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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

THE HINDU ANALYSIS



Current Affairs & Editorial Digest

10 August 2026

PRELIMS · MAINS · EDITORIALS · PRACTICE MCQs

COMPILED BY

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UPSC / STATE PCS | THE HINDU ANALYSIS

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

Each topic pairs a crisp analytical brief with the original *Hindu* clipping and a Syllabus Linkage box. Two reframed Mains questions and ten Prelims MCQs (with an explained answer key) close the edition. Revise the ★ fact-boxes the night before the exam.

01 Netanyahu rejects Trump's 15-point proposal for Gaza

GS PAPER 2

International Relations

West Asia

WHY IN NEWS

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu has rejected the U.S.-led 15-point Gaza peace plan (proposed by the “Board of Peace”) that Hamas had endorsed, opening visible distance with U.S. President Donald Trump ahead of Israel's October 27 elections.

Key developments

- Netanyahu declared “**Israel rejects the 15-point document**”, the plan Hamas had agreed to in late July, following pushback from his **right-wing coalition allies**.
- The Israeli military will **not begin any withdrawal until Hamas is “genuinely disarmed”** and will keep acting against threats to its forces and citizens.
- He called Trump “our greatest friend in the White House” yet signalled Israel would “**stand its ground**” and raise objections with Washington — accepting some ideas, rejecting others.
- Hamas, days after choosing new leader **Khalil al-Hayya**, reaffirmed support for the plan and urged Washington to press Netanyahu to accept it.

What the plan reportedly says

- Hamas to **surrender weapons** to a nascent Palestinian governing body.
- Israel to begin a **phased pull-out** in tandem with the disarmament.
- A staged path toward a ceasefire and post-war governance of Gaza.

Why Netanyahu resists

- The Gaza plan is **unpopular with his right-wing base**; far-right cabinet members have urged him to kill it.
- He is Israel's longest-serving PM and is **running even or trailing** in some pre-election polls.



Israel, the West Bank & Gaza — areas under Israeli control after the 1967 war (pink).

Netanyahu rejects Trump's 15-point proposal for Gaza

Israeli military will not withdraw from Gaza unless Hamas is 'genuinely disarmed', says the Israeli PM amid pressure from right-wing base ahead of election; willing to 'challenge' Trump, he adds

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday rejected a U.S.-led Gaza plan endorsed by Hamas, putting distance between himself and U.S. President Donald Trump as he tries to shore up his base ahead of close elections.

After more than a week of gradually escalating criticism of the plan proposed by the Board of Peace, and despite receiving assurances that Israel would not need to start withdrawing from Gaza immediately, Mr. Netanyahu explicitly opposed the deal following pushback from his right-wing allies.

"Israel rejects the 15-point document," Mr. Netanyahu said, referring to

Difference of opinions

The Israeli PM's opposition to the proposal comes after more than a week of gradually escalating criticism of the plan

What the plan says:

■ Hamas would surrender weapons to a nascent Palestinian governing body

■ Israel would begin pulling out forces in tandem with the disarmament

They [U.S.] have ideas; some of them are acceptable to us and some are not, and we know how to stand our ground

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU
Israeli Prime Minister

the plan Hamas agreed to in late July.

The Israeli military "will not carry out any withdrawal until Hamas is genuinely disarmed, and will continue to thwart threats against our forces and our citizens", he told a Cabinet meeting.

Mr. Netanyahu described Mr. Trump, who

had hailed the Gaza deal as a milestone for peace, as "our greatest friend in the White House", but quickly made clear he was willing to challenge him, saying Israel was raising its objections with the United States.

"They have ideas; some of them are acceptable to us and some are not, and

we know how to stand our ground on these matters," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu, Israel's longest-serving leader, is running even or trailing in some polls ahead of October 27 elections, the country's first since the devastating October 7, 2023 attack by Hamas that sparked the war on Gaza.

Polls show that the Gaza plan is unpopular with Mr. Netanyahu's right-wing base, and far-right members of his Cabinet have urged him to kill it.

Hamas, days after selecting a new leader, Khalil al-Hayya, announced it supported the Gaza plan, and has since called on Washington to push Mr. Netanyahu to accept it.

Hamas in a statement said it was still committed to the plan.

The Hindu · Page 1 · "Netanyahu rejects Trump's 15-point proposal for Gaza"

★ Static Backgrounder — The Israel–Palestine Question

- **Balfour Declaration (1917):** Britain backed a Jewish “national home” in Palestine, raising Jewish–Arab tensions.
- **Creation of Israel (1948):** After the 1947 UN partition plan, Jews declared independence; Arab rejection led to successive wars.
- **1967 War:** Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza & East Jerusalem.
- **Yom Kippur War (1973) → Camp David Accords (1978):** Egypt became the first Arab state to recognise Israel; Sinai returned by 1979.
- **Gaza Strip:** Densely populated Mediterranean coastal territory, ~41 km × 10 km, in West Asia.

