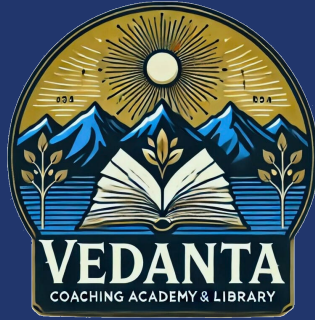




VEDANTA COACHING ACADEMY & LIBRARY PRESENTS

The Hindu *Analysis*

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Daily Current Affairs for UPSC CSE · HPAS/HAS · State PSCs

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NUMBERS OF THE DAY

13 cr+ names removed from draft rolls in SIR	32 cr+ families recorded in Census 2027 so far	1,85,785 rape cases pending trial (2024)	220 eye surgeries under Op Drishti
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Compiled by **Sapna Chauhan**

VEDANTA COACHING ACADEMY & LIBRARY

In Need of an Overhaul: ECI's Response and the SIR

WHY IN NEWS The Election Commission of India issued a press note after it emerged that Election Commissioners **Sukhbir Singh Sandhu** and **Vivek Joshi** had recorded **14 objections** to decisions taken under Chief Election Commissioner **Gyanesh Kumar**. The Hindu's editorial calls the note "damage control" and argues that the ill-effects of the **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** of electoral rolls must be undone.

◆ WHAT THE ECI CONCEDED

- ▶ Only **administrative** complaints were accepted: the agenda will be circulated before meetings and minutes afterwards; officers' foreign trips will now need the Commission's approval.
- ▶ It implicitly admitted flawed implementation of the SIR — **Electoral Registration Officers (EROs)** are to run a "special drive" to enrol anyone "whose name has got left out".
- ▶ But deleted voters are simply asked to **reapply as if they were new applicants**, and there is no answer to Mr. Sandhu's question on who authorised **16.1 lakh appeals** to remove voters whom judicial officers had included in West Bengal.

◆ THE EDITORIAL'S CRITIQUE OF THE SIR

- ▶ **Scale:** more than **13 crore names** removed from draft rolls under the present ECI.
- ▶ **Design flaws:** shifts the onus of enrolment from the State to the elector; **deletes before it verifies**; imposes onerous conditions for re-entry.
- ▶ **Judicial delay:** the Supreme Court declined for months to decide constitutionality; when it ruled on **May 27**, the SIR was already a settled fact in Bihar, West Bengal and other Phase 2 States.
- ▶ **The judgment**, in the editorial's view, echoed ADM *Jabalpur*'s deference — it read a provision for **exceptional, targeted revisions** as a licence for a State-wide sweep, made existing voters prove eligibility afresh, and set aside the Court's **1995 ruling** that every removal must be individually reasoned.
- ▶ **Evidence of damage:** over **9 in 10 appeals** decided by West Bengal's tribunals restored deleted voters — months after the Assembly polls; in **one-third of Delhi's seats** draft rolls have fewer electors than those who voted in 2025.
- ▶ **Prescription:** the ECI must be reconstituted by a **selection committee without an overriding government majority**.

THE OTHER SIDE (FOR A BALANCED ANSWER)

Supporters of intensive revision argue that the ECI has a constitutional duty under Article 324 to keep rolls accurate — removing dead, shifted, duplicate and ineligible entries — and that Article 326 limits the franchise to citizens aged 18+. Clean rolls protect the vote of genuine electors too. The debate is therefore about **process** (notice, verification before deletion, easy restoration) rather than the **objective** of roll purity.

VALUE ADDITION · CONSTITUTIONAL & LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- ▶ **Art. 324** — superintendence, direction and control of elections vests in the ECI. The CEC can be removed only like a Supreme Court judge; an Election Commissioner only on the **recommenda-**

tion of the CEC (Art. 324(5)).

- **Art. 325** — one general electoral roll per constituency; no exclusion on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex. **Art. 326** — adult suffrage (voting age cut from 21 to 18 by the **61st Amendment, 1988**).
- **Representation of the People Act, 1950** — Sec. 21 (preparation and revision of rolls; Sec. 21(3) allows a **special revision** for reasons to be recorded), Sec. 22 (correction), Sec. 23 (inclusion), Sec. 24 (appeals).
- **CEC & Other ECs (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023** — selection committee: Prime Minister (chair), Leader of Opposition / leader of largest opposition party in Lok Sabha, and a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the PM. It replaced the interim arrangement of **Anoop Baranwal v. Union of India (2023)**, which had included the CJI.
- **ADM Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla (1976)** — held that the right to move courts for enforcing Art. 21 stood suspended during the Emergency; expressly overruled in **K.S. Puttaswamy (2017)**. The 1995 ruling referred to is generally identified as **Lal Babu Hussein v. ERO**, which required notice and individual inquiry before deletion.

In need of an overhaul

ECI's response is mere damage control, the SIR's ill-effects must be undone

The Election Commission of India's (ECI) press note on Saturday, following revelations that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had recorded 14 objections to decisions under Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, reads like damage control to manage perceptions. It concedes their complaints, but only administrative ones. Agenda will be circulated before meetings, and the minutes afterwards, while officers' foreign trips will require the ECI's approval. It also implicitly admits the flawed implementation of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR). Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) are to launch a "special drive" to enrol anyone "whose name has got left out". But there is no remorse for an exercise that struck lakhs of genuine electors off the rolls in West Bengal and has marauded from State to State. Those deleted are simply asked to reapply as though they were new applicants. There is no answer to Mr. Sandhu's question on who authorised 16.1 lakh appeals to remove voters whom judicial officers had included in West Bengal.

