

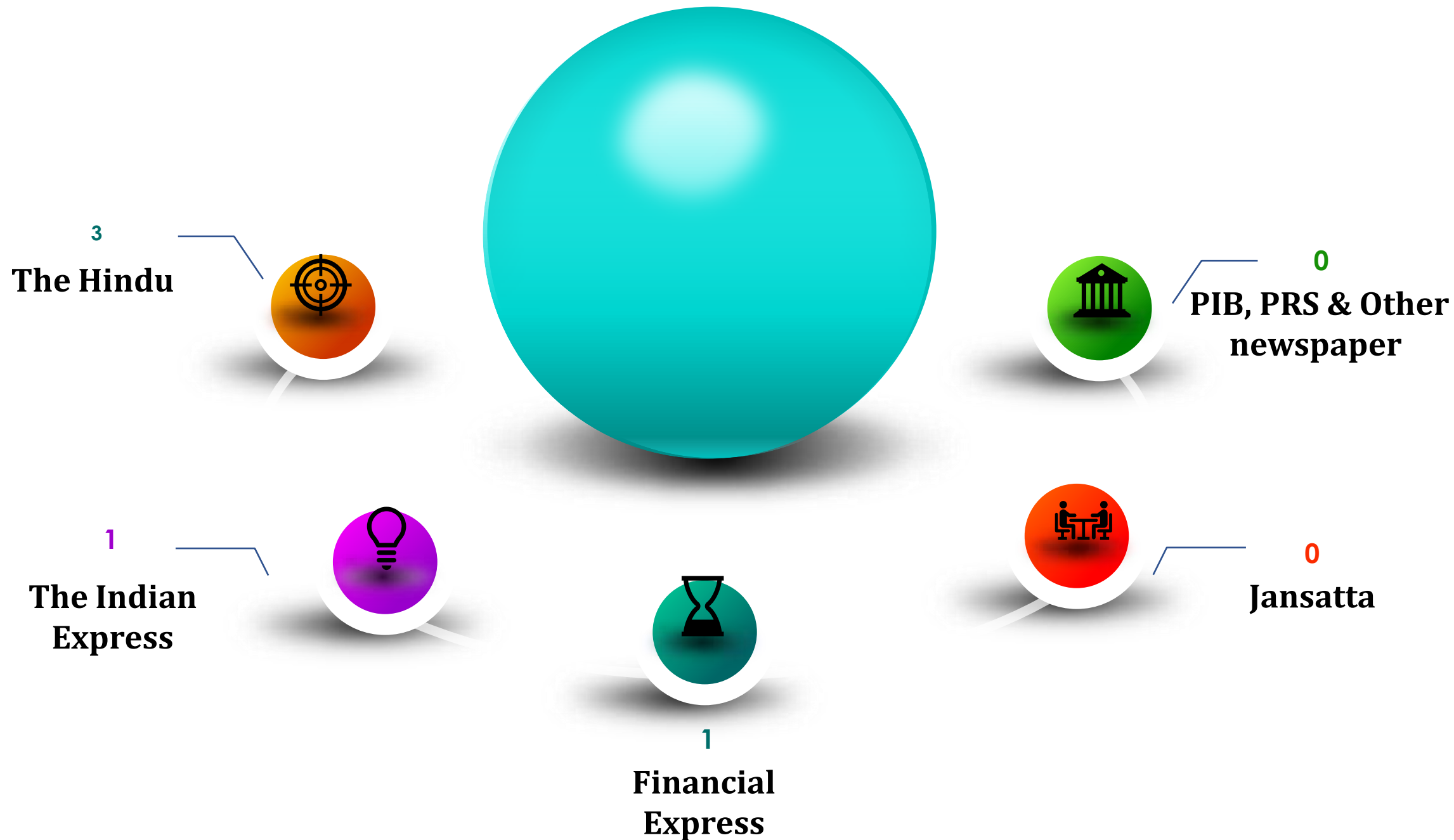


जनसत्ता



THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS





“The greatest prison people live in is the fear of what other people think.”

— Osho

REPORT - PAGE 14

'Why such a long rope'
He said it was "beyond comprehension" why "such a long rope" was given to a judge whose request for resignation to the Rajasthan High Court was not accepted by the Supreme Court Collegium in March 2023.

While Mr. Trump campaigned in 2024 on a platform of stopping illegal immigration, his administration has also made legal immigration more difficult—for example, by imposing new and expensive fees for applicants of certain work visas.

157 killed in Nepal flash flood, hundreds of people missing

Around 133 Indians reported missing after a flooded Bhotekoshi River swamped villages bordering Tibet

A rock-and-ice landslide on the China border caused a debris-laden flood, officials say citing satellite images

Sanjeev Satgaliya
KATHMANDU

At least 157 people were killed and more than 400 people, 133 Indians among them, were missing or out of contact after a massive flash flood in Nepal's Bhotekoshi River swept through villages in Rasuwa, a district bordering China's Tibet region, on Wednesday morning, authorities said.

According to Nepal's Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, 391 foreign nationals and 93 Nepali citizens were out of contact. "Several security personnel, government officials and employees of hydropower projects are also out of contact," the government said. "The disaster has damaged 19 motorable bridges and 40 kilometres of road."

The Nepal Police said that 157 bodies had been recovered. As authorities stepped up rescue operations, officials said the death toll could rise.

Debris-laden flood
Nepal's National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority, citing a preliminary analysis of Planet Labs satellite imagery, said in the evening that a rock-and-ice landslide along the Nepal-China border, about 20 km northeast of the Rasuwagadhi border crossing, caused a debris-laden flood in the Lhunde River, a tributary of Bhotekoshi, that flowed through Timore and entered the Trishuli River.

