

# Daily Current Affairs





4  
**The Hindu**



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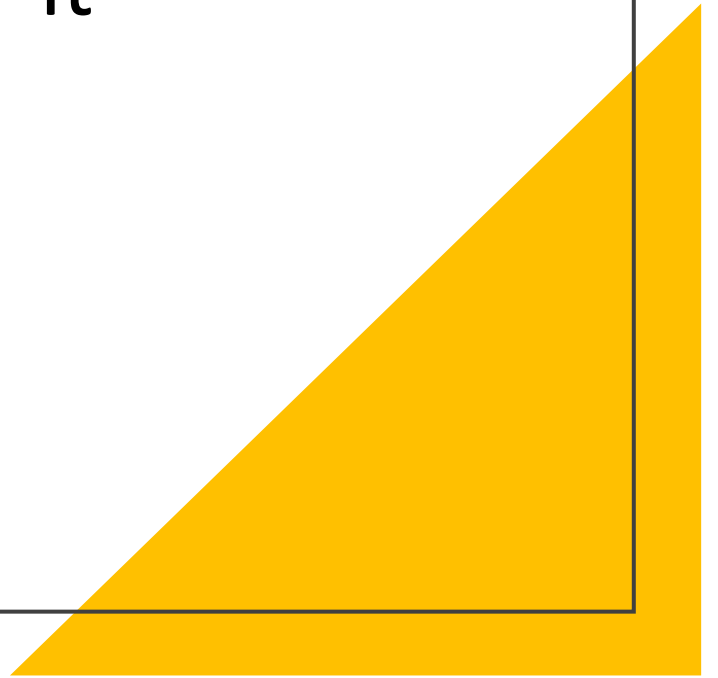


PDF



10 MCQ QUIZ

- Success doesn't arrive at your door — it follows those who keep moving, even when no one is watching.”





Home • Business • Politics • National • India • World • Environment • Health • Agriculture • Education • Sports • Entertainment • Lifestyle • Travel • Opinion • Columns • Cartoons • Photo • Video • Special • Index

SCORCHING IMPACT

## Women face higher risk from rising heat

Study finds that those in districts facing extreme heat are badly affected

NEWS PAGE 2



Sam Altman: merchant of the future  
PROFILES PAGE 3



Rupee at 90: a market meltdown or a calculated pivot?  
FAQ PAGE 5

Clinical India crushes South Africa in third ODI, clinches series  
SPORT PAGE 13

INSIDE



### National seminar over Ambedkar's legacy organised

**NEW DELHI** The National Commission for Scheduled Castes on Saturday held a national seminar to mark the death anniversary of India's first Law Minister, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, whose Social Justice Minister V. K. Rajwade Kumar paid tribute to the leader. **PAGE 8**

### Zubeen death: charged sheet to be filed on Friday

**NEW DELHI** The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the unnatural death of Assamese cultural icon Zubeen Garg will submit the charge sheet in a court on December 12. Special Director-General of Police (DGP) Muzeeb Hussain Khan said, Mr. Garg died while swimming in the sea off a Singapore island on Sept. 19. **PAGE 9**

### Vatican panel says 'no' to women as Catholic deacons

**VATICAN CITY** A high-level Vatican commission voted against allowing Catholic women to serve as deacons, maintaining the global Church's practice of all-male clergy, according to a report given to Pope Leo XIV and released on Thursday. The commission recommended further study of the issue. **PAGE 12**

# As crisis continues, govt. sets cap on airfares

IndiGo, which cancelled two out of every three services on Friday, flew 1,500 flights on Saturday

The airline will likely return to full capacity of 2,200 flights by December 15, says CEO Elbers

Caps for domestic economy fares are in the range of ₹7,500 to ₹18,000, depending on the distance

**Jagjit Chandra**  
**NEW DELHI**

The Union government imposed caps on airfares, set a timeline for refunds, and announced special trains to help stranded passengers on Saturday, as IndiGo, the country's largest domestic airline, began a slow return to normalcy.

The airline has experienced a near-total breakdown of operations in recent days, and had cancelled two out of every three of its scheduled flights on Friday. IndiGo, which operates 2,200 flights daily and accounts for six out of every 10 passengers who travel by air, said it had operated 1,500 flights on Saturday, compared with 700 on Fri-

day. Normalcy is expected between December 10 and 15, according to IndiGo chief executive officer Peter Elbers.

"Over 95% of network connectivity has already been re-established as we are able to operate to 135 out of the existing 138 destinations," the airline said in a statement.

**'Fair fares'** Meanwhile, Minister for Civil Aviation, Ramnath Kovil, said in a post on X: "The Ministry has invoked its regulatory powers to ensure fair and reasonable fares across all affected routes."

The Ministry has notified trains to carry passengers in class airfares for domestic flights starting with a cap of ₹7,500 for a distance of



Long heat: Passengers waiting at the Chennai airport on Saturday amid continued cancellations. A. V. GANESAN/PTI

500 km, ₹12,000 for up to 1,000 km, ₹15,000 for up to 1,500 km and ₹18,000 for longer flights.

These caps exclude the user development fee payable to airports, the

passenger security fee collected by the Central Industrial Security Force, and taxes.

**Refunds by Sunday** The government has di-

### DGCA serves show-cause notice on IndiGo CEO

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separated from passengers due to cancellations or delays and deliver them to their residences or designated addresses within 48 hours.

IndiGo has also announced a full waiver of cancellation and rescheduling fees for travel between December 5 and 15, allowing passengers to cancel or modify their bookings.

This is in addition to refunds owed to all the other passengers whose flights were cancelled by the airline over the past few weeks.

