

THE PALA

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P2. NATIONAL



Election Commission: Response to Concerns Raised by Two ECs - Examines the Election Commission's constitutional role, recent internal functioning, decision-making procedures and institutional accountability.

P3 WORLD



Nepal's flash foods: How can communities rebuild after a disaster? : Examines the shift from emergency relief towards decentralised, community-led recovery, reconstruction, accountability and resilience.

P4. ECOLOGY



COP31 hosts Australia and Türkiye face the fossil-fuel question : Examines the Türkiye-Australia presidency arrangement, electrification, oceans, fossil-fuel transition and climate-finance priorities.

P5. ECONOMICS



Industrial Production: Strong Growth with Uneven Consumption Signals : Examines India's expanding growth potential, its uneven distribution across sectors and regions, and the need for more effective pathways to sustain and broaden economic growth.

Editor's Note

Another day, and the world remains as buzzing as ever. In India, the Election Commission continues to remain in the headlines as questions surrounding its internal functioning and electoral administration take a new turn. In the neighbourhood, Nepal is focused on rebuilding infrastructure and restoring lives following the devastating 2026 floods, bringing disaster governance, recovery and community resilience into focus. On the international front, COP31 takes centre stage as countries grapple with the transition away from fossil fuels, growing electrification needs and the search for sustainable long-term climate solutions. At home, India's growing economy continues to face the challenge of unlocking and distributing its growth potential more effectively, keeping questions of economic development and inclusive growth firmly on the agenda. Alongside these developments, World Heart Day 2026 draws attention to cardiovascular health, its major risk factors and the importance of prevention and stronger healthcare systems. So, we hope students make a clear note of these developments to build clear, concise and exam-oriented notes that strengthen both their conceptual understanding and current-affairs preparation. Happy reading!

HIGHLIGHT OF THE DAY

Asian Games 2026 special

QuizUp

Daily Quiz Alerts

#339

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DECADERS OF GLORY | A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE | FOUNDED BY LAKSHMI CHANDRAN

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At the 2026 Asian Games, Vithya Ramraj broke P.T. Usha's long-standing 400m hurdles National record by clocking _____ seconds.

A

54.75 seconds

B

55.75 seconds

C

58.25 seconds

D

58.15 seconds

Why in News?

Vithya Ramraj broke P.T. Usha's long-standing 400m hurdles National record at the Asian Games 2026, clocking 54.75 seconds to win bronze. She had earlier equalled P.T. Usha's National record of 55.42 seconds at the 2023 Asian Games in Hangzhou. Usha had set the record at the 1984 **Los Angeles Olympics**, making it the longest-standing National record in Indian athletics. **Mariam Kareem of the United Arab Emirates** won first place in **54.31 seconds**. Adelina Zems of Kazakhstan finished second in **54.58 seconds**.

BHIMAN RAMRAJ

Election Commission: Response to Concerns Raised by Two ECs

Following reports of differences within the three-member Election Commission of India (ECI), the Commission held a meeting involving Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi.

SIR: Easing the Hearing Process

Exemption: Electors issued notices for being “unmapped” or having “logical discrepancies” during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) will generally not need to attend in-person hearings.

Verification: Booth Level Officers (BLOs) will visit their homes, collect documents and upload them on ECINet for the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) to decide.

Hearings: Hearings will be held only in exceptional cases, preferably online. An adult family member may represent the elector where required.

Inclusion: Those left out of the rolls, including young and first-time voters, can seek inclusion through continuous updation.

Form 6: Reverting to the Statutory Format

What is Form 6? Form 6 is normally used for new voter registrations. During the SIR process, it was also used for re-enlisting those who had been deleted during the enumeration phase

Declaration: During the SIR exercise, an additional declaration was attached to Form 6 to establish the applicant's or their parents' mapping with electoral rolls from the previous SIR.

Issue: The online Form 6 had made completion of this declaration mandatory even in States where SIR was not ongoing, preventing applicants from submitting the form without completing the SIR-specific requirement.

Authority: Form 6 is prescribed under the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, which can be amended only by the Central Government through the Ministry of Law and Justice.

Restoration: Following concerns raised by Election Commissioners, the ECI announced that the additional declaration would apply only during the SIR period, while Form 6 would revert to its regular format elsewhere.

ECINet: Review of Centralisation

What is ECINET? ECINET is the Election Commission of India's (ECI) one-stop digital platform for election-related information and services, launched in January 2026.

Integration : ECINET brings together 40+ ECI apps and portals into a single platform, connecting citizens, candidates, political parties and election officials.

Committee: A committee headed by a Senior Deputy Election Commissioner (DEC) and including an independent expert from an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)/Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) will review ECINET for compliance with electoral laws and rules.

