

# SEPTEMBER 2026

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## Part 1: Topic-Wise Current Affairs Notes for UPSC Preparation

### Topic 1: International Relations & Strategic Choke Points

#### Sub-topic: Resolution Models for Maritime Choke Points – Malacca-Singapore Model vs. Strait of Hormuz

**Context & Issue:** Siege warfare and closure of the Strait of Hormuz have disrupted global crude and LPG supplies. Analysts and Gulf nations have mooted the **1970s**

**Malacca-Singapore Straits settlement** as a legal and institutional framework model for reopening Hormuz.

##### **Distinction Between Maritime Passages under UNCLOS:**

**Innocent Passage:** The right of foreign vessels to navigate through a coastal State's territorial sea. The coastal State **may suspend it** for security reasons, and submerged submarines are excluded (must surface).

**Transit Passage:** The right of navigation through straits used for international navigation connecting high seas or Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) in a "**continuous and expeditious**" manner. Applies to warships, **cannot be suspended** by the coastal State, and permits submerged transit. Introduced by the **United Kingdom** during UNCLOS III negotiations.

##### **The Malacca & Singapore Straits Settlement (1970s & 2007):**

**Background:** In 1957, Indonesia declared all waters between its islands as archipelagic waters, claiming a 12-nautical-mile territorial sea. Malaysia also claimed a 12-nautical-mile zone. At their narrowest points, the straits are under 24 nautical miles wide, causing territorial claims to meet in the middle and closing the high-seas corridor.

**2007 Cooperative Mechanism:** Established a Traffic Separation Scheme administered jointly by Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. Funded via the **Aids to Navigation Fund** through voluntary contributions from stakeholders (e.g., The Nippon Foundation). Crucially, the littoral States **impose no tolls or fees** on ships exercising transit passage.

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# SEPTEMBER 2026

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## Why the Malacca Model Cannot Be Easily Applied to Hormuz:

**UNCLOS Ratification Gap:** Iran has signed but **not ratified UNCLOS** and operates under a 1993 domestic law requiring foreign warships to seek prior authorization to navigate the strait.

**Nature of Conflict:** Malacca was primarily a debate over navigation safety and environmental protection; Hormuz involves state security, economic sanctions, and geopolitical conflict.

**User State Rejection:** The United States has not accepted the Iran-Oman framework.

## India's Strategic Exposure & Resilience Measures:

India imports ~85% of its crude oil, with a majority of its LPG passing through the Strait of Hormuz.

**Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR):** Underground crude storage operated by ISPRL at Visakhapatnam, Mangaluru, and Padur.

**Alternative Logistics & Doctrines:** Chabahar Port (10-year contract signed in 2024 for Shahid Beheshti terminal), India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), Information Fusion Centre–Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR at Gurugram), and the SAGAR / MAHASAGAR doctrines.

**UNCLOS Basics:** Adopted in 1982, in force since 1994; India ratified in 1995. Standard zones: 12 nm Territorial Sea, 24 nm Contiguous Zone, 200 nm EEZ.

## Topic 2: Bilateral Defence Cooperation & Military Exercises

### Sub-topic: Exercise NOMADIC ELEPHANT 2026

**Event & Location:** The **18th edition** of the joint military exercise commenced on September 21, 2026, at the **Foreign Training Node in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand**.

**Participating Forces:** Indian Army and the Mongolian Armed Forces (45 personnel from each side).

#### Key Features:

An **annual, platoon-level** military exercise conducted **alternately in India and Mongolia**.

The 17th edition was held at **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia** in May–June 2025.

**Operational Focus:** Counter-Insurgency Operations in semi-urban and mountainous terrain under a **United Nations Mandate**.

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# SEPTEMBER 2026

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## Topic 3: Indian Art, Culture & Intellectual Property Rights

Sub-topic: Traditional Indian Crafts vs. Misappropriation by Global Fashion Houses

**Context:** Global luxury brands have frequently utilized traditional Indian craft techniques without acknowledgment or attribution (e.g., Ralph Lauren using *Aari* hook embroidery, Fendi using mirror work, Prada using *Kolhapuri* chappals).