India's institutions have largely held, except in dark periods such as the Emergency, when an executive emboldened by legislative strength ran roughshod over the Constitution and a shamelessly permissive judiciary let it do so via *ADM Ja-*

balpur. The ECI under Mr. Kumar has overseen the removal of more than 13 crore names from draft rolls through the SIR which, as this daily has repeatedly argued, shifts the onus of enrolment from the state to the elector, deletes names before it verifies and imposes onerous conditions for re-entry. It got away with this because the Supreme Court declined for months to decide whether the exercise was constitutional. When it finally ruled on May 27, the SIR was already a settled fact in Bihar, West Bengal and other Phase 2 States. The judgment, reminiscent of *ADM Jabalpur's* deference to the state, engaged the SIR in theory and not in practice. It read a provision for exceptional, targeted revisions as a licence for a State-wide sweep. While it assured voters already on the rolls that they were still presumed eligible, the SIR made them prove it all over again. And it brushed aside its 1995 ruling that every removal must be individually reasoned. Events since then indicate the damage done — over nine in 10 appeals decided by West Bengal's tribunals have restored deleted voters months after the Assembly polls; and in one third of Delhi's seats, the draft rolls have fewer electors than those who voted in 2025. The ECI's press note changes very little. The ECI must be reconstituted by a selection committee that does not give the government an overriding majority. Anything less would be a travesty of institutional democracy.

Source: The Hindu, Page 6 — Editorial "In need of an overhaul"

PRELIMS POINTERS

- ECI established **25 January 1950** — celebrated as National Voters' Day since 2011. Became permanently multi-member in **1993**.

- Electoral Registration Officer prepares the roll for each Assembly constituency; the Chief Electoral Officer supervises at the State level.

SYLLABUS LINK GS 2 — Salient features of the RP Act; appointment to constitutional posts; powers, functions and responsibilities of constitutional bodies.



02

GS 2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS · THE HINDU · PAGE 6 · EDITORIAL

New Equilibrium: As the U.S. and China Recalibrate Ties

WHY IN NEWS Chinese President **Xi Jinping's visit to Washington** saw President **Donald Trump** personally receive him at the base where he landed — an honour last accorded by a U.S. President when **John F. Kennedy** welcomed British PM **Harold Macmillan in 1962**. The editorial argues the modest outcomes hide a larger shift with huge implications for countries like India.

New equilibrium

As the U.S. and China recalibrate ties, implications for other nations are huge

In the surface, Chinese President Xi Jinping's Washington visit appeared to be more about ceremony than substance. President Donald Trump rolled out the red carpet, personally welcoming the Chinese leader at the base where he landed. The last time that a U.S. President accorded such an honour to a foreign leader was when John F. Kennedy welcomed British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan in 1962. Mr. Trump also laid out a grand state dinner at the White House, inviting some of the biggest names in tech and business in the U.S. Beyond the optics, the concrete outcomes from the Trump-Xi talks were modest. The most immediate one was an agreement for both leaders to meet twice this year at the APEC summit in Shenzhen and the G-20 in Miami, marking an unusual four meetings in one year, with Mr. Trump having visited Beijing in May. Both sides also agreed to operationalise a board of trade and investment. No new trade agreement was reached, although both have extended for another two months the trade truce agreed to at Busan last year as well as an arrangement for a \$30 billion reciprocal tariff reduction. China reaffirmed its commitment to buy \$17 billion worth of agricultural products annually, but offered no new ones. Other long pending issues such as semiconductors, rare earths and U.S. arms sales to Taiwan appear deferred for now. Both did, however, announce the establishment of a new dialogue on Artificial Intelligence and the opening of a channel for incidents, amid growing concerns over the consequences of an unregulated AI race.

The modest outcomes from the Xi visit should not obscure the broader shift that recent U.S.-China engagement has underlined. The agreement between the world's two biggest powers to pursue what they call a constructive relationship of strategic stability based on fairness, respect and reciprocity points to a new equilibrium. Their relationship certainly remains beset by serious structural challenges and will remain one marked by rivalry. At the same time, both sides appear eager to set a floor to ensure a rivalry that is more managed, stable and predictable. Countries in the region will be watching closely how this may temper an "America First" Washington's appetite to push back against China in waters far from home. New Delhi will need to carefully watch this evolving new equilibrium. The recent U.S. tariff threats aimed at India have offered a stark contrast to the measured language with which Washington has been engaging Beijing. For long, a strand of Indian strategic thinking has been predicated on the assumption that U.S. strategy in the region was centred on the idea of a relationship with India as a bulwark against Chinese influence. That assumption increasingly appears open to question.

Source: The Hindu, Page 6 — Editorial "New equilibrium"

◆ CONCRETE OUTCOMES — MODEST

- **Four meetings in one year:** the leaders will meet twice more — at the **APEC summit in Shenzhen**

and the **G-20 in Miami** — after Mr. Trump's visit to Beijing in May.

- ▶ **Trade:** a board of trade and investment to be operationalised; no new trade agreement, but the **trade truce agreed at Busan** last year and a **\$30 billion reciprocal tariff reduction** extended by two months.
- ▶ **Agriculture:** China reaffirmed its commitment to buy **\$17 billion** of U.S. farm products annually — but offered nothing new.
- ▶ **Deferred:** semiconductors, rare earths and U.S. arms sales to Taiwan.
- ▶ **New:** a dialogue on **Artificial Intelligence** and a channel for incidents, amid fears of an unregulated AI race.

◆ THE BIGGER PICTURE & INDIA

- ▶ Both sides now speak of a “**constructive relationship of strategic stability based on fairness, respect and reciprocity**” — a rivalry that is managed, stable and predictable, with a floor under it.
- ▶ Regional states will watch whether this tempers an “America First” Washington's appetite to push back against China in distant waters.
- ▶ For India, recent **U.S. tariff threats** contrast sharply with Washington's measured tone towards Beijing. The long-held assumption that U.S. regional strategy centres on **India as a bulwark against China** “increasingly appears open to question”.
- ▶ **Way forward:** deepen **strategic autonomy** and multi-alignment; diversify trade and technology partners; build domestic capacity in semiconductors, rare earths and critical minerals; keep the Quad and Indo-Pacific partnerships relevant; and manage the India-China relationship on its own terms.

VALUE ADDITION · CONCEPTS & FORUMS

- ▶ **G2** — the idea of a U.S.-China condominium over global affairs (popularised by economist C. Fred Bergsten). **Thucydides Trap** (Graham Allison) — the risk of war when a rising power challenges an established one.
- ▶ **APEC** (1989) — 21 member economies of the Asia-Pacific; **India is not a member**. China hosts APEC in 2026.
- ▶ **G20** (1999; leaders' summits since 2008) — India held the presidency in 2023; the U.S. holds it in 2026.
- ▶ **Taiwan Relations Act, 1979** — the U.S. law under which Washington supplies defensive arms to Taiwan while following a “One China” policy.

