# CURRENT AFFAIRS — 28 Sept 2026

Monday, 28 September 2026 • Asia/Kolkata (IST) • Prelims + Mains GS-wise digest

**StudyForGS.com**

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR UPSC CSE

## TODAY AT A GLANCE — 10 THINGS TO REMEMBER

Prelims + Mains

- **JNPA, Paradip, Deendayal & Mundra** = India's first **mega ports** (Sec 73, Ports Act 2025).
- DRDO **30-kW laser** DEW: hits drones up to **~5 km**; industry partner in **6 months**.
- TDB gives **₹200 crore** to Agnikul for fully reusable **Agnibaan** (TRL-4 → **TRL-8**).
- IIT Delhi builds India's **first indigenous micro-GPU** on a **Spartan-7 FPGA**.
- **Pygmy hog** count up from **6 (1996)** to **190+**; only wild home **Manas NP**.
- OECD lifts India **FY27 GDP** forecast to **7.1%** (+80 bps); FY28 **6.5%**.
- India **31st** (up **9**) in WEF **TTDI 2026**; **Japan** tops, **110** economies.
- **Census 2027** phase-1: **32 crore+** families recorded; first **fully digital** census.
- Russia backs **India & Brazil** for permanent **UNSC** seats at **UNGA-81**.
- **Tarang Shakti 2026** (2nd edition) operational phase begins at **Jodhpur** today.

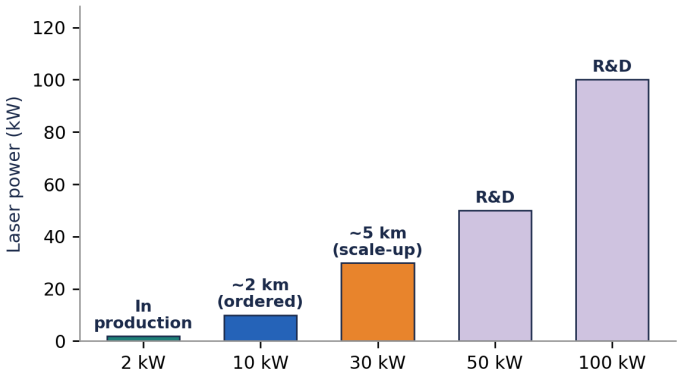
## SECTION A | GS-III: Science & Tech • Economy • Security • Environment

### DRDO's 30-kW laser weapon moves towards mass production

[DEFENCE] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS3** – Security challenges; **indigenisation of technology**. Prelims: **Directed Energy Weapons (DEW)**, counter-drone systems. |
| **Context** | DRDO is set to pick a **domestic industry partner within six months** to mass-produce its **30-kW-class laser** directed-energy weapon, built to defeat **drone swarms** at low cost per shot. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ Engagement range up to **~5 km**; **truck-mounted** mobile platform.<br>■ Targets **drone swarms**, fixed-wing **UAVs** and surveillance sensors; trials completed in **August 2025**.<br>■ **2-kW** system already in production (**BEL** & private firms); **10-kW** (~**2 km**) units ordered.<br>■ R&D under way on **50-kW** and **100-kW** variants. |
| **Way Fwd** | Integrate lasers into **Project Sudarshan Chakra**'s layered air defence; secure **high-power fibre lasers** and beam-control optics domestically. |
| **Concept** | **DEW**: destroys targets with focused **electromagnetic energy** (laser/microwave) – near-zero cost per shot, **speed-of-light** engagement, but hit by **rain, dust & fog**. |

**DRDO laser DEW ladder: power & reach**




### ₹200 crore push for fully reusable 'Agnibaan' rocket

[SCI-TECH] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS3** – Space technology; private sector in space. Prelims: **RLV**, **TRL scale**, **RDI Fund**. |
| **Context** | The **Technology Development Board (TDB)** under **DST** signed an agreement on **25 Sept 2026** giving **₹200 crore** to Chennai start-up **Agnikul Cosmos** for a **fully reusable** Agnibaan launch vehicle. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ Funding via **Optionally Convertible Debentures** under the **RDI Fund**.<br>■ Aim: move tech from **TRL-4** to **TRL-8** – beyond first-stage recovery to **full-system reuse**.<br>■ **Semi-cryogenic** propulsion with **deep throttling & restart**; controlled descent & recovery.<br>■ Agnikul earlier built **Agnilet** – a **single-piece 3D-printed** engine. |
| **Way Fwd** | Pair patient capital with **IN-SPACe** authorisation and assured **launch demand** so start-ups can scale reusable launch. |
| **Concept** | **TRL (Technology Readiness Level)**: 9-point scale – **TRL-1** basic principles to **TRL-9** mission-proven system. Reusability cuts **cost/kg** and **space debris**. |