Prime Minister Balendra Shah said in a social media post that he was left with a "heavy heart". "The entire nation has been left shocked and deeply saddened by the loss of life and damage to property," he added, describing the disaster as "sudden" and "massive". Stating that the government immediately mobilised all its resources for rescue operations, he vowed that rescue operations would continue through the night.

"Saving the lives of the injured, searching for those missing and protect-



Flood fury: A screenshot shows water flowing across a residential area and damaging a bridge near the Nepal-Tibet border. (1)

PM Modi promises all possible assistance to tragedy-hit Nepal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra

Shah and offered "all possible assistance" to deal with the flash flood. "Our teams are coordinating closely on rescue and relief efforts,"

said Mr. Modi on X.

An Indian Air Force aircraft with 10 tonnes of relief materials and medical supplies took off to Nepal from the Hindon

airbase. Additional aircraft have been earmarked for rescue and evacuation.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 4

ing affected people is our first priority," he said.

Earlier, Foreign Minister Shishir Khanal told Parliament that preliminary information suggested an earthquake around 8.37 a.m. triggered an ice avalanche, which was followed by the flood around 8.40 a.m. "The information needed further verification," he said.

Officials at the Flood Forecasting Division had separately said they received information that a landslide may have blocked a river in Tibet before water burst through. In an update at 1.35 p.m., the division said, citing information from the Chinese side, that the blocked river had yet to fully open.

The Bhotekoshi River,

which originates in Tibet, flows into Nepal's Trishuli River and eventually enters India as the Gandak River.

Mr. Khanal told Parliament that the flood had caused extensive damage in Timore and Syabrubesi in Rasuwa, and in Betrawati, Trishuli, Battar and Devghat in neighbouring Nuwakot. Roads, bridges, hydropower and communication infrastructure were among those damaged.

According to Nepali authorities, there had been no rain in the region before the flood hit, while rainfall was recorded on the Tibetan side. In July last year, flash floods in the same Bhotekoshi River, which also occurred without rain, killed nine people and

washed away the Miteri Pol (Friendship Bridge) linking Nepal and China.

A Cabinet meeting in the afternoon directed authorities to urgently restore roads, electricity and telecommunications in the affected areas and to mobilise resources to rebuild damaged public infrastructure. It also decided to de-clare the affected local governments in Rasuwa, Nuwakot, and Dhading as disaster-stricken areas for three months.

Experts concerned

The recurrence of extreme floods has raised concerns among experts about disaster preparedness, infrastructure planning and risk mitigation.

"I think we should ana-

lyse today's incident in a larger frame; it's not a standalone event. The Melamchi, Roshi, and Seti floods, etc, show that these kinds of extreme events are occurring across the Himalayas and are becoming more frequent," said Ramesh Bhushal, a journalist who has extensively covered climate change and its impact. "While such disasters may happen regardless of our understanding, the high casualties are the result of ignorance."

A construction spree along rivers in Nepal's northern regions has remained a concern for environmentalists and climate experts.

WESTERN DISTURBANCE
» PAGE 4

Topic	English	हिंदी
Event	Catastrophic flash flood in the Nepal–Tibet Himalayan border region on 26 August 2026	26 अगस्त 2026 को नेपाल–तिब्बत हिमालयी सीमा क्षेत्र में विनाशकारी आकस्मिक बाढ़
Major affected area	Rasuwa district of Nepal and adjoining Tibet	नेपाल का रसुवा जिला तथा तिब्बत से लगा क्षेत्र
Important river	Bhote Koshi , which flows into the Trishuli river system	भोटे कोशी , जो आगे त्रिशूली नदी तंत्र में मिलती है
Origin of surge	The destructive surge originated on the Tibetan side of the Himalayas	विनाशकारी जल-मलबा प्रवाह की उत्पत्ति हिमालय के तिब्बती क्षेत्र से हुई
Likely trigger	Preliminary investigations indicate collapse of glacier/ice-rock mass and landslide; a seismic trigger is also being investigated	प्रारंभिक जाँच में हिमनद/बर्फ-चट्टान के ढहने और भूस्खलन की भूमिका सामने आई; भूकंपीय कारण की भी जाँच जारी है
Nature of disaster	A high-velocity debris-laden flash flood carrying water, mud, rocks and ice	पानी, मिट्टी, चट्टानों और बर्फ से युक्त तीव्र गति का मलबा-युक्त फ्लैश फ्लड
Death toll	About 157 reported dead in Nepal , with additional deaths reported in Tibet; figures remain provisional	नेपाल में लगभग 157 मौतें , तिब्बत में भी मौतें; आँकड़े अभी बदल सकते हैं

Indians affected	At least 133 Indian nationals were reported missing/untraceable, many connected with the Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage	कम से कम 133 भारतीय नागरिक लापता/संपर्क से बाहर बताए गए, जिनमें कई कैलाश मानसरोवर यात्रियों से जुड़े थे
Infrastructure damage	Roads, bridges, settlements and hydropower infrastructure were damaged	सड़कें, पुल, बस्तियाँ और जलविद्युत परियोजनाएँ क्षतिग्रस्त हुईं
India's response	India offered assistance and dispatched humanitarian relief to Nepal	भारत ने नेपाल को सहायता की पेशकश की और मानवीय राहत भेजी
Indian states concerned	Bihar and Uttar Pradesh monitored downstream rivers because Nepal's river systems ultimately connect with the Gangetic plains	नेपाल की नदियाँ गंगा के मैदानी क्षेत्र से जुड़ी होने के कारण बिहार और उत्तर प्रदेश में निगरानी बढ़ाई गई





