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Daily news summary**UPSC daily news summary - 27 August 2026**

UPSC Civil Services • 27 August 2026 • Prelims and Mains

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Key developments include India-China bilateral talks on trans-border rivers hydrological data sharing, ECI's voter literacy expansion, and wildlife discoveries in Kaziranga.

COMBINED SUMMARY

- India China Trans Border Rivers Hydrological Data Sharing
- **Election Commission** Electoral Literacy Clubs Outreach
- Greater Hog Badger Kaziranga National Park IUCN
- National Mission for Clean Ganga Delhi Jal Board Sewage Plants
- Data Governance Norms and Fintech Regulation
- Revising the Indus Waters Treaty Framework

1. INDIA CHINA TRANS BORDER RIVERS HYDROLOGICAL DATA SHARING**WHY IN NEWS**

- India and China agreed to schedule the next meeting of their Expert-Level Mechanism (ELM) on trans-border rivers in September.
- The talks focus on resuming emergency and flood-season hydrological data sharing for the Brahmaputra (Yarlung Zangbo) and Sutlej (Langqen Zangbo) rivers.

WHAT IS THE EXPERT-LEVEL MECHANISM?

- Established in 2006 to discuss cooperation on trans-border rivers between India and China.
- Mandated to oversee provision of hydrological information such as water level, discharge, and rainfall data during flood season (June 1 to October 15).

KEY BILATERAL PROVISIONS & OBJECTIVES

- Covers major trans-border river basins including the Brahmaputra (Yarlung Zangbo) and Sutlej (Langqen Zangbo).
- Aims to ensure early flood warning capability in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh downstream.

WHY IT MATTERS

- Hydrological transparency is critical to mitigate flood disasters caused by upper-riparian dam building and natural landslides along the **Line of Actual Control**.
- Acts as a functional confidence-building measure alongside military and diplomatic de-escalation dialogues.

KEY TERMS

- **Upper Riparian State:** A country situated upstream along a river system that exercises control over water flow before it reaches downstream nations.
- **Hydrological Data:** Measurements of water flow, volume, discharge rate, and surface precipitation used for flood forecasting and river management.

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PRELIMS FACTS

Hydrological data sharing between India and China is governed under a bilateral Memorandum of Understanding managed by the Expert-Level Mechanism.

MAINS DISCUSSION

- Assess the strategic and ecological vulnerabilities of lower-riparian states like India in trans-boundary river management with China.

KEY DATA

- **Institutional Body:** India-China Expert-Level Mechanism (ELM) - Institutional bilateral channel established in 2006 dedicated exclusively to trans-border river management.
- **Key Basin:** Yarlung Zangbo / Brahmaputra River - Major trans-boundary watercourse originating in Tibet, crucial for North-East India water security.

[Official source](#)

2. ELECTION COMMISSION ELECTORAL LITERACY CLUBS OUTREACH**WHY IN NEWS**

- The **Election Commission of India** (ECI) announced plans to establish 50,000 new Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELCs) nationwide.
- The drive targets high school and university students to foster democratic awareness ahead of future election cycles.

WHAT ARE ELECTORAL LITERACY CLUBS?

- Platform set up by the **Election Commission of India** at educational institutions and community spaces.
- Designed to engage youth in hands-on electoral processes, voter registration mechanisms, and ethical voting concepts.

KEY OBJECTIVES & TARGET GROUPS

- Targets students in classes 9 to 12 as future voters and university students as prospective or newly eligible electors.
- Focuses on seamless transition from voter education to official electoral roll registration upon turning 18 years of age.

WHY IT MATTERS

- Addresses urban and youth apathy during elections to enhance democratic voter turnout and representation.
- Leverages **Article 324** mandate of ECI for complete, unbiased, and inclusive civic election management.

KEY TERMS

- **Electoral Literacy Club:** An institutional initiative under ECI's Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program to promote civic engagement.
- **SVEEP:** Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation flagship initiative of ECI for voter awareness and voter literacy.

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PRELIMS FACTS

- Electoral Literacy Clubs operate under ECI's flagship **SVEEP** initiative for democratic literacy.