### Limitations of Existing IP Protections:

**Geographical Indications (GI) Act, 1999:** Protects a good's name, geographical origin, and reputation. However, a GI **protects the specific product, not the underlying technique or motif** (e.g., Kutch embroidery has a GI, but the *Aari* hook technique itself does not).

**Territoriality Mismatch:** IP rights are strictly territorial, whereas traditional culture has no geographic boundaries. An Indian GI registration does not automatically prevent misuse abroad without foreign registrations.

**Absence of Individual Owner:** Traditional craft knowledge belongs collectively to a community across generations, making conventional individual ownership frameworks unsuitable.

### Defensive Mechanisms & Global Frameworks:

**Collective Custodianship Model:** A legal framework recognizing community custodianship based on historical records, oral traditions, and regional practice.

**Craft Motif & Technique Database:** Expanding defensive documentation (akin to the **Traditional Knowledge Digital Library - TKDL** used for Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and Yoga) to craft motifs and techniques.

**WIPO Framework:** The World Intellectual Property Organization (UN specialized agency established by the 1967 Stockholm Convention, HQ in Geneva) adopted a treaty in 2024 on Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge and is negotiating a binding instrument for Traditional Cultural Expressions.

## Topic 4: Environment & Biodiversity

### Key Findings of JNTBGRI Floristic Survey:

Published in *Plant Science Today* by the Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI), documenting **3,261 flowering plant species** (plus 26 sub-species and 28 varieties) across 1,139 genera and 190 families.

**Dominant Families:** **Fabaceae** (legume family – 349 taxa) > **Rubiaceae** (coffee family – 194 taxa) > **Poaceae** (grass family – 193 taxa) > **Orchidaceae** (orchid family – 168 taxa).

**High Level of Endemism:** 1,018 taxa (**31.2%**) are endemic to India, including **245 steno-endemic taxa** (confined to extremely narrow micro-habitats). Includes *Paphiopedilum druryi*, a critically threatened endemic orchid.

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# SEPTEMBER 2026

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**Biogeographic Affinities:** Shares **347 taxa with Sri Lanka** (reflecting past land-bridge connections, shared Gondwanan history, and similar climate) and 102 taxa with tropical American flora.

## **Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve Profile:**

Designated as a Biosphere Reserve in 2001; added to the **UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves in 2016**.

Located in the southern Western Ghats, straddling **Kerala and Tamil Nadu**.

**Constituent Protected Areas:** Neyyar, Peppara, and Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuaries, and the **Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve (KMTR)**.

**Indigenous Inhabitants:** Home to the **Kani tribal community**, whose traditional knowledge of *Trichopus zeylanicus* led to India's first commercial benefit-sharing agreement.

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## Topic 5: Economy & Financial Technology

### Sub-topic: UPI Tap and Pay Facility & NPCI Regulatory Framework

#### **UPI Tap and Pay Mechanics:**

Introduced by RBI and NPCI, allowing contactless payments for **RuPay credit cards** linked to UPI.

**Thresholds:** Payments up to **₹5,000** require no PIN or OTP; transactions above ₹5,000 require PIN authentication.

**Infrastructure:** Operates using the Point of Sale (PoS) terminal's internet connection; the **customer's phone does not require active internet**.

**Regulatory Trigger:** Designed to comply with RBI's mandatory Two-Factor Authentication (2FA) rules taking effect from April 1, 2026, replacing easily intercepted OTP codes with physical card/device possession.

#### **Emerging Alternative Authentication Protocols:**

Cryptographic **Passkeys** and Mastercard's **Consumer Device Cardholder Verification Method (CDCVM)** utilizing device biometrics (fingerprint/face recognition).

#### **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) Profile:**

Set up in **2008** as a joint initiative of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Indian Banks' Association (IBA).

Registered as a **Not-for-Profit Company under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013**.

Operates key national financial rails: UPI, RuPay, IMPS, NACH, FASTag, and AePS.