**Nepal Floods Leave Destruction: Flash
Floods Sweep Away Bridges and Homes,
More Than 500 Missing, Several De@d.**

Sequence	English	हिंदी
1. Fragile Himalayan terrain	Steep slopes, glaciers, loose sediments and fractured rocks make the region naturally unstable.	तीव्र ढाल, हिमनद, ढीला मलबा और टूटी हुई चट्टानें हिमालय को स्वाभाविक रूप से अस्थिर बनाती हैं।
2. Ice/rock collapse	A glacier/ice-rock mass apparently collapsed in the high Himalayas.	ऊँचे हिमालयी क्षेत्र में हिमनद/बर्फ-चट्टान का विशाल हिस्सा ढह गया।
3. Avalanche	Ice and rocks rushed rapidly down the steep slope.	बर्फ और चट्टानों का विशाल मलबा तेज गति से नीचे आया।
4. River interaction	The mass entered the Lhende Khola/Bhote Koshi river system.	यह मलबा ल्हेण्डे खोला/भोटे कोशी नदी तंत्र में पहुँचा।
5. Sediment entrainment	Flow picked up mud, boulders and sediment, greatly increasing its destructive force.	प्रवाह ने मिट्टी, बड़े पत्थर और तलछट को साथ लिया, जिससे उसकी विनाशकारी शक्ति बढ़ गई।
6. Flash flood	A high-speed debris-laden flood travelled downstream into Nepal.	मलबे से भरी तेज बाढ़ नेपाल की ओर नीचे बहने लगी।
7. Cascading disaster	Bridges, roads, settlements and hydropower infrastructure were hit simultaneously.	पुल, सड़कें, बस्तियाँ और जलविद्युत ढाँचे एक साथ प्रभावित हुए।

Hazard	English Explanation	हिंदी में
Flash Flood	Sudden, rapidly rising flood occurring within a short period	बहुत कम समय में अचानक आने वाली तीव्र बाढ़
GLOF	Glacial Lake Outburst Flood caused by sudden release of water stored in a glacial lake	हिमनदीय झील का बाँध टूटने से अचानक पानी निकलना
Cloudburst	Extremely intense rainfall concentrated over a small geographical area	छोटे क्षेत्र में अत्यधिक तीव्र वर्षा
Debris Flow	Fast-moving mixture of water, mud, rocks and sediment	पानी, मिट्टी, चट्टान और मलबे का तीव्र प्रवाह
Landslide	Downslope movement of rock/soil under gravity	गुरुत्वाकर्षण के कारण चट्टान/मिट्टी का ढाल से नीचे खिसकना
Ice/Rock Avalanche	Rapid downslope movement of ice and rock	बर्फ और चट्टानों का तेज गति से नीचे गिरना



Nepal River/System

Karnali

Narayani

Saptakoshi/Koshi

Mahakali

Bagmati

Kamla

**Bhote Koshi–Trishuli
system**

Indian Connection

Ghaghara

Gandak

Kosi

Sharda/Kali

Enters Bihar

Kamla-Balan system

Ultimately linked with
Narayani/Gandak
drainage

Exam Point

Major tributary of Ganga

Important for Bihar &
eastern UP

Major flood-prone river of
Bihar

Forms part of India–Nepal
boundary

Important transboundary
river

Flood-prone Bihar river

Relevant to present disaster



Exam / Year	PYQ / Theme	Connection with Current News
UPSC CSE Mains 2021 – GS III	<i>Differentiate the causes of landslides in the Himalayan region and Western Ghats.</i>	Very strong – Himalayan slope instability, geology and extreme rainfall
UPSC CSE Mains 2016 – GS III	<i>The frequency of urban floods due to high-intensity rainfall is increasing... discuss preparedness mechanisms.</i>	Flash-flood preparedness, forecasting and mitigation
UPSC CSE Mains 2013 – GS III	<i>How important are vulnerability and risk assessment for pre-disaster management?</i>	Directly applicable to glacial lakes, landslides and Himalayan valleys
UPSC Geography/GS recurring theme	Himalayan instability, earthquakes, landslides and river systems	Provides static geography behind the disaster
State PCS/RAS recurring geography	Himalayan rivers, Ganga tributaries, disaster management and climate change	High probability areas for prelims/current-affairs integration



- With reference to the 2026 Nepal flash flood, consider the following statements:
 - The disaster severely affected Nepal's Rasuwa region near Tibet.
 - The Bhoté Koshi river system was affected.
 - Preliminary evidence indicates an ice/rock collapse rather than ordinary monsoon rainfall alone.
 - At least 133 Indian nationals were reported missing/untraceable.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
 - **A. 1 and 2 only**
 - **B. 1, 2 and 3 only**
 - **C. 2, 3 and 4 only**
 - **D. 1, 2, 3 and 4**

Graindant has around 250 employees in India, with Chemical and Combustore operations. The two locations form its Global Engineering Centre (GEC), which supports projects worldwide.

Graindant is responsible for detailed engineering work across Graindant's global projects, including process design and manufacturing assistance. The company said the Chemical Combustore engineering operation is pivotal to almost three quarters of its revenue.

Graindant was in Colombia at the invitation of the company.

Gross FDI hit 15-year high of \$30.7 billion in April-June 2026

An analysis of latest RBI data shows net FDI turned positive again in June 2026, with inflows exceeding outflows by \$1.3 billion that month

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

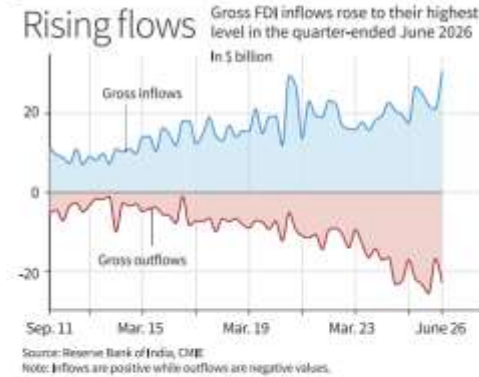
India attracted a total of \$30.7 billion as gross foreign direct investment in the April-June 2026 quarter, the highest level in at least 15 years. This strong inward flow overshadowed outflows, resulting in net FDI in the quarter rising to its highest level since June 2022.