### IIT Delhi unveils India's first indigenous micro-GPU

[SCI-TECH] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS3** – Indigenisation of technology; semiconductors. Prelims: **GPU, FPGA, ASIC, RTL**. |
| **Context** | Researchers at **IIT Delhi** built the **first working, indigenously designed micro-GPU** from an Indian university, a small step towards cutting **GPU import dependence**. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ Written entirely in **RTL (Register Transfer Level)** with a custom **floating-point** engine.<br>■ Prototyped on a **Spartan-7 FPGA**; led by Prof. **Jayadeva** & Prof. **Kaushik Saha**.<br>■ Uses: **industrial displays**, low-cost HMIs, **e-rickshaw dashboards**, e-readers.<br>■ Roadmap: **8–16 core** vector GPU and a **65 nm ASIC** proof-of-concept. |
| **Way Fwd** | Link such designs to **India Semiconductor Mission** fabs and **DLI scheme** support to reach tape-out and market. |
| **Concept** | **GPU** = many simple cores for **parallel** maths (graphics, AI). **FPGA** is re-programmable hardware for testing; **ASIC** is a fixed, mass-produced chip. |

### Centre notifies India's first four 'mega ports'

[ECONOMY] COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS3** – Infrastructure: ports; logistics. Prelims: **Indian Ports Act, 2025**, major ports & their states. |
| **Context** | The **Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways** notified (**25 Sept 2026**) **JNPA, Paradip, Deendayal (Kandla)** and **Mundra** as mega ports under **Section 73** of the **Indian Ports Act, 2025**. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ Criteria: **150 MMT/yr** cargo (bulk) or **7.5 million TEUs/yr** (container).<br>■ Status valid for **5 years**, subject to periodic review.<br>■ **Mundra** (Gujarat) is the **only private** port; **Paradip** (Odisha) the only **east-coast** one.<br>■ Status based on **cargo volume**, not ownership. |

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| **Way Fwd** | Prioritise **deep-draft berths**, rail-road **last-mile links** and **PM Gati Shakti** integration to become global transhipment hubs. |

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| **Concept** | **TEU** = Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit (standard container). **Indian Ports Act, 2025** replaced the colonial **Indian Ports Act, 1908**. Links: **Sagarmala**, **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047**. |

**India's first 4 MEGA PORTS (Sec 73, Indian Ports Act 2025 • valid 5 years)**

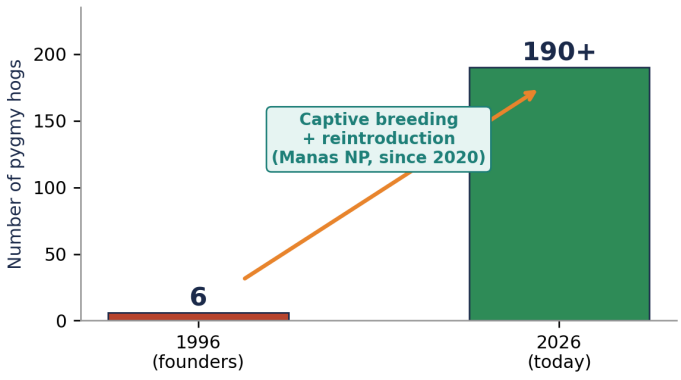
| JNPA | PARADIP | DEENDAYAL | MUNDRA | ENTRY CRITERIA |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nhava Sheva, Maharashtra | Odisha | Kandla, Gujarat | Gujarat | **150 MMT/yr** bulk cargo OR **7.5 mn TEU/yr** |
| **Container gateway** | **Only east-coast one** | **Govt. major port** | **Only private port** | |

