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UPSC EPFO · APFC 2026

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UPSC EPFO · APFC RECRUITMENT TEST 2026

EPFO Current Affairs 2026

Current events and developmental issues, November 2025 to November 2026, with labour and social-security news for the APFC exam

English Medium | **December 2026 Exam Edition**

7	150	EPFO
chapters, Nov 2025 to Nov 2026	practice MCQs with answers	labour & social-security news

INSIDE

01 Government schemes and developmental issues
02 Labour, employment and social security news
03 Economy: Budget, RBI, taxes, trade and data
04 International relations, organisations and summits
05 Reports, indices and rankings
06 Awards, persons, sports and appointments
07 Science, technology, defence and environment news



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FREE PYQ PRACTICE

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About this book



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This book covers the **current events and developmental issues** part of the **UPSC EPFO APFC Recruitment Test** on **Sunday, 20 December 2026** (UPSC Special Advertisement 52/2026), and the recent changes in **labour and social security** that the same paper tests.

Exam	What it asks on current affairs
UPSC EPFO APFC (Assistant Provident Fund Commissioner)	120 questions in 2 hours; "Current events and developmental issues" is a syllabus topic, and the Labour Laws and Social Security questions often test the latest changes
UPSC EPFO EO/AO and Personal Assistant	The same current-events topic
Other UPSC and central exams of December 2026 – early 2027	The same events: schemes, economy, international, reports, awards, science

How UPSC asks it. In the six EPFO papers on learnwithanil.in (2017 to 2025), UPSC asked **5 to 18 questions** on current events in each paper, most of them on **government schemes and missions**, then **international organisations and events**, **awards and persons**, and **reports and indices**. They are mostly **statement questions** ("which of the statements given above is/are correct?") and **pairs**, so half-knowledge does not work: you need the ministry, the year, the target group and the number. The labour and social-security questions add the new **Labour Codes**, **EPFO** and **ESIC** changes and **ILO** reports.

How each chapter works

- A **syllabus line** at the top, and a **What UPSC asked** table with the questions UPSC has already asked on that area. Sections where UPSC has asked such questions carry an **ASKED BY UPSC** tag.
- Notes in **tables, timelines and short points**, with exact **dates**, **ministries** and **numbers**: the facts statement questions are built on.
- **From the exam** boxes: UPSC's real EPFO questions with the answer and the trap explained (official key where UPSC has published one).
- A **meme break**, a **Quick revision** list, **20–25 practice MCQs** in UPSC's EPFO style with answers and explanations, and a **rapid-fire** table for the last day.

What is inside. Seven chapters (see the contents): schemes and developmental issues; labour, employment and social security; the economy; international relations; reports and indices; awards, persons and sports; science, defence and environment. **150 practice MCQs** in all. The same MCQs are on learnwithanil.in as timed **Current Affairs tests** in the Sankalpa EPFO series, with the same All-in-One Pass.

Period covered. November 2025 to **17 November 2026**. Every recent fact was checked against an official or reputable source (PIB, ministries, RBI, EPFO, ESIC, ILO, UN and the organisers' own sites). Events after 17 November 2026 (for example the RBI's December policy) are not in this edition.

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Contents

01 Government schemes and developmental issues –

02 Labour, employment and social security news –

03 Economy: Budget, RBI, taxes, trade and data –

04 International relations, organisations and summits –

05 Reports, indices and rankings *(in this sample)* 3

06 Awards, persons, sports and appointments –

07 Science, technology, defence and environment news –

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CHAPTER 5

Reports, indices and rankings

UPSC EPFO APFC: Current events and developmental issues · India's rank and score in global reports, growth forecasts, NITI Aayog indices, national surveys and Census 2027 · Facts current to 17 November 2026

UPSC asks about reports in two ways: India's rank or score in a named report, and the organisation that publishes it. The APFC & EO/AO 2025 paper went one step further and tested what a report actually found: the share of the bioeconomy in GDP (and the ILO's social-protection coverage figure, covered in Chapter 2), each set as a two-statement question. EO/AO 2021 asked a plain rank question (Global Firepower Index). So learn three things for every report: **publisher, India's latest rank or score, and the previous one**. Section 5.1 gives the master table; the later sections give the details that statement questions are built on.