An analysis of the latest data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) shows that net FDI turned positive again in June 2026, with inflows exceeding outflows by \$1.3 billion that month, driven by an increase in investment entering the country and a fall in outward investment by Indian companies.

A longer-term analysis also shows that inflows are starting to outpace outflows on a more regular basis. For instance, while net FDI was negative in six out of the last 12 months, it was negative in only one of the last six months.

Strong inflows

Gross inflows in June 2026, or the total amount of direct investment that entered the country that month, stood at \$9.3 billion. This was 53% higher than in May, but just a little lower than the \$9.6 billion that entered the country in



June last year. According to the RBI, Singapore, the Netherlands, the U.S., and Canada accounted for around 74% of the inflows. The manufacturing sector received the highest share of inflows, followed by electricity generation, computer, and communication services.

On a quarterly basis, gross inflows stood at \$30.7 billion in April-June 2026, which was nearly 46% higher than in the quarter ended March 2026 and about 15% higher than June 2025 quarter.

This was also the highest inflow recorded in the accessible data, which goes back 60 quarters or 15 years to the September 2011 quarter. According to the RBI, this underscores the "continued interest of

global investors in India".

Total outflows of direct investment stood at \$7.9 billion in June 2026, which was nearly 30% higher than in May, and 8.6% higher than in June of last year. On a quarterly basis, total outflows stood at \$22.8 billion. As a result, net FDI stood at \$1.3 billion in June 2026 and \$7.8 billion in the April-June 2026 quarter. Within outflows, repatriation and disinvestment by foreign companies operating in India grew to \$5.8 billion in June 2026, 57% higher than in May, and 36% higher than in June last year.

Outward FDI by Indian firms, on the other hand, fell to \$2.1 billion during this period, down 13% over May 2026 and 30% lower than in June 2025.

Topic	English
Period	April–June 2026 quarter (Q1 FY 2026–27)
Gross FDI inflows	India received \$30.7 billion in gross FDI
Record	Highest quarterly gross FDI inflow in at least 15 years
Growth	Gross inflows were nearly 46% higher than Jan–Mar 2026
YoY comparison	Around 15% higher than April–June 2025
Gross FDI outflows	\$22.8 billion during April–June 2026
Net FDI – quarter	Approximately \$7.8 billion
June gross inflow	\$9.3 billion
Other important sectors	Electricity generation, computer and communication services
Source of data	Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

हिंदी
अप्रैल–जून 2026 तिमाही (Q1 FY 2026–27)
भारत को 30.7 अरब डॉलर का सकल FDI प्राप्त हुआ
कम-से-कम 15 वर्षों में सर्वाधिक तिमाही सकल FDI
सकल प्रवाह जनवरी–मार्च 2026 की तुलना में लगभग 46% अधिक रहा
अप्रैल–जून 2025 की तुलना में लगभग 15% अधिक
अप्रैल–जून 2026 में 22.8 अरब डॉलर का सकल बहिर्प्रवाह
तिमाही का शुद्ध FDI लगभग 7.8 अरब डॉलर
जून में सकल FDI 9.3 अरब डॉलर
विद्युत उत्पादन, कंप्यूटर एवं संचार सेवाएँ
भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक (RBI)

June net FDI	Positive by \$1.3 billion	जून में शुद्ध FDI +1.3 अरब डॉलर
June direct-investment outflows	\$7.9 billion	जून में प्रत्यक्ष निवेश बहिर्प्रवाह 7.9 अरब डॉलर
Repatriation/disinvestment	\$5.8 billion in June	जून में प्रत्यावर्तन/विनिवेश 5.8 अरब डॉलर
Outward FDI by Indian firms	Fell to \$2.1 billion in June	भारतीय कंपनियों का outward FDI जून में घटकर 2.1 अरब डॉलर
Major source countries	Singapore, Netherlands, USA and Canada together contributed about 74% of June inflows	सिंगापुर, नीदरलैंड, अमेरिका और कनाडा ने मिलकर जून के लगभग 74% FDI inflows दिए
Leading sector	Manufacturing received the highest share	विनिर्माण क्षेत्र को सर्वाधिक हिस्सा मिला

Concept

English

हिंदी

Gross FDI Inflow

Total direct investment entering India before accounting for investment leaving/repatriation

बाहर जाने वाले निवेश/प्रत्यावर्तन को घटाने से पहले भारत में आया कुल प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश

Repatriation

Foreign investors take previously invested capital/proceeds back abroad

विदेशी निवेशक अपनी पहले निवेश की गई पूँजी/राशि वापस विदेश ले जाते हैं

Outward FDI

Indian companies invest directly in businesses/assets abroad

भारतीय कंपनियाँ विदेशों में कंपनियों/परिसंपत्तियों में प्रत्यक्ष निवेश करती हैं

Net FDI

Broadly, inward FDI minus relevant outward/repatriated direct-investment flows

व्यापक रूप से inward FDI में से संबंधित outward/repatriated investment घटाने के बाद बचा निवेश

Positive Net FDI

More direct investment is entering than leaving

बाहर जाने की तुलना में अधिक प्रत्यक्ष निवेश देश में आ रहा है

Negative Net FDI

Relevant direct-investment outflows exceed inflows

संबंधित प्रत्यक्ष निवेश प्रवाह में आने से अधिक राशि बाहर जा रही है

Parameter	FDI	FPI
Full form	Foreign Direct Investment	Foreign Portfolio Investment
हिंदी	प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश	विदेशी पोर्टफोलियो निवेश
Nature	Long-term strategic investment	Primarily financial investment
Investment	Business, factories, subsidiaries, equity with lasting interest	Shares, bonds and other securities
Management influence	Usually greater	Generally limited
Stability	Relatively stable	More volatile
Liquidity	Lower	Higher
Exit	Comparatively difficult	Comparatively easy
Common description	Long-term/"sticky" capital	Can behave like "hot money"
BoP	Financial account	Financial account