Rationale: The committee is intended to independently verify whether ECINET's centralised functioning and role-based access comply with electoral laws.

Access: Field officers will retain role-based access according to their statutory powers.

Approval: Future IT initiatives will be considered by the Committee of Officers (COO) before approval by the Commission.

Decision-Making: Strengthening Internal Procedures

Agenda: Agendas for Commission meetings will be circulated in advance.

Minutes: Minutes of Commission meetings will be issued.

Appraisal: Annual Performance Appraisal Reports of officers will be completed within the stipulated timeframe.

Oversight: Commission approval will be obtained for officers' foreign trips, and directions issued by Commissioners to officers are to be complied with.

These measures seek to make the Commission's internal functioning more transparent, documented and accountable.

PYQ COMPASS



Q. Is the right to vote a fundamental right? Discuss the position of the Election Commission of India while undertaking the revision of electoral rolls. Can it also examine the question of citizenship of voters (GS II - 2026)

Nepal's flash floods: How can communities rebuild after a disaster?

The August 26, 2026 flash floods in Nepal's Rasuwa, Nuwakot and Dhading districts have shifted attention from immediate rescue and relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and long-term recovery, highlighting deeper questions of governance and accountability.

Disaster: Event to Process

Vulnerability: Disasters should not be viewed only as sudden natural events. They emerge from the interaction of hazards, long-term vulnerabilities and human choices.

Accountability: Viewing disasters purely as events beyond human control can obscure the role of governance structures, institutional decisions and longstanding inequalities in creating or intensifying vulnerability.

Approach: A rights-based approach requires greater attention to affected communities, their rights and their ability to participate in decisions concerning recovery and reconstruction.



Response: Centralisation to Decentralisation

Emergency: The State often responds rapidly by mobilising emergency and security forces, particularly during large-scale disasters.

Limitation: A centralised, top-down approach can undermine local governments and community-level institutions, despite their role as frontline responders.

Localisation: Ward officials, elected representatives, local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations possess contextual knowledge and should be involved even when national or international assistance is required.

Capacity: Local governments need adequate financial, human and physical resources, including ambulances, hospitals and relief shelters, to manage disasters effectively.

Recovery: Reconstruction to Societal Recovery

Physicality: Recovery often focuses on rebuilding houses and infrastructure, but physical reconstruction may not reflect community priorities and choices.

Participation: Communities should have a meaningful role in decisions such as resettlement and reconstruction, including whether and where they wish to relocate.

Long-term: Effective recovery requires sustained State engagement with affected populations.

Voice: Participation to 'Bite'

Voice: Affected communities need the ability to demand answers, question relief decisions and influence government action.

Teeth: Voice becomes meaningful only when communities and local institutions have the resources and institutional capacity to translate their demands into concrete interventions.

Bite: The combination of voice and institutional capacity produces a "bite" — concrete measures that protect the rights and welfare of disaster-affected communities.

Governance: Human Choices and Disaster Risk

Infrastructure: The destruction of hydropower and road infrastructure in the Nepal floods raises questions about where and how critical infrastructure is planned and authorised.

Decisions: Locating infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and hydropower projects in vulnerable areas involves human and institutional decisions that can influence disaster impacts.

Prevention: Disaster management therefore requires examining governance and decisions made before the hazard occurs, not merely the response after it.

PYQ COMPASS



Q. "Community participation is the cornerstone of effective disaster management". Analyse this statement with suitable examples from India. Also discuss the challenges to community participation and measures to strengthen it. (GS III - 2026)

COP31 hosts Australia and Türkiye face the fossil-fuel question

The Conference of the Parties (COP) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the principal multilateral forum where countries assess climate progress, negotiate collective responses and translate climate commitments into action. COP31 will be held in Antalya, Türkiye, from November 9–20, 2026.

COP31: A Distinctive Presidency

Host: COP31 will be hosted by Türkiye in Antalya, with Environment Minister Murat Kurum serving as COP31 President.

Partnership: Australia will oversee the negotiations process, with Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen serving as President of Negotiations/Vice-President. This Türkiye–Australia arrangement separates the hosting and negotiation functions while requiring the two presidencies to work jointly.

Approach: The COP31 presidency describes the conference as an “**Implementation COP**” and a “**COP of the Future**”, guided by Dialogue, Consensus and Action, with an emphasis on converting commitments into measurable outcomes.

COP31: Finance, Adaptation and Loss and Damage

- Climate finance, adaptation finance and loss and damage remain important areas of contention in global climate negotiations.
- The absence of loss and damage financing and broader climate finance from COP31’s stated priorities may increase attention on whether these issues enter the formal negotiations.
- Climate-related disasters can further strengthen demands for greater mitigation, adaptation and climate finance.