**Special trains** To help those passengers stranded by the flight cancellations, Indian Railways has introduced more than 75 special trains connect-

ing multiple cities across the country.

East Coast Railway, for instance, will run six trains to connect passengers between destinations in Odisha, including Bhubaneswar, Bargarh, Puri, and Durlab, Mumbai, and Visakhapatnam.

It will also add coaches to four trains, including the Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Tejas Rajdhani and the Puri-Shalimar Garib Rath.

Western Railway will also run seven special trains from Central New Delhi, Mumbai Central-Bhubaneswar, Mumbai Central-Shakur Basti, Mumbai Terminus-Durgam, Valsad-Bilaspur, Samalpur-Delhi, and Saharanpur-Surat.

### Winter pastimes



**Fun outing:** People skating on an ice rink in Shimla on Saturday. Though temperatures went down in Himachal Pradesh in the winter, dry weather prevailed over the State. PTI

## Four civilians and a soldier killed in Afghan-Pak. clash

**AFGHANISTAN**

An overnight exchange of gunfire and shelling at a major Pakistan-Afghanistan border crossing killed four civilians and one soldier, Afghan officials said on Saturday.

The latest flare-up of fighting between the two countries erupted a ceasefire since deadly clashes in October. Five other civilians were wounded, an Afghan government spokesperson, Mansurullah Khan, said in a video statement. A hospital at the Pakistani border town of Chaman said three people suffered minor in-



A Pakistani armoured vehicle near the Chaman border on Saturday. AP

juries during the fighting. Each side accused the other of launching "unprovoked" attacks at the crossing between Chaman and Spin Boldak, in southern Afghanistan and Pakistan have been locked in an increasingly bitter dispute since the Taliban authorities retook control in Kabul in 2021. Kabul accused Islamabad last month of air strikes in a border area that killed 10 people, nine of them children. Pakistan denied the claim.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry warned on November 26 that in light of "terrorist attacks" on its soil, the ceasefire is not holding.

Pakistan said earlier this week it would partially reopen the frontier for aid deliveries, with the crossing at Chaman expected to be used by United Nations,

## Supreme Court warns of penalties for abuse of disabled persons in prisons

**Krishnakumar Rajagopal**  
**NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court has held that prison authorities who abuse disabled prisoners will be penalised under the Rights to Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act.

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sanjay Mishra, in a 15-page order, directed all States and Union Territories to change their prison rules, draw up new modalities to ensure that disabled prisoners with special needs and provided assistive devices to aid mobility, specialised medical care and enhanced visitation rights to access sustained family support.

The court directed the

**The order was based on a plea over the inhumane conditions faced by G. Subhash and Sanjay Swamy**

creation of facilities in prisons to allow those with disabilities "meaningful access to inclusive education".

"No inmate shall be deprived of the opportunity to pursue educational programmes solely on account of disability," the apex court underscored in the order dated December 2, but published on Saturday.

The order has come across as a significant gesture of benevolent judicial legislation with the court bringing disabled prison-

ers under the statutory protection and framework of the 2016 Act.

The judicial intervention afforded prisoners with benchmark disabilities the same rights as a free disabled person. Prisoners with disabilities must be able to "carry out their daily activities with dignity without compromising institutional safety".

The order was based on a petition filed by Subhash Narayan, represented by advocate Rakeshwarjan Raj and Thibud Raj, highlighting the inhumane and inhuman prison conditions suffered by Professor G. Subhash and the elderly Sanjay Swamy.

The demise of Subhash, a scholar and human rights

activist with disabilities, was directly attributable to his deteriorating health, exacerbated by prolonged incarceration and the inhuman conditions of his detention. Swamy, who suffered from Parkinson's syndrome, was denied a sipper cup in prison.

**Two aspects** Prisoners with disabilities are punished on two aspects, namely the crime for which they have been convicted, and the "crime" of being handicapped, the plea said.

The court ordered to make the necessary changes in the prison manuals so as to ensure that disabled prisoners were entitled to "enhanced visitation rights".

## U.S. team to visit India next week to discuss tariffs for bilateral trade deal

**T. A. Sharad Raghavan**  
**NEW DELHI**

A team of negotiators from the U.S. will visit India from December 10 to 12 to take forward talks on the first tranche, dealing with tariffs, of a bilateral trade agreement between the two countries.

According to sources in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the U.S. delegation is expected to be led by Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Rick Swartz, while the Indian side will be represented by Deputy Joint Secretary in Ministry. The talks are not expected to constitute an official round of negotiations, the last of which took place in the U.S. in October. However, the two sides are

### Engaging again

India and the U.S. are venturing to finalise the first tranche of a proposed bilateral trade agreement



looking forward to making "significant progress" towards addressing the issue of tariffs.

The U.S. has imposed a total of 50% tariffs on imports from India, and the first tranche would be concluded soon. Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has voiced

■ A team led by Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Rick Swartz will visit India on December 10-12.

■ Indian team will be led by Joint Secretary Raghavan.

■ Discussions will focus on the tariff issue.

■ India will not constitute an official round of negotiations.

similar sentiments about the agreement.

**'Final concessions'** According to officials closely tracking the deal negotiations, India has presented the U.S. with a revised version of what it considers its "final concessions" on the wider issues of market access and sectoral benefits.

The officials and negotiators have done what they can on that front," a senior official said. "Now it really is up to the last mile, and that too, one more than the other."

There are also indications that the U.S. delegation to India might be accompanied by a "more senior" American government official.



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NEW DELHI

**T**he Union government imposed caps on airfares, set a timeline for refunds, and announced special trains to help stranded passengers on Saturday, as IndiGo, the country's largest domestic airline, began a slow return to normalcy.

The airline has experienced a near-total breakdown of operations in recent days, and had cancelled two out of every three of its scheduled flights on Friday.

