



P.L.RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY

Building Bureaucrats Since 2006

6. Short News

1. Veera Pasi

A statue of Veera Pasi, a celebrated "forgotten hero" of the 1857 Uprising, was recently unveiled in Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh.

1. **Identity** – Born as Shivdeen Pasi on November 11, 1835, in Lodhwari village, Raebareli.
2. **Name Origin** – Orphaned early, he lived with his sister. In the local dialect, a brother living with his sister's family is called "Verena," which evolved into "Veera."
3. **Military Role** – He was a brilliant 19th-century warrior who rose to become a trusted army commander.
4. **Key Alliance** – Served as a close associate of Rana Beni Madhav Baksh Singh, the ruler of the Shankarpur Estate in Awadh.
5. **Heroic Exploit** – When British forces captured Rana Beni Madhav Singh, Veera Pasi planned and executed a daring rescue operation to free him from prison.
6. **Historical Legacy** – Remembered as an iconic subaltern leader who mobilized local communities against British colonial rule during the Revolt of 1857.

2. Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968

The Judges Inquiry Committee submitted its investigation report concerning allegations against Justice Yashwant Varma to the Lok Sabha Speaker.

1. **Statutory Framework** – The Act elaborates on the strict constitutional procedure required to remove a judge of the Supreme Court or a High Court in India.
2. **Constitutional Mandate** – A judge can only be removed by an order of the President, following a motion passed by both Houses of Parliament.
3. **Grounds for Removal** – The Act specifies only two legal grounds for removal – Proved Misbehaviour or Incapacity.
4. **Initiation Threshold** – A removal motion requires the signatures of at least 100 members if introduced in the Lok Sabha, or 50 members in the Rajya Sabha.
5. **Investigation Committee** – Once admitted, the Speaker/Chairman sets up a 3-member committee (a Supreme Court judge, a High Court Chief Justice, and an eminent jurist) to investigate the charges.
6. **Parliamentary Voting** – If the committee finds the judge guilty, Parliament votes on the motion. It must be passed by a special majority in each House during the same session.

3. Agricola Medal & PM Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred the prestigious Agricola Medal for 2026 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome.

1. **Highest Honor** – The Agricola Medal is the highest recognition bestowed by the Director-General of the FAO.
2. **Historical Namesake** – Named after Georgius Agricola, a German scholar widely regarded as the "father of mineralogy" and a pioneer in mining and agricultural sciences.

3. **Eligibility Criteria** – Awarded to world leaders who make exceptional, long-term contributions to global food security, sustainable farming, and poverty reduction.
4. **Past Indian Recipient** – Former PM Manmohan Singh received this medal in 2008 for his role in modernizing Indian agriculture.
5. **Key Indian Strides Highlighted** – The award honors India's focus on climate-resilient farming, precision irrigation ("Per Drop More Crop"), and the deployment of farm-tech like drones and AI.
6. **Crop Innovations** – India has successfully developed nearly 3,000 climate-resilient crop varieties over the last decade.

4. Food and Agriculture Organization – FAO

The FAO hosted PM Modi at its headquarters in Rome, Italy, to present the Agricola Medal, putting the spotlight on its institutional role.

1. **Institutional Status** – Established on October 16, 1945, in Quebec City, Canada, it is the oldest permanent specialized agency of the United Nations.
2. **Core Mandate** – Leads international efforts to defeat hunger, improve nutrition, and ensure global food security.
3. **Global Footprint** – Headquartered in Rome, Italy, with a membership of 195 members (194 countries plus the European Union).
4. **India's Standing** – India is a proud founding member of the organization.
5. **Governance Structure** – Governed by the biennial FAO Conference where every member nation gets equal representation.
6. **World Food Day** – Celebrated globally every year on October 16 to mark the founding anniversary of the FAO.

5. UN Cuts India's 2026 Growth Forecast

The United Nations flagship report, *World Economic Situation and Prospects*, downgraded India's projected GDP growth rate for 2026 from 6.6% to 6.4%.

1. **Global Outperformer** – Despite the marginal downgrade, the UN confirms India will remain one of the world's fastest-growing major economies.
2. **Weak Global Demand** – A primary reason for the cut is sluggish international trade and slowing investment inflows worldwide.
3. **Geopolitical Friction** – Ongoing global conflicts and political instabilities are injecting high volatility into major trade markets.
4. **Protectionism Obstacles** – Rising import tariffs, trade restrictions, and inward-looking state policies are bottlenecking economic growth.
5. **Energy Headwinds** – Volatile global energy prices are creating fiscal planning uncertainties for developing countries.
6. **Capital Costs** – High global borrowing costs and tightening monetary policies are disproportionately impacting emerging economies.

6. PRAGATI 2026 Exercise

The multilateral military exercise PRAGATI 2026 officially commenced at the Umroi Military Station in Meghalaya.