Significance of COP31

- COP31 reflects a broader shift in climate negotiations from setting emission targets towards questions of implementation, energy transition, finance and differentiated pathways.
- The Türkiye–Australia arrangement and the competing priorities surrounding electrification, fossil fuels, finance and adaptation illustrate the challenge of building consensus among countries with different national circumstances.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in 1994.

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the annual forum where the 198 Parties to the UNFCCC assess progress and negotiate collective climate action.

The COP process has produced major climate agreements including the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and the Paris Agreement (2015).

PYQ COMPASS



Q. Consider the following statements with reference to India's response to climate change:

I. India's Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy (LT-LEDS) is a crucial tool for achieving net-zero emissions by 2070.

II. India's 4th Biennial Update Report (BUR-4) submitted in December, 2024 recorded around 8% decrease in Greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 over 2019.

III. Climate-resilient development necessarily depends on quick and short-term achievement of emission reduction targets.

Which of the following relationships among the above statements is/are correct?

1. Statement I is empirically supported by statement II.
2. Statement III contradicts the approach implicit in statement I.
3. Statement I and statement III together establish the premise of long-term sustainability.

Select the answer using the code given below: (a) 1 only (b) 1 and 2 (c) 2 and 3 (d) 3 only

Industrial Production: Strong Growth with Uneven Consumption Signals

India's industrial production grew 8% year-on-year in August 2026, supported partly by a favourable base effect, while weak growth in consumer non-durables raised concerns about the strength of household demand.

Overall: Broad Industrial Expansion

Index of Industrial Production (IIP): Industrial production, measured by the IIP, grew 8% in August, compared with 7.4% in July and 4.7% in August 2025.

Trend: Industrial growth averaged 6.7% during April-August 2026, compared with 4.2% during the corresponding period of 2025-26.

Manufacturing: Manufacturing, which accounts for about three-fourths of the IIP, grew 9% year-on-year, with 18 of 23 manufacturing categories recording higher output.

Base Effect: Boosting the Growth Rate

Meaning: A favourable base effect occurs when output in the corresponding period of the previous year was unusually low, making the current year's growth rate appear higher.

August: Despite the 8% year-on-year growth, overall industrial output was 1.8% lower than July, while manufacturing output fell 1.4% month-on-month.

Cause: The favourable base was partly linked to inventory recalibration in August 2025, when sellers reduced stocks ahead of expected Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate cuts that took effect on September 22, 2025.

Consumption: Divergent Trends

Durables: Consumer durable production grew 11.1% in August, following 12% growth in July, indicating continued strength in demand for longer-lasting goods.

Non-durables: Consumer non-durables, largely Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), grew only 2.1% in August. Their output rose just 1.2% during April-August 2026, following 2.1% growth in the corresponding period of 2025-26.

Credit: Personal loans also recorded strong growth, with bank lending up 16.2% and non-bank lending up 21.4% as of July.

Strong growth run continues



Industry: Sectoral Performance

Manufacturing: Electrical equipment (30.9%) and motor vehicles (25.2%) recorded particularly strong year-on-year growth, pointing to broad-based improvement within manufacturing.

Mining: Mining and quarrying output fell 5.6% year-on-year and 9.2% month-on-month, partly reflecting the disruption caused by the monsoon.

Electricity: Electricity and gas supply grew 12.3% year-on-year, although its month-on-month increase was only 0.3%. Renewable electricity generation rose 15.4%, while non-renewable generation increased 12.3%.

Goods: Investment-Led Strength

Capital Goods: Output grew 16.9%, indicating strong production of investment-related goods.

Intermediate Goods: Output increased 13.7%, reflecting strength in goods used as inputs for further production.

Consumer Durables: Output rose 11.1%.

Primary Goods: Output increased 3.5%, while consumer non-durables grew only 2.1%.

The August data indicates strong and broad-based industrial activity, particularly in manufacturing, capital goods and consumer durables. However, the persistent weakness in consumer non-durables remains an important indicator to watch for the underlying strength of household consumption.

PYQ COMPASS



Q. Faster economic growth requires increased share of the manufacturing sector in GDP, particularly of MSMEs. Comment on the present policies of the Government in this regard. (GS III - 2023)

Human Heart and Cardiovascular Health: World Heart Day 2026

Why in News? World Heart Day 2026 highlights the global burden of cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), the importance of recognising risk factors and the need for stronger prevention and heart care.

Cardiovascular Burden

Global: Cardiovascular diseases claim over 20 million lives annually and remain a leading cause of death and disability worldwide.

South-East Asia: In the World Health Organization (WHO) South-East Asia Region, eight people die from CVDs every minute, with half of these deaths occurring prematurely among people below 70 years.

Vulnerability: Ageing populations and increasing urbanisation are increasing cardiovascular vulnerability and placing additional pressure on resource-constrained health systems.