IndiGo, which operates 2,200 flights daily and accounts for six out of every 10 passengers who travel by air, said it had operated 1,500 flights on Saturday compared with 700 on Fri-

day. Normalcy is expected between December 10 and 15, according to IndiGo chief executive officer Pieter Elbers.

"Over 95% of network connectivity has already been re-established as we are able to operate to 135 out of the existing 138 destinations," the airline said in a statement.

## 'Fair fares'

Meanwhile, Minister for Civil Aviation K. Rammohan Naidu said in a post on X: "The Ministry has invoked its regulatory powers to ensure fair and reasonable fares across all affected routes."

The Ministry has notified limits on economy class air fares for domestic flights starting with a cap of ₹7,500 for a distance of



**Long haul:** Passengers waiting at the Chennai airport on Saturday amid continued cancellations. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

500 km, ₹12,000 for up to 1,000 km, ₹15,000 for up to 1,500 km and ₹18,000 for longer flights.

These caps exclude the user development fee payable to airports, the

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rected IndiGo to ensure that refunds for all cancelled and disrupted flights are completed by 8 p.m. on Sunday.

It has also instructed the airline to trace all baggage

separated from passengers due to cancellations or delays and deliver them to their residences or designated addresses within 48 hours.

IndiGo has also announced a full waiver of cancellation and rescheduling fees for travel between December 5 and 15, allowing passengers to cancel or modify their bookings.

This is in addition to refunds owed to all the other passengers whose flights were cancelled by the airline over the past few weeks.

## Special trains

To help those passengers stranded by the flight cancellations, Indian Railways has introduced more than 75 special trains connect-

ing multiple cities across the country.

East Coast Railway, for instance, will run six trains to connect passengers between destinations in Odisha, including Bhubaneswar, Sambalpur, Puri, and Delhi, Mumbai, and Vishakhapatnam.

It will also add coaches to four trains, including the Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Tejas Rajdhani and the Puri-Shalimar Garib Rath.

Western Railway will also run seven special trains on special fares on the following routes: Mumbai Central-New Delhi, Mumbai Central-Bhiwani, Mumbai Central-Shakur Basti, Bandra Terminus-Durgapura, Valsad-Bilaspur, Sabarmati-Delhi, and Sabarmati-Sarai Rohilla.

# 1. Aviation Crisis: What Happened?

- IndiGo, India's largest airline, faced a **near-total break-down** in operations.
  - It cancelled **two out of every three flights on Friday**, causing massive passenger disruption.
  - Reason:
    - Large-scale operational dislocation
    - Crew shortage due to cascading delays
    - Technical + logistical bottlenecks
- 

## 2. Govt Steps In — Caps on Airfares

To protect passengers, the Union Government imposed **fare caps** on domestic economy flights:

### Fare Cap Structure (Based on Flight Distance):

- Up to 500 km → ₹7,500
- Up to 1,000 km → ₹12,000
- Up to 1,500 km → ₹15,000
- Above 1,500 km → ₹18,000

### Notes:

- Caps do *not* include airport user development fees, security charges, or taxes.
- Ministry invoked regulatory powers to ensure **"fair and reasonable fares"**.

### 3. Restoration of Airline Operations

- IndiGo operated **1,500 flights on Saturday**, compared to 700 on Friday.
  - Expected return to **full capacity (2,200 flights/day)** by **December 15**.
  - 95% of network operational → 135 out of 138 destinations restored.
- 

### 4. Passenger Relief Measures

#### a) Refunds

- Govt directed IndiGo to complete *all refunds* for cancelled flights by **8 PM, Sunday**.

#### b) Baggage Tracking

- Airlines must trace and deliver all baggage **within 48 hours** to passenger homes.

#### c) Free Cancellations

- IndiGo offered free cancellation/rescheduling for travel between **Dec 5–15**.
- 

### 5. Special Trains Introduced

To help stranded passengers:

- Indian Railways introduced **75 special trains**.
- Routes include:
  - **Bhubaneswar–Delhi, Mumbai–Delhi, Valsad–Delhi, Sambalpur–Bhubaneswar, Shalimar–Puri**, etc.
- Western Railway added **seven more special services**.
- Coaches added to Tejas Rajdhani and other premium trains.



## 6. DGCA Regulatory Action

- DGCA issued a **show-cause notice** to IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers.
  - Asking explanation within **24 hours** as to why enforcement shouldn't begin for:
    - Large-scale disruptions
    - Poor passenger handling
    - Violations of Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR)
- 

## 7. Key Policy Takeaways

- Govt is willing to impose **temporary fare caps** to prevent price gouging.
- Regulatory focus shifting to **passenger rights, refund timelines, and service accountability.**
- Crisis highlights fragility of India's aviation sector despite high growth.



Exam

Year

Actual Question

Correct Answer

Verification Link



**UPSC Prelims**

**2021**

“With reference to Indian aviation, what is DGCA?”

**A statutory body under Ministry of Civil Aviation (regulator)**

UPSC Key 2021

**SSC CGL**

**2023**

“Which airline has the highest domestic market share in India?”

**IndiGo**

SSC Official Key → <https://ssc.nic.in>

**RPSC RAS Prelims**

**2023**

“UDAN scheme is implemented by which ministry?”