PRELIMS POINTERS

- ▶ The **Busan** trade truce was reached when Mr. Trump and Mr. Xi met in South Korea on the sidelines of the **2025 APEC** meetings. The **APEC Secretariat** is in **Singapore**.
- ▶ The **Taiwan Strait** separates Taiwan from China's **Fujian** province; rare earths and semiconductors are the two chokepoints both powers are trying to manage.

SYLLABUS LINK GS 2 — Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests; bilateral, regional and global groupings.



Long Wait for Justice as Pendency in Rape Cases Mounts

WHY IN NEWS The gang-rape of a 17-year-old girl on **September 21** by three men posing as police personnel near Kalkaji Mandir in South-East Delhi, and videos of harassment of girls from Bihar's **Jamui** and **Samastipur**, have renewed concern over women's safety. A Data Point analysis of **NCRB** reports shows that time-bound justice remains elusive.

◆ WHAT THE DATA SHOW (NCRB, 2018–2024)

- ▶ Registered cases have stayed **roughly flat** — about **84 a day, nearly 3 an hour** — but court pendency has **risen every year**, from 1.38 lakh (2018) to **1.85 lakh (2024)**.
- ▶ **2024 funnel:** ~40,000 cases in the investigation pool (29,536 new) → ~25,000 (**63%**) chargesheeted → total trial pool **2,06,777** → nearly **90% still pending** at year-end.
- ▶ Of the **20,587** cases disposed of by courts: ~**68% acquittals**, 8% discharged, only **24% convictions**.
- ▶ Only **421** cases sent to trial in 2024 ended in conviction the same year — about **2%**, and under **1.5%** of cases filed that year. Earlier years: 2.3% (2023), 1.9% (2022), 1.2% (2021).
- ▶ The overall conviction rate for rape is **below 30%**, and even convictions arrive after long delays — despite legally mandated timelines.

Year	Rape cases registered		Pending trial at year-end	
2018	33,356		1,38,642	
2019	32,033		1,45,632	
2020	28,046		1,59,660	
2021	31,677		1,73,716	
2022	31,516		1,78,485	
2023	29,670		1,82,163	
2024	29,536		1,85,785	

VALUE ADDITION · LAW, INSTITUTIONS & WAY FORWARD

- ▶ **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023** — Sec. 63 defines rape, Sec. 64 punishment (minimum 10 years), Sec. 70 gang rape. **BNSS, 2023** — investigation into rape to be completed within **two months**; trial also targeted within two months of the chargesheet.
- ▶ **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013** followed the **Justice J.S. Verma Committee** after the Nirbhaya case; the 2018 amendment added death penalty for rape of girls below 12. **POCSO Act, 2012** covers child victims (not counted in this analysis).
- ▶ **Fast Track Special Courts** scheme (2019, Department of Justice, centrally sponsored) — includes exclusive POCSO courts; funded partly through the **Nirbhaya Fund** (2013).
- ▶ **Why cases drag:** slow investigation and forensic (FSL) backlogs, judge vacancies, adjournments, hostile witnesses and weak victim-witness protection.
- ▶ **Way forward:** more FTSCs with dedicated judges and prosecutors; forensic capacity and time-

stamped evidence under BNSS; the **Witness Protection Scheme, 2018** (upheld in *Mahender Chawla*); victim compensation and One Stop Centres; gender-sensitisation of police and courts.

Long wait for justice as pendencies in rape cases mount

Rape cases have remained steady since 2018, but pendency has grown, with less than 2% ending in conviction in the same year as the trial

DATA POINT

Sambavi Parthasarathy

The gang-rape of a 17-year-old girl on September 21 by three men who posed as police personnel at Astha Kunj Park near Kalkaji Mandir in South-east Delhi and social media videos from Bihar's Jamui and Samastipur showing harassment of girls, have once again raised concerns about women's safety in public spaces and the need for prompt and stringent preventive and punitive measures.

Legislative changes over the years, especially since the 2012 Nirbhaya rape case in Delhi, have introduced tougher punishments and set timelines for disposal of rape cases.

However, an analysis of rape cases from the reports of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) shows that the country still has a long way to go in ensuring justice in a time-bound manner. (This analysis does not include rape cases filed under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, which are reported separately by the NCRB).

The country's conviction rate of less than 30% of rape cases is already low, and analysis showed that even for those cases that result in conviction, the wait is usually long.

Chart 1 shows the number of cases of rape registered every year since 2018. This translates to an average of 84 cases per day and nearly three cases per hour.

Further data show that roughly 2% of the cases that were sent to trial ended in conviction within the same year.

This is quite low even if one were to assume that the cases that went to trial towards the end of the year could spill over to the subsequent year despite following legally mandated deadlines.

Though the number of new cases has fairly remained the same,

the pendency in the courts has consistently grown over the years, as shown in **Chart 2**.

Chart 3 illustrates how only a small fraction of cases entering the system result in conviction after trial within the same year. The chart shows data for 2024, the latest year for which the NCRB has released the data.

Nearly 40,000 cases were taken up for investigation in 2024, which included the 29,536 rape cases reported that year. The rest were predominantly cases pending from the previous year and a handful of cases that were reopened.

Of these cases in the investigation pool, about 25,000 (63%) were chargesheeted, while the rest ended up in the categories of pending police investigation, transfer of the case to another investigative agency, or disposal by the police if they found that the investigation did not warrant further proceedings.

Trial backlog

When the chargesheeted cases went to trial, they added to the lakhs of cases that were already in the trial backlog, bringing the total rape cases in the trial pool to 2,06,777 cases. Nearly 90% of these remained pending at the end of the year.

Of the rest of the 20,587 cases disposed of by the judiciary, nearly 68% were acquittals, 8% were discharged, and the remaining 24% ended up in convictions.

Only 421 of those cases resulted in convictions – which is just 2% of those taken up for trial that year and less than 1.5% of the total rape cases filed that year.

A look at the previous years also revealed similar patterns.