Heart: Structure and Function

Location: The heart lies in the front of the chest, behind and slightly to the left of the breastbone, between the lungs. The left lung is slightly smaller to accommodate it, while the ribcage protects the heart.

Walls: The heart wall has three layers — endocardium, the inner layer; myocardium, the muscular middle layer; and epicardium, the protective outer layer. A muscular septum separates the right and left sides.

Chambers: The right atrium receives oxygen-poor blood from the body and the right ventricle pumps it to the lungs. The left atrium receives oxygen-rich blood from the lungs and the left ventricle pumps it to the body through the aorta.

Valves: The four valves — tricuspid, mitral, aortic and pulmonic — maintain one-way blood flow by opening and closing during each heartbeat.

Circulation: Arteries carry blood away from the heart, veins return blood to it and capillaries enable the exchange of oxygen, nutrients and waste products with tissues. The heart itself receives oxygen-rich blood through the coronary arteries.



Cardiovascular Diseases and Risk Factors

Major Diseases: Cardiovascular disease includes conditions such as atrial fibrillation, coronary heart disease, heart attack, heart failure and stroke.

Atrial Fibrillation: It is an irregular heartbeat condition associated with one in three strokes.

Coronary Heart Disease: Narrowing or blockage of the coronary arteries restricts oxygen-rich blood reaching the heart.

Heart Attack: It occurs when a blocked artery deprives the heart of oxygen.

Heart Failure: It occurs when the heart cannot pump blood and oxygen around the body as effectively as it should.

Stroke: It occurs when the blood supply to the brain is suddenly interrupted, such as when a blood clot blocks an artery.

Risk Factors: Major modifiable risk factors include hypertension, diabetes, tobacco use, alcohol consumption, unhealthy diets high in salt and fats, and physical inactivity.

Control Gap: In the WHO South-East Asia Region, as many as 85% of people living with hypertension and diabetes do not have their conditions under control.

Cardiovascular health depends on understanding the heart's structure and circulation while addressing preventable risk factors through early detection, disease control and population-level prevention.

PYQ Compass



Q. Consider the following statements with reference to India's response to climate change:

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Select the answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 only

(b) 1 and 2

(c) 2 and 3

(d) 3 only

Ans : b

India submitted its Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy (LT-LEDS) at the COP27 held in Sharm El Sheikh in 2022 under the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement.

Statement 1 is correct : LT-LEDS is a long-term roadmap prepared by countries to: achieve climate goals, pursue economic development, reduce greenhouse gas emissions over time, align with the Paris Agreement temperature goals. It is generally targeted toward the mid-century period (around 2050–2070).

Statement 2 is correct: India submitted its 4th Biennial Update Report (BUR-4) to the UNFCCC on 30th December 2024. The report shows a 7.93% reduction in total GHG emissions in 2020 with respect to 2019 which aids in the Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy.

Statement 3 is incorrect: Statement 3 talks about quick and short-term achievement and that is in contradiction with Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy. Climate resilient development does not necessarily depend on quick and short-term achievement of emission reduction targets.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q. With reference to ECINET, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is envisaged as a unified digital platform integrating multiple ECI applications and portals.
2. It provides services relating to voter registration and electoral information.
3. It eliminates the role-based access of field-level election officials.
4. It is intended to bring citizens, candidates, political parties and election officials onto an integrated platform.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: (b)

Statements 1, 2 and 4 correctly describe ECINET, while Statement 3 reverses an important feature of the system: role-based access continues to be retained for field officials. ECINET does not eliminate role-based access for field-level election officials. Officers continue to have access according to their respective roles and statutory powers. The issue is therefore not centralisation replacing field-level authority, but ensuring that a centralised digital system remains consistent with the functions assigned to different electoral authorities.

Q. Which of the following are major risk factors for cardiovascular diseases?

1. Hypertension
2. Diabetes
3. Tobacco use
4. Physical inactivity
5. Diet high in salt and fats

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (b) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (c) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- (d) 1 and 5 only

Answer: (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Persistent hypertension places additional strain on the cardiovascular system and is an important condition requiring control.

Statement 2 is correct: Poorly controlled diabetes is associated with increased cardiovascular vulnerability, making prevention and effective disease management important components of cardiovascular health.

Statement 3 is correct: Tobacco exposure contributes to cardiovascular damage and increases the risk of serious cardiovascular conditions.

Statement 4 is correct: Physical inactivity is another major risk factor. Lack of adequate physical activity is associated with greater cardiovascular vulnerability and is therefore an important target of preventive health measures.

Statement 5 is correct: An unhealthy diet high in salt and fats contributes to cardiovascular risk. Dietary risk is particularly relevant to conditions such as hypertension and the development of cardiovascular disease.