Xtracts
Daily Current Affairs · 4 Issues · PYQ Connections

MONDAY · 16 NOVEMBER 2026
Mission X for UPSC

ISSUE 01 GS-I Indian Heritage & Culture

Piprahwa Buddha Relics Complete Arunachal Pradesh Tour at Namsai

The repatriated Piprahwa relics of the Buddha reached the Golden Pagoda in Namsai on 15 November, the final stop of a tour across three districts of Arunachal Pradesh. The relics, excavated in 1898 near ancient Kapilavastu, were the subject of a 2025 cultural repatriation effort after a planned Hong Kong auction, and were formally exhibited at an exposition the Prime Minister inaugurated in January 2026.

1898	Piprahwa	W.C. Peppe	2025	Namsai
YEAR FOUND	SITE, UP	DISCOVERER	AUCTION HALTED	FINAL TOUR STOP

PRELIMS RELEVANCE ★★★★★ MAINS RELEVANCE ★★★☆☆ ETHICS RELEVANCE ★★☆☆☆

PRELIMS TRIGGER

- Discovered in 1898 by British engineer William Claxton Peppe at Piprahwa, Siddharthnagar district, Uttar Pradesh, near the site traditionally identified with ancient Kapilavastu.
- The relic casket carries an early Brahmi inscription linking the find to the Buddha's Sakya clan and dating it to around the 3rd century BCE.
- Per the Mahaparinibbana Sutta, the Buddha's cremated remains were divided into eight shares among ruling clans, and the Piprahwa stupa is held to be the Sakya share.
- ASI excavations between 1971 and 1977 recovered 22 more bone relics from the same site, now held at the National Museum, New Delhi.

MAINS CONNECTION

GS-I GS-II

The 2025 attempt to auction a private collection of Piprahwa gems in Hong Kong, and its reversal through a deal in which an Indian industrialist privately acquired and then gifted the collection to the state, has sharpened debate on how colonial era antiquities should be reclaimed and who should bear that cost. **GS-II | Cultural Diplomacy:** India has used sacred relic tours, including earlier visits to Mongolia and Sri Lanka, to deepen Buddhist circuit diplomacy with Asian neighbours, and this Arunachal Pradesh leg extends that outreach to the Northeast's own Buddhist communities.

ETHICS LENS

"Who truly owns a nation's sacred heritage when it has passed through private hands for over a century?" The Piprahwa gems sat in a single family's custody for 127 years before a privately funded intervention returned them to India, raising the question of whether heritage recovery should depend on individual wealth rather than a reliable institutional response. ***GS-IV Value: Stewardship,*** *acting as a trustee of a resource held for the larger community rather than treating it as personal property.*

Buddhist Heritage → Stupas & Relics — UPSC 2023

With reference to ancient India, consider the following statements: 1. The concept of Stupa is Buddhist in origin. 2. Stupa was generally a repository of relics. 3. Stupa was a votive and commemorative structure in Buddhist tradition. How many of the statements given above are correct?

(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Answer: (b) The tradition of erecting stupas predates Buddhism, so Statement 1 is incorrect, but stupas became closely tied to it as repositories of relics and as votive, commemorative structures, making Statements 2 and 3 correct.

ISSUE 02 GS-II Governance & e-Governance

MeitY Opens Registration for Consent Managers Under the DPDP Act

The Ministry of Electronics and IT has launched a portal for companies to register as Consent Managers under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. The framework gives individuals a single interoperable platform to grant, review and withdraw consent for their personal data across services, with the Data Protection Board of India acting as the registering and supervising authority.

2023	Rs 2 Cr	DPBI	7 Years	13 Nov 26
ACT YEAR	MIN NET WORTH	REGULATOR	RECORD RETENTION	RULE TAKES EFFECT

PRELIMS RELEVANCE ★★★★☆ MAINS RELEVANCE ★★★★★ ETHICS RELEVANCE ★★★★☆

PRELIMS TRIGGER

- A Consent Manager is a company registered with the Data Protection Board of India that gives a Data Principal one interoperable platform to give, review and withdraw consent for sharing personal data with Data Fiduciaries.
- To register, an applicant must be a company incorporated in India with a minimum net worth of Rupees 2 crore, among other technical and governance conditions under the DPDP Rules, 2025.
- The Supreme Court located the Right to Privacy within Article 21 of the Constitution in the 2017 Justice K.S. Puttaswamy judgment, the constitutional basis for the DPDP Act, 2023.
- Registered Consent Managers must retain consent records for at least seven years and may not subcontract their core obligations.