1. **Acronym Expanded** – PRAGATI stands for *Partnership of Regional Armies for Growth and Transformation in the Indian Ocean Region*.
2. **Geographic Footprint** – A major security initiative bringing together India and 12 friendly nations from the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

3. **Participating Nations** – Includes Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam.
4. **Operational Core** – Concentrates heavily on joint counter-terrorism operations executed in challenging semi-mountainous and jungle terrains.
5. **Strategic Paradigm Shift** – Marks a deliberate transition for the Indian Army from traditional bilateral (two-nation) drills to consortium-style (multi-nation) security frameworks.
6. **Atmanirbhar Bharat Component** – Indian domestic defense firms are actively using the exercise platform to exhibit indigenous defense technologies and weapon systems.

7. International Booker Prize 2026

The novel '*Taiwan Travelogue*' created history by winning the International Booker Prize 2026.

1. **Literary Milestone** – It is the first novel originally written in Mandarin Chinese to ever win this prestigious global prize.
2. **The Creative Team** – Written by Taiwanese author Yang Shuang-zi and translated into English by Taiwanese-American translator Lin King.
3. **The Prize Rules** – Conferred annually for a book of fiction translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland.
4. **Equality of Translation** – The £50,000 prize money is split precisely 50-50 between the author and the translator to honor the latter's craft.
5. **Past Indian Winner (2025)** – The 2025 prize went to *Heart Lamp* by Banu Mushtaq, translated by Deepa Bhashti, making it the first Kannada work to win.
6. **Distinct from the Booker Prize** – The regular Booker Prize is reserved exclusively for novels originally written in English.

8. Taiwan Travelogue – The Book

Deep-diving into the narrative structure and themes of *Taiwan Travelogue* following its landmark 2026 International Booker Prize win.

1. **Historical Backdrop** – The entire narrative is set in 1938, a period when Taiwan was under Japanese colonial rule.
2. **Core Plot** – Follows a Japanese novelist, Aoyama Chizuko, who travels through Taiwan on a state-sponsored literary promotional tour.
3. **Key Relationship** – Centres on her deep, layered relationship with her Taiwanese interpreter and cook, Chizuru.
4. **Food as a Medium** – Uses the depiction of local food culture and travel as central literary devices to explore human connection.
5. **Major Themes** – Explores the power dynamics of colonialism, imperial structure, gender roles, and class divides.
6. **Emotional Duality** – Captures the complex balance of emotional intimacy and cultural distance between the colonizer and the colonized.

9. Sperm Whale Clicks & Human Speech

A breakthrough scientific study discovered that sperm whale vocalizations display structural patterns strikingly similar to human phonology (speech sounds).

1. **Communication via Codas** – Sperm whales communicate using short sequences of clicking sounds known as "codas" to interact within social groups.
2. **Functional Uses** – These codas are essential for underwater navigation, social coordination, and identifying individual groups.

3. **Tonal Architecture** – Scientists discovered that the clicks are not random; they vary intricately in acoustic structure, timing, and tonal quality.
4. **Vowel-like Subdivisions** – The whale clicks fall into two distinct structural categories ("a" and "i" types), closely mirroring human vowel formants.
5. **Dual Layers** – The whales can produce the exact same coda pattern using completely different click types, revealing complex, layered communication.
6. **Phonology vs. Language** – While the study highlights a profound structural similarity to human phonology, scientists clarify it cannot yet be classified as a fully formed language.

10. India–Vietnam Defence Ties

India and Vietnam significantly escalated their strategic and defense cooperation during Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's official bilateral visit to Hanoi.

1. **Indo-Pacific Alignment** – Both nations strongly reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining maritime security, stability, and freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific region.
2. **Industrial Collaboration** – Held high-level talks on co-developing defense manufacturing infrastructure, cyber security systems, and capacity-building drills.
3. **Consortium Engagements** – Agreed to expand regular institutional defense dialogues and widen exchange programs across all wings of their armed forces.
4. **Peacekeeping Operations** – Identified shared United Nations Peacekeeping deployments as a major area of upcoming bilateral training.
5. **Tech Infrastructure Assistance** – India helped establish a dedicated Language Lab at Vietnam's Air Force Officers' College.
6. **AI & Quantum Cooperation** – India announced the setting up of an Artificial Intelligence Lab at the Telecommunications University in Nha Trang, backed by an institutional MoU for joint Quantum research.

11. Biology and Conservation of the Sperm Whale

The scientific study on whale communication has renewed global focus on the conservation status and unique biological traits of the Sperm Whale.

1. **Physical Superlatives** – The sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*) is the world's largest toothed whale and possesses the biggest brain of any animal on Earth (weighing up to 9 kg).
2. **The Spermaceti Organ** – Features a massive square head housing a waxy oil sac called *spermaceti*, used for echolocation. Historical hunting for this oil drove the species close to extinction.
3. **Ambergris Value** – Produces *ambergris* (a highly prized perfume fixative) in its intestines. Notably, possession or trade of ambergris is strictly illegal in India under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
4. **Ecological Carbon Pump** – Their iron-rich feces fertilize marine phytoplankton, which directly assists in atmospheric carbon sequestration and sustains the ocean food chain.
5. **Conservation Status** – Currently listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.
6. **International Trade Ban** – Protected under Appendix I of CITES, which strictly prohibits any international commercial trade of the species or its derivatives.