WHAT UPSC ASKED ON THIS AREA

Paper	What was asked
APFC & EO/AO 2025	India BioEconomy Report 2025 (DBT-BIRAC): bioeconomy about 4.25% of GDP; BioE3 policy (Q36)
APFC & EO/AO 2025	GANHRI accreditation of national human rights institutions under the UN Paris Principles; 'A' and 'B' status; NHRC India (Q44)
EO/AO 2021	Global Firepower Index 2021: India's rank (4th) (Q114)

5.1 The master table: who publishes what, and where India stands

ASKED BY UPSC

Report (when released)	Publisher	India: latest	India: previous edition
Global Hunger Index 2026 (Oct 2026)	**Welthungerhilfe** with Helvetas and IFHV (Ruhr University Bochum)	**100th of 122**, score **24.1**, "serious"	102nd of 123 (2025)
Global Innovation Index 2026 (Sept 2026)	**WIPO**	**38th of 139**	38th (2025), 39th (2024), 40th (2023)
Global Gender Gap Index 2026 (**16 Sept 2026**)	**World Economic Forum**	**131st of 145**, 64.5% of gap closed	131st (2025)
World Happiness Report 2026 (March 2026)	**Oxford Wellbeing Research Centre**, with **Gallup** and **UN SDSN**	**116th of 147**	118th (2025)
World Press Freedom Index 2026 (**30 April 2026**)	**Reporters Without Borders (RSF)**	**157th of 180**, "very serious"	151st (2025)
Henley Passport Index (October 2026 edition)	**Henley & Partners** (uses IATA data)	**84th**, visa-free access to **55** destinations	85th, 57 destinations (Oct 2025)
Sustainable Development Report 2026 (June 2026)	**UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)**	**94th of 167**, score **68.3** (best ever)	99th (2025)
Corruption Perceptions Index 2025 (Feb 2026)	**Transparency International**	**91st of 182**, score **39**	96th (CPI 2024)

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Report (when released)	Publisher	India: latest	India: previous edition
Climate Change Performance Index 2026 (Nov 2025, COP30)	**Germanwatch, NewClimate Institute, Climate Action Network**	**23rd**	10th
Climate Risk Index 2026 (Nov 2025, COP30)	**Germanwatch**	**9th** most affected country, 1995–2024	—
Global Peace Index 2026 (June 2026)	**Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP)**	**127th of 163**, score 2.409	115th in the 2025 report (the 2026 report, on revised data, shows a fall of 3 places)
SIPRI military expenditure data (27 April 2026, for 2025)	**SIPRI**, Stockholm	**5th** largest spender, **$92.1 billion**	5th (2024, April 2025 release)
World Inequality Report 2026 (**10 Dec 2025**)	**World Inequality Lab**	Top 10% get **58%** of income; bottom 50% get **15%**	—
Human Development Report 2025 (6 May 2025; still the latest)	**UNDP**	**130th of 193**, HDI **0.685**	133rd (HDI 0.676)
World Economic Outlook (**13 Oct 2026**)	**IMF**	2026-27 growth **7.0%**	6.4% (July 2026 update)
India Development Update (**6 Oct 2026**)	**World Bank**	2026-27 growth **7.1%**	6.6% (June 2026)

Other publishers UPSC pairs with reports (no Indian rank needed, but the pairing is a common trap):

Report	Publisher
World Investment Report	UNCTAD
World Development Report; Global Economic Prospects; Logistics Performance Index; Human Capital Index	World Bank
Global Financial Stability Report; Fiscal Monitor	IMF
Global Risks Report; Energy Transition Index	World Economic Forum
Emissions Gap Report	UNEP
State of World Population	UNFPA
State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI)	FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO
Global Multidimensional Poverty Index	UNDP and OPHI (Oxford)
Global Tuberculosis Report; World Malaria Report	WHO
World Drug Report	UNODC
Global Terrorism Index	Institute for Economics & Peace
World Competitiveness Ranking	IMD, Lausanne
Global Firepower Index	GlobalFirepower, a private US-based website

- Rank changes between editions are not always strictly comparable: the GHI itself warns that its rankings cannot be compared across editions because data and country lists change.

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5.2 Hunger, human development and inequality

Global Hunger Index 2026 (October 2026)

Item	Fact
India's rank	**100th of 122**, shared with **Ethiopia** (both 24.1)
Category	**Serious** (20.0–34.9); India has been "serious" since 2012
The four indicators	Undernourishment **9.8%**; child stunting **29.3%**; child wasting **19.0%**; under-five mortality **2.7%**
Headline finding	India's child-wasting rate (19.0%) was the **highest of all countries** in the report
Neighbours (scores)	Sri Lanka 10.2, Nepal 14.5, Bangladesh 19.2 ("moderate"); Pakistan 25.5, Afghanistan 28.6 (worse than India)
Global average score	18.1
Last year	2025: **102nd of 123**

Human Development Report (UNDP)

- **HDR 2025**, released **6 May 2025**, titled **"A Matter of Choice: People and Possibilities in the Age of AI"**, is still the latest edition.
- India: **130th of 193**, HDI **0.685** (2023 data), up from **133rd** (0.676). India is in the **medium human development** group and close to the **0.700** cut-off for "high".
- India's life expectancy reached **72 years** in 2023, the highest since the index began (58.6 years in 1990).
- Watch: UNDP has announced **HDR 2026**, *"Thriving Together: Advancing Human Development on a Shared Path for People and Nature"*, for early **December 2026**; it will introduce a new **Nature Relationship Index**.