## Pygmy hog numbers climb to 190+ in Assam

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

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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS3** – Conservation; species recovery. Prelims: **IUCN status**, **Manas NP**, Terai-Duar grasslands. |
| **Context** | In the **138th Mann Ki Baat** (**27 Sept 2026**), the PM hailed Assam's **Pygmy Hog Conservation Programme**, which has lifted numbers from just **6 in 1996** to over **190**. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ World's **smallest wild pig**; India's **only endemic wild suid**.<br>■ Programme began in **1995**; since **2020**, **six groups** reintroduced into **Manas NP**.<br>■ Only viable wild population: **Manas National Park** (Assam).<br>■ Threats: **grassland burning** and conversion to **tea estates**. |
| **Way Fwd** | Protect **tall wet grasslands** as habitat, not wasteland; replicate captive-breeding + reintroduction for other grassland species. |
| **Concept** | Pygmy hog: **IUCN – Endangered**; **Schedule I**, Wild Life (Protection) Act. **Manas** = Tiger, Elephant & **Biosphere Reserve** + **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. |

**Pygmy hog recovery: ~32-fold rise**




## NTPC–EDF 50:50 JV to build pumped storage & clean power

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

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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS3** – Energy; infrastructure; **energy storage**. Prelims: **Pumped Storage Projects (PSP)**. |
| **Context** | **NTPC** and **EDF Power Solutions India** (arm of France's **EDF**) formed a **50:50 joint venture** on **25 Sept 2026** for low-carbon projects in **India and neighbouring countries**. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ Focus: **pumped storage**, hydropower, renewables, **transmission & distribution**.<br>■ Aligns with India's target of **~100 GW pumped storage by 2036**.<br>■ Signed by NTPC CMD **Gurdeep Singh** and EDF CEO **Bernard Fontana**.<br>■ Project pipeline and investment **not yet disclosed**. |
| **Way Fwd** | Fast-track **PSP clearances** and storage tariffs so round-the-clock renewables can meet the **500 GW non-fossil** goal. |
| **Concept** | **Pumped storage**: water pumped **uphill** when power is cheap/surplus, released through turbines at **peak demand** – a 'water battery' for **grid balancing**. |

## SECTION B | Economy Data Point of the Day

**7.1%**

### OECD forecast: India GDP growth, FY 2026-27

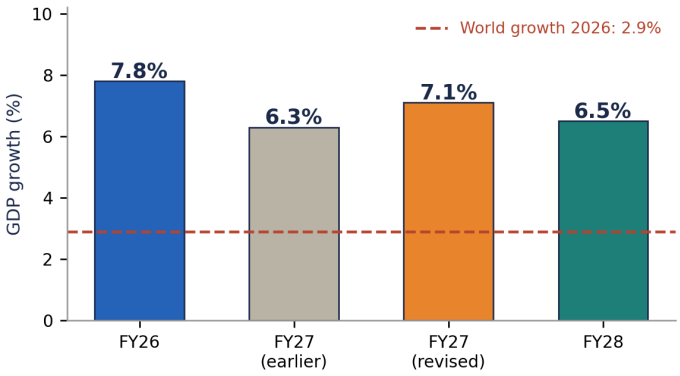
Raised by **80 bps** from 6.3%; highest among major forecasters. FY28 seen at **6.5%**, inflation **4.7%** in FY27.

## OECD raises India's FY27 growth forecast to 7.1%

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

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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS3** – Growth, inflation, mobilisation of resources. Prelims: **OECD**, Economic Outlook. |
| **Context** | The OECD's **Interim Economic Outlook (Sept 2026)** raised India's **FY27** GDP growth forecast by **80 bps** to **7.1%**, citing **resilient domestic demand** and policies that cushioned households from **high energy prices**. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ **FY26: 7.8%** → **FY27: 7.1%** (from 6.3%) → **FY28: 6.5%**.<br>■ Inflation seen at **4.7%** (FY27) and **4.2%** (FY28).<br>■ World growth: **2.9%** (2026) and **3.0%** (2027).<br>■ Risk: **West Asia conflict**, weaker purchasing power in **H2 2026**. |
| **Way Fwd** | Keep **fiscal consolidation** on track while shielding the vulnerable; build **energy-import resilience** via storage and renewables. |
| **Concept** | **OECD**: Paris-based, **38 members**; India is **not a member** but a **Key Partner**. **1 bps = 0.01%**, so 80 bps = **0.8 percentage point**. |