In 2023, only 2.3% of cases that went to trial ended up in conviction, while these figures for 2022 and 2021 respectively were 1.9% and 1.2%, which emphasise the need for additional measures beyond the legislative amendments to ensure time-bound delivery of justice.

Elusive justice

The data for the charts were sourced from National Crime Records Bureau's annual Crime In India reports



Demanding safety: A college student holds a placard during a solidarity march demanding police action and better safety for women following the alleged gang-rape of a girl, in New Delhi, on September 23. REUTERS

CHART 1: Nearly 30,000 cases of rape were reported in India since 2018, averaging to around 80 rape cases a day

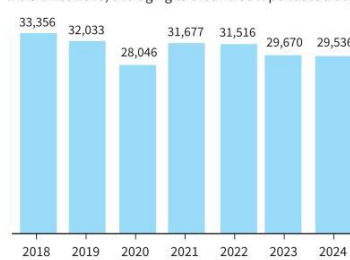


CHART 2: Status of rape cases that went to trial at the end of each year. Values above bars are cases pending trial

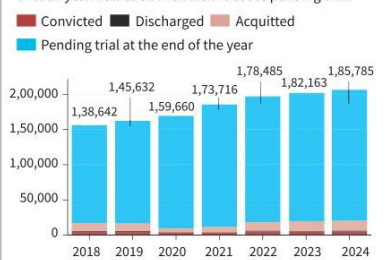
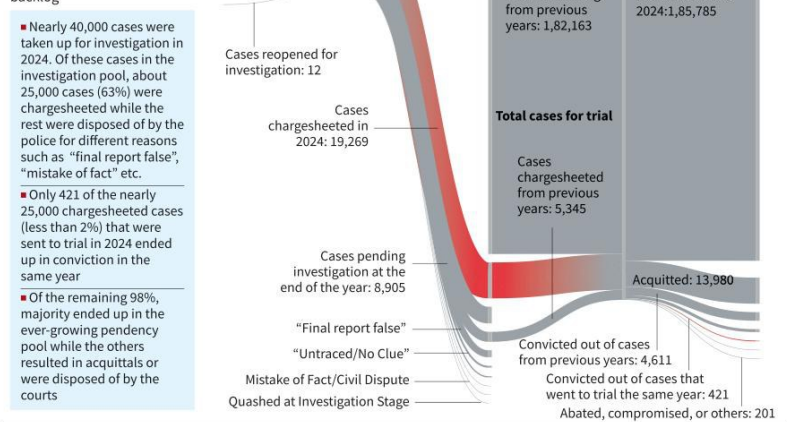


CHART 3: This shows how rape cases investigated in 2024 moved from the police to the judiciary, with many adding to the pendency backlog



Source: The Hindu, Page 7 – Data Point (NCRB Crime in India reports)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **NCRB** (1986) functions under the **Ministry of Home Affairs** and publishes the annual *Crime in India* report.

SYLLABUS LINK GS 2 – Structure and functioning of the judiciary; mechanisms for protection of vulnerable sections. GS 1 – Issues related to women.

The Paradox of De-Sinification in Global Production

WHY IN NEWS SpaceX's reported efforts, in July 2026, to remove Chinese-made components from its supply chain mark a new phase of global production restructuring — the challenge is no longer *where* a product is assembled, but what lies several layers beneath the final manufacturer.

The paradox of de-Sinification in global production

SpaceX's reported efforts, in July 2026, to remove Chinese-made components from its supply chain capture a new phase in the restructuring of global production. The challenge is no longer simply where a product is assembled. It is increasingly about what lies several layers beneath the final manufacturer — and whether firms can identify, replace and verify suppliers embedded deep within complex production networks. Moving a factory may be relatively straightforward; removing an industrial ecosystem from the production process is not.

The other side of de-Sinification

Here lies a less noticed paradox. The ecosystem problem is not confined to foreign firms seeking to reduce their exposure to China. Chinese companies expanding overseas increasingly confront it from the opposite direction. While foreign firms struggle to disentangle themselves from Chinese suppliers and capabilities, Chinese firms must decide how much of the industrial ecosystem that supports their competitiveness at home can be carried abroad and how much must be recreated locally.

This difficulty is compounded by the fact that China's industrial ecosystem is not standing still. Even as foreign firms seek to reduce their dependence on China, China is building capabilities in areas where it has historically relied heavily on foreign technology. Memory-chip maker CXMT is illustrative. It has emerged as the world's fourth-largest producer of DRAM chips, although it continues to trail global leaders in advanced memory technologies and remains dependent on access to foreign chipmaking equipment. Attempts to reduce exposure to China are therefore taking place against a moving target: Chinese firms are simultaneously working to reduce their own external dependencies.

The reverse challenge becomes visible when Chinese manufacturers venture overseas. They too confront a form of de-Sinification, although from the opposite direction. Their internationalisation increasingly involves more than establishing final-assembly plants. The



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competitiveness of companies such as BYD and Xpeng rests partly on dense networks of component makers, engineering capabilities and production relationships developed within China. Moving a factory abroad therefore creates a choice: take existing suppliers along, cultivate new local suppliers, or combine the two. Each route carries different costs — and produces a different degree of genuine localisation.

The challenge beyond factories

BYD's expansion in Europe illustrates one response. As it builds manufacturing capacity in Hungary, the company is also developing relationships with European suppliers. Xpeng has chosen another route, contracting Canadian automotive supplier Magna to assemble its vehicles in Austria. The two approaches differ, but they expose the same underlying problem: producing outside China is easier than reproducing outside China, the ecosystem that made production in China efficient in the first place.

What makes these ecosystems difficult to unwind or reproduce is that they consist of more than identifiable suppliers. They embody accumulated relationships between firms, specialised skills, tooling and production knowledge, logistics networks, and the ability of suppliers to respond quickly when designs or production volumes change. Many of these advantages are built through repeated interaction rather than formal contracts. This is why replacing an individual Chinese supplier does not necessarily eliminate dependence on the wider Chinese production system — and why transplanting a Chinese factory abroad does not automatically transplant the capabilities surrounding it.