MAINS CONNECTION

GS-II GS-III

A functioning Consent Manager ecosystem is meant to end the present practice of consent being scattered across dozens of apps with little real user control, moving India's regime closer to a European Union style architecture while building on the consent artefact already used in the Account Aggregator system. **GS-III | Digital Economy:** A credible consent layer is also seen as a precondition for trusted data sharing in sectors such as health and finance, where fintech and health tech firms depend on verified user consent to operate.

ETHICS LENS

"Can true consent exist when most citizens never read what they agree to?" Consent Managers assume that informed, specific and revocable consent is possible at scale, yet most data principals continue to click through notices without understanding what is collected or why, testing whether a technical fix can substitute for genuine user awareness. ***GS-IV Value: Autonomy,*** *respecting an individual's right to control decisions over their own personal information rather than leaving that control to fine print alone.*

Right to Privacy → Data Protection — UPSC 2024

Under which of the following Articles of the Constitution of India, has the Supreme Court of India placed the Right to Privacy?

(a) Article 15
(b) Article 16
(c) Article 19
(d) Article 21

Answer: (d) In K.S. Puttaswamy versus Union of India (2017), the Supreme Court held the Right to Privacy to be a Fundamental Right under Article 21, covering personal intimacies, family, marriage and autonomy, the same guarantee underlying the DPDP Act's consent framework.

ISSUE 03 GS-III Science & Technology, Space

India's Space Economy Scales to About 9 Billion Dollars

A government factsheet shows India's space economy has grown to about 9 billion dollars, up from 8.4 billion dollars in 2023, driven by a sixfold rise in startup investment and reforms that widened private participation. Official projections put the sector at 40 to 45 billion dollars within the next decade.

$9 Bn	440	$618.5 Mn	113	61
CURRENT SIZE	SPACE STARTUPS	FY26 INVESTMENT	NGE AUTHORISATIONS	COUNTRIES PARTNERED

PRELIMS RELEVANCE ★★★★☆ MAINS RELEVANCE ★★★★★ ETHICS RELEVANCE ★★☆☆☆

PRELIMS TRIGGER

- NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), set up in March 2019, is the Department of Space's commercial arm; it has signed 118 technology transfer agreements covering 83 ISRO technologies.
- IN-SPACe is the autonomous, single window agency under the Department of Space that authorises and supervises private space activity, including mission safety and spectrum coordination.
- Reforms approved by the Union Cabinet, announced on 24 June 2020, opened the space sector to greater private participation while ISRO retained its lead in research and development.
- Six Indian non-government entities have together launched 18 satellites, and 25 payloads have flown or are scheduled on PSLV Orbital Experimental Module platforms.

MAINS CONNECTION

GS-III

The shift from a largely state run model to a facilitative one, with IN-SPACe as regulator and NSIL as the commercial interface, is intended to let ISRO focus on frontier work such as Gaganyaan and deep space missions while private players handle launch services and satellite manufacturing. **GS-III | FDI Policy:** Easier foreign investment norms, reflected in eleven FDI proposals worth over Rupees 1,745 crore by mid-2026, are central to the government's target of a 40 to 45 billion dollar space economy by the early 2030s.

ETHICS LENS

"Should a strategic sector like space be opened to profit driven private players at all?" Space infrastructure touches national security, remote sensing and strategic communication, so widening private and foreign participation raises the question of balancing commercial efficiency with sovereign control over sensitive capability. ***GS-IV Value: Accountability,*** *ensuring that private actors given access to strategic national assets remain answerable to public oversight bodies such as IN-SPACe.*

ISRO Missions → Space Economy UPSC 2016

Consider the following statements. The Mangalyaan launched by ISRO: 1. is also called the Mars Orbiter Mission. 2. made India the second country to have a spacecraft orbit Mars, after the USA. 3. made India the only country to be successful in making its spacecraft orbit Mars in its very first attempt. Which of the statements given above is or are correct?