SYLLABUS LINKAGE

GS-II: Effect of policies & politics of developed and developing countries on India’s interests; India and its neighbourhood; important international institutions. **Prelims:** map-based questions on West Asia.

02 Koya Tribe & the Kommu Dance

GS PAPER 1

Art & Culture

Tribal Society

WHY IN NEWS

Kommu Koya tribal dancers performed during the **World’s Indigenous Peoples’ Day** celebration at the Kumram Bheem Adivasi Bhavan in Hyderabad, spotlighting Koya culture.

About the Koya

- One of the few **multi-racial and multi-lingual** tribal communities of India.
- Inhabit forests, plains and valleys on **both banks of the Godavari** across Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and Odisha.
- Believed to have **migrated to central India from Bastar** in the north.
- Famous for the vigorous **Kommu (horn) dance** performed with decorated headgear.

Language

- Koyi is a **Dravidian language**, closely related to **Gondi** and heavily influenced by **Telugu**.
- Most Koya also speak Gondi or Telugu alongside Koyi.

Cultural showcase



Indigenous rhythms: Kommu Koya tribal dancers perform during the World's Indigenous Peoples Day celebration at Kumram Bheem Adivasi Bhavan in Hyderabad on Sunday. SIDDHANT THAKUR

Kommu Koya dancers, World's Indigenous Peoples' Day, Hyderabad. (The Hindu, Pg 15)

Occupation

- Traditionally **pastoralists and shifting cultivators**; now largely **settled cultivators** with animal husbandry & seasonal forest collection.
- Grow **jowar, ragi, bajra** and other millets.

★ Prelims Pointers — Tribes & Their States

- **Koya:** AP, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Odisha — Godavari basin.
- **Gond:** largest tribe of central India (MP, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra).
- **World's Indigenous Peoples' Day:** observed on **9 August** (UN).
- Millets (jowar/ragi/bajra) tie in with the **Shree Anna / millet-promotion** theme.

SYLLABUS LINKAGE

GS-I: Salient features of Indian society & diversity; tribal communities and their art/culture. **Prelims:** match-tribe-to-state and tribal-dance questions.

03 The Quit India Movement (1942)

GS PAPER 1

Modern History

Freedom Struggle

WHY IN NEWS

The Chairman of the Rajya Sabha made a solemn reference in Parliament marking the **84th anniversary** of the Quit India Movement (*Bharat Chhodo Andolan*).

- A **mass civil-disobedience movement** by the INC demanding an immediate end to British rule; also called the **August Kranti**.
- **Launched 8–9 August 1942** at **Gowalia Tank Maidan** (now August Kranti Maidan), Bombay.
- Clarion call: **“Do or Die” (Karo ya Maro)**, given by Mahatma Gandhi.
- Leadership: Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Maulana Azad and **Aruna Asaf Ali**.



Mahatma Gandhi — the Quit India Movement, 1942.

Causes / Background

- **WWII at India's doorstep:** after Pearl Harbor (Dec 1941) and the fall of Singapore & Rangoon, the Japanese advance neared India.
- **Failure of the Cripps Mission (Mar 1942):** offered only post-war Dominion Status, not immediate self-government.
- **Wardha & Bombay resolutions:** CWC drafted the Quit India resolution at Wardha (Jul 1942); ratified by the **AICC in Bombay on 8 Aug 1942**.

Course of the movement

- **Operation Zero Hour (5 a.m., 9 Aug 1942):** wholesale arrest of Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Azad — before it could be organised.
- The leadership vacuum triggered a **spontaneous, leaderless mass uprising** across Bombay, Bihar, Bengal, UP, Karnataka and more.
- **Parallel governments (Prati Sarkar):** Tamluk (Bengal) — *Jatiya Sarkar*; Satara (Maharashtra) — Nana Patil; Ballia (UP) — Chittu Pandey.
- **Underground resistance:** Aruna Asaf Ali hoisted the flag at Gowalia Tank; **Usha Mehta** ran the secret Congress Radio.
- **Repression:** firings, over **1,00,000 arrests** and heavy fines.

★ Exam Nuggets — Quit India

- Slogan “Do or Die” — Gandhi; “Quit India” coined by **Yusuf Meherally**.
- Called the **last major mass movement** of the freedom struggle.
- Secret Congress Radio — **Usha Mehta**; flag at Gowalia Tank — **Aruna Asaf Ali**.

SYLLABUS LINKAGE

GS-I: The Freedom Struggle — its various stages and important contributors/contributions from different parts of the country.

04 The cost of Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCTs)

GS PAPER 2

Governance

Fiscal Federalism

WHY IN NEWS

Delhi launched the **Lakshmi Yojana** (₹2,500/month UCT for eligible women) on 1 August, joining a growing list of States/UTs with women-focused cash-transfer schemes — reviving the debate on their **fiscal sustainability**.

