

**CURRENTLY | 30 JUNE 2026**

**1. Radio-tagged White-rumped Vulture Electrocuted in Tamil Nadu**

**Source: The Hindu | Page: 1 | GS-3: Environment & Biodiversity**

**2. Delayed Honour (Editorial)**

**Source: The Hindu | Page: 8 | GS-4: Ethics, Integrity & Aptitude | GS-2: Accountability & Governance**

**3. Has RBI Changed the Rules for Scam Compensation?**

**Source: The Hindu | Page: 10 | GS-3: Banking & Cyber Security**

**4. Kharge Reappointed Rajya Sabha Leader of Opposition; Seeks Stronger Coordination**

**Source: The Hindu | Page: 13 | GS-2: Parliament & Constitutional Bodies**

**5. MoSPI Releases Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) National Indicator Framework (NIF) Progress Report, 2026**

**Source: PIB | GS-2: Governance | GS-3: Inclusive Development & Environment**

**6. Surveillance Boost: Army to Raise 'Baaz Battalions'**

**Source: The Hindu | Page: 12 | GS-3: Internal Security & Defence Technology**

# Radio-tagged white-rumped vulture electrocuted in T.N.

**Rohan Premkumar**

UDHAGAMANDALAM

A captive-bred, radio-tagged white-rumped vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*) that was released earlier this year at the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve in Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu was electrocuted on Sunday.

The bird came into contact with a power line and was killed at Ebbanad village overlooking the Sigur plateau, Forest Department officials said.

The bird, initially released in the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra in December 2025, made its way into Karnataka, where it had to be captured and treated after showing signs of illness. In April, the Bombay Natural



The radio-tagged vulture that was electrocuted on Sunday.

M. SATHYAMOORTHY.

History Society (BNHS) and the Karnataka Forest Department had discussions with their counterparts in Tamil Nadu and received permission to release the bird in the MTR, which is home to the last sizeable population of white-rumped vultures in South India. Foresters

hoped the bird would associate with other vultures and acclimatise to the region.

However, officials said the release proved to be more difficult than expected, with the vulture failing to acclimatise and embarking on exploratory forays around the tiger reserve, including to Gudalur, and later towards Kalhatty and Ebbanad.

The death of the vulture has signalled the end of the first attempted reintroduction of a captive-bred bird of the species into the landscape and could have consequences for conservation policies in the future.

**CONTINUED ON**

**» PAGE 12**

Vultures which used to be very common in Indian countryside some years ago are rarely seen nowadays. This is attributed to

- (a) the destruction of their nesting sites by new invasive species
- (b) a drug used by cattle owners for treating their diseased cattle
- (c) scarcity of food available to them
- (d) a widespread, persistent and fatal disease among them.

With reference to **Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)**, consider the following statements :

1. It is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Environment and Forests.
2. It strives to conserve nature through action-based research, education and public awareness.
3. It organizes and conducts nature trails and camps for the general public.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

1. **Context (GS-3: Environment & Biodiversity)** : A radio-tagged, captive-bred White-rumped Vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*), released under India's Vulture Conservation Breeding Programme at Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu), died after colliding with a power line, highlighting the need for safer infrastructure to support vulture reintroduction and recovery.

2. (i) **White-rumped Vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*)**

- \* **Family:** Accipitridae | **IUCN:** Critically Endangered (CR) | **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:** Schedule I | **CITES:** Appendix II
- \* **Ecological role:** Nature's scavenger; removes carcasses and prevents the spread of zoonotic diseases.
- \* **Major threats:** Veterinary Diclofenac (primary cause), electrocution, poisoning, habitat degradation and food scarcity.

(ii) **Vultures in India**

- \* **Total species:** 9
- \* **Critically Endangered (4):** White-rumped, Indian, Slender-billed, Red-headed.
- \* **Endangered (1):** Egyptian.
- \* **Near Threatened (3):** Himalayan Griffon, Cinereous (Black), Bearded (Lammergeier).
- \* **Least Concern (1):** Griffon Vulture.