Seen from this perspective, de-Sinification has a less obvious, two-sided character. Foreign firms attempting to reduce their exposure to China confront the depth of China's integration into their production networks. Chinese firms going global confront the difficulty of reproducing abroad the ecosystem on which their competitiveness depends. One side is trying to

disentangle itself from an ecosystem; the other is trying to make that ecosystem portable. Both discover that changing the location of production is easier than changing the capabilities and relationships that sustain it.

What India needs to note, must build

This distinction matters particularly for India. The reorganisation of production is already creating openings. Japan's TDK has expanded its battery production in Haryana, deepening an Indian manufacturing base that it has been developing as part of its broader China-plus-one strategy. Murata Manufacturing, another Japanese electronic-component maker, is expanding its manufacturing presence in India. These investments show that India is beginning to receive parts of production ecosystems previously concentrated in China. But making the most of this opening requires more than attracting individual factories. India needs domestic suppliers capable of meeting demanding cost, quality and delivery standards, alongside reliable logistics, skilled workers and access to critical inputs. The test is whether new investments progressively deepen linkages with Indian firms and bring specialised capabilities and intermediate production into the domestic economy. The same principle should inform Chinese investment: its value should be judged partly by the capabilities and supplier networks it develops locally. India's opportunity is to convert the movement of factories into the gradual accumulation of an industrial ecosystem of its own.

The emerging geography of global production will therefore be shaped by more than decisions over where to locate factories. It will depend on whether the ecosystems behind those factories can be dismantled, transferred or rebuilt. De-Sinification may be visible in new factory locations and investment announcements, but its real test lies deeper within the production system. Factories can cross borders relatively quickly; industrial ecosystems, built through accumulated capabilities and relationships, are far less mobile.

De-Sinification is reshaping factories, but industrial ecosystems remain harder to move

Source: The Hindu, Page 6 — “The paradox of de-Sinification in global production”

◆ THE CORE ARGUMENT

- **Factories vs ecosystems:** moving a factory is relatively easy; removing an industrial ecosystem — accumulated relationships between firms, specialised skills, tooling, production know-how, logistics networks and suppliers who respond quickly to changes — is not. These are built through **repeated interaction, not formal contracts**.
- **Two-sided paradox:** foreign firms struggle to disentangle from Chinese suppliers, while Chinese firms going abroad struggle to **reproduce** the ecosystem that made them competitive. **BYD** is building capacity in **Hungary** and cultivating European suppliers; **Xpeng** has contracted Canadian supplier **Magna** to assemble vehicles in **Austria**.
- **A moving target:** China is reducing its own dependence on foreign technology — memory-chip maker **CXMT** is now the world's **fourth-largest DRAM producer**, though still reliant on foreign

chipmaking equipment.

- ▶ **Openings for India:** Japan's **TDK** has expanded battery production in **Haryana** under its China-plus-one strategy; **Murata Manufacturing** is expanding in India too.
- ▶ **What India must build:** domestic suppliers meeting cost, quality and delivery standards; reliable logistics; skilled workers; access to critical inputs. Chinese investment should be judged partly by the **capabilities and supplier networks it develops locally**.
- ▶ **The test:** whether new investments deepen linkages with Indian firms and bring intermediate production into the domestic economy — converting factory relocation into the **gradual accumulation of an ecosystem**.

VALUE ADDITION · TERMS & POLICY TOOLKIT

- ▶ **China-plus-one** — adding at least one non-China production base; related terms: **friend-shoring** (trusted partners), **near-shoring** (closer to markets), **re-shoring** (back home).
- ▶ **DRAM** — Dynamic Random Access Memory, the working memory of computers and phones; global leaders are Samsung, SK Hynix and Micron.
- ▶ **India's toolkit:** Production Linked Incentive schemes (14 sectors), **India Semiconductor Mission** (2021), Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme, **PM Gati Shakti** (2021) and the **National Logistics Policy** (2022).
- ▶ **Press Note 3 (2020)** — FDI from countries sharing a land border with India needs prior government approval; central to the debate on screening Chinese investment.

SYLLABUS LINK GS 3 — Indian economy and industrial policy; effects of liberalisation; investment models; supply-chain resilience.



05

GS 3 · SCIENCE & TECH · INFRASTRUCTURE · PRELIMS FOCUS

Kavach: India's Indigenous Automatic Train Protection System

WHY IN NEWS Indian Railways continues to scale up **Kavach** across its network as the backbone of collision prevention — a staple topic for Prelims and for Mains questions on rail safety and indigenous technology.

◆ WHAT KAVACH IS AND HOW IT WORKS

- ▶ India's own **Automatic Train Protection (ATP)** system, developed by the **Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO)** with Indian industry, to prevent collisions by **automatically applying brakes**.
- ▶ Uses electronic devices linked to **Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)** tags placed on tracks, with equipment at stations and on locomotives.
- ▶ If a loco pilot **skips a red signal**, Kavach activates and controls braking; it also detects trains approaching on the same track and alerts the loco pilot.
- ▶ Earlier called the **Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS)**; it borrows key elements from the

European Train Protection and Warning System and the indigenous Anti Collision Device.

- ▶ **Permissible speeds** — lets trains run at permitted speeds safely.
- ▶ **SPAD prevention** — guards against Signal Passing at Danger.
- ▶ **Continuous speed supervision** — over-speeding is monitored and controlled.
- ▶ **Cab signalling** — signal aspects and movement authority shown in the cab.
- ▶ **Collision protection** — head-on and rear-end risks.
- ▶ **All-weather** — works in fog, low visibility and adverse weather.



Kavach — RFID tags on track, lineside tower and loco cab display

VALUE ADDITION · GLOBAL ATP SYSTEMS & KEY FACTS

Country / Region	System
India	Kavach (TCAS) — RDSO
Europe	European Train Control System (ETCS)
Japan	Automatic Train Control (ATC)
United States	Positive Train Control (PTC)

- ▶ Kavach is certified to **Safety Integrity Level 4 (SIL-4)**, the highest level of safety certification; it was adopted as the **National ATP system** in 2020 and upgraded to **Kavach 4.0** in 2024.
- ▶ RDSO, headquartered in **Lucknow**, is the sole R&D wing of the Ministry of Railways.