- The **Economic Survey** and the **16th Finance Commission** have flagged the rising fiscal burden of such schemes.
- In Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, beneficiary numbers are being **trimmed in the name of “rationalisation”**; Delhi has added restrictive criteria (MLA/MP recommendation) even before roll-out.
- Evaluations show women mostly spend the money on **food, health and education** — but access barriers (documents, bank access, digital errors) persist.

The cost of unconditional cash transfers

Data show that an overemphasis on cash transfer schemes is bound to eat into investments needed for other public service sectors such as education

DATA POINT

Dipa Sinha
Vijay Ram S.

On August 1, the Delhi Chief Minister launched the Lakshmi Yojana which will provide eligible women with an Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) of ₹2,500 per month, fulfilling one of the ruling party's central promises during the Assembly elections. With this, Delhi joins the list of States/UTs which now have such a UCT scheme for women.

Over the last two years, many studies, including the Economic Survey and the 16th Finance Commission (FC) report have raised concerns over the increasing fiscal burden of such schemes. Recent reports show that in States such as Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, the number of beneficiaries has been reducing in the name of rationalisation. In Delhi, even before the scheme has been rolled out, restrictive criteria such as requiring a recommendation from the local MLA or MP have been included, plausibly to keep the numbers in check. Evaluations of these schemes show that the money received by women is mostly spent on useful expenditures such as food, health and education. The usual barriers to access such as lack of documents, access to banks, and errors in digital records also remain. The question to be asked going forward is whether the finances for these schemes are coming at the cost of other investments in public services such as education and health. **Chart 1** shows the expenditure of these schemes relative to total expenditure and the expenditure of these sectors for some major States. As a proportion of total State expenditure, expenditure on these UCT schemes range from over 10% in Jharkhand to less than 0.3% in Himachal Pradesh. According to the 16th FC report, almost 44% of State expenditure is tied up in interest payments, pensions and salaries; this indicates that States do not have much space to manoeuvre towards financing new initiatives or investing in necessary infrastructure. The 16th FC also shows that the States' social sector revenue expenditure as a proportion of total revenue expenditure has remained stable since 2011-12. However, as a proportion of GDP they show a declining trend since 2020-21, indicating that there has been no commensurate increase in spending on these sectors with the increase in spending capacity. In Jharkhand, Karnataka and West Bengal, which happen to have the largest UCT schemes, the spending on UCTs is more than half the entire spending on education (**Chart 2**). Further, in Jharkhand, Karnataka, West Bengal, and Maharashtra, the spending on these schemes exceeds the entire State spending on health (**Chart 3**). This shows that household benefits notwithstanding, there is a need for informed discussions on what the long-term implications of such schemes might be. As these schemes expand, they increase the fiscal burden on States, which is likely to generate pressure on other forms of social sector spending, including existing expenditures towards providing health and education services. Given the resource-constrained position of State governments, this is not an unreasonable apprehension. Over time, the implications of underfunded public services must be considered. Some scholars have been arguing that such cash transfers are a 'compensation' for the failure of the state to create opportunities for all. The timing of the cash transfers, immediately before elections, has also led many to call them a 'dole'. It could be argued that the recent protests demanding better facilities and greater accountability are an indication that people are no longer satisfied with only 'compensation' and demand a fair share in resources.

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Burden or benefit?

Data were sourced from the Reserve Bank of India. Dipa Sinha and Vijay Ram S are affiliated with the Centre for the Study of the Indian Economy, Azim Premji University. Views expressed are personal.



Cost of welfare: Women receive the Pongal gift items, along with ₹1,000 provided by the Tamil Nadu government in Madurai in January 2023

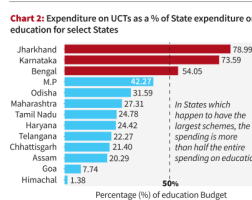
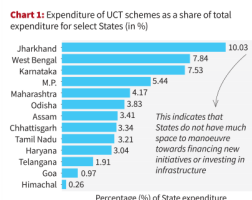
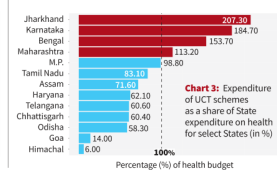


Table 1: A State-wise list of unconditional cash transfer (UCT) schemes, which have increased since 2023