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## Topic 6: Indian Polity & Constitutional Law

### Sub-topic: Supreme Court Strike-Down of Methanol Regulations & Proportionality Standard

**Case Background:** The Supreme Court struck down **Rules 18A and 18B of the Maharashtra Poisons Rules, 1972** (introduced in 2011 following the 1991 Mumbai hooch tragedy) framed under the **Poisons Act, 1919**.

#### Content of Voided Rules:

Rule 18A(1): Mandatory verification of purchaser's Form A licence.

Rule 18A(2): Mandatory mixing of methanol with colourants and bitterants for non-drug industrial uses.

Rule 18B: Mandatory confiscation for possession without a Form A licence.

#### Constitutional Principles & Proportionality Analysis:

The Court held the rules violated **Article 14** (arbitrariness and lack of rational nexus) and **Article 19(1)(g)** (right to carry on trade/business).

Applied the 4-prong **Proportionality Test** from *K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017):

**Legitimate Aim:** Preventing loss of life from adulterated liquor (accepted by SC).

**Rational Nexus & Suitability:** Failed because illicit hooch production occurs in the **unregulated sector** using diverted/stolen supply, whereas mandatory additives damaged legitimate chemical applications (paints, resins, pharmaceuticals) without preventing illegal adulteration.

**Necessity & Least Restrictive Means:** Less restrictive measures (transport tanker sealing, stock audit, end-to-end digital tracking) were available.

## Topic 7: Science & Technology / Health

### Sub-topic: Multidrug Resistance in *Candida auris* & Rethinking Antimicrobial Research

#### Study Findings (JNCASR, IISER-TVM, PGIMER):

Published in *Nature Communications*, analyzing Indian clinical isolates of *Candida auris*.

***Candida auris* Profile:** A single-celled oval **yeast** (distinct from molds) causing severe bloodstream infections in intensive care units, carrying a mortality rate of **30% to 40%**.

**Resistance Patterns:** >90% resistant to **Azoles** (e.g., fluconazole), ~30% resistant to **Polyenes**, leaving **Echinocandins** (e.g., caspofungin) as the main effective class.

**Molecular Mechanisms:**

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*Azole Resistance*: Driven by **gene amplification of the Erg1 gene**, increasing ergosterol production in the fungal cell membrane.

*Echinocandin Resistance*: Driven by point mutations in the **Fks1 gene**, altering the cell wall target.

## Testing Diagnostic Gap & The Eagle Effect:

**Testing Gap**: CDC susceptibility testing ceiling is set at **2 µg/mL**, but *C. auris* isolates can survive up to **16 µg/mL**, making resistant strains appear treatable to clinicians.

**The Eagle Effect (Paradoxical Growth)**: At high drug concentrations, *C. auris* compensates by producing large amounts of **chitin**, rebuilding its cell wall and surviving exceptionally high drug doses.

**Paradigm Shift in Drug Discovery**: Shifting away from lethal eradication (which creates strong evolutionary selection pressure driving rapid resistance) toward **disarming the pathogen** by targeting non-essential virulence pathways.

**Fungal Infection Mammalian Selection Hypothesis**: Suggests global warming forces fungi to adapt to higher ambient temperatures, enabling them to breach the human body temperature barrier (37°C).

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**Q1. With reference to maritime passage rights under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), consider the following statements:**

Innocent passage allows foreign vessels to navigate through a State's territorial sea, but the coastal State may temporarily suspend it for security reasons.

Transit passage applies to straits used for international navigation, permits submerged transit by submarines, and cannot be suspended by the littoral State.

The concept of transit passage was formally introduced by Iran during UNCLOS III negotiations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- [A] 1 and 2 only
  - [B] 2 only
  - [C] 1 and 3 only
  - [D] 1, 2 and 3
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# SEPTEMBER 2026

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**Q2. Regarding the 2007 Cooperative Mechanism for the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, consider the following statements:**

It established the Aids to Navigation Fund, which is supported by voluntary contributions from user States and industry foundations.

Under this mechanism, the littoral States levy compulsory user tolls on transiting commercial vessels to finance navigation safety.