World Inequality Report 2026 (World Inequality Lab, 10 December 2025)

India	Share
Top 10% of earners	about **58%** of national income
Bottom 50%	about **15%** of national income
Top 10% of wealth holders	about **65%** of wealth
Top 1%	about **40%** of wealth

5.3 Gender, happiness, press freedom, peace and corruption

Global Gender Gap Index 2026 (WEF, 16 September 2026)

- 20th edition; **145 economies**. The world has closed **69.2%** of the gender gap (68.8% in 2025); at the current pace parity is about **120 years** away.
- Top three: **Iceland** (93% of gap closed), **Finland**, **Norway**. **Chad** is last (145th); **Pakistan** is in the bottom three.
- India: **131st** (unchanged from 2025), **64.5%** of its gap closed.

Sub-index	India's score
Economic Participation and Opportunity	**41.2%**
Educational Attainment	**96.6%**
Health and Survival	**95.6%**

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Sub-index	India's score
Political Empowerment	**24.5%** (lowest score, yet India's best rank: **67th**)

World Happiness Report 2026 (March 2026)

- Published by the **Wellbeing Research Centre, University of Oxford**, with **Gallup** and the **UN SDSN**; released around the **International Day of Happiness (20 March)**.
- Ranks **147** countries on people's own life evaluations (the **Cantril ladder**, 0–10). Six factors are used to explain the scores: GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom, generosity and perceptions of corruption.
- **Finland** is first for the **9th year in a row**; Nordic countries dominate the top ten. **Afghanistan** is last (147th).
- India **116th** (118th in 2025), behind **Nepal (99th)** and **Pakistan (104th)**. The 2026 report's focus was happiness and social media.

World Press Freedom Index 2026 (RSF, 30 April 2026)

- India **157th of 180** (151st in 2025), in the **"very serious"** category, the lowest band.
- Top: **Norway**, then the Netherlands and Estonia.
- India ranks **below Nepal (87), the Maldives (108), Sri Lanka (134), Bhutan (150), Bangladesh (152) and Pakistan (153)**. Below India: Myanmar 166, Afghanistan 175, China 178.

Global Peace Index 2026 (IEP, June 2026)

- **163** countries. **Iceland** remains the most peaceful country (score 1.161).
- India **127th**, score **2.409**, after a 2.9% deterioration. The 2025 report had placed India 115th; the 2026 report, which recalculates last year's ranks with revised data, shows India down 3 places.
- **South Asia** recorded the largest deterioration of any region, with big falls in Nepal, Pakistan and India.

Corruption Perceptions Index 2025 (Transparency International, February 2026)

- Scale **0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean)**; **182** countries and territories.
- **Denmark** first (89), then Finland and Singapore.
- India **91st**, score **39** (one point up), from **96th** in CPI 2024. Pakistan 136th, Bangladesh 150th.

5.4 Innovation, sustainability, climate, defence and mobility

ASKED BY UPSC

Global Innovation Index 2026 (WIPO, September 2026)

- **139** economies. Top: **Switzerland**, Sweden, the United States, Republic of Korea, Singapore, the UK, the Netherlands; **China 10th**.
- India **38th**, the same as 2025 (40th in 2023, 39th in 2024). Innovation inputs **49th**, outputs **25th**.
- India leads the **lower-middle-income** group and the **Central and Southern Asia** region.
- Indicator ranks: **1st** in ICT services exports, **3rd** in domestic market scale, **4th** in late-stage venture-capital deals.
- India and Viet Nam are the longest-running "innovation overperformers" for their level of development: **16 consecutive years**.

Sustainable Development Report 2026 (UN SDSN, June 2026)

- India **94th of 167**, score **68.3**: its **highest-ever rank**. In 2025 it was 99th, its first time in the top 100. On the report's back-calculated series India stood 112th in 2015, the year the SDGs were adopted.

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- **Finland 1st**, Sweden 2nd, Denmark 3rd. Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka rank above India.
- India faces challenges on **13 of the 17 SDGs**; globally, **no SDG** is on track for 2030.

Climate indices released at COP30, Belém (November 2025)

	Climate Change Performance Index 2026	Climate Risk Index 2026
Publisher	Germanwatch, NewClimate Institute, Climate Action Network	Germanwatch
What it measures	Climate **performance** of 63 countries + EU (over 90% of emissions)	Countries most **affected** by extreme weather
India	**23rd**, down **13 places** from 10th	**9th** most affected over **1995–2024**
Key points	**Top three places left vacant** (no country good enough); **Denmark** first in 4th place; India "medium" in all categories except renewable energy ("low"); reliance on coal cited	India: about **80,000 deaths**, **1.3 billion** people affected, about **$170 billion** losses in 30 years; most affected overall: Dominica, Myanmar, Honduras

SIPRI: world military expenditure in 2025 (27 April 2026)

World spending reached **$2,887 billion** in 2025, up 2.9% in real terms.