State	Scheme name	Monthly amount (₹)	Year of introduction
Goa	Griha Aadhar Scheme	₹1,500	2016 (renewed in 2023)
Sikkim	Sikkim Aama Sashaktikaran Yojana	₹40,000 (per year)	2022 (expanded in 2023)
Karnataka	Gruha Lakshmi Scheme	₹2,000	2023
M.P.	Ladi Behna Yojana	₹1,500	2023
T.N.	Kalaignar Magalir Urimal Thogal Mahalakshmi Scheme	₹1,000	2023
Telangana	Mukhyamantri	₹2,500	2023
Maharashtra	Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana	₹1,500	2024
Jharkhand	Mukhyamantri Mayya Samman Yojana	₹2,500	2024
Odisha	Subhadra Yojana	₹10,000 (per year)	2024
Chhattisgarh	Mahtari Vandan Yojana	₹1,000	2024
Assam	Orunodo 3.0	₹1,250	2024
Himachal	Pyari Behna Sukh Samman Nidhi	₹1,500	2024
Haryana	Lado Lakshmi Yojana	₹2,100	2025
Kerala	Sthree Suraksha Scheme	₹1,000	2026
Punjab	Mukh Mantri Mawan Dheeyan Satkar Yojna	₹1,000 - 1,500	2026
Delhi	Lakshmi Yojana	₹2,500	2026 (replacing earlier scheme)
West Bengal	Annapurna Bhandar	₹3,000	2026 (replacing Lakshmi Bhandar (2021))



The Hindu · Page 7 · Data Point — “Burden or benefit?”

The core fiscal concern

- Per the 16th FC, nearly **44% of State expenditure** is locked in interest payments, pensions and salaries — leaving little room to fund new schemes or capex.
- In **Jharkhand, Karnataka and West Bengal** (the largest UCT schemes), spending on UCTs exceeds **half of total education spending**.
- As schemes expand they pressure **other social-sector spending**, especially health and education.

★ Two Sides of the Debate

- **For:** direct, leakage-light income support; women's agency; counter-cyclical demand; spent on essentials.
- **Against:** crowds out capex & human-capital spending; competitive populism ("revdi"); weak targeting; recurring liability.
- **Way ahead:** transparent criteria, outcome evaluation, and balancing transfers with investment in public services.

SYLLABUS LINKAGE

GS-II: Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections & their performance; issues in design/implementation. **GS-III:** Government budgeting; subsidies vs. capital expenditure.

05 Makkah Joint Defence Agreement ("Makkah Pact")

GS PAPER 2

International Relations

West Asia

WHY IN NEWS

The **Makkah Joint Defence Agreement (MJDA)**, signed on **7 August 2026** by the top leaders of **Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan**, is the first major regional realignment since the U.S.–Iran war — billed by some as a "Muslim NATO".

- The joint statement holds that **"any armed attack against any one of the three states shall be regarded as an attack against them all"** — echoing NATO's **Article 5**.
- Part of a jerky Saudi security response: it follows a **Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) with Pakistan** (last year) and a **14-country Multinational Maritime Defence Alliance (MMDA)** in late July.
- The full treaty text has **not been released**; the Saudi Deputy FM has denied it is a nuclear/sectarian axis.

A new security triangle emerges with the Makkah Pact

The Makkah Joint Defence Agreement (MJDA), signed on August 7, 2026, by the top leaders of Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan, is the first regional realignment since the geostrategic tsunami of the United States-Iran war. While the MJDA text has not been revealed, the joint statement issued specifically states that “any armed attack against any one of the three states shall be regarded as an attack against them all”.

This echoes infamous Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) – never invoked – leading speculators to claim that the MJDA was a harbinger of a “Muslim NATO”. It appears to be part of a jerky Saudi response to specific security challenges, including a Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) with Pakistan last year and a 14-country Multinational Maritime Defence Alliance (MMDA) in the last week of July.

Shifting alignments, uncertain stakes

Any analysis of the MJDA faces multiple uncertainties, including ongoing regional turbulence, partners’ previous karma, and their varied expectations. This hazy context creates a push-pull effect: from anticipation of the MJDA having profound cascading implications to it being a seemingly desultory, inconsequential response to their asymmetric defence and security challenges. Some also see it as inducing counter-polarisation and alarming other stakeholders from Iran and its non-state allies, Israel, Kurds, and Greece to the United Arab Emirates and India. To walk back, the Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister has clarified that it is neither an effort to establish a military axis nor a sectarian bloc. He denied any link to nuclear ambitions or an arms race.

This denial is unlikely to pierce the statement’s conspicuous silence about the precise threats that the MJDA is geared to confront, the U.S.-Iran war roiling the region, Israeli aggressiveness, threats from the non-state actors, and the impact of choke point constrictions. It also refrains from either inviting like-minded regional powers to join in or an uplink with the existing collective security architectures provided by the Arab League, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Observers point out that the Arab-Muslim world has remained divided against Israel for close to eight decades. Hence, the prospect of the MJDA being a precursor to a Muslim NATO polarised against Iran and its Arab proxies appears far-fetched at this stage. Moreover, even as all three MJDA signatories are allies of the U.S. (which remains suspiciously silent), it is unclear if it is meant to substitute the regional Pax Americana or to serve as a surrogate for the *ancien régime*. In the same vein, if the proposed Muslim NATO in future decides to confront Israel, the U.S. would have scored its own goal.

Moreover, the MJDA is beset by various snags. The Saudis have bitter memories of the Ottoman



Mahesh Sachdev
Retired Indian Ambassador, specialising in the Arab world and oil issues

rule, which brutally suppressed the Al-Saud. For similar reasons, from Türkiye, Ankara’s boots on the ground have been shunned by most post-independence Arab regimes.