The traffic separation framework of the mechanism was structurally modelled on an earlier 1960s arrangement between Iran and Oman.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

[A] 1 and 2 only

[B] 1 and 3 only

[C] 2 and 3 only

[D] 1, 2 and 3

**Q3. Consider the following statements regarding 'Exercise NOMADIC ELEPHANT 2026':**

It is an annual tri-service exercise conducted between India and Mongolia.

The 2026 edition was conducted at Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand.

The exercise focuses on counter-insurgency operations in semi-urban and mountainous terrain under a United Nations mandate.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

[A] 1 and 2 only

[B] 2 and 3 only

[C] 3 only

[D] 1, 2 and 3

**Q4. With reference to the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, consider the following statements:**

A registered Geographical Indication (GI) protects both the specific product name and the general underlying traditional craft technique used across all products.

Under the Act, both registered proprietors and registered authorized users hold the legal right to institute infringement proceedings.

Obtaining a GI registration in India automatically provides extraterritorial legal protection across all foreign jurisdictions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

[A] 2 only

[B] 1 and 2 only

[C] 2 and 3 only

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# SEPTEMBER 2026

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[D] 1, 2 and 3

**Q5. Consider the following statements regarding the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO):**

It was established by the Stockholm Convention of 1967 and became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1974.

In 2024, WIPO adopted a treaty specifically addressing intellectual property, genetic resources, and associated traditional knowledge.

It is headquartered in Vienna, Austria.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

[A] 1 and 2 only

[B] 2 and 3 only

[C] 1 and 3 only

[D] 1, 2 and 3

**Q6. Which of the following protected areas are part of the Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve?**

Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary

Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary

Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve

Silent Valley National Park

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

[A] 1 and 2 only

[B] 1, 2 and 3 only

[C] 2, 3 and 4 only

[D] 1, 2, 3 and 4

**Q7. With reference to the floristic survey of the Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve (ABR) published by JNTBGRI, consider the following statements:**

Fabaceae is recorded as the most species-rich plant family within the reserve.

Over 30% of the documented flowering plant taxa in the reserve are endemic to India.

The flora of the reserve shows significant biogeographic affinity with Sri Lanka, sharing over 300 plant taxa.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

[A] 1 and 2 only

[B] 2 and 3 only

[C] 1 and 3 only

[D] 1, 2 and 3

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# SEPTEMBER 2026

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**Q8. Regarding the UPI 'Tap and Pay' facility launched by RBI and NPCI, consider the following statements:**

- It settles RuPay credit card transactions up to ₹5,000 without requiring an OTP or PIN.
- The transaction requires the customer's mobile phone to have an active mobile data or Wi-Fi internet connection.
- It was introduced to align with RBI's mandatory Two-Factor Authentication framework for digital payments.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- [A] 1 and 2 only
- [B] 1 and 3 only
- [C] 2 and 3 only
- [D] 1, 2 and 3

**Q9. Consider the following statements regarding the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI):**

- It was set up in 2008 as an initiative of the Reserve Bank of India and the Indian Banks' Association.
- It is registered as a Not-for-Profit Company under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013.
- It is the operating body behind UPI, RuPay, FASTag, and the Aadhaar Enabled Payment System.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- [A] 1 and 2 only
- [B] 2 and 3 only
- [C] 1 and 3 only
- [D] 1, 2 and 3

**Q10. In a landmark judgment, the Supreme Court struck down Rules 18A and 18B of the Maharashtra Poisons Rules, 1972 regarding methanol. On what primary legal ground did the Court void the mandatory additive rule?**

- [A] The State government completely lacks statutory power to regulate industrial poisons under the Poisons Act, 1919.
- [B] The rule lacked a rational nexus with its objective because illicit liquor misuse occurs in the unregulated sector, while the burden fell on legitimate industries.
- [C] Methanol is classified as an essential commodity under Central law, excluding State regulation.
- [D] The rule violated India's commitments under the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement.

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# SEPTEMBER 2026

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**Q11. With reference to the 'Proportionality Test' applied by Indian courts under Article 14 and Article 19, consider the following statements:**

It was authoritatively laid down as a 4-prong constitutional test in *K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017).