**Ministry of Civil Aviation**

RPSC Answer Key 2023


**IB ACIO**

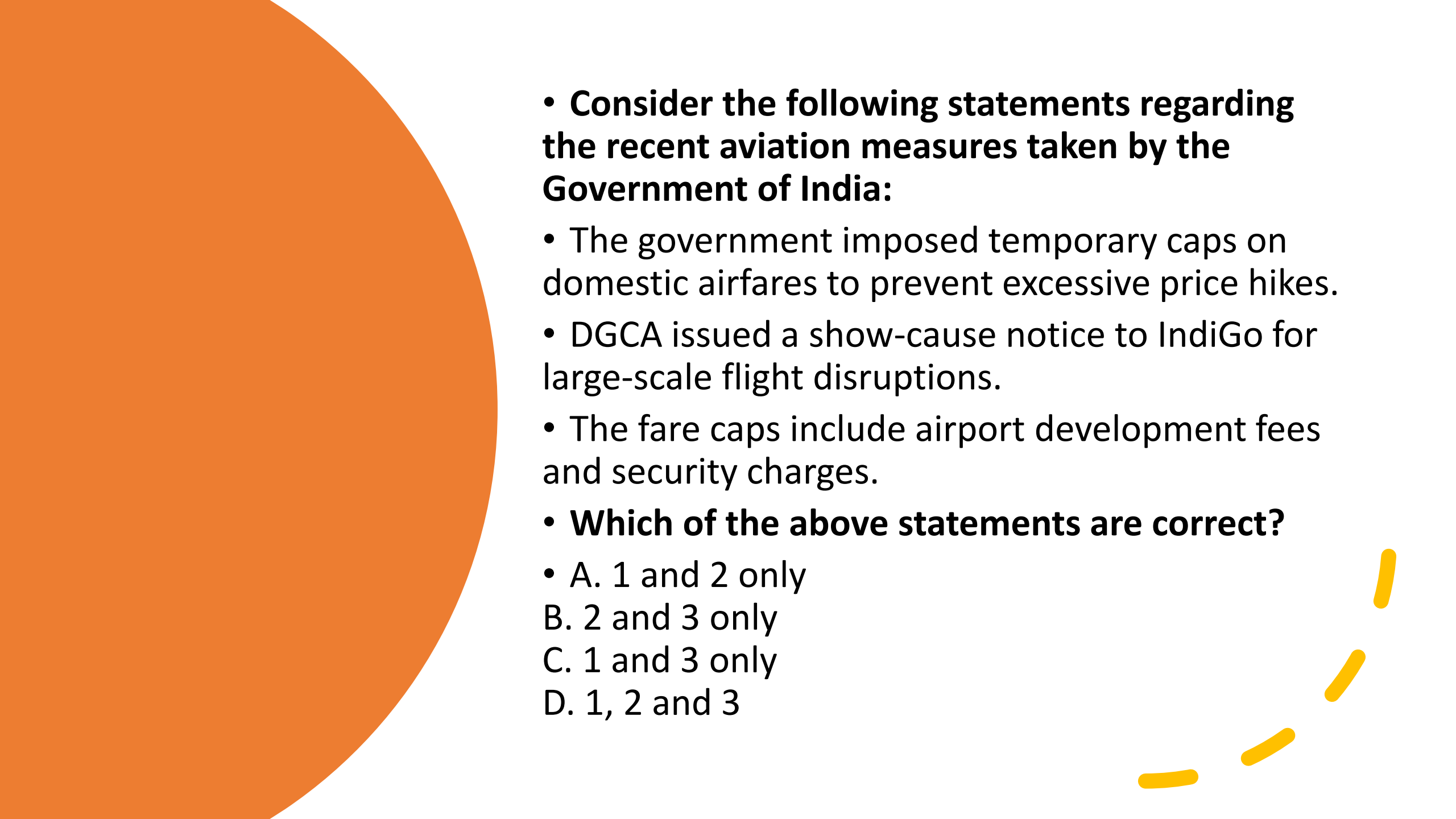
**2023**

“Which authority regulates civil aviation safety in India?”

**DGCA**

Memory-based but validated across coaching keys



- 
- **Consider the following statements regarding the recent aviation measures taken by the Government of India:**
  - The government imposed temporary caps on domestic airfares to prevent excessive price hikes.
  - DGCA issued a show-cause notice to IndiGo for large-scale flight disruptions.
  - The fare caps include airport development fees and security charges.
  - **Which of the above statements are correct?**
  - A. 1 and 2 only
  - B. 2 and 3 only
  - C. 1 and 3 only
  - D. 1, 2 and 3



It stated that the U.S. would prevent other powers from exploiting the crisis. "This does not mean warring against Russia," it added. "This does not mean warring against the Soviet Union." It also stated that the U.S. would continue to exert its influence on all the world's governments.

Commenting on the development, the Kremlin's official newspaper said that the current U.S. administration was "fundership" and "not from the previous times."

"Opportunity to adjust"

The adjustments were made by the U.S. government, which was consistently with our vision," Mr. Puskov told state television.

President Trump is currently strong in the eyes of domestic voters, and his policies are being implemented.



## ● What were the pilot duty rules that led to flight disruptions?

THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has certain guidelines called the flight duty time limitation (FDTL) norms to ensure adequate rest timings for pilots and flight attendants and prevent fatigue-related safety issues. The DGCA had asked domestic airlines to comply with a new set of FDTL norms in a phased manner from July 1, 2025 to November 1, 2025. It increased weekly rest periods from 36 hours to 48 hours for flight crew from July 1. The new regulations also took into consideration different types of operations across time zones from July 1. The definition of night duty was changed to cover the period from midnight to 6 am as opposed to midnight to 5 am previously. This enhancement of one hour was made to align the night duty period to encompass the window of circadian low from 2 am to 6 am, when the human body is at its lowest in terms of alertness.

Then from November 1, the maximum flight time and maximum flight duty period for flight operations encroaching night were restricted to eight hours flight time and 10 hours flight duty period, respectively. The number of landings was limited to only two as compared to six during night operations previously.