Till recently, Türkiye promoted the Sunni outfits such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas and motley Syrian militias, many of which are anathema to the Gulf regimes. Türkiye’s President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s Neo-Ottoman ambitions to lead the Sunni Islamic world collide with the Kingdom’s self-image of being the Custodian of Islam’s Two Holiest Shrines. Riyadh does not contemn playing second fiddle to Turkey or any other Muslim power. President Erdoğan had a tenuous relationship with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) over the 2018 murder of Jamal Khashoggi, a U.S.-based Saudi journalist, in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. Turkish leaks on this episode sullied MBS’s image, making him a western outlier.

On the other hand, Pakistani troop deployments in Saudi Arabia in the past resulted in frictions due to chain of command disputes, Islamabad’s refusal to have its troops short of Shias and its reluctance to confront Iran or Yemen. Armed forces in Türkiye and Pakistan have a long-standing tradition of Bonapartism. Saudis have kept armed forces and the National Guard, both with an American-styled set up, out of politics since the Ikhwan militia insurrection (the late 1920s) and the Makkah siege of 1979. Both Türkiye and Pakistan have an active border with Iran – offering a potentially lucrative post-war economic bonanza that they would be loath to forego. Pakistan’s enthusiasm for the MJDA is circumscribed by its 900 kilometre-long border with Iran, a large Shia minority, internal security challenges and hostility with India and Afghanistan. In a typical doublespeak, last week, Pakistan began formal discussions on a Free Trade Agreement with Iran, notwithstanding the U.S. sanctions, the MJDA and the SMDA.

Riyadh’s security needs

The MJDA is clearly fulcrumed around Saudi security requirements, which Riyadh expects Türkiye and Pakistan to mitigate as part of a “friends with benefits” arrangement. However, the current threats faced by Saudi Arabia are complex and asymmetric, ranging from air attacks on its vital and vulnerable oil and civil infrastructure by Iran and its proxies, the closures of the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandeb and the possible insurrection by the restive Shia minority. It is unclear if Türkiye and Pakistan can meet such challenges, where the U.S. Central Command, with its large, long-standing presence and state-of-the-art equipment, failed. The new allies could perhaps upstage the U.S. in having more boots on the ground in Saudi Arabia, but the Kingdom is unlikely to face a ground invasion. Moreover, relying on foreign forces to address internal security challenges would be bad optics for the

Kingdom. The foregoing is not to deride the MJDA as merely a cosmetic exercise. It symbolises the congruence of the three large Sunni powers with considerable complementarity: the Saudi \$83 billion defence budget, Türkiye’s booming military industrial complex exporting \$10 billion annually and Pakistan’s 6,60,000-strong armed forces. Their defence and security cross-pollination through military exercises, interoperability of weapon systems and co-production and development of hardware would be beneficial to them all. Additionally, Türkiye and Pakistan could gain political influence in the Kingdom and enrich themselves.

At this stage, the MJDA’s future appears uncertain. It may flourish if a low-burn attrition war continues to ripple through the region. Ironically, if an all-out shooting war breaks out, Türkiye and Pakistan may be hesitant to commit forces against Iran, their neighbour. At the other end, if peace prevails, the MJDA would become superfluous. A market share scrimmage among the oil exporters would create a glut, affecting the Saudi capacity to bankroll the MJDA partners.

Having suffered Iranian doggedness and Trumpian tantrums, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Arabs are currently experimenting with various security alternatives. The Saudis began the SMDA with Pakistan last year and have felt the need for an MMDA and MJDA. They do not appear to be playing a zero-sum game between semi-reliable Pakistan and India. U.S. President Donald Trump’s unreliability was on full display to the Saudis recently in his last-minute Abraham Accords rider to the recent nuclear agreement with the Kingdom. The Saudis may not wish to further complicate their dependence on Uncle Sam by deepening their entanglement with Ankara and Islamabad, both ultimately subject to Washington’s dictates.

The implications for India

Depending on various scenarios panning out, the MJDA can impact India’s interests in multiple ways. While India needs to keep a steady eye on Pakistan’s attempt to align the MJDA partners with it against India, New Delhi should not overreact. As the world’s third-largest crude oil importer, India is slated to drive global demand for the next 15 years. India has been the Kingdom’s third-largest market and second largest trading partner. Like Saudi Arabia, India has been both a consistent and moderate pro-status quo power amenable to simpler paradigms of economic complementarity.

Riyadh finds ties with India uncluttered by extraneous considerations. India is a geo-strategically safe bet for the turbulent Gulf. Riyadh, facing a huge paradigm shift, is most unlikely to wade into supporting Pakistan’s adventurism against India. So, while the MJDA may give Islamabad an adrenaline high, Pakistan’s quest to match India’s rise through military fluster in West Asia is unlikely to succeed.