4. Why Is the \$30.7 Billion Figure Important?

Significance	English	हिंदी	
15-year high	Signals exceptionally strong gross investment entry	असाधारण रूप से मजबूत सकल विदेशी निवेश प्रवाह का संकेत	
Manufacturing	Strong manufacturing inflows can support productive capacity	विनिर्माण में निवेश उत्पादन क्षमता बढ़ाने में सहायक	
Employment	Greenfield manufacturing FDI can create direct and indirect employment	Greenfield manufacturing FDI प्रत्यक्ष व अप्रत्यक्ष रोजगार पैदा कर सकता है	
Technology	FDI can facilitate technology and managerial know-how transfer	FDI तकनीक और प्रबंधकीय ज्ञान हस्तांतरण में सहायक	
Exports	Global firms can integrate India with global value chains	वैश्विक कंपनियाँ भारत को Global Value Chains से जोड़ सकती हैं	
BoP	Stable capital inflows can help finance external-account requirements	स्थिर पूँजी प्रवाह बाह्य भुगतान आवश्यकताओं में मदद कर सकता है	
Investor confidence	Sustained inflows can indicate confidence in India's long-term growth	लगातार FDI भारत की दीर्घकालीन वृद्धि में निवेशकों के विश्वास का संकेत हो सकता है	

5. But Why Gross FDI Alone Does NOT Tell the Full Story?

This is an excellent UPSC/RAS Mains analytical point.

Positive Headline	Necessary Qualification
Gross FDI = \$30.7 bn	Gross FDI does not equal net FDI
Highest in 15 years	Outflows were also substantial
Strong foreign interest	Investors can simultaneously repatriate earlier investments
Manufacturing led inflows	Quality and nature of projects also matter
Net FDI positive	At \$7.8 bn , it was much smaller than gross inflow
Strong June inflow	June direct-investment outflows were still \$7.9 bn

Therefore:

Gross FDI tells us how much entered. Net FDI gives a better picture of the balance between investment entering and leaving.



- With reference to India's FDI during April–June 2026, consider the following statements:
 - Gross FDI inflows were \$30.7 billion.
 - This represented the highest quarterly level in at least 15 years.
 - Net FDI during the quarter was approximately \$7.8 billion.
 - Manufacturing received the highest sectoral share of inflows.
- Which of the above are correct?
 - **A. 1 and 2 only**
 - B. 1, 2 and 3 only**
 - C. 2, 3 and 4 only**
 - D. 1, 2, 3 and 4**

LOS ANGELES

Tim Curry, actor famed for Rocky Horror Picture Show, dies at 80



Tim Curry, a character actor who created a gallery of delicious, very funny villains for stage and screen, including Dr. Frank N. Furter in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and the drug smuggler in *Home Alone 2: Lost in New York*, passed away on Tuesday. He was 80. Curry had suffered a stroke in 2012 that put him in a wheelchair. **AP**

SEOUL

South Korea says Russian military planes entered its air defence zone



South Korea said on Wednesday it had scrambled fighter jets in response to Russian military aircraft entering its air defence zone, the second such incursion in weeks. Seoul's Defence Ministry said multiple Russian aircraft had entered and then left its air defence identification zone over the East Sea. **AP**

NYTV

Ukraine awards Musk top honour as it seeks to use Starlink more



President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has bestowed one of Ukraine's top state honours on SpaceX owner Elon Musk as Kyiv seeks to expand use of the company's Starlink terminals, which provide battlefield communications for Ukrainian forces. Mr. Musk was awarded the Order of Freedom, under a presidential decree. **AP**

PARIS

French flight attendant wins landmark breast cancer ruling



A flight attendant in France has succeeded in having her breast cancer recognised as an occupational disease, a first for country's aviation industry, her lawyer said. The ruling recognised that Sophie Lemaire, a former flight attendant for Air France, had frequently worked at night and been exposed to passive smoking. **AP**

U.S. will achieve nothing with its sanctions campaign: Pezeshkian

Israel's Netanyahu dismisses the possibility of a deal, referring to Iran's leaders as 'savages'. Oman and Iran are negotiating a transit corridor through Hormuz, with BRCC saying that the two nations agreed to share revenues from managing the strait

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

TEHRAN

Iran's President insisted on Wednesday that the United States will achieve nothing with its sanctions campaign after Washington laid out plans to collapse the country's economy.

About six months into their war, the two sides are locked in a stalemate, with Iran keeping the key Strait of Hormuz shut and Washington persisting with a naval counter-blockade of Iran.

Under political pressure at home over the impacts of the conflict, U.S. President Donald Trump has pri-



Hassan Rouhani holds a document showing the memorandum of understanding he signed to end the West Asia war. **AP**

Iran's army said on Wednesday it had rebuilt or replaced all weapons systems damaged during the fighting.

"America will not

achieve anything with economic pressure" at this stage, just as it was unable to achieve anything in the war, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday, according to the country's ISNA news agency.

"We will stand firm against economic pressures, as we have done so far, and will continue to do so."

Mr. Trump had frequently claimed a deal was close, but has since backed away from diplomacy, while Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday dismissed any prospect of a deal, calling Iran's leaders "savages".

"I tell you — an agreement cannot be reached," Mr. Netanyahu said, adding that he had discussed the issue with Mr. Trump at a recent meeting.

"I doubt, however, that an agreement can be reached with that group there, with those savages."