Rank	Country	Spending (2025)
1	United States	$954 billion (−7.5%)
2	China	$336 billion (+7.4%)
3	Russia	$190 billion
4	Germany	$114 billion (+24%)
5	**India**	**$92.1 billion** (**+8.9%**; 3.2% of world total)

- India was also **5th** for 2024 in SIPRI's April 2025 release (Germany had moved into 4th that year). Pakistan spent $11.9 billion (31st).

Henley Passport Index (October 2026 edition)

- Ranks passports by the number of destinations holders can enter without a prior visa, using **IATA** data.
- **Singapore** first (**193** destinations); **Japan, South Korea and UAE** joint second (188).
- India **84th** (joint with Algeria and Mauritania), **55** destinations; a year earlier it was 85th with 57.

5.5 Growth forecasts for India: IMF, World Bank and ADB

The **IMF** publishes the **World Economic Outlook** in **April and October**, with shorter **updates in January and July**. The **World Bank** publishes **Global Economic Prospects** in **January and June**, and country reports such as the **India Development Update**. The **ADB** publishes the **Asian Development Outlook**. The IMF gives India's numbers on a **fiscal-year** basis (2026-27 = FY27).

When	Report	India's FY27 (2026-27) forecast	Change and reason
19 Jan 2026	IMF WEO Update	**6.4%**	Up from 6.2%; FY26 forecast raised to 7.3%
8 Apr 2026	World Bank, South Asia update	**6.6%**	Up from 6.3% (Oct 2025); warned of West Asia conflict and energy prices

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When	Report	India's FY27 (2026-27) forecast	Change and reason
April 2026	IMF WEO	**6.5%**	Up from 6.4%: lower US tariffs offset the drag from the West Asia conflict; world 2026 growth cut from 3.3% to 3.1%
April 2026	ADB Asian Development Outlook	**6.9%**	—
11 Jun 2026	World Bank Global Economic Prospects	**6.6%**	World growth 2.5%, weakest since the pandemic
9 Jul 2026	ADB ADO (July)	**6.6%**	Cut from 6.9%: high energy prices; inflation forecast raised to 5.2%
July 2026	IMF WEO Update	**6.4%**	Cut
6 Oct 2026	World Bank **India Development Update**	**7.1%**	Up from 6.6%: stronger-than-expected activity; South Asia to grow 6.9% in 2026
13 Oct 2026	IMF **WEO** (Annual Meetings, Bangkok)	**7.0%** (and 7.0% for FY28)	Up from 6.4%; world 3.1% (2026), 3.4% (2027); China 4.5% (2026); India the fastest-growing major economy

5.6 NITI Aayog indices

Index (release)	What it ranks	Top performers
Export Preparedness Index 2024 (4th edition, **14 Jan 2026**)	States' export readiness	Large states: **Maharashtra**, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat. Small states, North-Eastern states and UTs: **Uttarakhand**, Jammu & Kashmir, Nagaland
Fiscal Health Index 2026 (2nd edition, **March 2026**; data for 2023-24)	Fiscal health of **28** states (18 major + 10 North-Eastern/Himalayan)	Major: **Odisha** (73.1), Goa (54.7), Jharkhand (50.5). NE/Himalayan: **Arunachal Pradesh**, Uttarakhand
Investment Friendliness Index 2026 (first edition, **17 Jul 2026**)	**28 States and 8 UTs** in three groups; **8 pillars**, **84 indicators**	Large States: **Gujarat** (56.6), Maharashtra (53.7), Tamil Nadu (53.3). Hilly and North-Eastern States: **Uttarakhand**. UTs and city states: **Goa**
India Science & Technology Scoreboard (launched **3 Nov 2026**)	Interactive platform: research institutions, publications, patents, start-ups, R&D funding, state policies	Compares any two states/UTs; covers 11 priority research areas
SDG India Index 2023-24 (4th edition, 12 Jul 2024; still the latest)	States/UTs on **16 SDGs**, 113 indicators	India's score **71** (66 in 2020-21); **Kerala and Uttarakhand** top (79); Bihar lowest (57)

- **Fiscal Health Index** sub-indices (five): quality of expenditure, revenue mobilisation, fiscal prudence, debt index, debt sustainability. The weakest ("aspirational") major states: Kerala, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and **Punjab** (most stressed).
- The SDG India Index is built by NITI Aayog with technical support from the **UN in India**; the global SDR (5.4) is a different report by the **SDSN**.