The Hindu · Page 6 · “A new security triangle emerges with the Makkah Pact”

Implications for India

- India must watch Pakistan’s attempt to align the MJDA partners against it — but **should not overreact**.
- As the **world’s third-largest crude importer**, India will drive global oil demand for ~15 years; it is the Kingdom’s third-largest market and second-largest trading partner.
- Riyadh sees India as a **geo-strategically safe, status-quo partner** and is unlikely to back Pakistan’s adventurism.
- So the MJDA may give Islamabad an “adrenaline high”, but Pakistan’s bid to match India’s rise via West-Asian posturing is **unlikely to succeed**.

SYLLABUS LINKAGE

GS-II: Bilateral, regional & global groupings involving India and/or affecting its interests; India–Gulf and India–Pakistan relations; energy security.

06 Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2026 — India's show

GS PAPER 2

Sports & Society

Editorial

WHY IN NEWS

At the truncated **Glasgow Commonwealth Games**, India retained **4th place** behind Australia, England and Canada — with women boxers the standout performers.

- India won **39 medals (13 gold, 17 silver, 9 bronze)** — down from 61 in Birmingham 2022, as many disciplines were dropped from the truncated Games.
- **Boxers led the surge** — 7 gold & 3 silver, including five women (Sakshi Chaudhary, Preeti Pawar, Jaismine Lamboria, Priya Ghanghas, Arundhati Choudhary).
- **Neeraj Chopra** took javelin silver; **Mirabai Chanu** won her third successive CWG gold; **Asmita Dey & Harsh Singh** won India's first judo golds.

Podium finish

India's women boxers were the highlight of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games

In the truncated Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, India performed well, exceeding expectations and retaining fourth place behind developed nations such as Australia, England, and Canada, despite a sharp drop in medals from 61 to 39, including 13 gold, 17 silver, and nine bronze. The gold rush on the penultimate day, powered by the spectacular performance of the boxers who won seven gold and three silver medals, improved India's position. While some weight classes had weaker draws, several categories posed strong challenges. Propelled by determination and hard work, five women boxers — Sakshi Chaudhary, Preeti Pawar, Jaismine Lamboria, Priya Ghanghas, and Arundhati Choudhary — and two men, Sachin Siwach and Ankush Panghal, ensured India's best-ever showing of 10 medals, three more than that in the last edition. The women boxers' fearless approach established them as a force to reckon with. India won 16 medals in athletics and para-athletics, with notable contributions from para-athletes Dilip Gavitt, Soman Rana, and Sharmila Dhankar. In world-class fields, the country's athletes won 10 medals compared to eight in Birmingham 2022. Neeraj Chopra recovered from injury to take a creditable silver and lead the country to twin-medal glory in javelin along with Yashvir Singh and underlined India's rising status as a javelin powerhouse. Other moments to cherish included triple jumpers Praveen Chithravel and Selva Prabhu's

underlined India's rising status as a javelin powerhouse. Other moments to cherish included triple jumpers Praveen Chithravel and Selva Prabhu's twin podium finishes, Gulveer Singh becoming the first Indian to medal in 5000m and 10000m, Murali Sreeshankar winning his second straight long jump silver, Tejaswin Shankar claiming the country's first-ever decathlon medal, and Sarvesh Kushare pocketing a high jump silver.

Asmita Dey and Harsh Singh sprang a surprise by winning the country's first gold medals in judo, while Mirabai Chanu lived up to her billing to clinch her third successive gold medal. She led Indian lifters to a significant haul of eight medals. The country's strong show, against an expectation of around 30 medals, helped the contingent leave Glasgow on a high as Ahmedabad prepares to host a bigger Games offering more medals in 2030. Indian athletes' praiseworthy performance in Glasgow has raised hopes for the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games next month, where a bigger haul is expected from a wider range of disciplines. While India is capable of securing impressive medal collections at the Commonwealth and Asian Games, it needs to raise its level manifold to be counted among the best globally. Aspiring to host the 2036 Olympics, it must identify priority sports and invest in them to ensure a higher finish, even while waging a perennial war against doping.

The Hindu editorial, "Podium finish" (Pg 6).

The editorial argument

- India exceeded its ~30-medal expectation, raising hopes for the **Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games**.
- To be counted among the world's best — and to bid for the **2036 Olympics** — India must **identify priority sports, invest in them**, and wage a "perennial war against doping".
- Ahmedabad is set to host a **bigger Games in 2030**.

SYLLABUS LINKAGE

GS-II/Essay: Development of the sports ecosystem; institutional support (TOPS, Khelo India); doping & sports governance; India's 2036 Olympic ambition.

07 NRTS — two-thirds of nurses off the national registry

GS PAPER 2

Health Governance

Digital Registry

WHY IN NEWS

Government data in the Lok Sabha show only **14.24 lakh of India's 46.02 lakh** registered nursing personnel are enrolled on the **Nurses Registration and Tracking System (NRTS)** — leaving 31.78 lakh outside, seven years after launch.