However, since December 1 IndiGo has faced flight disruptions, which resulted in the cancellation of over 2,700 flights, mostly due to a lack of proper arrangements by the airline to meet the updated FDTL requirements.



CREW CRUNCH

## The pilot fatigue norms that left IndiGo gasping

The government has granted a one-time relaxation for some of the flight duty time limitation (FDTL) norms that triggered massive disruption of IndiGo flights last week. Though this gives the airline more time to adapt to the new rules, it will not be easy to build pilot bench strength that quickly, explains *Yaruqhullah Khan*

### ● Mitigation measures taken by the govt

TO HELP RESOLVE the chaos at IndiGo, the DGCA has given a temporary reprieve till February 10, 2026, to the airline's A320 fleet, from the norms that had come into effect on November 1. Twelve new Flight Operations Instructions have been issued with updated ratings for both flight and simulator duties. Caps have been set on

airfares to control the surge in ticket prices following the flight disruptions. The government also directed IndiGo to clear all pending passenger refunds without delay by December 7, 8 pm. Airlines have been told not to levy any rescheduling charges for passengers whose travel plans were affected by cancellations.

INDIGO HAS ADMITTED THAT IT MISJUDGED THE OPERATIONAL IMPACT OF THE NEW FDTL NORMS

Feb 10, 2026

NEW DEADLINE FOR INDIGO'S A320 FLEET TO ADOPT THE NORMS THAT CAME INTO EFFECT ON NOV 1

## ● Why IndiGo was unable to adhere to the new norms

INDIGO HAS ADMITTED to the DGCA that it had "misjudged" the operational impact of the new FDTL norms. According to a statement issued by the DGCA, the airline said planning gaps contributed to its ongoing disruptions. At the heart of IndiGo's crisis lies the issue of the airline underhiring pilots. IndiGo currently operates around 410 aircraft with 5,700 pilots, translating to roughly 14 pilots per aircraft. This skeletal staffing model is insufficient as new rest rules require more pilots to operate the same flight schedule. IndiGo's ultra-high utilisation strategy also relies disproportionately on midnight-to-early-morning turnarounds—the window most constrained by the new FDTL rules.

By capping night landings at two per duty period and extending night duty definitions, the FDTL rules directly attacked the operational window upon which IndiGo's entire model depends.

## ● Action taken against the airline

THE DGCA HAS issued show-cause notices to IndiGo's Chief Executive Officer Pieter Elbers, and the airline's accountable manager, COO Isidre Porqueras. It held the CEO responsible, saying he "failed in his duty" to ensure reliable operations and to provide the facilities passengers are entitled to. The DGCA has also constituted a four-member committee to review the factors behind the flight disruptions, which will assess gaps in crew planning, operational preparedness and compliance with revised FDTL norms.

Meanwhile, the Airline Pilots' Association of India (ALPA India) has warned the temporary reprieve creates an unsafe flying environment. It stated that operators had been given almost two years to meet the new FDTL standards in two phases. However, it was reported that operational disruptions occurred just 35 days after the implementation of Phase II, coinciding with the winter 2025 roster increase that was approved by the DGCA.

## ● Can IndiGo hire that many pilots?

INDIGO PLANS TO add 158 pilots by February 10, and another 742 by December 2026. It is in the market to hire 300 captains and 600 junior first officers over the next 12 months, the airline's management said in its detailed action plan submitted to the DGCA. It admitted that, for its Airbus fleet, it needed 2,422 captains and 2,290 first officers to operate its scheduled flights under the new FDTL norms, but had an availability of 2,357 captains and 2,194 first officers, respectively.

Aviation experts, including former

AirAsia CFO Vijay Gopalan, highlighted that increasing the number of captains is a complex task, as they undergo months of in-flight and on-ground training before being allowed to fly. Gopalan, in a post on Twitter said that the airline will not find it easy to hire pilots. "One is a notice period. The second is, if you want to bring in fresh pilots, they need to go through the training. They need to finish the minimum number of flying hours. I don't think Indian infrastructure supports any of those things. It's a long process. It's not going to be easy," he said.

# 1. What were the new pilot duty rules (FDTL norms) that triggered disruptions?

New DGCA FDTL norms implemented in phases (July 1, 2025 → Nov 1, 2025):

FDTL = *Flight Duty Time Limitations*, designed to prevent pilot fatigue.

---

## A. Weekly Rest Period Enhanced

- Rest for flight crew increased from:
    - **36 hours → 48 hours** (starting July 1).
  - Aim: Improve circadian recovery & reduce fatigue risk.
- 

## B. "Night Duty" definition changed

Earlier: Midnight to 5 AM

Now: **Midnight to 6 AM**

Why important?

- Human alertness lowest between **2–6 AM** → highest fatigue risk.
- Extending night window = fewer early-morning duty extensions allowed.



### C. From Nov 1, 2025 — strictest rules implemented

- **Maximum flight time + maximum duty time** for flights crossing night hours became restricted.
- Maximum **number of landings** in a day reduced to **two**, compared to earlier **six**.

👉 Result: Airlines need *more pilots* to maintain same schedule.

---

## 2. Why IndiGo struggled to comply with new norms?

### A. Misjudged staffing requirements

- IndiGo admitted to DGCA that it **underestimated** the impact of new norms.
  - IndiGo operates:
    - **410 aircraft**
    - **5,700 pilots** → roughly **14 pilots per aircraft**
  - Model requires **18–20 pilots per aircraft** to meet new norms.
- 

### B. Over-reliance on night & early-morning flights

IndiGo's "utilisation-heavy" strategy depends on:

- High frequency of **midnight-to-dawn operations**
- Fast aircraft turnaround times

The new **night duty restrictions** broke this model.