5.7 National surveys: NFHS-6, HCES and ASER

NFHS-6 (2023-24): factsheets released 29 May 2026

- Conducted for the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** with the **International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai** as nodal agency; about **6.79 lakh households** in **715 districts**.

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Indicator	NFHS-5 (2019-21)	NFHS-6 (2023-24)
Stunting (children under 5)	35.5%	**29.3%**
Severe wasting (under 5)	7.7%	**5.2%**
Underweight (under 5)	32.1%	**31.8%**
Institutional deliveries	88.6%	**90.6%**
Full immunisation (12–23 months, vaccination-card basis)	83.8%	**87.1%**
Contraceptive prevalence	66.7%	**69.1%**
Total fertility rate	2.0	**2.0** (below replacement level of 2.1)

- **Anaemia was not reported.** Haemoglobin testing was not done because of doubts about the capillary blood method used earlier; anaemia figures will come from **ICMR's diet and biomarkers survey**, which uses venous blood. Sex ratio at birth and clean cooking fuel were also not in the first factsheets; the Ministry called them an interim release, with a full report to follow.

Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (NSO, MoSPI): the latest is **HCES 2023-24** (August 2023 to July 2024, released 27 December 2024).

HCES 2023-24	Rural	Urban
Average monthly per capita expenditure (MPCE)	**₹4,122**	**₹6,996**
Gini coefficient of consumption	0.237	0.284

- Urban–rural gap **70%** (84% in 2011-12). Highest MPCE: **Sikkim**; lowest: **Chhattisgarh**.

ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) is run by **Pratham**, a non-government organisation, through household surveys in rural districts. The latest published report is **ASER 2024** (January 2025). The **ASER 2026** survey runs in the usual September–November window; Pratham's report usually comes by mid-January.

Who publishes India's own reports

Report or survey	Publisher
NFHS	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, through IIPS Mumbai
HCES, PLFS, Annual Survey of Industries	National Statistics Office (NSO), MoSPI
Sample Registration System (SRS), Census	Office of the **Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India** (Ministry of Home Affairs)
ASER	Pratham
India State of Forest Report (every two years)	Forest Survey of India, Dehradun (MoEFCC)
Swachh Survekshan; Ease of Living Index	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
NIRF (higher-education ranking)	Ministry of Education
Good Governance Index	DARPG
State Food Safety Index	FSSAI
India BioEconomy Report	DBT-BIRAC

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5.8 Census 2027: where it stands on 17 November 2026

Item	Fact
Which census	**16th** Census of India, **8th since Independence** (last: 2011, population 1.21 billion)
Cabinet approval	**12 December 2025**, outlay **₹11,718.24 crore**; about **30 lakh** field functionaries
Firsts	**First digital census**: mobile apps (Android and iOS), **self-enumeration** web portal (16 languages), **CMMS** portal for real-time monitoring, HLB Creator map application
Caste	**Caste enumeration included** (Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs, 30 April 2025); collected electronically in the population-enumeration phase
Reference date	**00:00 hours, 1 March 2027**; for **Ladakh and snow-bound areas of J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand**: **00:00 hours, 1 October 2026**
Phase I: Houselisting and Housing Census	**April–September 2026**; each State/UT picks a **30-day** window, preceded by an optional **15-day self-enumeration** window
Phase II: Population Enumeration	Snow-bound areas: **1–30 September 2026** (done). Rest of the country: **25 January – 28 February 2027** (self-enumeration 10–24 January; revisional round 1–5 March)

When	Event
12 Dec 2025	Union Cabinet approves the Census 2027 scheme
1 Apr 2026	Houselisting begins (first group of States/UTs); self-enumeration opens
1–30 Sept 2026	Population enumeration in Ladakh and snow-bound areas
5 Sept 2026	MHA Gazette notification (**S.O. 4729(E)**) advances population enumeration in **Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab** and non-snow-bound **Uttarakhand** to **1 Dec 2026 – 4 Jan 2027** (revisional round 5–9 Jan; reference date 00:00 hours, 5 Jan 2027). All four have Assembly elections due in early 2027 (the notification itself gives no reason)
Nov 2026	Houselisting complete in all States/UTs **except Manipur**, where it was deferred; about **24.25 lakh** houselisting blocks mapped
30 Oct 2026	MHA announces the schedule for the rest of the country (Manipur's to be announced later)
16–30 Nov 2026	Self-enumeration window for the four poll-bound States
25 Jan – 28 Feb 2027	Population enumeration in the rest of the country; reference date 00:00 hours, 1 March 2027

FROM THE EXAM · EO/AO 2021

- *The Global Firepower Index 2021 placed India at which rank?* → **4th** (option 3). GFP is a private US-based website, not a government or UN ranking; India came after the USA, Russia and China. Do not confuse it with **SIPRI**, which ranks military **spending** (India 5th in 2025). *(EO/AO 2021, Q114)*