- Enrolled cadres include **ANMs, RN & RM, and Lady Health Visitors (LHVs)**.
- Incomplete roll-out delays **No Objection Certificates (NOCs)** for job changes and **credential verification** for overseas jobs — hitting careers and livelihoods.
- Coverage is starkly uneven: **Bihar 99.1%, Jharkhand 90.7%** vs. **Tamil Nadu 12%, Karnataka 14.7%**.

Two-thirds of nursing staff not listed in national registry: data

Only 14.24 lakh of the country's 46.02 lakh registered nursing personnel are enrolled on Nurses Registration and Tracking System, or NRTS, resulting in delays in accessing many basic services

Soilham Rocky Singh
NEW DELHI

More than two-thirds of India's registered nursing workforce are yet to be brought under the Nurses Registration and Tracking System (NRTS), despite the digital platform having been introduced over seven years ago to create a national registry and streamline registration-related services.

Government data tabled in the Lok Sabha last month show that only 14.24 lakh of the country's 46.02 lakh registered nursing personnel — comprising Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs), Registered Nurses and Registered Midwives (RN & RM), and Lady Health Visitors (LHVs) — have been enrolled on the platform, leaving 31.78 lakh outside the national system.

The incomplete rollout has left many nurses waiting months for No Objection Certificates (NOCs) required to change their place of employment, while others seeking overseas employment have encountered delays in credential verification, affecting their career opportunities and livelihoods.

Incomplete registration

State-wise figures point to stark disparities in implementation of the NRTS. A look at the States ranked at the top and bottom

State	Total personnel	Enrolled on NRTS	Yet to be enrolled	Coverage
Bihar	62,591	62,020	571	99.1%
Jharkhand	27,160	24,640	2,520	90.7%
Odisha	98,194	78,244	19,950	79.7%
Nagaland*	6,808	1,024	5,784	15.0%
Karnataka*	5,58,851	82,194	4,76,657	14.7%
Tamil Nadu*	4,76,264	57,084	4,19,180	12.0%

*bottom-ranked States (data tabled in Lok Sabha last month)

The State-wise figures point to stark disparities in implementation. Karnataka, which has more than 5.58 lakh registered nursing personnel, has enrolled only around 82,000 on the NRTS. Tamil Nadu, with over 4.76 lakh registered nurses and midwives, has enrolled just 57,000, while Andhra Pradesh has brought only 92,000 of its 4.52 lakh registered personnel onto the platform. Kerala has enrolled about 1.5 lakh of its 4.2 lakh registered personnel. The rollout, however, has been relatively successful in a few States. Bihar has enrolled 62,020 of its 62,591 registered

nursing personnel on the NRTS, making it one of the best-performing States. Jharkhand has brought 24,640 or around 90% of its 27,160 registered personnel under the system.

MP's letter
Congress MP Anto Antony recently urged Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda to complete the enrolment of all registered nurses and issue National Unique Identity (NUID) cards within six months.

In a recent letter to the Health Minister on July 30, the MP said the incomplete implementation of the NRTS had caused considerable hardship to nurses, particularly those seeking NOCs, inter-State registra-

tion and verification of credentials for overseas employment.

The NRTS was launched by the Indian Nursing Council (INC) in association with the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to maintain a live national register of nursing personnel and provide a common online platform for primary registration, renewal, reciprocal registration, higher qualification registration and other services.

Meanwhile, nursing organisations argue that the uneven implementation has undermined the very purpose of creating a centralised digital registry. The Indian Professional Nurses Association (IPNA) contends that several State Nursing Registration Councils continue to process registration, renewal and reciprocal registration through their own systems, resulting in delays and duplication.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Siju Thomas, Joint Secretary of the IPNA, called the NRTS "the hope of nurses across the country" and alleged that its failure was the result of "mismanagement and lack of accountability" on the part of the INC.

The Hindu • Page 12 • State-wise NRTS coverage.

- Congress MP **Anto Antony** urged Health Minister J.P. Nadda to complete enrolment and issue **National Unique Identity (NUID)** cards within six months.
- NRTS was launched by the **Indian Nursing Council (INC)** with the **National Informatics Centre (NIC)** for a live registry and online registration/renewal/reciprocal registration.
- Nursing bodies (e.g. **IPNA**) say parallel processing by State councils causes **delays & duplication**, undermining a single digital registry.

★ Quick Facts

- NRTS:** INC + NIC platform for a national nursing register.
- Coverage:** 14.24 / 46.02 lakh nurses (≈ 31%).
- Best:** Bihar (99.1%), Jharkhand (90.7%); **Worst:** Tamil Nadu (12%), Nagaland (15%).

SYLLABUS LINKAGE

GS-II: Issues relating to development & management of the health sector; e-governance and digital registries; role of statutory/regulatory bodies (INC).

