



20 AUGUST 2026 (THURSDAY)

★ RELEVANT FOR UPSC PRELIMS & MAINS ★

“Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out.”
— Robert Collier

1 NATIONAL NEWS

Aadhaar App Crosses 5 Crore Downloads



5
CRORE+
DOWNLOADS

- Over 60 lakh people updated mobile numbers through the app.
- More than 15 lakh address updates and 23 lakh+ email updates.
- More than 200 entities onboarded as Offline Verification Seeking Entities (OVSEs).
- Offline verification uses QR codes and digitally signed documents.
- Based on the principle “Show, Share and Verify.”

11.19 Lakh Pucca Houses Approved for Bihar



- 11,18,937 pucca houses approved for poor families in Bihar with ₹13,427 crore.
- 24,30,327 houses approved for Bihar over two years.
- Total expenditure during the period: ₹29,164 crore.
- PM Fasal Bima Yojana to be implemented in Bihar.
- Focus on Lakhpati Didis, SHGs and Farmer IDs.

2 INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India-Japan Strengthen Maritime Security Cooperation



- India and Japan signed a Memorandum of Arrangement on Maritime Security Cooperation.
- Strengthening cooperation between Indian Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force.
- Enhanced Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA).
- Cooperation in Search and Rescue (SAR).
- Cooperation in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR).

12th BRICS Communications Ministers' Meeting



- India will host the 12th BRICS Communications Ministers' Meeting on 21 August 2026.
- Chaired by Jyotiraditya M. Scindia.
- Theme: “Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability.”
- Focus: Digital Public Infrastructure, Cybersecurity, Future Networks, Emerging Technologies, Digital Connectivity, Capacity Building.

3 ECONOMY

Building a Business-Ready India



- Government continues reforms to reduce compliance burden.
- Focus on transparency and ease of doing business.
- Emphasis on entrepreneurship and enterprise-led growth.
- Supports enterprises of different sizes.
- Manufacturing is an important pillar of India's growth strategy.

Government Approved Test Centres: Applications Open



- Department of Consumer Affairs invites applications for Government Approved Test Centres (GATCs).
- 51 GATCs already recognised.
- Verification scope expanded to 23 categories.
- Eligible applicants: Industries, Laboratories, Engineering Colleges, Polytechnics, ITIs and Testing Facilities.
- Under Legal Metrology (Government Approved Test Centre) Rules, 2013.

4 SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Aadhaar Offline Verification Ecosystem Expands



- More than 200 OVSEs onboarded since January.
- Offline verification possible without real-time connectivity with UIDAI's central database.
- Uses QR-code verification and secure digitally signed documents.
- Promotes privacy-first and consent-based digital identity verification.

AI in Healthcare – IIMA Healthcare Summit 2026



- IIM Ahmedabad will host the IIMA Healthcare Summit 2026 on 22 August 2026.
- Theme: “Advancing AI in Healthcare.”
- Brings together government, industry and academia.
- Focus on opportunities and challenges of AI-driven healthcare.

5 ENVIRONMENT & TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission



- Many Scheduled Tribes depend on Minor Forest Produce (MFP).
- Tribal communities organised into Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs).
- Focus on moving tribals from raw-product sellers to value-adding entrepreneurs.
- Promotes community ownership and livelihood enhancement.

MoTA Reviews Tribal Welfare Schemes in Madhya Pradesh



- Ministry of Tribal Affairs reviewed last-mile delivery of welfare schemes.
- Field review covered Indore Division.
- Included Adi Sewa Kendra, Tribal Homestay, Bunkar Suvidha Kendra and Eklaya Model Residential Schools.
- Focus on scheme saturation and beneficiary delivery.

6 GOVERNANCE & REPORTS

National Commission for Minorities – First Meeting of 2026



- Newly reconstituted National Commission for Minorities (NCM) held its first meeting of 2026.
- Meeting chaired by Harjit Singh Grewal.
- Reviewed welfare and safeguards for minority communities.
- Focus on institutional mechanisms for protection and welfare.

India Hosts 31st Southern Zonal Council Meeting



- 31st Southern Zonal Council meeting at Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu.
- Chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.
- Zonal Councils promote cooperation between States and the Union.
- Important areas: Interstate coordination and regional development.

7 IMPORTANT FOR PRELIMS (Quick Facts)

- ✓ Aadhaar App crossed 5 crore downloads.
- ✓ Over 60 lakh mobile number updates via Aadhaar App.
- ✓ More than 200 OVSEs onboarded for offline verification.
- ✓ 11,18,937 pucca houses approved for Bihar.
- ✓ ₹13,427 crore allocation for rural housing in Bihar.
- ✓ India-Japan signed MoA on Maritime Security Cooperation.
- ✓ 12th BRICS Communications Ministers' Meeting on 21 Aug 2026.
- ✓ BRICS ICT theme: Innovate, Cooperate and Transform.
- ✓ Government Approved Test Centres (GATCs): 51 recognised.
- ✓ Verification scope expanded to 23 categories.
- ✓ PM Janjatiya Vikas Mission promotes MFP-based livelihoods.
- ✓ Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs) support tribal entrepreneurs.
- ✓ 31st Southern Zonal Council meeting at Mahabalipuram.
- ✓ IIMA Healthcare Summit 2026 on 22 August – AI in Healthcare.

PRELIMS QUICK FACTS

- UIDAI – Unique Identification Authority of India
- OVSE – Offline Verification Seeking Entity
- PMAY-G – Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin)
- PMFSY – Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana
- SHG – Self Help Group
- MDA – Maritime Domain Awareness
- SAR – Search and Rescue
- HADR – Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief
- GATC – Government Approved Test Centre
- MFP – Minor Forest Produce
- VDVK – Van Dhan Vikas Kendra
- NCM – National Commission for Minorities
- Zonal Councils – States Reorganisation Act, 1956

PRACTICE MCQ

- Q. With reference to India's Aadhaar Offline Verification framework, consider the following statements:
- Offline verification can use QR-code based authentication.
 - Offline verification necessarily requires real-time connectivity with the UIDAI central database.
 - Offline Verification Seeking Entities (OVSEs) can participate in the ecosystem.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- A) 1 and 2 only B) 1 and 3 only
C) 2 and 3 only D) 1, 2 and 3
- Answer: B) 1 and 3 only



TODAY IN HISTORY – 20 AUGUST



Rajiv Gandhi Jayanti
20 August marks the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The day is observed in India as Sadbhavana Diwas, associated with the message of harmony and national integration.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

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— Robert Collier