SYLLABUS LINK GS 3 — Infrastructure (Railways); indigenisation of technology. Prelims — Science & Technology in news.



Census 2027 a 'National Responsibility' — and Other Mann Ki Baat Highlights

WHY IN NEWS In his **Mann Ki Baat** address, PM Narendra Modi described **Census 2027** as a national responsibility: data of **over 32 crore families** has already been recorded, **2.6 crore people** have self-enumerated digitally, and the first phase is nearly complete across all States and UTs.

Census 2027 is a 'national responsibility', says Modi

Data of over 32 crore families has already been recorded during the nationwide exercise, PM says in *Mann Ki Baat*; he also highlights Indian armed forces' decisive response to terror attacks

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

P rime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday described Census 2027 as a national responsibility requiring public participation. With over 32 crore families recorded and 2.6 crore people having self-enumerated digitally, he said accurate information about people and their families would help create a precise picture of the country's future.

During his *Mann Ki Baat* address, Mr. Modi said: "The facility to self-register your Census details is very convenient. You can register information about yourself and your family from your mobile itself."

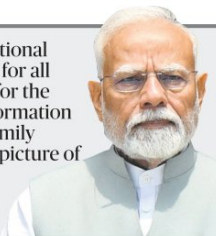
"The first phase of this exercise is nearly complete across all States and Union Territories; data of over 32 crore families has already been recorded," he said.

Over 2.6 crore people had already entered their details on the Census portal through mobile phones without uploading any documents, he added.

During his address, Mr. Modi paid tributes to the victims of the September

Census is a national responsibility for all of us... It is important for the nation as accurate information about you and your family helps create a precise picture of the country's future

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister



2008 Delhi serial blasts, the 26/11 Mumbai attack and the 9/11 U.S. terrorist attacks.

Recalling India's surgical strike on September 28-29, 2016, he said the Indian Army demonstrated a decisive response by crossing the Line of Control to target terrorist hideouts in Pakistan. He highlighted the Balakot air strike and Operation Sindoor as instances of India's zero-tolerance counter-terrorism approach.

On the "Somnath Swahiman Parv", he said Mahmud of Ghazni demolished the Somnath Temple for the first time in 1026 and the same year, the Sun Temple in Gujarat's Modhera was also attacked and destroyed. He said despite invasions and destruction of temples, the people and rulers of that period did

not lose their resolve and rebuilt them.

Praise for expert

Mr. Modi hailed the contribution of A. Selvaraju, associated with the Department of Tamil Studies at a college in Manapparai in Tamil Nadu's Tiruchirappalli.

He said Mr. Selvaraju discovered several sculptures and ancient temples, helping people understand and connect with the past.

Referring to the recently concluded Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations, Mr. Modi noted that India's spiritual and cultural heritage transcended national boundaries, citing Thailand resident Panthoun Thirkhanon's decades-long study and promotion of Ganesha traditions in that country.

With Mahatma Gandhi's

birth anniversary approaching on October 2, he said cleanliness was one of Gandhiji's guiding principles.

Green drive

On environment conservation, he noted the achievements made in the Sonai Rupai Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam, where land was cleared of encroachment for the once-displaced elephants to return to their natural habitat.

In West Bengal's Sundarbans, some women from Jharkhali — most of whom lost their husbands to tiger attacks — were creating mangrove forests, which were not only serving as a natural protective shield for villages but also creating income opportunities, Mr. Modi said.

Stating that the month of September is dedicated to the fight against malnutrition, he noted that Chhattisgarh was promoting moringa through "Har Ghar Munga"; Gujarat was encouraging nutritious millet dishes through "Vangi Spardha"; Maharashtra was conducting nutrition-awareness campaigns; and Mizoram was supporting "Poshan Vatikas".

Source: The Hindu, Page 12 — "Census 2027 is a 'national responsibility', says Modi"

◆ CENSUS 2027 — KEY FEATURES

- ▶ **Legal basis:** conducted under **Sections 3 and 17A of the Census Act, 1948** by the Office of the **Registrar General of India**; supersedes the 2020 notification for the deferred 2021 Census.
- ▶ **India's first digital census**, with a formal **15-day self-enumeration window** to submit data online before the enumerator's visit.
- ▶ **Digital tools:** GPS tagging, offline data capture for low-connectivity areas, cloud uploads and a **Census Management and Monitoring System** for near-real-time supervision.
- ▶ **House-listing — 34 columns**, including new items: internet access, smartphone ownership, gas

connection type (PNG/LPG), vehicle categories, drinking-water source and cereal consumption.

- **Caste enumeration** — the first nationwide caste count (beyond SCs/STs) since **1931**; will also be the basis for future **delimitation** once the constitutional freeze lifts.

STATIC LINKAGE · CENSUS IN INDIA

Early mentions	Rigveda, Kautilya's Arthashastra, Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari
First (non-synchronous)	1872, under Governor-General Lord Mayo
First synchronous	1881, by W.C. Plowden under Lord Ripon
Responsible body	Ad hoc until 1951; since then Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner (MHA)
Constitutional basis	Union List subject (Art. 246, Seventh Schedule)
Confidentiality	Guaranteed under the Census Act, 1948 — individual data not admissible even in courts
Delimitation link	Art. 82 & 170 — seat freeze till first census after 2026 (84th Amendment, 2001)

HP ANGLE · REFERENCE DATES

Census 2027 has two reference dates: **00:00 hours of 1 March 2027** for most of India, and **1 October 2026** for Ladakh and the **snow-bound, non-synchronous areas of Himachal Pradesh**, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand — i.e., population enumeration in HP's snow-bound tracts falls **this week**. Expect a direct HPAS question.