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

Answer: (c) Mangalyaan, launched in 2013, is indeed the Mars Orbiter Mission and made India the first nation to succeed on its maiden attempt to Mars, but India was the fourth, not second, to reach Mars orbit, after the Soviet Union, the USA and the European Space Agency.

ISSUE 04 GS-III Indian Economy, Agriculture

Centre Tightens Rice Stock Disclosure as Five States Get Hoarding Curbs

With retail rice prices climbing, the Centre has made weekly stock declaration mandatory for traders, millers and warehouses, and has allowed five southern states to cap how much paddy, rice and pulses they may hold. Tamil Nadu has capped wholesaler stocks at 2,000 tonnes and given traders until 16 November to clear any surplus.

5 States	2,000 T	8 T	50 Lakh T	16 Nov
GIVEN STOCK LIMITS	TN WHOLESALER CAP	TN RETAILER CAP	FY27 SALE TARGET	TN CLEARANCE DATE

PRELIMS RELEVANCE ★★★★☆ MAINS RELEVANCE ★★★★☆ ETHICS RELEVANCE ★★★☆☆

PRELIMS TRIGGER

- Stock limits on an essential commodity such as rice, paddy or pulses are imposed under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, to check hoarding and black marketing.
- The Centre has doubled the Food Corporation of India's open market rice sale target to 50 lakh tonnes for FY27 to add supply and cool prices.
- Under the National Food Security Act, 2013, the eldest woman aged 18 years or above in a household is recognised as its head for issuing a ration card.
- Tamil Nadu's order caps wholesaler stock at 2,000 tonnes and retailer stock at 8 tonnes per outlet, with surplus to be cleared by 16 November.

MAINS CONNECTION

GS-III GS-II

Mandatory weekly stock disclosure through a central portal is meant to give the government real time visibility into where rice supplies are concentrated, a tool that becomes necessary when a price rise is driven less by an actual production shortfall than by speculative holding ahead of the festive and winter season. **GS-II | Food Security:** The measure sits alongside the National Food Security Act's subsidised distribution architecture, since unchecked hoarding in the open market can undercut the price stability that the public distribution system is meant to guarantee.

ETHICS LENS

"How far can the state go in restricting private trade to protect public access to food?" Stock limits curb a trader's freedom to hold and sell goods as they choose, and the state must justify such restriction by showing that the harm from hoarding driven price rises to ordinary consumers outweighs the cost to legitimate trade. ***GS-IV Value: Distributive Justice,*** *prioritising fair access to a basic necessity for the many over unrestricted profit for a few when the two genuinely conflict.*

Food Security Act → PDS Safeguards UPSC 2018

With reference to the provisions made under the National Food Security Act, 2013 consider the following statements: 1. The families coming under the category of ‘below poverty line (BPL)’ only are eligible to receive subsidised grains. 2. The eldest woman in a household, of age 18 years or above, shall be the head of the household for the purpose of issuance of a ration card. 3. Pregnant women and lactating mothers are entitled to a ‘take-home ration’ of 1600 calories per day during pregnancy and for six months thereafter. Which of the statements given above is or are correct?

(a) 1 and 2
(b) 2 only
(c) 1 and 3
(d) 3 only

Answer: (b) The Act covers priority and Antyodaya households, not all BPL and APL families, and entitles take-home rations of 600, not 1600, calories per day, but it does correctly make the eldest adult woman the head of household for ration card purposes.

🧠 Memory Lab

Rapid revision · High-retention formats · Today's key concepts

MON · 16 NOV 2026

✕ XTRACTS IN 30 SECONDS

1. Piprahwa Relics. Repatriated Buddha relics complete their Arunachal Pradesh tour at Namsai's Golden Pagoda, 127 years after their 1898 discovery.

2. Consent Managers. MeitY opens registration for DPDP Act Consent Managers, requiring Rupees 2 crore net worth and Data Protection Board approval.