Oman, which sits on the other side of Hormuz, has been discussing with Iran a temporary transit corridor. On Wednesday, Iran's Revolutionary Guards, the ideological arm of the nation's military, said the talks with Oman included the two countries agreeing to share revenues received for management of the strait.

Taiwan President pushes \$6.6 billion military drone Bill

REUTERS

TAIPEI

Taiwan must demonstrate its resolve to defend itself and pass a six-year, \$230 billion (\$6.6 billion) special budget to buy military drones, President Lai Ching-te said on Wednesday ahead of a crucial vote in the opposition-controlled Parliament.

Taiwan's government says the plans to buy some 20,000 new military drones cannot wait, given the wars in Ukraine and the West Asia have shown the importance of untested weapons in modern warfare.

But the opposition, which controls Parliament,

has put forward its own proposals to cap spending each year at \$240 billion, drawn from the annual budget and overseen by the Economy, not Defence, Ministry.

The government says with the threat from China, which views the democratically governed island as its own territory, the drones are urgently needed to turn any conflict zone into a "hellcape" for the Chinese.

"This is not only a matter of national defence but also an important step for Taiwan to demonstrate its determination for self-defence," he told a meeting of his Democratic Progressive Party.

Flattening Infrastructure



Palestinians inspect the Abu Salem Mosque a day after it was hit by an Israeli air strike, in Doha at Rafah, central Gaza Strip, on Tuesday. **AP**

Trump submits civil nuclear agreement with Saudi for review

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump has submitted to Congress for review an agreement with Saudi Arabia aimed at bolstering the kingdom's civilian nuclear programme, but continues to insist that it won't move forward if Saudi Arabia doesn't improve its relations with Israel, according to a Trump administration official.

The classified document was submitted in Capitol Hill on Monday as required by the Atomic Energy Act, according to the administration official, a congressional aide, and two others familiar with the matter,



Donald Trump

who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Under law, Congress has 90 days while in session to review the agreement. Unless Congress passes a joint resolution rejecting the deal during the review period, the agreement can take effect without a vote by either chamber.

Chinese hackers broke into Justice Dept., NASA, Federal Reserve, Senate, says U.S.

REUTERS

WASHINGTON

The United States said on Wednesday it had disrupted a Chinese hacking operation responsible for break-ins and attempts on the U.S. Justice Department, NASA, the Federal Reserve, the Senate, and other sensitive government agencies.

In a statement, the Justice Department said it had seized domains used by two hacking platforms, dubbed Qihoo and Qihoo, and which it said had been used as part of the campaign. An affidavit identified the U.S. Department of Energy, Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes

The hackers had targeted critical infrastructure and sensitive networks since at least 2018

of Health, and four unnamed companies in the U.S. and South Korea as being among the hackers' victims.

The Chinese embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Beijing routinely denies responsibility for hacking activity.

The Justice Department said the hackers used tools they developed to compromise critical infrastructure and other sensitive networks in the U.S. and worldwide since at least 2018.

The level of access they gained ranged, according to the affidavit, from the ability to install malware on the networks, with public reporting later attributing the compromise to China.

by targeting a virtual private network vulnerability. In September 2024, the hackers carried out intrusions at three unnamed Energy Department laboratories, the NHE, an unnamed HRIS agency, and a U.S. security device manufacturer, according to the affidavit.

Chinese-linked hacking campaigns have comprised a string of sensitive U.S. government and private networks in recent years. In March, the FBI notified Congress that hackers had penetrated certain agency networks related to people under FBI investigation, with public reporting later attributing the compromise to China.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

OAKLAND

Meta has agreed to pay \$17 billion and add child-safety measures to its Facebook and Instagram platforms to end a landmark trial over teen social media addiction and settle claims filed by 47 U.S. states, state attorneys-general announced on Wednesday.

The affidavit said the hackers used tools they developed to compromise critical infrastructure and other sensitive networks in the U.S. and worldwide since at least 2018.



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The agreement is worth \$353 million in Virginia

with state attorneys-general to act a new industry standard.

The company urged its rivals to adopt similar safety measures. The lawsuit accused Meta of contributing to the youth mental health crisis by deliberately designing features that addict children to its platforms and hiding them from the public. It also argued that Meta violated federal laws by routinely collecting data on children under 13 without their parents' consent.

Even though Meta has since added a host of safety features — to Instagram, child safety experts have long contended that the features are little more than window dressing.

Meta reaches \$17-bn settlement with U.S. in trial over social media addiction

Associated Press

OAKLAND

Meta has agreed to pay \$17 billion and add child-safety measures to its Facebook and Instagram platforms to end a landmark trial over teen social media addiction and settle claims filed by 47 U.S. states, state attorneys-general announced on Wednesday.

California, Colorado, Kentucky and New Jersey were among 29 states that sued the tech giant in 2023, but the deal cuts short the trial, which was expected to see CEO Mark Zuckerberg take the stand before a jury in federal court in California.

The agreement is worth \$353 million in Virginia



A protestor holds a banner with the names of nearly 400 young people who allegedly died from the impacts of social media. AFP

alone and is one of the biggest in state consumer protection history, Attorney-General Jay Jones said in a statement.

Meta said in a blog post that it was “building on our longstanding efforts to empower parents and sup-

port teens”.

“Ensuring teens have a safe and productive experience on our platforms is an absolute imperative for Meta,” the company said. “We want to get this right for parents and teens, and that’s why we partnered

with state attorneys-general to set a new industry standard.”