(iii) **Vulture Conservation Programme (India)**

- \* **Launched:** 2004 (Vulture Conservation Breeding Programme).
- \* **Implemented by:** MoEFCC, Central Zoo Authority (CZA), Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and State Forest Departments.
- \* **Focus:** Captive breeding • Reintroduction • Vulture Safe Zones (VSZs) • Radio/Satellite tagging • Diclofenac-free landscapes • Promotion of Meloxicam.
- \* **Policy Framework:** Action Plan for Vulture Conservation in India (2020–2025).

(iv) **Important Protected Areas in News**

- \* **Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu):** Part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve; one of India's most important breeding landscapes for White-rumped Vultures and the site of the recent reintroduction.
- \* **Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (Maharashtra):** Important source population for captive breeding and reintroduction of White-rumped Vultures.

(v) **Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)**

- \* **Established:** 1883 | **Headquarters:** Mumbai.
- \* India's oldest non-governmental scientific conservation organisation.
- \* **Key functions:** Biodiversity research • Species conservation • Environmental education • Technical partner in the Vulture Conservation Breeding Programme and several national wildlife recovery programmes.

# Delayed honour

Operational secrecy during wars is a must, but there must be accountability

**W**ar is secretive and strategy may require deception. But that is no good explanation for the fact that the Narendra Modi government took over a year before formally acknowledging that six soldiers had lost their lives in Operation Sindoor in 2025. India had launched cross-border military strikes in Pakistan in retaliation for the Pahalgam terrorist attack, in April 2025, that killed 26 innocent people. From the beginning, the government has been reluctant to share any meaningful details of Operation Sindoor even as it continuously kept the hyperbolic self-congratulatory posture. Its decision to not publicly acknowledge and honour the supreme sacrifice of the fallen soldiers contemporaneously was hardly a sign of any wise strategy. Casualties can happen in any military operation and that is a key consideration in any military planning, and more importantly, the political decision to go to war or not. Not being transparent about losses, human and material, may serve the political interests of the ruling party, but not national interest. By trying to be clever and selective about facts, the government undermined its own credibility and did a disservice to those who paid with their lives. Soon after the operation concluded in May 2025, the then Director General of Military Operations (DGMO), Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai, paid tribute, during a press briefing on May 11, 2025, to Indian military personnel who had made the supreme sacrifice, though their names were not disclosed.

The cremations were done with full military honours. In August 2025, Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh visited the family of Sergeant Surendra Kumar, who was killed during the operation, while the Ministry of Defence also announced gallantry awards for the fallen personnel. Tributes were simultaneously carried on the Indian Army's official social media platforms. In the Lok Sabha on July 28, 2025, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that "no Indian soldiers were harmed" during Operation Sindoor. Following accusations that it has misled Parliament, the government is now explaining that the Minister's remarks were made in the context of reports that Indian aircraft were shot down and were meant to clarify that no pilot was killed during the mission. The government has also maintained that details relating to aircraft losses during the conflict remain operationally sensitive and refused to disclose them. There is a distinction to be made between operational secrecy and requirements of public accountability. War is a stark demonstration of the fact that it is the public that always pays for all actions of the government. A public accounting of the gains and the losses is the best way to ensure wise decision making.

# BALANCING SECURITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

*Transparency After Security: An Ethical and Constitutional Imperative*



## 1 CONTEXT

The delayed disclosure of military casualties raises an ethical dilemma between operational secrecy and democratic accountability, highlighting the need to balance national security with transparency, public trust and respect for the sacrifice of armed forces personnel.

“National security requires vigilance; democracy requires accountability. Secrecy may win a battle, but transparency wins the peace.”

## 2. ETHICAL DIMENSION

### (i) CORE ETHICAL DILEMMA

Operational Secrecy	VS	Transparency & Public Accountability
National Security	VS	Citizens' Right to Know
Strategic Necessity	VS	Honouring Soldiers' Sacrifice

“Ethical governance lies in ensuring that secrecy is time-bound and need-based, while transparency and accountability are the rule, not the exception.”