It requires that the state action must pursue a legitimate aim and choose the least restrictive means necessary to achieve it.

The burden of proving that a restriction is proportionate rests on the individual challenging the law.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- [A] 1 and 2 only
- [B] 2 and 3 only
- [C] 1 and 3 only
- [D] 1, 2 and 3

**Q12. Consider the following statements regarding *Candida auris* and fungal resistance:**

*Candida auris* is a single-celled oval yeast that causes bloodstream infections with high mortality rates.

Gene amplification of the *Erg1* gene is associated with fungal resistance against azole-based drugs like fluconazole.

Point mutations in the *Fks1* gene confer resistance against echinocandin drugs like caspofungin.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- [A] 1 and 2 only
- [B] 2 and 3 only
- [C] 1 and 3 only
- [D] 1, 2 and 3

**Q13. In microbiology and medical mycology, the term 'Eagle Effect' (paradoxical growth) refers to:**

- [A] Pathogens mutating rapidly when exposed to sub-lethal antibiotic doses.
- [B] Pathogens surviving exceptionally high drug concentrations by activating compensatory pathways like chitin cell wall synthesis.
- [C] Fungi transferring drug-resistance genes horizontally to bacterial populations.
- [D] Fungal spores remaining dormant in soil for decades despite fungicide application.

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# SEPTEMBER 2026

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**Q14. With reference to India's strategic petroleum reserves and maritime security, consider the following statements:**

Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL) maintains underground crude oil storage at Visakhapatnam, Mangaluru, and Padur.

In 2024, India Ports Global Limited signed a 10-year agreement to operate the Shahid Beheshti terminal at Chabahar Port.

Over 80% of India's crude imports transit through the Malacca Strait.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- [A] 1 and 2 only
- [B] 2 and 3 only
- [C] 1 and 3 only
- [D] 1, 2 and 3

**Q15. Consider the following statements regarding the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL):**

It was established in India to prevent bio-piracy and wrongful grant of patents at international patent offices.

It currently covers traditional medicine systems, including Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and Yoga.

It includes a comprehensive digital database for traditional Indian textile craft motifs and handloom techniques.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- [A] 1 and 2 only
- [B] 2 only
- [C] 1 and 3 only
- [D] 1, 2 and 3

## Part 3: Answer Key and Detailed Explanations

### Answer Key

- [A] 1 and 2 only
- [B] 1 and 3 only
- [B] 2 and 3 only
- [A] 2 only
- [A] 1 and 2 only
- [B] 1, 2 and 3 only
- [D] 1, 2 and 3
- [B] 1 and 3 only
- [D] 1, 2 and 3
- [B] The rule lacked a rational nexus...

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# SEPTEMBER 2026

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[A] 1 and 2 only

[D] 1, 2 and 3

[B] Pathogens surviving exceptionally high drug concentrations...

[A] 1 and 2 only

[A] 1 and 2 only

## Detailed Explanations

### Q1: Correct Option [A]

**Statement 1 is correct:** Under UNCLOS, innocent passage allows foreign vessels to pass through territorial seas, and coastal States can temporarily suspend it for security reasons.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Transit passage applies to international straits connecting high seas/EEZs, cannot be suspended by littoral States, and allows continuous/expeditious transit including submerged submarines.

**Statement 3 is incorrect:** The concept of transit passage was introduced by the **United Kingdom** (not Iran) during the UNCLOS formulation phase in the 1970s.

### Q2: Correct Option [B]

**Statement 1 is correct:** The 2007 Cooperative Mechanism built the Aids to Navigation Fund, supported voluntarily by organizations like The Nippon Foundation and industry stakeholders.

**Statement 2 is incorrect:** Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore impose **no tolls or fees** on ships exercising transit passage.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The traffic separation scheme was modeled on an earlier 1960s arrangement negotiated between Iran and Oman for the Strait of Hormuz.

### Q3: Correct Option [B]

**Statement 1 is incorrect:** Exercise NOMADIC ELEPHANT is an **army (platoon-level) exercise**, not a tri-service exercise.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The 18th edition (2026) was held at Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Its operational focus is counter-insurgency operations in semi-urban and mountainous terrain under a UN mandate.