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Topic	English	हिंदी
Company	Meta Platforms, parent of Facebook and Instagram	फेसबुक और इंस्टाग्राम की मूल कंपनी Meta Platforms
Country	United States	संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका
Settlement	Around \$17 billion , potentially rising to about \$18 billion under the broader arrangement	लगभग 17 अरब डॉलर , व्यापक व्यवस्था के तहत करीब 18 अरब डॉलर तक
Main issue	Allegations that social-media products were deliberately designed in ways that could foster addictive use among children and teenagers	आरोप कि सोशल मीडिया प्लेटफॉर्म बच्चों और किशोरों में लत जैसी उपयोग प्रवृत्ति बढ़ाने वाले डिजाइन का उपयोग करते थे
Platforms involved	Facebook and Instagram	Facebook और Instagram
States involved	Settlement covers claims involving 47 U.S. states and other jurisdictions in the broader agreement	समझौते में 47 अमेरिकी राज्यों से जुड़े दावे तथा व्यापक व्यवस्था में अन्य क्षेत्राधिकार
Significance	One of the largest child-safety/consumer-protection settlements involving a technology company	किसी टेक कंपनी से जुड़ा बाल-सुरक्षा/उपभोक्ता संरक्षण का सबसे बड़े समझौतों में से एक

Original litigation

A coalition of states sued Meta over youth safety, privacy and platform design

राज्यों के गठबंधन ने युवा सुरक्षा, गोपनीयता और प्लेटफॉर्म डिजाइन को लेकर Meta पर मुकदमा किया

Major allegation

Meta allegedly prioritised engagement while failing to adequately disclose risks to young users

आरोप कि Meta ने युवा उपयोगकर्ताओं के जोखिमों की पर्याप्त जानकारी दिए बिना engagement को प्राथमिकता दी

Privacy issue

Lawsuits also alleged collection of data from children under 13 without valid parental consent

मुकदमों में 13 वर्ष से कम बच्चों का डेटा अभिभावकीय सहमति के बिना एकत्र करने के आरोप भी शामिल थे

Legal status

Settlement is designed to resolve major litigation; court approval is relevant to implementation

समझौता बड़े मुकदमों को समाप्त करने के लिए है; क्रियान्वयन में न्यायिक मंजूरी महत्वपूर्ण

2. What Was Meta Accused Of? | Meta पर क्या आरोप थे?

Allegation	English Explanation	हिंदी
Addictive design	Features were allegedly designed to maximise repeated and prolonged engagement	आरोप कि फीचर्स को बार-बार और लंबे समय तक उपयोग बढ़ाने के लिए डिजाइन किया गया
Infinite/continuous engagement	Platform mechanics could encourage users to keep scrolling and returning	प्लेटफॉर्म डिजाइन उपयोगकर्ताओं को लगातार स्क्रॉल करने और वापस आने के लिए प्रेरित कर सकता था
Youth mental-health risks	States alleged that the design contributed to harms affecting children and teenagers	राज्यों का आरोप था कि प्लेटफॉर्म डिजाइन से बच्चों और किशोरों के मानसिक स्वास्थ्य पर नकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़ा
Social comparison	Likes, appearance-related content and other features could intensify social comparison	लाइक्स, appearance-based content आदि से सामाजिक तुलना बढ़ सकती है
Data collection	Data of children under 13 was allegedly collected without adequate parental permission	13 वर्ष से कम बच्चों का डेटा पर्याप्त अभिभावकीय अनुमति के बिना एकत्र करने का आरोप
Lack of disclosure	Meta was accused of failing to fully disclose known risks	Meta पर ज्ञात जोखिमों की पूरी जानकारी सार्वजनिक न करने का आरोप
Consumer protection	States argued that platform practices could amount to deceptive or unfair conduct	राज्यों ने कहा कि प्लेटफॉर्म की कुछ प्रथाएँ भ्रामक अथवा अनुचित व्यापार व्यवहार हो सकती हैं



3. What Will Change for Teen Users?

The settlement is important because it does not concern only money—it requires **product-design changes**.

Safety Measure	English	हिंदी	
Daily limit	Teen use is generally capped at about 2 hours a day under the settlement framework	किशोर उपयोग को सामान्यतः लगभग 2 घंटे प्रतिदिन तक सीमित करने की व्यवस्था	
Mandatory pauses	Breaks/prompts are introduced during prolonged use	लंबे उपयोग के दौरान अनिवार्य pause/prompt	
Night restrictions	Teen access can be restricted overnight	रात के समय किशोरों के उपयोग पर प्रतिबंध	
School-hour protection	Push notifications restricted during school hours	स्कूल समय में push notifications सीमित	
Age assurance	Stronger mechanisms to determine whether users are minors	उपयोगकर्ता नाबालिग है या नहीं, इसके लिए मजबूत age-assurance प्रणाली	
Parental controls	Parents receive greater supervision/control options	अभिभावकों को अधिक नियंत्रण और निगरानी सुविधाएँ	
Like counts	Social-comparison features such as like counts can be limited for minors	नाबालिगों के लिए like counts जैसी social-comparison सुविधाओं को सीमित किया जाएगा	
Personalised feeds	Greater restrictions on highly personalised content for teens	किशोरों के लिए अत्यधिक personalised feed पर अधिक नियंत्रण	
Harmful content	Stronger controls for bullying, eating-disorder, self-harm and other harmful material	bullying, eating disorder, self-harm आदि सामग्री के विरुद्ध मजबूत नियंत्रण	

