natural gas and fertilisers contracted year-on-year. ■ Cumulative April–August 2026: 4.3%, against 2.4% a year ago.
Way Fwd	Revive coal and hydrocarbon output and watch fertiliser production ahead of the rabi sowing season.

Concept ICI is compiled by the **Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT (Ministry of Commerce & Industry)**; the eight industries (coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement, electricity) are a **leading indicator** for the **IIP**, released by **NSO (MoSPI)**.

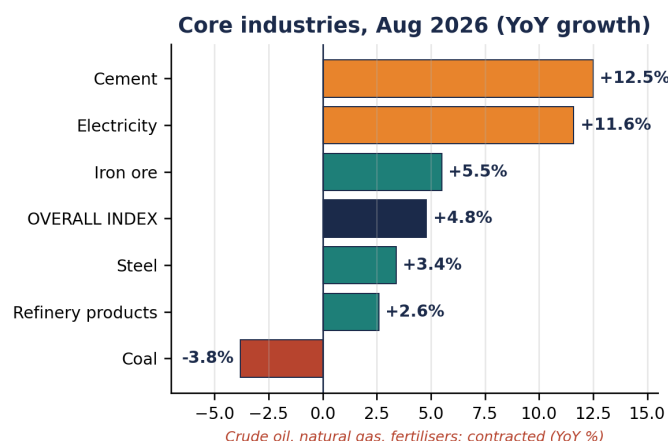


Fig. 6: Core sector growth eases to 4.8% in August; cement and electricity lead

SECTION C | GS-II: Governance • Polity • International Relations • Social Justice

7. 11th Ayurveda Day on 23 September: 'Ayurveda for a Healthier Tomorrow'

[HEALTH] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: Health, government schemes. GS-I: Indian knowledge systems. Prelims: AYUSH systems, National Ayush Mission, WHO-GCTM, ICD-11 TM2.
Context	The Ministry of Ayush marks the 11th Ayurveda Day on 23 September 2026 with the theme ' Ayurveda for a Healthier Tomorrow ' — 9,700+ activities across 30 States/UTs . Since a 23 March 2025 gazette, the Day falls on a fixed date instead of Dhanteras .
Key Facts	■ National Ayush Mission (NAM): CSS since 2014; central releases ₹6,406.99 crore (2014-15 to 2025-26); funding 60:40, 90:10 for NE/Himalayan States. ■ 12,260 Ayush Ayushman Arogya Mandirs functional (target 12,500). ■ ICD-11 TM2 module (launched in New Delhi, 10 January 2024) codes Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani diagnoses. ■ WHO-GCTM, Jamnagar — WHO's first global outpost traditional medicine centre; Budget 2026-27 Ayush allocation ₹4,408 crore. ■ Ayush market grew to US\$43 billion (2024); target US\$200 billion by 2030.
Way Fwd	Back integration with multi-centre clinical trials , pharmacovigilance and heavy-metal testing , and publish health-outcome data , not just counts.
Concept	Tridosha — Vata, Pitta, Kapha. Brihat Trayi — Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya. Ministry of AYUSH formed November 2014 ; NCISM Act, 2020 regulates ISM education; ITRA Jamnagar is an Institute of National Importance .

Context	Union Home Minister Amit Shah said (13 September 2026) that a Uniform Civil Code will be introduced in all 21 BJP-NDA-ruled States before 2029 ; a month-long ' Seva Sankalp Abhiyan ' (17 Sept-17 Oct) is publicising it.
Key Facts	■ Uttarakhand became the first State after independence to operationalise a UCC (January 2025). ■ Goa already follows the Portuguese Civil Code, 1867 — a pre-existing uniform family law. ■ Personal-law bills of some States (e.g. Assam, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh) are reported to be awaiting Presidential assent. ■ Tribal customary laws are generally kept outside State UCCs, citing Fifth/Sixth Schedule protections. ■ Key cases: Shah Bano (1985), Sarla Mudgal (1995), Shayara Bano (2017) — the Court flagged non-implementation of Art. 44.
Way Fwd	Wide consultation and a gender-just rather than merely uniform code; note the 21st Law Commission (2018) found a UCC 'neither necessary nor desirable' at that stage.
Concept	Article 44 (DPSP, Part IV): the State shall endeavour to secure a UCC. Marriage, divorce, succession fall in Concurrent List, Entry 5 — a State law repugnant to a central law needs Presidential assent under Art. 254(2) .