**OECD: India growth outlook (+80 bps)**

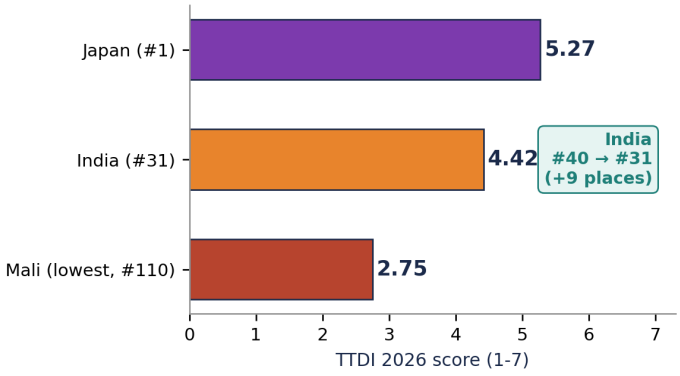



## India jumps 9 places to 31st in WEF tourism index

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

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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS3** – Services sector, employment. Prelims: **reports & indices** and their publishers. |
| **Context** | In the **World Economic Forum's Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2026**, released around **World Tourism Day (27 Sept)**, India rose **nine places** to **31st** with a score of **4.42**. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ **10th edition**; covers **110 economies** (119 in 2025).<br>■ Top 5: **Japan (5.27)**, USA, Spain, Australia, France; lowest **Mali (2.75)**.<br>■ India's strengths: **low travel costs**, **cultural** & **natural resources**.<br>■ World Tourism Day 2026 theme centred on **digital & AI** in tourism. |
| **Way Fwd** | Fix weak pillars – **tourist services infrastructure**, safety and hygiene – and push **Swadesh Darshan 2.0** destination-led circuits. |
| **Concept** | **TTDI** (biennial, by **WEF**, Geneva) replaced the **Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index** in **2022**; it measures factors enabling **sustainable, resilient** tourism. |

**WEF TTDI 2026: where India stands**




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

## Census 2027: phase-1 nears completion, 32 crore+ families recorded

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

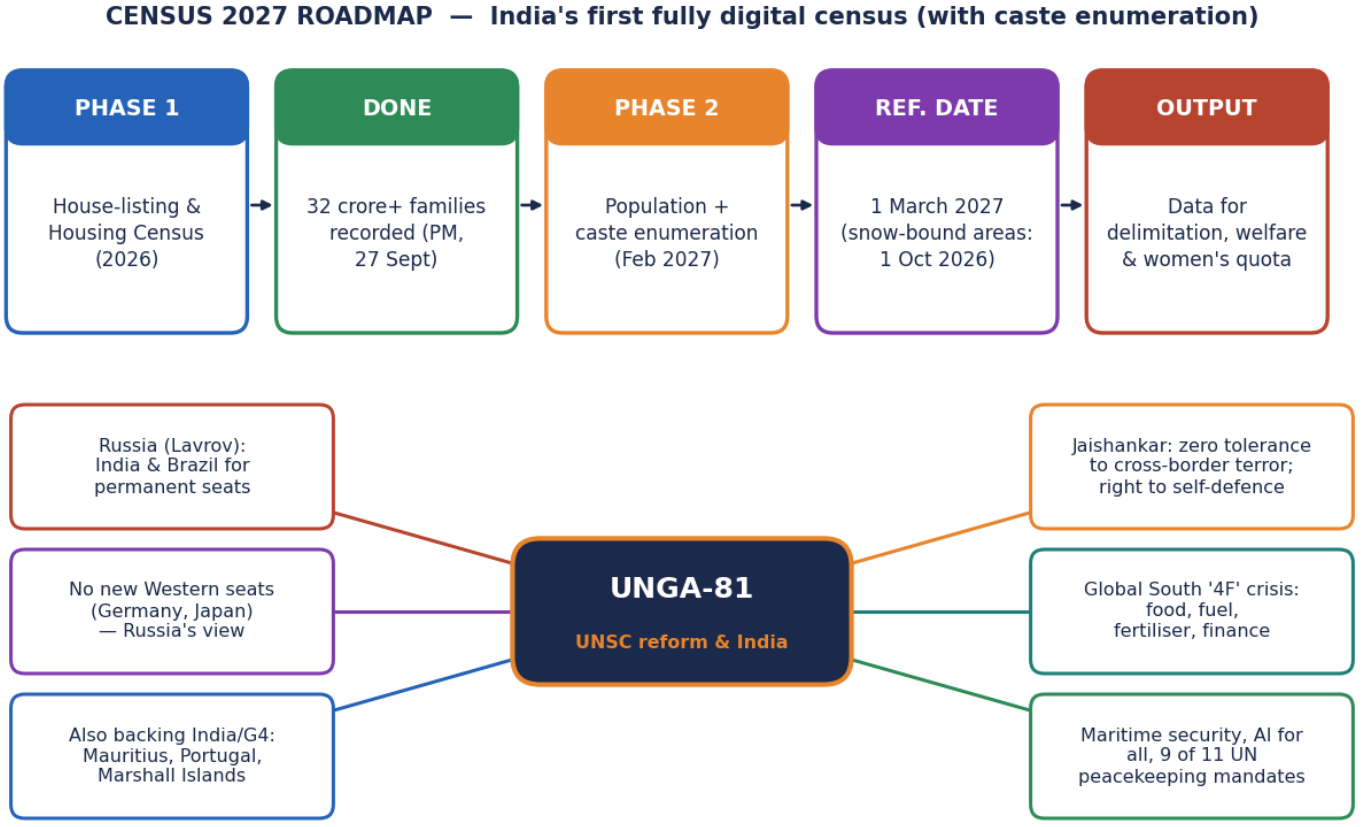
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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS2** – Government policies; **GS1** – Population. Prelims: **Census Act, 1948**, **Seventh Schedule**, RGI. |
| **Context** | In **Mann Ki Baat (27 Sept)** the PM said the **House-listing & Housing Census** phase is almost complete in all States, with data of **over 32 crore families** recorded, and urged full public participation. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ India's **first fully digital** census; **self-enumeration** in **16 languages**.<br>■ **Caste enumeration** included (Cabinet approval **30 April 2025**).<br>■ **Population Enumeration**: **Feb 2027** (snow-bound areas: **Sept 2026**).<br>■ Outlay **₹11,718.24 crore**; covers **36 States/UTs**, **~6.4 lakh villages**. |
| **Way Fwd** | Ensure **data privacy**, timely release and use of caste data for **evidence-based welfare**; prepare for **delimitation** and **women's reservation** linkages. |
| **Concept** | Census = **Union List (Entry 69)**, conducted by **Registrar General & Census Commissioner** (MHA) under the **Census Act, 1948**. Last census: **2011**; reference date **1 March 2027**. |