### (ii) ETHICAL & CONSTITUTIONAL VALUES

#### A. ETHICAL VALUES

- Integrity: Honest disclosure once operational risks subside.
- Accountability: Government remains answerable for its decisions.
- Transparency: Builds public trust and institutional credibility.
- Compassion: Timely recognition of fallen soldiers and support for their families.
- Responsibility: Balance national security imperatives with democratic obligations.

#### B. CONSTITUTIONAL VALUES

- Justice (Preamble; Article 14): Equal dignity and recognition for every soldier.
- Liberty (Preamble; Article 19(1)(a)): Facilitates informed public discourse after security concerns subside.
- Rule of Law (Article 14): Executive actions remain subject to constitutional scrutiny.
- Collective Responsibility (Article 75(3)): Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha.
- Parliamentary Accountability (Articles 105 & 118): Parliament has the right to discuss and hold the Executive accountable.

## 3. WHY TRANSPARENCY MATTERS

- Builds Public Trust: Strengthens confidence in institutions and governance.
- Enables Informed Decision-Making: Allows Parliament and citizens to make informed judgments.
- Improves Policy & Operational Learning: Honest evaluation of successes and failures leads to better future decisions.
- Counters Misinformation: Reduces rumours, speculation and politicisation of national security.
- Honours Sacrifice: Timely recognition upholds the dignity of armed forces and boosts morale.
- Strengthens Civil-Military Trust: Reinforces mutual respect between citizens and armed forces in a democracy.

## 4. WAY FORWARD

- Time-bound Disclosure Protocol
- Clear guidelines for timely disclosure after operational exigencies have ended.

- Institutional Mechanism for Review
- Independent review by Parliamentary Committees on national security matters.

- Strengthen Communication Strategy
- Proactive, factual and empathetic communication to families, public and media.

- Respect for Families
- Ensure timely support, benefits and counselling for families of martyrs.

- Parliamentary Oversight with Sensitivity
- Debate and scrutiny without compromising operational details or national security.

- Capacity Building & Training
- Ethics and sensitivity training for bureaucrats and military leadership on transparency and accountability.

## 5. ETHICS TAKEAWAY



Operational secrecy is justified during active military operations, but once the purpose is achieved and threats subside, **transparency and accountability** become essential to uphold democratic values, institutional credibility and public trust.



### MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION (GS-4 | 10 MARKS | 150 WORDS)

National security cannot become a substitute for public accountability. In the light of this statement, examine the ethical and constitutional imperatives of transparency in military operations.



### KEY TAKEAWAY

In a democracy, secrecy may be necessary to win a battle, but transparency and accountability are indispensable to win the trust and build lasting peace.

# Has RBI changed the rules for scam compensation?

Who can claim compensation, how much can they receive, and what are the eligibility conditions?

Aroon Deep

The story so far:

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday issued fresh rules to protect customers from scam transactions where they lose money to fraudsters and cyberattacks. These directions amend the RBI's 2017 circular on "Limiting Liability of Customers in Unauthorised Electronic Banking Transactions". That previous framework only left banks liable to compensate scammed customers if transactions were not even authorised by customers, such as in a successful hacking incident. These rules are only a pilot for now, but may be extended in the future. They are effective from January 1, 2027, and last for the year.

What has the RBI changed?

In Wednesday's amendments, a draft version of which was released for public comment in March, customers can get reimbursed when they fall prey to certain scams, like digital arrests (where they are "coerced" into paying money), or when

one-time passcodes (OTPs) are "fraudulently" stolen from them. Most financial fraud currently relies on "social engineering" attacks, which require hoodwinking customers in one way or another; since banks' core cybersecurity infrastructure is heavily regulated and subject to RBI audits, "zero click" hacks are vanishingly rare.

The new key concept is "fraudulent electronic banking transactions (EBTs)". RBI defines these as transactions which are "executed by a third-party using the credentials obtained from the customer through fraudulent means or executed by the customer by granting approval under coercion or duress from the third-party" or "an EBT which is not authorised by a customer and inter alia includes an EBT occurring on account of negligence by a bank and/or a third-party breach."