### **C. Complex scheduling under new rules**

- Duty period calculations became stricter.
  - Pilot fatigue alerts triggered more often.
  - Simulation data IndiGo relied on also failed to predict actual disruptions.
- 

## **3. Action taken by DGCA against IndiGo**

### **A. Show-cause notice issued**

To IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers + Accountable Manager CIO Isidre Porqueras.

Charges:

- Failure to ensure reliable operations
  - Poor passenger facilities
  - Not preparing operations for new norms
- 

### **B. Four-member committee formed**

To examine:

- Crew planning
- Operational preparedness
- Compliance failures

## 5. Can IndiGo hire enough pilots?

### IndiGo Plans:

- Hire **158 pilots** by Feb 2026
- Hire **742 more** by Dec 2026
- Currently in market for **300 captains & 1500 first officers**

### Pilot Hiring Gap:

- Needs:
  - **2,422 captains**
  - **2,290 first officers**
- Has:
  - **1,460 captains**
  - **2,194 first officers**

Large skill gap remains → training pipeline slow.

### Industry Insight

- Airlines face difficulty hiring because:
  - Captain training months-long
  - Limited simulator availability
  - Fresh pilots need years to reach captain rank



IIA celebrated 10 years of  
AstroSat's UltraViolet  
Imaging Telescope

## 1. IIA celebrates 10 years of AstroSat's UVIT

- Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) marked a decade of operations of the **UltraViolet Imaging Telescope (UVIT)**.
  - A workshop in Bengaluru highlighted:
    - UVIT's contribution to **UV astronomy**,
    - Key scientific discoveries,
    - Role in shaping **future Indian space telescopes**.
- 

## 2. AstroSat — India's First Dedicated Space Observatory

- Launched: **2015** (by ISRO).
- India's first **multiwavelength space observatory**.
- Observes across:
  - **Ultraviolet**,
  - **Optical**,
  - **Soft and hard X-ray bands**.

### Why AstroSat is important?

- It is among **very few global UV astronomy facilities**, alongside NASA's **Hubble Space Telescope**.
- Helps bypass Earth's atmospheric absorption which blocks most UV radiation.

### 3. UVIT — Flagship Instrument of AstroSat

Activated in Nov 2015.

#### Key Features

- Two co-aligned telescopes:
  - Near-UV
  - Far-UV
- Very high-resolution imaging (~1 arcsecond).
- Capable of long-duration stable observations.

#### Scientific Achievements

- Study of:
    - Star formation histories
    - Evolution of star clusters
    - Hot stellar populations
    - UV mapping of galaxies
  - Helped India join the **elite global UV astronomy community**.
-



## 4. Importance of UV Astronomy

- UV radiation cannot be observed from Earth due to atmospheric absorption → requires **space telescopes**.
  - UVIT's longevity has boosted:
    - Stellar evolution research
    - Galactic evolution studies
    - Measurement of cosmic star formation rates
- 

## 5. Future Scope

- India preparing new missions that may build on UVIT's:
  - Optics
  - Detectors
  - UV calibration expertise
- UVIT's success lays foundation for **India's next-generation UV space missions**.

## **AstroSat Facts**

- Launcher: **PSLV-C30**
- Weight: ~1500 kg
- Instruments include:
  - UVIT
  - Soft X-ray Telescope (SXT)
  - Large Area Xenon Proportional Counters (LAXPC)
  - Cadmium Zinc Telluride Imager (CZTI)
  - Scanning Sky Monitor (SSM)

## **UVIT Specs**

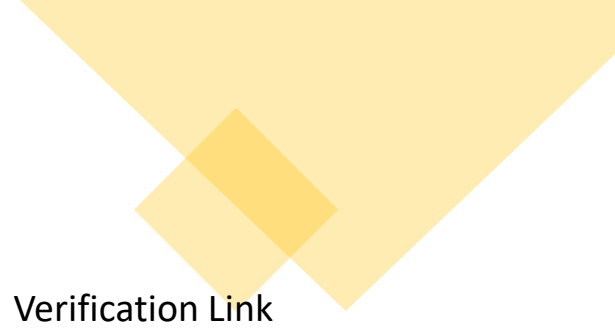
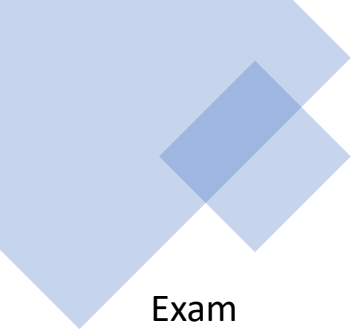
- Wavelength coverage:
  - **FUV: 130–180 nm**
  - **NUV: 200–300 nm**
- Resolution: **1 arcsecond** — one of the best globally in UV band.

## **Global UV Missions**


- Hubble Space Telescope (NASA/ESA)
- GALEX (NASA, retired)

## **India's Astronomy Centres**

- IIA (Bengaluru)
- IUCAA (Pune)
- ARIES (Nainital)



Exam	Year	Actual Question	Correct Answer	Verification Link
UPSC Prelims	2023	“With reference to AstroSat, consider the following statements...” (asked about multiwavelength capability)	<b>It observes UV + X-ray + visible</b>	<a href="https://upsc.gov.in">https://upsc.gov.in</a> — Official Answer Key
UPSC Prelims	2021	“Which of the following missions deals with X-ray astronomy?”	<b>AstroSat</b>	UPSC Key 2021
SSC CGL	2023	“Which is India’s first dedicated multi-wavelength space observatory?”	<b>AstroSat</b>	<a href="https://ssc.nic.in">https://ssc.nic.in</a>
RPSC RAS	2023	“UVIT is associated with which Indian satellite?”	<b>AstroSat</b>	RPSC Answer Key
UPPSC	2023	“Hubble Telescope observes which part of spectrum?”	<b>Visible, UV, Near IR</b>	UPPSC Official Key