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FROM THE EXAM · APFC & EO/AO 2025

- *India's bioeconomy contributes about 4.25% of GDP; BioE3 promotes regenerative bio-manufacturing and a circular bioeconomy.* → **Both 1 and 2** (option 3; answer by Learn with Anil). The figure is from the **India BioEconomy Report 2025** of **DBT-BIRAC**: the question rewards knowing who publishes the report. *(APFC & EO/AO 2025, Q36)*

😂 **MEME BREAK** **Who makes the Global Hunger Index?**



"The FAO or the UN World Food Programme publishes the Global Hunger Index" ✗



"GHI comes from Welthungerhilfe and partners (non-UN). The UN agencies' hunger report is SOFI" ✓

👉 Hunger INDEX = NGOs (India 100th); hunger REPORT = FAO and four UN partners.

QUICK REVISION

- GHI 2026: India **100th of 122** (score 24.1, serious); child wasting **19.0%**, highest in the report; 2025: 102nd.
- GII 2026 (WIPO): India **38th of 139** for the second year; 1st in ICT services exports.
- Gender Gap 2026 (WEF): India **131st of 145**, 64.5%; Iceland first; parity 120 years away.
- World Happiness 2026: India **116th** (from 118th); Finland first for the 9th year.
- Press Freedom 2026 (RSF): India **157th** (from 151st), "very serious"; Norway first.
- SDR 2026 (SDSN): India **94th**, best ever (99th in 2025); Finland first.
- CPI 2025: India **91st of 182**, score 39 (from 96th). GPI 2026 (IEP): India **127th of 163**; Iceland most peaceful.
- CCPI 2026: India **23rd** (from 10th), top three vacant; Climate Risk Index 2026: India **9th** most affected.
- SIPRI: India **5th** largest military spender in 2025 ($92.1 billion), after the US, China, Russia and Germany.
- Growth forecasts for FY27: IMF **7.0%** (13 Oct 2026); World Bank **7.1%** (6 Oct 2026).
- NITI: Fiscal Health Index 2026 **Odisha**; Export Preparedness Index 2024 **Maharashtra**; Investment Friendliness Index 2026 **Gujarat** (large States).
- NFHS-6: stunting **29.3%** (from 35.5%), TFR 2.0, no anaemia data. Census 2027: reference date **1 March 2027** (snow-bound areas 1 October 2026), first digital census, caste included.

Practice

1. Consider the following statements about the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2026:
1. India was ranked 100th among 122 countries and remained in the 'serious' category.
2. India's child-wasting rate was the highest among all the countries covered by the report.
3. The GHI is published by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(1) 1 only (2) 2 and 3 only (3) 1 and 3 only (4) 1 and 2 only

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2. Consider the following pairs:
Report — Publisher
1. World Happiness Report — Wellbeing Research Centre (Oxford) with Gallup and UN SDSN
2. World Press Freedom Index — Reporters Without Borders
3. Climate Change Performance Index — Germanwatch, NewClimate Institute and Climate Action Network
4. Global Peace Index — Institute for Economics & Peace
How many of the pairs given above are correctly matched?
(1) Only one (2) Only two (3) Only three (4) All four

3. Consider the following statements about the Global Gender Gap Report 2026:
1. It is published by UN Women.
2. India's rank in it was the same as in the 2025 report.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(1) 1 only (2) 2 only (3) Both 1 and 2 (4) Neither 1 nor 2

4. In the World Happiness Report 2026, in which Finland was ranked first for the ninth year in a row, India was ranked:
(1) 116th (2) 118th (3) 126th (4) 136th

5. Consider the following statements about the Sustainable Development Report 2026:
1. It is published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
2. India's rank of 94th in its SDG Index is the highest India has achieved.
3. Finland was ranked first.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(1) 1 and 2 only (2) 1 and 3 only (3) 1, 2 and 3 (4) 2 and 3 only

6. In the October 2026 edition of the Henley Passport Index, India's rank and the country with the most powerful passport were respectively:
(1) 85th; Japan (2) 84th; Singapore (3) 84th; Japan (4) 80th; Singapore

7. Consider the following statements:
1. The October 2026 World Economic Outlook projected India's growth for 2026-27 at 7.0%, up from 6.4% in the July 2026 update.
2. The World Economic Outlook is published by the World Bank in January and June every year.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(1) 1 only (2) 2 only (3) Both 1 and 2 (4) Neither 1 nor 2

8. Which one of the following pairs of a report or survey and the body that publishes it is NOT correctly matched?
(1) National Family Health Survey — Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, through IIPS Mumbai
(2) Sample Registration System — NITI Aayog
(3) Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) — Pratham
(4) Household Consumption Expenditure Survey — National Statistics Office, MoSPI