This means that customers who ignore fraud signal warnings, such as those on a UPI PIN screen that a given transaction could be a scam, would not be eligible for any compensation. In cases of a third-party hack, the timeline for a customer to report the loss has been

increased to five calendar days from three working days. As in the 2017 rules, if any amount is deducted after a customer reports fraud, the customer bears no liability and is entitled to a reversal of the transaction.

Banks can waive customers' liability even if a transaction is negligent, but this is subject to their own discretion. If a user does not have their latest phone number or email address registered with the bank, this counts as negligence, as the bank would not send fraud alerts to the right contact.

How much compensation can customers receive?

For losses up to ₹50,000, individual victims can claim 85% of the amount as compensation, only once in their lifetime, up to ₹25,000. (This means that for any amount from ₹29,412 till ₹50,000, customers will receive a flat ₹25,000 compensation.) Roughly three-fourths of the amount will be paid by RBI itself, while the customer and beneficiary banks will pay half the remaining amount.

A customer must report to the

cybercrime helpline (1930) within five days to be eligible for this. It is worth noting that scams above ₹50,000 don't seem to be covered in this framework at all.

What changed between the draft and final rules?

From the March draft, banks have been given more time to implement this new system; the draft rules had a July 1 effective date. This is now January 1, 2027. Complaint settlement timelines are also now increased to 45-60 days, with the latter applying for international transactions.

Dvara Research, a non-profit financial inclusion think tank, had suggested that the vulnerability of customers be taken into account. "Research suggests that Indians encounter fraud attempts multiple times a week, that these attempts are growing more sophisticated, and therefore, it is not unlikely that customers may fall for them more than once," the body wrote.

"Vulnerable customers may not be expected to meet high standards of attentiveness or defend themselves against frauds that are sophisticated even for the more evolved customers ... Under the Indian Contract Act, contracts executed under information asymmetry, external influence, or fraudulent pretext are voidable... Bundling such different transactions under the common definition of 'authorised transaction' diminishes their fundamental difference and may even reduce the significance of a liability framework."

## THE GIST

RBI's revised rules expand customer protection by allowing compensation for certain fraud caused by coercion or stolen credentials, not just unauthorised transactions.

Eligible customers can claim up to ₹25,000 for losses of up to ₹50,000 if they report the fraud within five days; the pilot framework takes effect from January 1, 2027.

1. **Context (GS-3: Banking & Cyber Security)** : The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised its 2017 customer liability framework to extend protection to victims of certain online banking scams involving fraud or coercion. The pilot framework will be effective from 1 January 2027.

## 2. Existing Rule vs Revised Rule

### (i) Existing Rule (2017)

- \* Covered only Unauthorised Electronic Banking Transactions (UEBTs).
- \* Authorised scams (customer transferred money after being deceived) were not covered.

### (ii) Revised Rule (2027 Pilot)

- \* Covers Fraudulent Electronic Banking Transactions (FEBTs).
- \* Includes digital arrest, OTP theft and social engineering scams.
- \* Effective from: 1 January 2027 (pilot for one year).

## 3. Compensation

(i) Eligible loss: Up to ₹50,000.

(ii) Customer receives: 85% of the loss, subject to a maximum of ₹25,000.

(iii) Condition: Report to Cybercrime Helpline (1930) within 5 days.

(iv) Not covered: Losses above ₹50,000 and cases involving customer negligence.

**One-line takeaway (UPSC):** 2017: Protection only against unauthorised transactions → 2027: Protection extended to certain authorised-but-fraudulent scams, with limited compensation.