### Q4: Correct Option [A]

**Statement 1 is incorrect:** A GI protects the product name, origin, and reputation of a good, but does **not protect the underlying craft technique or motif** applied across other goods.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Under the GI Act 1999, both registered proprietors and registered authorized users can seek relief/injunctions for infringement.

**Statement 3 is incorrect:** GI rights are territorial; an Indian registration has **no automatic extraterritorial reach** abroad without separate foreign registrations.

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# SEPTEMBER 2026

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## Q5: Correct Option [A]

**Statement 1 is correct:** WIPO was established by the 1967 Stockholm Convention (entered into force in 1970) and became a UN specialized agency in 1974.

**Statement 2 is correct:** In 2024, WIPO adopted a landmark treaty on Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge.

**Statement 3 is incorrect:** WIPO headquarters is in **Geneva, Switzerland** (not Vienna, Austria).

## Q6: Correct Option [B]

Statements 1, 2, and 3 are correct as Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve includes Neyyar, Peppara, and Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuaries, along with the Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve.

Statement 4 is incorrect because Silent Valley National Park is part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.

## Q7: Correct Option [D]

**Statement 1 is correct:** Fabaceae is the most species-rich family in ABR with 349 taxa.

**Statement 2 is correct:** 1,018 taxa (31.2%) are endemic to India.

**Statement 3 is correct:** ABR flora shows strong biogeographic affinity with Sri Lanka, sharing 347 taxa.

## Q8: Correct Option [B]

**Statement 1 is correct:** The facility allows UPI payments on RuPay credit cards up to ₹5,000 without OTP or QR code.

**Statement 2 is incorrect:** The transaction runs on the **merchant PoS terminal's connection**; the customer's phone does not need active internet access.

**Statement 3 is correct:** It responds to RBI's 2FA mandate starting April 1, 2026.

## Q9: Correct Option [D]

All statements are correct. NPCI was established in 2008 by RBI and IBA, is registered under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013 as a not-for-profit company, and operates UPI, RuPay, FASTag, IMPS, NACH, and AePS.

## Q10: Correct Option [B]

The Supreme Court held that mandatory additives (colourant/bitterant) failed on rational nexus/proportionality because methanol misuse in hooch occurs in the **unregulated illicit market**, whereas the burden fell on legitimate industrial manufacturers without preventing illicit diversion.

## Q11: Correct Option [A]

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# SEPTEMBER 2026

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**Statements 1 and 2 are correct:** The 4-prong proportionality test was laid down in *K.S. Puttaswamy (2017)*, requiring a legitimate aim, rational nexus/suitability, necessity (least restrictive means), and balancing.

**Statement 3 is incorrect:** The **State carries the legal burden** of demonstrating that a restriction on fundamental rights is proportionate.

## Q12: Correct Option [D]

**Statement 1 is correct:** *C. auris* is a single-celled yeast causing bloodstream infections with 30-40% mortality.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Azole resistance occurs via gene amplification/copy multiplication of the *Erg1* gene.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Echinocandin resistance is caused by point mutations in the *Fks1* gene.

## Q13: Correct Option [B]

The Eagle Effect (paradoxical growth) occurs when pathogens exposed to high concentrations of drugs like caspofungin activate compensatory pathways—specifically producing massive amounts of **chitin** to rebuild their cell wall and survive.

## Q14: Correct Option [A]

**Statements 1 and 2 are correct:** ISPRL manages SPRs at Visakhapatnam, Mangaluru, and Padur, and IPGL signed a 10-year contract in 2024 for the Shahid Beheshti terminal at Chabahar.

**Statement 3 is incorrect:** A majority of India's crude imports transit through the **Strait of Hormuz** (westward), whereas ~60% of India's total trade passes through the Strait of Malacca (eastward).

## Q15: Correct Option [A]

**Statements 1 and 2 are correct:** TKDL protects Indian traditional knowledge from bio-piracy/wrongful patenting abroad, covering Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and Yoga

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