9. In the Global Innovation Index 2026 published by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), India was ranked:
(1) 38th (2) 39th (3) 40th (4) 48th

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10. Consider the following statements about the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2026, released at COP30 in Belém:
1. India fell to 23rd place from 10th place in the previous edition.
2. The first three places in the index were left vacant.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(1) 1 only (2) 2 only (3) Both 1 and 2 (4) Neither 1 nor 2

11. In Germanwatch's Climate Risk Index 2026, which ranks countries by the impact of extreme weather events over 1995–2024, India was ranked:
(1) 1st (2) 6th (3) 9th (4) 23rd

12. According to the data released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in April 2026, India's position among the world's largest military spenders in 2025 was:
(1) Fourth (2) Fifth (3) Sixth (4) Third

13. Consider the following statements about the World Inequality Report 2026:
1. It was published by the World Inequality Lab.
2. It estimates that the top 10% of earners in India receive about 58% of national income, while the bottom 50% receive about 15%.
3. It estimates that the top 1% in India hold about 40% of the country's wealth.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(1) 1 only (2) 1 and 2 only (3) 2 and 3 only (4) 1, 2 and 3

14. Consider the following pairs:
Index — India's rank
1. World Press Freedom Index 2026 — 157th
2. Global Peace Index 2026 — 127th
3. Corruption Perceptions Index 2025 — 96th
Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?
(1) 1 only (2) 2 and 3 only (3) 1 and 2 only (4) 1, 2 and 3

15. Which State was ranked first among the major States in NITI Aayog's Fiscal Health Index 2026?
(1) Goa (2) Gujarat (3) Odisha (4) Maharashtra

16. Consider the following pairs:
NITI Aayog index — State ranked first
1. Export Preparedness Index 2024 (large States) — Maharashtra
2. Investment Friendliness Index 2026 (large States) — Gujarat
3. Fiscal Health Index 2026 (major States) — Odisha
Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?
(1) 1, 2 and 3 (2) 1 and 2 only (3) 2 and 3 only (4) 1 and 3 only

17. Consider the following statements about the National Family Health Survey-6 (2023-24), whose factsheets were released in May 2026:
1. Stunting among children under five years fell to 29.3% from 35.5% in NFHS-5.
2. The factsheets reported anaemia among women and children on the basis of capillary blood tests.
3. The International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, is the nodal agency for the survey.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(1) 1 only (2) 2 and 3 only (3) 1 and 3 only (4) 1, 2 and 3

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18. Consider the following statements about Census 2027:
1. The reference date for most of the country is 00:00 hours of 1 March 2027.
2. For Ladakh and the snow-bound areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, the reference date is 00:00 hours of 1 October 2026.
3. The houselisting phase was carried out on paper schedules, with digital tools planned only for the population enumeration phase.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(1) 1 and 2 only (2) 2 and 3 only (3) 1 and 3 only (4) 1, 2 and 3

19. Consider the following statements about Census 2027:
1. It is the 15th Census of India and the 7th since Independence.
2. By a notification of 5 September 2026, the Ministry of Home Affairs advanced population enumeration in Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and the non-snow-bound areas of Uttarakhand to 1 December 2026 – 4 January 2027.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(1) 1 only (2) 2 only (3) Both 1 and 2 (4) Neither 1 nor 2

20. Consider the following statements about the Human Development Report 2025 of UNDP:
1. It placed India 130th among 193 countries.
2. India's HDI value of 0.685 keeps it in the 'medium human development' category.
3. It recorded India's life expectancy at 72 years, the highest since the index began.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(1) 1 only (2) 1 and 2 only (3) 2 and 3 only (4) 1, 2 and 3

Rapid-fire (cover the answers and test yourself)

Question	Answer
Who publishes the World Press Freedom Index?	Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
India's rank in GHI 2026 and number of countries	100th of 122
India's rank in the Global Innovation Index 2026	38th of 139
Which country topped the Global Gender Gap Index 2026?	Iceland
India's rank in the World Happiness Report 2026	116th
India's rank in the Sustainable Development Report 2026	94th (score 68.3)
Top passport in the Henley index, October 2026	Singapore (193 destinations); India 84th
Which three places were left vacant in CCPI 2026?	1st, 2nd and 3rd
India's rank among military spenders in 2025 (SIPRI)	5th
IMF's October 2026 forecast for India's 2026-27 growth	7.0%
First edition of NITI Aayog's Investment Friendliness Index: top large State	Gujarat
Nodal agency for NFHS	IIPS, Mumbai
Reference date of Census 2027 for snow-bound areas	00:00 hours, 1 October 2026
Census 2027 is which census since Independence?	8th (16th overall)