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Answer-writing practice — reframed from today's themes

Question 1

GS-II • 10 Marks • 150 words

Women-focused unconditional cash-transfer schemes are proliferating across Indian States. Critically examine their benefits against the fiscal risks they pose to State finances and to social-sector investment in health and education.

Hint: define UCTs; cite 16th FC (44% of State spend tied up; UCTs > half of education spend in top States); balance women's agency & essential-goods spending against crowding-out and competitive populism; suggest targeting & outcome evaluation.

Question 2

GS-II • 15 Marks • 250 words

The Makkah Joint Defence Agreement between Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan has been described as a possible “Muslim NATO”. Analyse its strategic significance for West Asia and assess its implications for India's security and energy interests.

Hint: NATO Article-5 style clause; context of the U.S.–Iran war, SMDA and MMDA; India's stakes as third-largest oil importer and Riyadh's top trade partner; argue why Riyadh is unlikely to back Pakistani adventurism; recommend a calibrated (non-overreacting) Indian response.

PRELIMS PRACTICE — 10 MCQs

Based on today's edition · answer key with explanations follows

Q1. With reference to the Israel–Palestine issue, consider the following:

1. The Balfour Declaration (1917) was issued by France.
2. Egypt was the first Arab country to recognise Israel.
3. Israel captured the West Bank and Gaza in the 1967 war.

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

Q2. The recently discussed 15-point Gaza plan was:

1. Endorsed by Hamas in late July.
2. Rejected by Israeli PM Netanyahu.
3. Backed by the U.S. under President Trump.

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

Q3. The Koya tribe is correctly described by which statements?

1. They mainly inhabit the Godavari basin.
2. Koyi belongs to the Indo-Aryan language family.
3. They are found in Odisha and Chhattisgarh.

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

Q4. Regarding the Quit India Movement, consider:

1. It was launched at Gowalia Tank Maidan, Bombay.
2. The slogan 'Do or Die' was given by Jawaharlal Nehru.
3. Usha Mehta operated the secret Congress Radio.

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

Q5. The parallel governments (Prati Sarkar) during 1942 are correctly matched:

1. Tamluk — Bengal.
2. Satara — Nana Patil.
3. Ballia — Chittu Pandey.

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

Q6. As per the 16th Finance Commission data cited, nearly what share of State expenditure is tied up in interest payments, pensions and salaries?

- a) About 24%
- b) About 34%
- c) About 44%
- d) About 54%

Q7. The Makkah Joint Defence Agreement (2026) was signed among:

- a) Saudi Arabia, Iran and Pakistan
- b) Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan
- c) Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Egypt
- d) Türkiye, Pakistan and Iran

Q8. Consider the following about India's energy profile referenced in the Makkah Pact analysis:

1. India is the world's third-largest crude oil importer.
2. India is Saudi Arabia's second-largest trading partner.

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q9. At the 2026 Glasgow Commonwealth Games, India:

1. Finished fourth in the medal tally.
2. Won the most medals in boxing.
3. Won its first-ever judo gold medals.

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

Q10. The Nurses Registration and Tracking System (NRTS) is:

1. Implemented by the Indian Nursing Council with the NIC.
2. Intended to issue National Unique Identity (NUID) cards to nurses.
3. Fully covering over 90% of registered nurses nationally.

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

Answer Key

- | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Q1 (b) | Q2 (d) | Q3 (b) | Q4 (a) | Q5 (d) |
| Q6 (c) | Q7 (b) | Q8 (c) | Q9 (d) | Q10 (a) |

Q1 (b) — Balfour Declaration was issued by **Britain** (not France); Egypt was the first Arab state to recognise Israel (Camp David); the 1967 war gave Israel the West Bank & Gaza. So 2 & 3 are correct.

Q2 (d) — Hamas endorsed the plan in late July, Netanyahu rejected it, and it was a U.S.-backed (Trump) proposal — all three are correct.

Q3 (b) — Koya inhabit the Godavari basin (AP/Telangana/Chhattisgarh/Odisha). Koyi is a **Dravidian** language (related to Gondi), not Indo-Aryan — so 1 & 3 only.

Q4 (a) — ‘Do or Die’ was given by **Gandhi**, not Nehru. It was launched at Gowalia Tank and Usha Mehta ran the Congress Radio — so 1 & 3 only.

Q5 (d) — Tamluk (Bengal), Satara under Nana Patil, and Ballia under Chittu Pandey are all correctly matched.

Q6 (c) — The 16th FC data cited note that nearly **44%** of State expenditure is tied up in interest, pensions and salaries.

Q7 (b) — The Makkah Joint Defence Agreement was signed by **Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan**.

Q8 (c) — Both statements are correct — India is the third-largest crude importer and Saudi Arabia’s second-largest trading partner.

Q9 (d) — India finished 4th, boxing was its top medal sport, and it won its first-ever judo golds — all correct.

Q10 (a) — NRTS is run by the INC with NIC and aims to issue NUID cards; national coverage is only ~31%, not 90%+ — so 1 & 2 only.