## UNGA-81: Russia backs India & Brazil for permanent UNSC seats

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

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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS2** – International institutions; India & the world. Prelims: **UNSC** composition, **G4**, veto. |
| **Context** | Addressing **UNGA-81 (26 Sept)**, Russian FM **Sergey Lavrov** said Moscow supports **Brazil's and India's** candidatures for permanent seats, while EAM **S. Jaishankar** pressed **reformed multilateralism** and zero tolerance for **terrorism**. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ Lavrov: more seats for **Asia, Africa, Latin America**; **no** extra Western seats (named **Germany, Japan**).<br>■ **Mauritius**, **Portugal** and **Marshall Islands** also voiced support for India / **G4**.<br>■ Jaishankar flagged the Global South's **'4F' crisis** – food, fuel, fertiliser, finance.<br>■ India active in **9 of 11** UN peacekeeping mandates; attacks on **seafarers** condemned. |
| **Way Fwd** | Convert bilateral backing into **text-based Inter-Governmental Negotiations (IGN)**; build **African Union (Ezulwini)** and **L.69** coalitions. |

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| **Concept** | **UNSC**: **15 members** – **5 permanent (P5)** with veto + **10 non-permanent** elected for **2 years**. Charter amendment needs **2/3 of UNGA + all P5** (**Art. 108**). **G4** = India, Brazil, Germany, Japan. |




## India hosts 2nd Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission

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

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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS2** – Groupings involving India; **GS3** – maritime security. Prelims: **Quad**, **MAHASAGAR**. |
| **Context** | **Indian Coast Guard Ship Shaunak** sailed from **Chennai** (**25 Sept 2026**) for **Australia** with **six sea-riders** from all four Quad nations aboard, launching the **Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission**. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ Members: **India, USA, Japan, Australia**; aim – coast-guard **interoperability**.<br>■ **1st mission (2025)** was aboard **US Coast Guard Cutter Stratton**.<br>■ India chosen as 2026 host at **Quad FMs' meeting, New Delhi (26 May 2026)**.<br>■ Reflects India's **MAHASAGAR** vision for a **free, open, rules-based** Indo-Pacific. |
| **Way Fwd** | Expand to **IUU fishing**, **HADR** and maritime domain awareness sharing via **IFC-IOR** with smaller littoral states. |
| **Concept** | **MAHASAGAR** = Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions (**2025**, successor to **SAGAR, 2015**). **Indian Coast Guard**: est. **1977/78**, under **MoD**. |