4. Why Is This a Landmark Case? | यह मामला ऐतिहासिक क्यों है?

Dimension	English	हिंदी	
Platform design liability	Regulation is shifting from merely policing harmful posts to scrutinising how platforms themselves are designed	विनियमन केवल हानिकारक content से आगे बढ़कर प्लेटफॉर्म के डिजाइन की जाँच कर रहा है	
Algorithmic accountability	Companies may face greater responsibility for recommendation and engagement systems	recommendation तथा engagement algorithms के लिए कंपनियों की जवाबदेही बढ़ सकती है	
Child rights	Digital platforms may have a higher duty of care toward minors	डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्मों पर नाबालिगों के प्रति अधिक duty of care हो सकती है	
Consumer protection	Product design itself can become a consumer-protection issue	स्वयं product design उपभोक्ता संरक्षण का विषय बन सकता है	
Industry precedent	Other platforms such as TikTok and YouTube may face pressure to adopt comparable standards	TikTok और YouTube जैसे अन्य प्लेटफॉर्मों पर समान standards अपनाने का दबाव	
Independent oversight	Self-regulation is supplemented by external auditing	self-regulation के साथ बाहरी auditing को जोड़ा गया	
Digital public health	Excessive platform use is increasingly being examined as a societal/public-health issue	अत्यधिक सोशल मीडिया उपयोग को सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य संबंधी प्रश्न के रूप में देखा जा रहा है	

5. Important U.S. Law — COPPA

Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, 1998

Point	English	हिंदी	
Full form	Children's Online Privacy Protection Act	Children's Online Privacy Protection Act	
Country	United States	संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका	
Target group	Primarily protects children under 13 in specified online contexts	विशेष ऑनलाइन परिस्थितियों में मुख्यतः 13 वर्ष से कम बच्चों की सुरक्षा	
Core principle	Parental consent is generally required before certain personal information is collected from children	बच्चों की कुछ व्यक्तिगत जानकारी एकत्र करने से पहले सामान्यतः अभिभावकीय सहमति आवश्यक	
Purpose	Protect children's online privacy	बच्चों की ऑनलाइन गोपनीयता की रक्षा	

Exam	Topic/PYQ Theme	Connection
UPSC Prelims 2018	Right to Privacy	Strong linkage with digital data
UPSC Mains GS-II/III	Data protection and social-media regulation	Direct conceptual relevance
UPSC Mains	Challenges posed by social media and digital platforms	Governance dimension
UPSC Essay	Technology, human behaviour and society	Strong essay application
Ethics GS-IV	Corporate responsibility and ethical use of technology	Meta case as a contemporary case study
UGC-NET / Law	Privacy, intermediary liability and child rights	Direct legal relevance
RAS/State PCS	IT Act, cyber law, privacy and child protection	Highly probable current-affairs linkage



With reference to the Meta settlement, consider the following statements:

1. The litigation concerned Facebook and Instagram.
2. Claims included allegations regarding addictive design affecting minors.
3. Meta agreed only to a monetary settlement and no design changes.
4. Independent oversight forms part of the new safety framework.

Which statements are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only**
- B. 1, 2 and 4 only**
- C. 2, 3 and 4 only**
- D. 1, 2, 3 and 4**

Census 2027: Ladakh to Lead Independent India's 1st Caste Enumeration

- Ladakh will be the first region to operationalise the **caste enumeration methodology** during the second phase of Census 2027 — Population Enumeration (PE).
- **Open-Ended Caste Column:** Respondents other than **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes** are likely to state their caste in an **open-ended column**.
- **Pre-Test Methodology:** The **caste enumeration methodology** was tested during the **Population Enumeration pre-test held from 1–20 July 2026 in 16 States and Union Territories** and is likely to be retained in the final questionnaire.
- **Around 40 Parameters:** The Population Enumeration schedule is expected to contain roughly **40 questions covering caste, demographic characteristics and other population-related information**.

Early Enumeration in Snow-Bound Areas: House-to-house Population Enumeration in Ladakh and designated snow-bound areas of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand will be conducted from 1–30 September 2026, followed by a revisional round from 1–5 October 2026.

Census 2027: It will be India's **first digital Census**, but sensitive defence establishments along the **LAC in Ladakh** will be recorded through **paper schedules as “special charges”** to avoid geo-tagging and disclosure of strategic locations.

Lesson from SECC 2011: Unlike the **SECC 2011**, which generated over **46 lakh caste names** through an open-response survey and was conducted outside the **Census Act, 1948**, the **Census 2027** caste enumeration will be part of the statutory Census exercise.

Paternity Test in Matrimonial Dispute

The_ Supreme Court, in a matrimonial dispute involving allegations of unchastity and disputed paternity, upheld the orders of a lower Court directing a DNA test of the child. Legitimacy of a Child and Paternity test Presumption of Legitimacy of a Child: Section 116 of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), 2023 a child born during a valid marriage or within 280 days after its dissolution is conclusively presumed to be the legitimate child of the husband.

- Section 116 of the BSA, 2023 corresponds to Section 112 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.
- Paternity Test: DNA tests cannot be ordered merely on disputed paternity claims but courts may direct DNA testing only in exceptional cases where it is necessary to resolve the dispute and other evidence is inadequate.

Supreme Court Jurisprudence on DNA Testing

- ***Goutam Kundu v. State of West Bengal (1993)***: The Supreme Court held that **DNA/medical tests cannot be ordered as a first resort** and require a strong **prima facie case of non-access**.
- ***Banarsi Dass v. Teeku Dutta (2005)***: The Court ruled that **DNA testing should not be directed routinely** and must be limited to exceptional cases.
- ***Nandlal Wasudeo Badwaik v. Lata Nandlal Badwaik (2014)***: The Court held that where **scientific evidence conflicts with legal presumptions**, scientific truth may prevail.
- ***Rohit Shekhar v. Narayan Dutt Tiwari (2014)***: The Court allowed DNA testing, prioritising the **child's right to know biological identity** over privacy concerns.
- ***Ivan Rathinam v. Milan Joseph (2025)***: The Court held that DNA tests require an **"eminent need"** and courts must balance privacy, social stigma, and the child's interest.

Word of the day

Rebarbative:

serving or tending to repel

Synonyms: irritating, annoying, disturbing, aggravating

Usage: *His rebarbative manner annoyed everyone.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/rebarbative

International Phonetic Alphabet: /rɪbɑːbətɪv/



Thank you ☺