◆ OTHER MANN KI BAAT HIGHLIGHTS

- **Somnath Swabhimani Parv: Mahmud of Ghazni** first demolished the Somnath Temple in **1026**; the same year the **Sun Temple at Modhera** (Gujarat) was attacked. The temples were rebuilt despite invasions.
- **Security:** tributes to victims of the 2008 Delhi serial blasts, 26/11 and 9/11; recalled the **surgical strike of 28–29 September 2016**, the Balakot air strike and **Operation Sindoor** as signs of zero tolerance for terror.
- **Heritage:** praised **A. Selvaraju** (Tamil Studies, Manapparai, Tiruchirappalli) for discovering sculptures and ancient temples; cited Thailand's **Panthoun Thirkhanon** for decades of study of Ganesha traditions.
- **Green drive:** land cleared of encroachment in **Sonai Rupai Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam**, for displaced elephants; women of **Jharkhali** (Sundarbans, West Bengal) — many widowed by tiger attacks — are raising mangroves that shield villages and create income.
- **Poshan Maah (September):** Chhattisgarh's "**Har Ghar Munga**" (moringa); Gujarat's "**Vangi Spardha**" (millet dishes); Maharashtra's awareness drives; Mizoram's "**Poshan Vatikas**". Gandhi Jayanti (2 October) — cleanliness as a Gandhian principle.

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Modhera Sun Temple** was built by the **Chaulukya (Solanki)** dynasty under Bhima I; its stepped tank is the **Surya Kund**.

- **Mann Ki Baat** began on **3 October 2014** on All India Radio. **Poshan Maah** is observed every September under Poshan Abhiyaan (2018).

SYLLABUS LINK Prelims — Polity, History, Environment in news. GS 1 — Population; GS 2 — Government policies and interventions.



07 PRELIMS · GS 3 · SECURITY · DEFENCE & HUMANITARIAN OUTREACH

Operation Drishti: Restoring Sight along the LoC

WHY IN NEWS Under **Operation Drishti**, surgeons of the **Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS)** performed **220 sight-restoring surgeries** at an **underground surgical centre in Tangdhar, Kupwara**, along the Line of Control, during the **10th Mega Eye Surgical Camp**.



Operation Drishti — eye camp under Operation Sadbhavana

- **What:** a flagship humanitarian medical outreach by the Indian Armed Forces delivering free super-specialty eye care — diagnostics and sight-restoring micro-surgeries — to underprivileged people and veterans in remote border areas.
- **Who:** led by the **AFMS** in coordination with the Indian Army's **Chinar Corps**; follow-up care is provided in **Srinagar**.
- **Aim:** prevent **avoidable blindness** among border communities facing geographical, financial and logistical barriers to healthcare.
- **Significance:** bridges tertiary-care gaps in isolated regions, shows the adaptability of military medical infrastructure for humanitarian work, and reinforces **Operation Sadbhavana**.
- **Operation Sadbhavana** (“goodwill”) — the Army’s military civic action programme to **“Win Hearts and Minds” (WHAM)** in areas affected by terrorism, insurgency or remoteness, mainly in J&K and Ladakh.

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Chinar Corps** = 15 Corps (HQ Srinagar); **Fire and Fury Corps** = 14 Corps (Leh). **Tangdhar** lies in the Karnah area of Kupwara district.

- Cataract is the leading cause of avoidable blindness in India, addressed under the **National Programme for Control of Blindness & Visual Impairment** (1976).

SYLLABUS LINK GS 3 — Security challenges in border areas; GS 2 — Health. Prelims — Operations in news.

TEST · REVISE · RETAIN

Practice Zone

MAINS Q1 · GS 2 · 15 MARKS · 250 WORDS

The purity of electoral rolls and the right of every eligible citizen to vote are two sides of free and fair elections. In the context of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), critically examine the concerns about due process in the deletion of voters, and suggest measures to strengthen the independence of the Election Commission of India.

निर्वाचक नामावलियों की शुद्धता और प्रत्येक पात्र नागरिक का मताधिकार — दोनों स्वतंत्र एवं निष्पक्ष चुनावों के दो पहलू हैं। विशेष गहन पुनरीक्षण (SIR) के संदर्भ में मतदाताओं के नाम हटाने में उचित प्रक्रिया से जुड़ी चिंताओं का आलोचनात्मक परीक्षण कीजिए तथा भारत निर्वाचन आयोग की स्वतंत्रता को सुदृढ़ करने के उपाय सुझाइए।

APPROACH

- **Intro:** Art. 324–326 and Sec. 21 of the RP Act, 1950 — ECI's duty to prepare accurate rolls; SIR removed 13 crore+ names from draft rolls.
- **Need for revision:** deaths, migration, duplicate and ineligible entries; clean rolls protect genuine votes.
- **Concerns:** onus shifted to elector; deletion before verification; re-entry as fresh applicants; WB tribunals restoring 9 in 10 appeals; individual-inquiry principle (1995 ruling); dissent of two ECs (14 objections).
- **Institutional angle:** 2023 Appointment Act vs *Anoop Baranwal*; unequal removal protection for ECs; collegial functioning.
- **Way forward:** notice and verification before deletion; published reasons; time-bound appeals; door-to-door checks; balanced selection committee; equal tenure protection; transparent minutes.
- **Conclusion:** inclusion and integrity must advance together — trust in the referee is the foundation of electoral democracy.

MAINS Q2 · GS 3 · 15 MARKS · 250 WORDS

“Factories can cross borders quickly; industrial ecosystems cannot.” In the light of the de-Sinification of global supply chains, discuss the opportunities and challenges for India in emerging as a manufacturing hub.

“कारखाने शीघ्रता से सीमाएँ पार कर सकते हैं, किंतु औद्योगिक पारितंत्र नहीं।” वैश्विक आपूर्ति शृंखलाओं के ‘डी-साइनिफिकेशन’ के आलोक में भारत के विनिर्माण केंद्र के रूप में उभरने के अवसरों एवं चुनौतियों की विवेचना कीजिए।

APPROACH

- **Intro:** define de-Sinification / China-plus-one; SpaceX example shows the shift from assembly

location to deep-tier suppliers.

- **Ecosystem vs factory:** relationships, skills, tooling, logistics, responsive suppliers; two-sided paradox (BYD–Hungary, Xpeng–Magna); China as a moving target (CXMT).
- **Opportunities:** TDK (Haryana), Murata; PLI, ISM, Gati Shakti, logistics policy; large market and demographic dividend.
- **Challenges:** weak component/MSME base, logistics costs, skills gap, import dependence on critical inputs, regulatory friction.
- **Way forward:** supplier-development programmes, cluster and plug-and-play parks, skilling tied to industry, judging FDI by local capability built, trade agreements for inputs and markets.
- **Conclusion:** convert the movement of factories into the accumulation of an ecosystem.