8. UCC push: Uniform Civil Code targeted in all 21 NDA-ruled States by 2029

[POLITY] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: Constitution — DPSPs, secularism, federalism. GS-I: Women and society. Prelims: Art. 44, Art. 25, Goa Civil Code, Art. 254(2).
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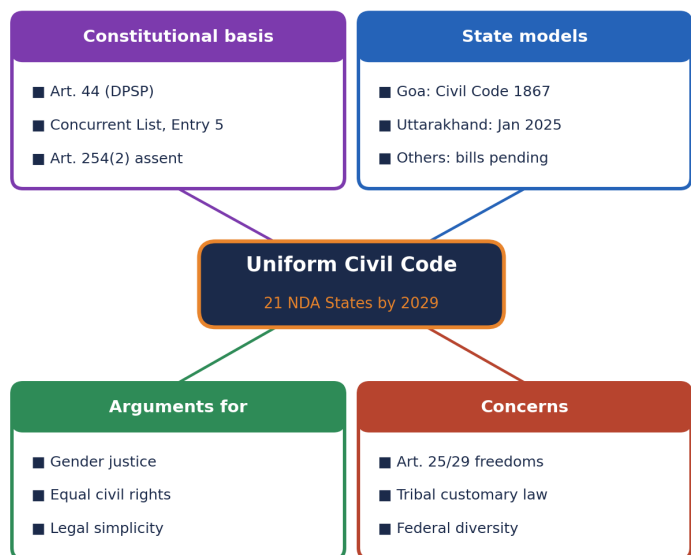