## Tarang Shakti 2026: operational phase begins at Jodhpur

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

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| **Syllabus Linkage** | **GS2** – Defence diplomacy; **GS3** – Security. Prelims: **military exercises** & partners. |
| **Context** | The IAF's multinational air exercise **Tarang Shakti 2026**, themed **'Power in Partnership'**, moved into its operational phase at **Air Force Station Jodhpur** (Rajasthan) on **28 Sept 2026**. |
| **Key Facts** | ■ **2nd edition** (1st in **2024**); runs **26 Sept – 12 Oct 2026**.<br>■ Foreign air forces incl. **Australia, USA, UAE, France, Germany, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh**; many **observers**.<br>■ Assets: **F-35**, **Rafale**, **F-16**, **A400M**, **KC-30A**, **C-130J**; IAF **Tejas, Su-30MKI**.<br>■ Drills: counter-air, **BVR** combat, air-to-air refuelling, **Combat SAR**. |
| **Way Fwd** | Use such exercises to showcase **Tejas** and indigenous systems for **defence exports** and deepen **interoperability** with Indo-Pacific partners. |
| **Concept** | **BVR** = Beyond Visual Range combat. Other IAF exercises: **Garuda** (France), **Cope India** (USA), **Red Flag** (USA, host), **Pitch Black** (Australia, host). |

## SECTION D | Prelims Rapid-Fire

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| **1.** **Yudh Abhyas 2026** (22nd, India–USA Army) concludes **28 Sept** – held at **Auli** & **Mahajan Field Firing Range**. | **4.** **Sawan Barwal**: marathon **silver** – India's first Asiad marathon medal since **1982**, with a national record. |
| **2.** **SAT-SAAW**: MoD–**BDL** contract of **₹810.79 crore** for **160** smart anti-airfield weapons for the IAF. | **5.** **28 Sept**: **World Rabies Day** (Louis Pasteur's death anniversary) and **Bhagat Singh's birth anniversary (1907)**. |
| **3.** **Asian Games 2026 (Aichi-Nagoya)**: India's **men's kabaddi** beat Iran **40–34** for a **9th** title; women won **37–34**. | **6.** **28 Sept**: **International Day for Universal Access to Information** – proclaimed by **UNESCO (2015)**, UNGA (**2019**). |

## SECTION E | Practice Corner

**Q1.** With reference to the 'mega ports' recently notified in India, consider the following statements: 1. They were notified under the Indian Ports Act, 2025. 2. All four notified mega ports are located on the west coast. 3. Mega port status is granted permanently once notified. 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: (a)** — Only 1 is correct. **Paradip** (Odisha) is on the **east coast**, so 2 is wrong; status is valid for **5 years** with periodic review, so 3 is wrong.

**Q2.** The only viable wild population of the pygmy hog, recently in news, is found in which of the following protected areas?

(a) Kaziranga National Park
(b) Manas National Park
(c) Dudhwa National Park
(d) Jaldapara National Park

**Answer: (b)** — The **pygmy hog** survives in the wild only in **Manas National Park**, Assam, where captive-bred groups have been reintroduced since **2020**.

**MAINS PRACTICE (GS-II):** Growing support for India's permanent membership has not translated into UNSC reform. Examine the obstacles to reform and suggest a strategy for India. (15 marks, 250 words)

**Hint:** Intro: UNSC's 1945 structure vs today's realities; recent backing at UNGA-81. Body: obstacles – **Art. 108** (P5 ratification), **Uniting for Consensus**, P5 veto politics, **Ezulwini Consensus**, stalled **IGN**. Strategy – text-based negotiations, AU/L.69 coalitions, Global South leadership, peacekeeping record. Conclude with **reformed multilateralism**.

**ONE-LINE REVISION:** Mega ports **4** (150 MMT / 7.5 mn TEU) | Laser **30 kW – 5 km** | Agnibaan **TRL-4→8, ₹200 cr** | Pygmy hog **6→190+, Manas** | OECD **7.1%** | TTDI **31st** | Census **32 cr+ families** | Quad-at-Sea **ICGS Shaunak**.

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

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