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Answers

Q	Ans	Explanation
1	4	India was 100th of 122 (score 24.1, 'serious'), and its child-wasting rate of 19.0% was the highest in the report, so 1 and 2 are correct. Statement 3 is wrong: the GHI comes from Welthungerhilfe and its partners, not from any UN agency; the UN agencies' hunger report is SOFI.
2	4	All four pairs are correct. The trap is to assume that big global rankings must come from the UN: of these four, only the World Happiness Report even has a UN partner (the SDSN), and the rest are run by NGOs and think tanks.
3	2	The Global Gender Gap Report is published by the World Economic Forum, not UN Women, so statement 1 is wrong. India was 131st of 145 in 2026 (64.5% of its gap closed), the same rank as in 2025, so statement 2 is correct.
4	1	India was 116th of 147 in the 2026 report, two places up from 118th in 2025. The tempting option 118th is last year's rank.
5	4	The Sustainable Development Report and its SDG Index are published by the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), not UNDP, so statement 1 is wrong. India rose to 94th (score 68.3), its best ever, from 99th in 2025, and Finland was first, so statements 2 and 3 are correct.
6	2	India was 84th (joint with Algeria and Mauritania) with visa-free access to 55 destinations, one place up from 85th a year earlier. Singapore was first with 193 destinations; Japan was joint second with South Korea and the UAE.
7	1	The IMF's World Economic Outlook of 13 October 2026 raised India's 2026-27 forecast to 7.0% from 6.4% in July, so statement 1 is correct. Statement 2 is wrong: the WEO is the IMF's report (full editions in April and October, updates in January and July); the World Bank's January/June report is Global Economic Prospects.
8	2	The Sample Registration System, like the Census, is run by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, under the Ministry of Home Affairs, not by NITI Aayog. The other three pairs are correct.
9	1	India was 38th of 139 economies in GII 2026, the same as in 2025, after 40th in 2023 and 39th in 2024. It leads the lower-middle-income group and the Central and Southern Asia region.
10	3	India slipped 13 places to 23rd, with its reliance on coal cited, so statement 1 is correct. As in the previous edition, no country was judged good enough for the top three places, and Denmark led from 4th place, so statement 2 is also correct.
11	3	India was the 9th most affected country over 1995–2024, with about 80,000 deaths and about $170 billion of losses. 23rd is India's rank in a different Germanwatch index, the Climate Change Performance Index 2026, which measures climate action, not damage.
12	2	India spent $92.1 billion in 2025 (up 8.9%) and was 5th, after the United States, China, Russia and Germany; it was also 5th for 2024 in SIPRI's April 2025 release. Do not confuse SIPRI's spending ranking with the Global Firepower Index, which rates overall military strength.
13	4	The World Inequality Lab released the report on 10 December 2025. For India it put the top 10% income share at about 58% and the bottom 50% at about 15%, and the top 1% wealth share at about 40% (top 10%: about 65%). All three statements are correct.
14	3	India was 157th of 180 in RSF's 2026 index and 127th of 163 in the Global Peace Index 2026, so pairs 1 and 2 are correct. In the Corruption Perceptions Index 2025 India improved to 91st (score 39); 96th was its rank in CPI 2024, so pair 3 is wrong.
15	3	Odisha kept the first place among major States with a score of 73.1, ahead of Goa and Jharkhand; Arunachal Pradesh led the North-Eastern and Himalayan States. Gujarat topped the large States in a different NITI index, the Investment Friendliness Index 2026.
16	1	Maharashtra topped the large States in the Export Preparedness Index 2024 (released 14 January 2026), Gujarat topped the large States in the first Investment Friendliness Index (17 July 2026) and Odisha topped the major States in the Fiscal Health Index 2026. All three pairs are correct.
17	3	Stunting fell from 35.5% to 29.3%, and IIPS Mumbai is the nodal agency for the Health Ministry, so statements 1 and 3 are correct. Statement 2 is wrong: haemoglobin testing was not done in NFHS-6 because of doubts about the capillary method, and anaemia figures are to come from ICMR's diet and biomarkers survey.

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Q	Ans	Explanation
18	1	Statements 1 and 2 give the two reference dates correctly. Statement 3 is wrong: Census 2027 is India's first digital census, and the houselisting phase from April 2026 already used mobile apps, a self-enumeration portal and the CMMS monitoring portal.
19	2	Census 2027 is the 16th Census of India and the 8th since Independence (2011 was the 15th), so statement 1 is wrong. Statement 2 is correct: the Gazette notification of 5 September 2026 (S.O. 4729(E)) advanced enumeration in these four States, which have Assembly elections due in early 2027, with a reference date of 00:00 hours on 5 January 2027.
20	4	HDR 2025 (6 May 2025), titled 'A Matter of Choice: People and Possibilities in the Age of AI', ranked India 130th of 193 with HDI 0.685, up from 133rd. That is still 'medium', below the 0.700 cut-off for 'high', and life expectancy reached 72 years. All three statements are correct.

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