MAINS DISCUSSION

- Evaluate the effectiveness of institutional voter literacy programs in curbing voter apathy among urban youth.

KEY DATA

- **Constitutional Provision:** **Article 324** - Vests superintendence, direction, and control of elections in the **Election Commission of India**.

- **Target Expansion:** 50,000 Electoral Literacy Clubs - National milestone target for youth civic engagement.

[Official source](#)

3. GREATER HOG BADGER KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK IUCN

WHY IN NEWS

- Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve published its first scientific assessment documenting a distinct population of the Greater Hog Badger.
- Camera traps recorded significant presence and nocturnal behaviors of the vulnerable mammal across the reserve's floodplains.

WHAT IS THE GREATER HOG BADGER?

- **Scientific name:** *Arctonyx collaris*, a mustelid mammal native to Southeast Asia and North-East India.
- Characterized by a pig-like snout used for rooting soil, powerful claws for digging, and omnivorous feeding habits.

CONSERVATION STATUS & DISTRIBUTION

- **IUCN Red List Status:** Vulnerable.
- Protected under Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (as amended in 2022).
- Inhabits tropical rainforests, grasslands, and alluvial floodplains across North-East Indian national parks.

WHY IT MATTERS

- Highlights the ecological importance of Kaziranga's non-charismatic micro-fauna beyond rhinos and tigers.
- Camera trap technology helps baseline population metrics for subterranean and nocturnal forest species.

KEY TERMS

- **Mustelidae:** A diverse family of carnivorous mammals including badgers, otters, martens, and weasels.
- **Rooting Behavior:** The act of using a elongated snout to dig and forage in the soil for roots, invertebrates, and tubers.

PAPERS

GS3

PRELIMS FACTS

- Greater Hog Badger is listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List and protected under Schedule I of WPA 1972.

KEY DATA

- **Species Name:** Arctonyx collaris (Greater Hog Badger) - Prelims regularly asks for habitat, protection status, and natural occurrences of wildlife.
- **IUCN Status:** Vulnerable - Standard conservation status question in UPSC Prelims.
- **WPA 1972 Schedule:** Schedule I - Highest legal protection level provided under Indian wildlife legislation.

[Official source](#)

4. NATIONAL MISSION FOR CLEAN GANGA DELHI JAL BOARD SEWAGE PLANTS

WHY IN NEWS

- Delhi High Court directed the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) to examine Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for 13 Decentralized Sewage Treatment Plants.
- The review aims to tackle raw sewage flowing into the Yamuna river basin.

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL MISSION FOR CLEAN GANGA?

- Implementation wing of National Ganga Council, registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- Executes the **Namami Gange** Program to abate pollution, conserve, and rejuvenate the Ganga river basin and its tributaries like the Yamuna.

DECENTRALIZED STPS MECHANISM

- Decentralized STPs (DSTPs) treat wastewater close to its source instead of routing it through vast trunk sewer lines.
- Reduces infrastructure cost and prevents un-intercepted drain discharges directly entering urban river reaches.

WHY IT MATTERS

- Yamuna river clean-up relies on strict enforcement of discharge standards monitored by statutory river basin bodies.

- Highlights inter-agency coordination challenges between state municipal boards (Delhi Jal Board) and central authorities (NMCG).

KEY TERMS

- **Decentralized Sewage Treatment:** Localized collection and treatment of wastewater near the point of generation rather than transporting it to centralized plants.
- **Namami Gange:** An Integrated Conservation Mission approved as a Flagship Program by the Union Government to rejuvenate River Ganga and tributaries.

PAPERS

GS2, GS3

PRELIMS FACTS

- NMCG functions under the Ministry of Jal Shakti as the implementation arm of the National Ganga Council.

MAINS DISCUSSION

- Discuss the structural challenges in tackling urban river pollution through centralized vs decentralized sewage infrastructure.

KEY DATA

- **Parent Authority:** National Ganga Council - Apex statutory body chaired by the Prime Minister for Ganga river basin oversight under EP Act 1986.
- **Implementing Body:** National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) - Primary executive entity enforcing effluent abatement for Ganga and tributaries.