3. Space Economy. India's space economy reaches about 9 billion dollars, with 440 registered startups, up from just one in 2014.

4. Rice Stock Curbs. Centre mandates weekly rice stock disclosure and lets five southern states cap hoarding as prices climb.

🔥 NUMBERS TO REMEMBER

1898 PIPRAHWA RELICS DISCOVERED	**127 Yrs** BEFORE RELICS RETURNED TO INDIA	**Rs 2 Cr** MIN NET WORTH, CONSENT MANAGER
7 Yrs CONSENT RECORD RETENTION	**$9 Bn** INDIA'S SPACE ECONOMY SIZE	**440** REGISTERED SPACE STARTUPS
$40-45 Bn PROJECTED SPACE ECONOMY, 2033	**2,000 T** TN WHOLESALER RICE STOCK CAP	**50 Lakh T** FY27 FCI RICE SALE TARGET

🟣 ETHICS QUICK REFERENCE

ISSUE 01 · STEWARDSHIP

The Piprahwa gems stayed in private hands for 127 years before a public private deal returned them to India in 2025. **Value:** acting as a trustee of a shared cultural resource rather than its owner.

ISSUE 02 · AUTONOMY

Most data principals click through consent notices without reading them, testing whether a technical layer can protect real choice. **Value:** respecting an individual's control over decisions on their own personal data.

ISSUE 03 · ACCOUNTABILITY

Space touches national security even as private and foreign capital enter the sector at scale. **Value:** keeping private actors in strategic sectors answerable to public oversight bodies like IN-SPACe.

ISSUE 04 · DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

Stock limits restrict a trader's freedom to hold and sell goods, in order to protect consumers from hoarding driven price rises. **Value:** prioritising fair access to a basic necessity over unrestricted private profit.

LINKING INSIGHT

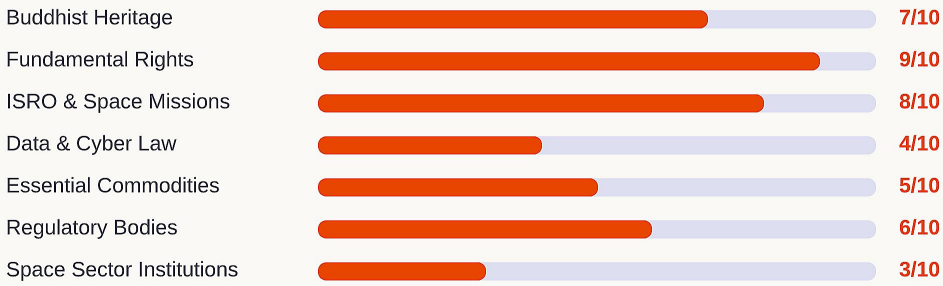
Regulation as a public trust

All four stories turn on the same question: who is answerable when private actors hold something the public depends on, whether that is heritage, personal data, strategic infrastructure or food stocks. Bodies such as the ASI, the Data Protection Board of India, IN-SPACe and state civil supply departments exist to keep that private holding answerable to the public interest.

◎ QUICK REVISION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Piprahwa relics discovered in 1898 by William Claxton Peppe at Piprahwa, Siddharthnagar district, UP.
- ☐ Piprahwa site is traditionally identified with ancient Kapilavastu, the Buddha's childhood home.
- ☐ 2025 Sotheby's Hong Kong auction of Piprahwa gems halted after India's intervention.
- ☐ Consent Manager defined under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 and its 2025 Rules.
- ☐ Right to Privacy held a Fundamental Right under Article 21 in K.S. Puttaswamy (2017).
- ☐ IN-SPACe is the single window regulator for private space activity; NSIL is ISRO's commercial arm.
- ☐ India's space economy: about 9 billion dollars now, projected 40 to 45 billion dollars by the early 2030s.
- ☐ Essential Commodities Act, 1955 is the legal basis for stock limits on rice, paddy and pulses.

📊 PYQ FREQUENCY · 10-YEAR VIEW



Join Mission X on Telegram

Daily CA decoded against PYQs · GS angles · Prelims + Mains + Ethics · Free

t.me/MissionXUPSC · +91 79025 80728

@MISSIONXUPSC