◆ PRELIMS MCQS

Q1. With reference to Kavach, consider the following statements:

1. It was developed by the Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) with Indian industry.
2. It is certified to Safety Integrity Level 4 (SIL-4).
3. It depends solely on satellite-based GPS to locate trains.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Q2. Consider the following statements about the Census in India:

1. Census is a subject in the Union List.
2. The first synchronous Census was held in 1881 under Lord Ripon.
3. Individual Census data can be produced as evidence in a court of law.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Q3. For the snow-bound, non-synchronous areas of Himachal Pradesh, the reference date of Census 2027 is:

- (a) 1 March 2027
- (b) 1 January 2027
- (c) 1 October 2026
- (d) 1 April 2026

Q4. Under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, investigation into an offence of rape is to be completed within:

- (a) one month
- (b) two months
- (c) three months
- (d) six months

Q5. Consider the following statements:

1. An Election Commissioner can be removed from office only on the recommendation of the Chief Election Commissioner.
2. Under the 2023 Act, the Chief Justice of India is a member of the committee that selects Election Commissioners.
3. Article 326 provides for elections on the basis of adult suffrage.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Q6. The ADM Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla (1976) case is associated with:

- (a) Basic structure of the Constitution
- (b) Suspension of the right to move courts to enforce Article 21 during the Emergency
- (c) Right to privacy as a fundamental right
- (d) Anti-defection law

Q7. With reference to Operation Drishti, consider the following statements:

1. It is led by the Armed Forces Medical Services in coordination with the Chinari Corps.
2. Its latest camp was held at an underground surgical centre in Tangdhar, Kupwara.
3. It is a disaster-relief operation of the Indian Navy.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Q8. Sonai Rupai Wildlife Sanctuary, recently in news for clearance of encroachments for elephants, is located in:

- (a) Arunachal Pradesh
- (b) Assam
- (c) Meghalaya
- (d) West Bengal

Q9. The Sun Temple at Modhera, attacked by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1026, was built by which dynasty?

- (a) Paramaras
- (b) Chandelas
- (c) Chaulukyas (Solankis)
- (d) Eastern Gangas

Q10. Consider the following statements:

1. India is a full member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).
2. The United States holds the G20 presidency in 2026.
3. China is the host of the APEC summit in 2026.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

ANSWER KEY & RATIONALE

1 · a Kavach uses RFID tags on tracks, station and loco units with radio communication — not GPS alone.

2 · b Census is Union List (Art. 246); 1881 was the first synchronous census. Data is confidential and not admissible in courts.

3 · c 1 October 2026 for Ladakh and snow-bound areas of HP, J&K and Uttarakhand; 1 March 2027 elsewhere.

4 · b BNSS mandates completion of investigation into rape within two months.

5 · c The 2023 Act's committee is PM, LoP and a Union Minister — the CJI was only in the interim Anoop Baranwal arrangement.

6 · b The "habeas corpus case"; overruled in *Puttaswamy* (2017).

7 · a It is an Army-AFMS humanitarian medical outreach, not a Navy operation.

8 · b Sonai Rupai WLS is in Assam, on the north bank of the Brahmaputra.

9 · c Built under Bhima I of the Chaulukya (Solanki) dynasty.

10 · b India is not an APEC member; China hosts APEC (Shenzhen) and the U.S. the G20 (Miami) in 2026.

QUICK REVISION RECAP

ECI & SIR: two ECs recorded 14 objections; press note conceded only administrative fixes; 13 crore+ names removed from draft rolls; 16.1 lakh appeals query unanswered; SC ruled May 27; editorial seeks a balanced selection committee.

U.S.–China: Xi in Washington; APEC Shenzhen and G20 Miami meetings ahead; Busan truce and \$30 bn tariff cut extended two months; \$17 bn farm purchases; AI dialogue; India must hedge.

Rape pendency: ~84 cases a day; pendency 1.85 lakh (2024); 2,06,777 in trial pool; only 421 same-year convictions (~2%); 68% acquittals among disposals.

De-Sinification: ecosystems are harder to move than factories; BYD–Hungary, Xpeng–Magna–Austria; CXMT 4th-largest DRAM maker; TDK in Haryana.

Kavach: RDSO-made ATP, RFID-based, SIL-4, prevents SPAD, head-on and rear-end collisions.

Census 2027: first digital census, 34 house-listing columns, caste count after 1931. **Op Drishti:** 220 eye surgeries at Tangdhar.

PRELIMS TRAP-SETTERS

Census Act is 1948, not 1951 — 1951 is when the permanent RGI office was set up. **1872** (Mayo) was non-synchronous; **1881** (Ripon, Plowden) was the first synchronous census.

Kavach is by RDSO (Ministry of Railways), not DRDO. Match the ATP systems correctly: **ETCS–Europe, ATC–Japan, PTC–United States**.

Removal protection differs: CEC — like an SC judge; Election Commissioners — only on the CEC's recommendation. The **CJI is not** on the 2023 selection committee.

Chinar Corps = 15 Corps (Srinagar); do not confuse with Fire and Fury (14 Corps, Leh). The **Busan** truce was agreed in South Korea, not in Beijing. **India is not in APEC**.

PLACES & PERSONS IN NEWS

Places: Tangdhar (Kupwara, J&K — LoC) · Sonai Rupai WLS (Assam) · Jharkhali (Sundarbans, West Bengal) · Modhera (Gujarat — Sun Temple) · Somnath (Gujarat) · Shenzhen (China — APEC 2026) · Miami (U.S. — G20 2026) · Haryana (TDK battery expansion) · Jamui & Samastipur (Bihar).

Persons: Gyanesh Kumar (Chief Election Commissioner) · Sukhbir Singh Sandhu & Vivek Joshi (Election Commissioners) · Xi Jinping & Donald Trump · Harold Macmillan (UK PM welcomed by JFK in 1962) · A. Selvaraju (Tamil scholar, Tiruchirappalli) · Panthoun Thirkhanon (Thai scholar of Ganesha traditions) · Mahmud of Ghazni (Somnath raid, 1026).

“An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.” — Keep revising!