## Rajya Sabha Chairman Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan administers oath/affirmation today to newly elected/re-elected Members in Rajya Sabha Chamber

Posted On: 29 JUN 2026 1:45PM by PIB Delhi

Hon'ble Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan administered oath/affirmation today in Rajya Sabha Chamber to seven newly elected/ re-elected Members namely Shri Mansingh Meraman Parmar, Shri Tarun Chugh, Dr. Alka Singh, Shri Jitendra Meghji bhai Kanzariya, Shri Rajendra Hiralal Jain, Shri M. Nagaraja and Smt. Adhikarimayum Sharda Devi.

Four Members took oath/ affirmation in Hindi, one in Kannada, one in Punjabi and one in Manipuri. Two Members are from the state of Gujarat and rest, one each from Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur and Rajasthan.

Shri Harivansh, Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha; Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda, Leader of the House, Rajya Sabha and Minister of Health and Family Welfare, and Chemicals and Fertilizers; Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs; Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of State for Law and Justice; Shri Jairam Ramesh, Shri Praful Patel, Members, Rajya Sabha; Shri P. C. Mody, Secretary General, Rajya Sabha and other senior officers of the secretariat were also present on the occasion.

# Kharge reappointed Rajya Sabha Leader of Opposition; seeks stronger coordination

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and seven other newly elected members of the Rajya Sabha took oath on Monday. Mr. Kharge was also reappointed the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha with effect from June 26.

After taking oath, Mr. Kharge expressed gratitude to the Congress leadership, including Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, as well as Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan and Deputy Chairman Harivansh.

He also extended greetings to his colleagues in the INDIA bloc and the broader Opposition. Mr. Kharge said he was looking forward to “even stronger coordination” during the coming Monsoon Session of Parliament to make “the government of the day more accountable”.



Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan greets Mallikarjun Kharge after the oath-taking ceremony on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

“We will continue to raise the burning concerns, aspirations, and voices of the people with sincerity, conviction and determination. That remains our foremost responsibility, and I shall discharge it with the utmost commitment,” he said.

He took oath separately in Mr. Radhakrishnan’s chamber. The Vice-President congratulated Mr. Kharge and said the Upper House would benefit from his long experience. Ms. Gandhi and other Congress leaders – Priyanka

Gandhi Vadra, K.C. Venugopal, Mukul Wasnik, Jairam Ramesh and Syed Nasseer Hussain – were present during the event. Mr. Kharge’s wife, daughter, and granddaughter, along with her spouse, were present.

Mr. Radhakrishnan later administered the oath to seven other newly elected members – Mansingh Meraman Parmar, Tarun Chugh, Alka Singh, Jitendra Meghji bhai Kanzariya, Rajendra Hiralal Jain, M. Nagaraja, and Adhikari mayum Sharda Devi.

Consider the following statements :

1. In the first Lok Sabha, the single largest party in the opposition was the Swatantra Party.
2. In the Lok Sabha, a "Leader of the Opposition" was recognised for the first time in 1969.
3. In the Lok Sabha, if a party does not have a minimum of 75 members, its leader cannot be recognised as the Leader of the Opposition.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

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



**1. Context (GS-2: Parliament/ Leader of Opposition)** :Mallikarjun Kharge was reappointed as the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Rajya Sabha after taking oath as a re-elected Member of Parliament (MP). The oath was administered by the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha (Vice-President).

## **2. Oath / Affirmation of Rajya Sabha Members**

### **(i) Constitutional Basis**

\* Article 99 | Form of Oath: Third Schedule.

\* Oath is taken before the President or a person appointed by the President (in practice, the Vice-President/Chairman of Rajya Sabha).

### **(ii) Oath Includes**

\* True faith and allegiance to the Constitution.

\* Uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India.

\* Faithfully discharge the duties of an MP.

### **(iii) UPSC Trap**

\* President (Article 60) and Vice-President (Article 69) take oath under their respective Articles; their oath forms are NOT in the Third Schedule.

## **3. Leader of Opposition (LoP)**

### **(i) Statutory Status**

\* Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977.

### **(ii) Recognition**

\* Leader of the largest recognised Opposition party; recognised by the Speaker (Lok Sabha) or Chairman (Rajya Sabha).

\* No constitutional or statutory requirement of 10% seats; the 10% rule is only a convention for party recognition, not for the 1977 Act.