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• **With reference to the UltraViolet Imaging Telescope (UVIT), consider the following statements:**

- UVIT operates on board India's AstroSat mission.
- UVIT provides high-resolution ultraviolet imaging not possible from Earth due to atmospheric absorption.
- UVIT is India's first space telescope capable of far-UV observations.
- **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**
- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3



# The 11th India International Science Festival (IISF)



## 1. The 11th India International Science Festival (IISF)

- Held from **6–9 December 2025**
  - Location: **Panchkula, Haryana**
  - IISF was launched in **2015** as a national platform to promote:
    - Scientific temper
    - Public engagement in science
    - Innovation and research
    - Collaboration among scientists, students, entrepreneurs & policymakers
- 

## 2. Theme of IISF 2025

**“Vigyan Se Samruddhi: for Aatmanirbhar Bharat”**

This theme highlights:

- Science-led growth for a **self-reliant India**
- Use of innovation-driven research for economy
- Integration of **traditional knowledge systems** with **modern science**
- Contribution of science to national development

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- **Vision of IISF 2025**

- Strengthen India's innovation ecosystem
- Promote scientific awareness among youth
- Encourage community science, grassroots innovation & indigenous knowledge
- Support SDGs through science & technology
- Showcase India's achievements in S&T to global audience
-

## **4. Major Focus Areas & Programme Structure (5 Broad Themes)**

### **A. Ecology and Science of North-West India & the Himalayan Region**

- Climate change impact
- Biodiversity & environmental resilience
- Disaster preparedness

### **B. Science for Society & Education**

- STEM education reforms
- Science communication
- Citizen science initiatives

### **C. Self-reliance through S&T**

- Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiatives
- Indigenous manufacturing
- Make in India + Startups + Deep-Tech

### **D. Traditional Knowledge Systems (TKS)**

- Ayurveda, Yoga, Natural farming
- Tribal knowledge integration

### **E. Innovation, Technology & Youth Empowerment**

- Research exhibitions
- Student innovation showcases
- Women in STEM

### **1. IISF is organised by:**

- Ministry of Science & Technology
- Ministry of Earth Sciences
- Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA)
- Department of Biotechnology (DBT)
- CSIR & other national labs

### **2. In India, 'Scientific Temper' promotion is mandated under:**

- Article 51A(h) – Fundamental Duties

### **3. First IISF was held in:**

- New Delhi, 2015

### **4. Haryana (host state) key S&T institutions:**

- National Brain Research Centre (NBRC), Manesar
- Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) regional centers

### **5. Panchkula is emerging as a biotech & innovation hub.**

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Exam	Year	Actual Question	Correct Answer	Verification Link
<b>UPSC Prelims</b>	<b>2022</b>	“INSPIRE, MANAK & SERB programmes relate to which sector?”	<b>Science &amp; Technology Research Promotion</b>	UPSC Key 2022
<b>UPSC Prelims</b>	<b>2021</b>	“Which institution coordinates India's science communication efforts?”	<b>Department of Science &amp; Technology (DST)</b>	UPSC Key
<b>SSC CGL</b>	<b>2023</b>	“What is the main aim of India International Science Festival?”	<b>Promoting scientific temper and innovation</b>	SSC Key → <a href="https://ssc.nic.in">https://ssc.nic.in</a>
<b>RPSC RAS</b>	<b>2023</b>	“Which Article promotes scientific temper?”	<b>Article 51A(h)</b>	RPSC Official Key



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• **With reference to the 11th India International Science Festival (IISF), consider the following statements:**

- The theme of IISF 2025 focuses on science-led growth for Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- The festival integrates traditional knowledge systems with modern science.
- The first IISF was held in Hyderabad in 2015.

• **Which of the above statements is/are correct?**

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

# India–Malaysia Joint Exercise Harimau Shakti 2025





Thailand

*South China Sea*

# Malaysia

Peninsular  
Malaysia

★ Kuala Lumpur


Singapore

Brunei

Sarawak

Sabah

Indonesia

- 
- Samudra Laksamana (bilateral maritime exercise), and Udara Shakti (bilateral air force exercise).

# 1. What is Harimau Shakti 2025?

- **5th edition** of the bilateral military exercise between **Indian Army** and **Royal Malaysian Army**.
- Conducted from **5–18 December 2025**.
- Venue: **Mahajan Field Firing Ranges, Rajasthan (India)**.

## Aim of the Exercise

- Strengthen **operational cooperation** through structured joint training.
  - Enhance capability for **sub-conventional warfare** under **Chapter VII of the UN mandate**.
  - Improve coordinated responses in **counter-terrorist scenarios**.
- 

# 2. Participating Contingents

## Indian Side

- Troops from the **Dogra Regiment**.

## Malaysian Side

- Personnel from the **25th Battalion of the Royal Malaysian Army**.