[Official source](#)

5. DATA GOVERNANCE NORMS AND FINTECH REGULATION

WHY IN NEWS

- RBI draft data governance guidelines and Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) rules have compelled banks and NBFCs to re-evaluate their fintech partnerships.
- Financial institutions are revising service-level contracts to address third-party data risks and regulatory liability.

WHAT IS THE REGULATORY CONTEXT?

- Banks and NBFCs rely heavily on fintech partners for customer acquisition, credit scoring, and digital onboarding under co-lending and outsourcing arrangements.

- The RBI outsourcing directives and the **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023** establish strict boundaries regarding data consent, storage, and third-party processing risks.

KEY REGULATORY CHANGES AND IMPACT

- Regulated Entities (REs) must maintain absolute operational control over customer financial data and cannot delegate compliance liability to tech vendors.
- Fintech contracts are being restructured to eliminate unauthorized data scraping, enforce strict data localization, and restrict unverified third-party access.

WHY IT MATTERS

- Reduces systemic cyber risks and protects consumer financial privacy in decentralized digital lending operations.
- Ensures legal compliance for regulated financial institutions under the DPDP statutory framework.

KEY TERMS

- **Regulated Entities (REs):** Financial institutions such as banks and NBFCs directly licensed and supervised by the Reserve Bank of India.
- **Data Fiduciary:** An entity that determines the purpose and means of processing personal data under the DPDP Act.

PAPERS

GS2, GS3

PRELIMS FACTS

- DPDP Act 2023 applies to digital personal data processed within India or processing linked to offering goods/services in India.

MAINS DISCUSSION

- Balancing fintech innovation with consumer data security and institutional accountability.

KEY DATA

- **Parent Act:** **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023** - Establishes the statutory framework for personal data processing and penalties for data breaches.
- **Regulator:** Reserve Bank of India - Issues guidelines on outsourcing of financial services and digital lending framework.

[Official source](#)

6. REVISING THE INDUS WATERS TREATY FRAMEWORK

WHY IN NEWS

- Experts emphasize the need to re-evaluate the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) to incorporate climate change and equitable water utilization principles.
- India has sought modifications to the treaty mechanism to handle altered hydrological realities and environmental flow needs.

WHAT IS THE INDUS WATERS TREATY, 1960?

- A bilateral water-sharing agreement signed in 1960 between India and Pakistan, brokered by the World Bank.
- It allocated the Eastern Rivers (Sutlej, Beas, Ravi) exclusively to India and Western Rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) primarily to Pakistan, subject to run-of-the-river power usage by India.

NEED FOR REVISION

- **Before:** The 1960 treaty relied on fixed historical water flow allocations without dynamic provisions for climate variability.
- **After:** Proposed revisions advocate incorporating 'equitable and reasonable utilization' principles, joint environmental monitoring, and updated dispute resolution mechanisms.

WHY IT MATTERS

- Crucial for transboundary water governance amidst glacial retreat and changing monsoonal patterns in the Himalayas.
- Balances upper-riparian infrastructure development requirements with lower-riparian ecological concerns.

KEY TERMS

- **Run-of-the-River Project:** Hydroelectric generation facilities that produce electricity without storing significant quantities of water in reservoirs.
- **Equitable and Reasonable Utilisation:** A customary international water law principle governing shared watercourses under the 1997 UN Watercourses Convention.

PAPERS

GS1, GS2

PRELIMS FACTS

- Under the IWT, **Permanent Indus Commission** commissioners meet at least once a year alternately in India and Pakistan.

MAINS DISCUSSION

- Transboundary water diplomacy in South Asia in the era of climate-induced hydrological unpredictability.

KEY DATA

- **Treaty Year:** 1960 - Signed by Prime Minister **Jawaharlal Nehru** and President Ayub Khan under World Bank mediation.
- **Eastern Rivers:** Ravi, Beas, Sutlej - Unrestricted water usage rights allocated to India under the IWT.
- **Western Rivers:** Indus, Jhelum, Chenab - Allocated to Pakistan, subject to non-consumptive and run-of-the-river hydro rights reserved for India.

[Official source](#)

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