### **(iii) Rank & Role**

\* Cabinet Minister rank.

\* Member of key selection committees (e.g., Lokpal, CVC, CIC, CBI Director, CEC/ECs, wherever provided by law).

## Release of SDG Publications on the Occasion of 20th Statistics Day (29th June 2026)

Posted On: 29 JUN 2026 5:00PM by PIB Delhi

On the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Statistics Day, on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2026, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation released the following publications on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- Sustainable Development Goals – National Indicator Framework Progress Report, 2026;
- Data Snapshot on Sustainable Development Goals – National Indicator Framework Progress Report, 2026;
- Sustainable Development Goals – National Indicator Framework, 2026 (along with metadata);
- Transforming Lives: India's Achievements under the People Dimension of the SDGs.



1. **Context (GS-2: Governance | GS-3: Inclusive Development & Environment)** : On 20th Statistics Day (29 June 2026), the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the annual Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) National Indicator Framework (NIF) Progress Report, 2026, along with three companion publications, to assess India's progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## 2. Core Content

### (i) National Indicator Framework (NIF)

- \* India's official statistical framework for monitoring the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- \* Contains 277 National Indicators, developed by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) in consultation with NITI Aayog, Line Ministries, States/UTs and United Nations (UN) Agencies.
- \* Serves as the national database for tracking SDG progress.

### (ii) Key Findings

- \* **Social Development**: Improvement in Social Protection Coverage, Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) and women's participation in professional and technical jobs.
- \* **Economic Development**: Decline in Unemployment Rate and significant growth in internet connectivity, indicating improved digital inclusion.
- \* **Environmental Sustainability**: Increase in Renewable Energy Capacity, Waste Recycling Infrastructure and Ramsar Wetland Coverage.



### 3. **UPSC Value Addition**

#### (i) **Institutional Framework**

- \* **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI):** Develops and publishes the National Indicator Framework (NIF) and the SDG Progress Report.
- \* **NITI Aayog:** Publishes the SDG India Index using NIF indicators.
- \* **States/Union Territories (UTs):** Prepare State Indicator Frameworks (SIFs) for SDG localisation.

#### (ii) **Significance**

- \* Enables evidence-based policymaking and outcome-based governance.
- \* Tracks India's progress towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.
- \* Identifies regional disparities and supports better policy targeting and resource allocation.

#### (iii) **Challenges & Way Forward**

- \* **Challenges:** Data quality, timely availability, inter-State disparities and last-mile implementation.
- \* **Way Forward:** Strengthen real-time digital statistical systems, improve district-level SDG monitoring, and deepen cooperative federalism for evidence-based governance.

# Surveillance boost: Army to raise 'Baaz Battalions'

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

The Indian Army is raising dedicated 'Baaz Battalions' to significantly enhance its Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) capability, a move aimed at strengthening battlefield surveillance, intelligence gathering and rapid response through a specialised drone force, defence sources said.

Sources in the Indian Army have confirmed the development and said that the new battalions will be built upon the Army's existing RPA Flights and will comprise a specialist pool of trained personnel responsible for operating and managing Remotely Piloted Aircraft systems.

The Baaz Battalions will centralise the Army's expanding drone capabilities and will be designed to handle the entire lifecycle of RPA operations.

---

1. **Context (GS-3: Internal Security | Defence Technology)** : The Indian Army is raising dedicated ‘Baaz Battalions’ to strengthen its Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) capability for surveillance, intelligence gathering and precision operations through a specialised drone force.

## 2. **Baaz Battalions**

(i) **Basics**: Dedicated Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) battalions built on existing RPA Flights, integrating drone operators, technical staff and mission planners under a single command.

(ii) **Functions**: Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance (ISR) • Real-time battlefield monitoring • Target acquisition • Artillery support • Battle Damage Assessment (BDA) • Rapid response.

(iii) **Significance**: Enhances persistent border surveillance • Strengthens network-centric warfare • Improves precision strikes and response against drone & hybrid warfare.