Fig. 8: UCC push: Uniform Civil Code targeted in all 21 NDA-ruled States by 2029

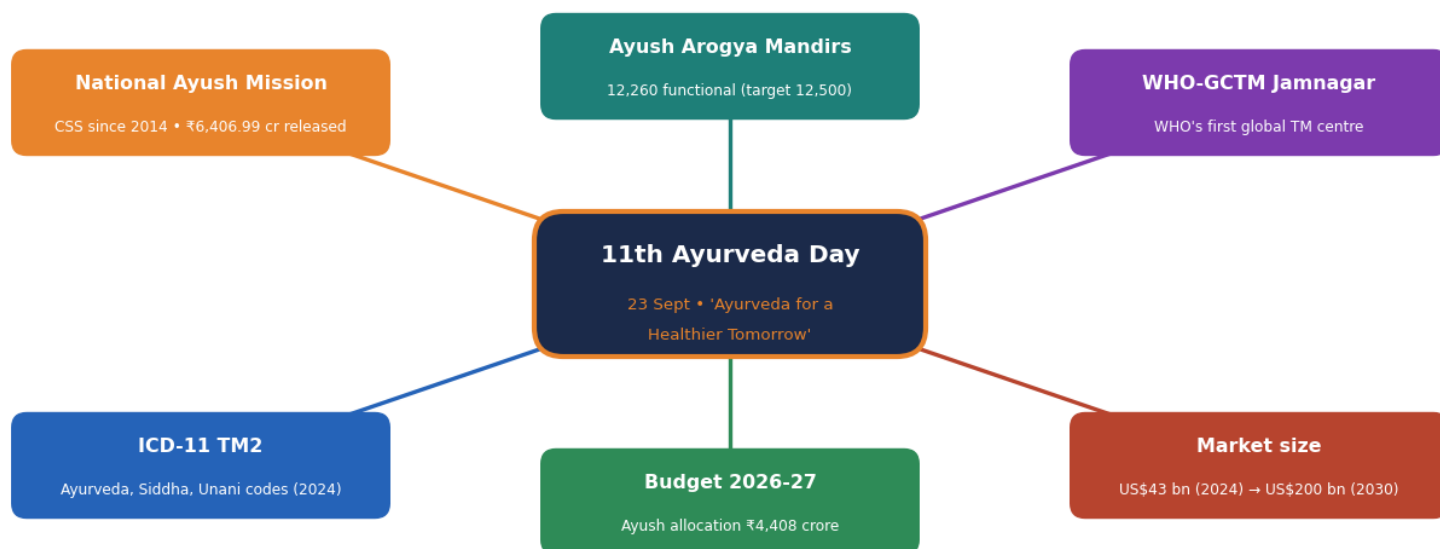


Fig. 7: Ayush ecosystem around Ayurveda Day 2026

9. India-Bhutan: ₹4,000 crore Line of Credit for energy; Punatsangchhu-II inaugurated

[IR] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	GS-II: India and its neighbourhood. GS-III: Energy. Prelims: Bhutan hydro projects, Gelephu, cross-border rail links.
Context	During External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's visit to Bhutan (16-18 September 2026), both sides welcomed a concessional ₹4,000 crore Line of Credit for Bhutan's energy sector and launched several projects.
Key Facts	■ Punatsangchhu-II (1,020 MW) inaugurated with its tariff protocol; dam work on Punatsangchhu-I (1,200 MW) resumed. ■ Connectivity: Gelephu-Kokrajhar and Samtse-Banarhat rail links; immigration check-post at Hatisar (Assam). ■ UPI payments enabled for Bhutanese nationals in India; ICCR scholarships doubled. ■ Also: a 65-bed mother-and-child hospital at Mongar and 54 electric vehicles handed over.
Way Fwd	Complete delayed hydro projects on time and link Gelephu Mindfulness City with India's North-East to anchor Bhutan's growth and counter China's outreach.
Concept	India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty (1949, revised 2007) . Earlier India-backed hydro projects: Chukha, Kurichhu, Tala, Mangdechhu . Bhutan is among the largest recipients of Indian development assistance .

10. UN Gender Snapshot 2026: full gender equality still 171 years away

[REPORT] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS1/GS2

Syllabus Linkage	GS-I: Women's issues. GS-II: International institutions; vulnerable sections. Prelims: SDG 5, UN Women, women's reservation.
Context	'Progress on the SDGs: The Gender Snapshot 2026' by UN Women and UN DESA , released on 17 September 2026 ahead of UNGA-81 , warns of a rollback of institutions built for women's equality.
Key Facts	■ 1 in 3 gender-equality institutions lost power in two years; ~1 in 4 faced budget cuts. ■ At the current pace, full gender equality is 171 years away; no SDG-5 indicator is on track for 2030. ■ 6 in 7 countries are led by men; women are only 6% of global corporate CEOs; 8 in 10 finance ministers are men. ■ India: women hold 74 of 543 Lok Sabha seats (13.6%); the 106th Amendment (2023) reserves one-third seats after delimitation.
Way Fwd	Protect gender budgeting and national women's machinery, operationalise women's reservation , and fund women's rights organisations .
Concept	SDG 5 = Gender Equality. UN Women created in 2010 . India's Gender Budget Statement since 2005-06 . Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam = 106th CAA ; inserted Articles 330A and 332A .

SECTION D | Prelims Rapid-Fire

Topic	Quick fact for Prelims
SLINEX-26	13th India-Sri Lanka naval exercise at Visakhapatnam (17-21 Sept) with INS Kavaratti, INS Jyoti and SLNS Sindurala .
UNGA-81	EAM S. Jaishankar leads India's delegation; address to the General Debate on 26 September 2026 .
Forex reserves	\$780.782 bn (week ended 11 Sept), down \$4.924 bn from the record \$785.706 bn .
Oscars 2027	Marathi thriller Gondhal (dir. Santosh Davakhar) is India's entry for Best International Feature .
Asian Wushu	India to host the 11th Asian Senior Wushu Championships in 2028 , for the first time .
Tulu	Karnataka Cabinet (18 Sept) approved Tulu as an additional official language in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi .

SECTION E | Practice Corner

Prelims MCQ 1. With reference to the Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI), consider the following statements: 1. It is released by the Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT. 2. Fertilisers are one of the eight core industries. 3. Cement is not covered by the index. 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) — ICI is compiled by the **Office of the Economic Adviser, DPIIT**. Its eight industries are **coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement and electricity** — so cement is covered (it grew **12.5%** in August 2026). Statement 3 is wrong.

Prelims MCQ 2. Consider the following statements: 1. Ayurveda Day is now observed every year on 23 September. 2. The WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine is located at Jamnagar. 3. The ICD-11 Traditional Medicine Module 2 covers Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani. How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (c) — A **23 March 2025 gazette** fixed Ayurveda Day on **23 September**; **WHO-GCTM** is at **Jamnagar, Gujarat**; **ICD-11 TM2** (launched **10 January 2024**, New Delhi) codes **Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani**. All three are correct.

Mains Practice (GS-II). "A Uniform Civil Code must aim at gender justice rather than mere uniformity." Examine in the light of recent State-level UCC initiatives. (15 marks, 250 words)

Hint: Intro: **Art. 44 + Concurrent List Entry 5** → State models (**Goa 1867, Uttarakhand 2025**) → Court cases (**Shah Bano, Sarla Mudgal, Shayara Bano**) → concerns: **Art. 25/29**, tribal customs, federalism (**Art. 254(2)**) → way forward: consultation, codify best practices, gender-just code.

One-line revision: **KAL** (1,000 km OWA drone) + **HTT-40** = defence Aatmanirbharta; **Moody's 7%** vs **core sector 4.8%**; **Art. 44 UCC** push; **Ayurveda Day 23 Sept**; **₹4,000 crore** Bhutan LoC.

Compiled & simplified by the StudyForGS.com Research Team

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