## **1. India's Key Bilateral Military Exercises**

- **India–Malaysia** → Harimau Shakti
- **India–Indonesia** → Garuda Shakti
- **India–Singapore** → Agni Warrior, Bold Kurukshetra
- **India–Thailand** → Maitree
- **India–Vietnam** → VINBAX
- **India–Myanmar** → IMBAX

## **2. UN Charter Chapter VII**

- Deals with actions related to **peace, security, and counter-terrorism**, including:
  - Authorizing military actions
  - Peace enforcement
  - Sanctions

## **3. Mahajan Field Firing Range**

- One of India's largest training areas for:
  - Live-fire exercises
  - Armoured warfare drills
  - International joint training

Exam	Year	Actual Question	Correct Answer	Verification Link
UPSC Prelims	2022	“Exercise VINBAX is conducted between India and which country?”	Vietnam	UPSC Key
SSC CGL	2023	“Exercise Garuda Shakti is a military drill between India and which nation?”	Indonesia	SSC Official Key
RPSC RAS	2023	“Bold Kurukshetra is conducted between India and?”	Singapore	RPSC Answer Key
CDS Exam	2023	“Harimau Shakti is a bilateral exercise between India and which country?”	Malaysia	UPSC CDS Admit + coaching verified Q

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- **Consider the following statements about Exercise Harimau Shakti 2025:**

- It is a bilateral exercise between the Indian Army and the Royal Malaysian Air Force.
- The 2025 edition was held at the Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan.
- The exercise focuses on sub-conventional operations under the UN Chapter VII mandate.

- **Which of the statements are correct?**

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

# Trump Receives First FIFA Peace Prize





## 1. What Happened?

- **US President Donald Trump** received the **inaugural FIFA Peace Prize**.
  - Award presented during the **2026 FIFA World Cup draw** in **Washington DC**.
  - Venue: **Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts**.
  - This marks a **rare merging of sports diplomacy and international political recognition**.
- 

## 2. Why Was Trump Given the Prize?

- FIFA President **Gianni Infantino** awarded Trump for:
  - His role in facilitating peace efforts across regions facing prolonged tensions.
  - His political contributions toward improving intercountry diplomacy.
  - His involvement in arrangements related to the **2026 World Cup**, jointly hosted by:
    - **USA**
    - **Canada**
    - **Mexico**

### 3. FIFA Introduces the Global Peace Award

#### Purpose of the Award:

- Introduced in **November 2025** by FIFA.
- Recognises individuals whose actions have:
  - **Advanced peace,**
  - **Strengthened unity,**
  - **Created positive global influence.**

#### Selection Criteria (Not Fully Disclosed):

- Exceptional contribution to peace efforts.
  - Global impact of actions.
- 

### 4. Importance of This Development

- Matches global trend where sports bodies increasingly support:
    - **Peace building,**
    - **International cooperation,**
    - **Sports diplomacy.**
  - Adds a soft power layer to FIFA's global presence.
-

**1. FIFA Headquarters: Zurich, Switzerland**

**2. 2026 FIFA World Cup Hosts:**

- USA
- Canada
- Mexico

(First 48-team World Cup)

**3. Sports Diplomacy Examples:**

- Cricket diplomacy: India–Pakistan
- Ping-pong diplomacy: USA–China 1970s
- Olympics used for peace initiatives

**4. First FIFA Peace Prize → 2025 (Awarded before 2026 Cup)**

**5. Lionel Messi won record 8 Ballon d'Or (Current affairs relevance)**

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- **With reference to the FIFA Peace Prize, consider the following statements:**
  - The inaugural FIFA Peace Prize was awarded during the draw ceremony of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.
  - The award aims to honour individuals who have significantly advanced peace and global unity.
  - The first award ceremony was held in Zurich, Switzerland.
  - **Which of the above statements is/are correct?**
  - A. 1 and 2 only
  - B. 1 and 3 only
  - C. 2 and 3 only
  - D. 1, 2 and 3



# Right to Disconnect Bill, 2025

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- A **private member's bill(PMB)** titled the **Right to Disconnect Bill 2025**, was introduced in the Lok Sabha, it seeks to legally protect **employees from after-hour work demands** and **reinforce healthy work–life boundaries**.
  - **Key Provisions:** The Bill proposes an **Employees' Welfare Authority** to enforce the right to disconnect, conduct baseline studies, and negotiate terms on after-hour engagement for companies with over 10 workers.
    - Employees refusing after-hours communication **cannot face disciplinary action**, and employers must pay **overtime wages** if work is assigned beyond fixed hours.
    - The Bill calls for **counselling services** and the creation of **digital detox centres** to address mental-health impacts like telepressure, stress, and **“info-obesity.”**



**Global Parallel:** Nations like **France, Portugal, and Australia** have already enacted similar rights, indicating international recognition of employee wellbeing.

**Private Member's Bill:** PMB is a proposed law introduced in the legislature by a Member of Parliament (MP) who is not a Minister.

- In the Indian parliamentary system, any **MP, whether from the ruling party or the opposition**, is considered a "Private Member" if they **do not hold a ministerial portfolio**.
- Private Members' Bills, which are taken up on **Fridays when Parliament is in session**, seldom make it to passage.
- Since Independence, only 14 PMBs have been passed by both Houses and received Presidential assent. **No PMB has passed both Houses since 1970.**

# Goldilocks Economy

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- RBI trims repo rate to 5.25% as the governor highlights a rare Goldilocks moment for India's economy.
  - **What is Goldilocks Economy Phase?**
  - A Goldilocks economy describes an ideal economic state that is “just right”, neither overheating with high inflation nor cooling into recession, but featuring steady growth, low inflation, and low unemployment.
  - **Why does the RBI call it a Goldilocks phase?**
  - Retail inflation has dropped well below the 4% target and is hovering near the lower end of the 2–6% band.
  - At the same time, real GDP growth has stayed robust at about 8%, even amid weak global conditions and external headwinds such as higher tariffs and currency pressures.

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# Word of the day

## **Regnant:**

exercising power or authority

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**Synonyms:** reigning, ruling

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**Usage:** *A sense of unease was the regnant emotion in the room.*

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**Pronunciation:** [newsth.live/regnantpro](http://newsth.live/regnantpro)

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**International Phonetic Alphabet:** /ˈɹɛɡnənt/

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Thank you 😊

