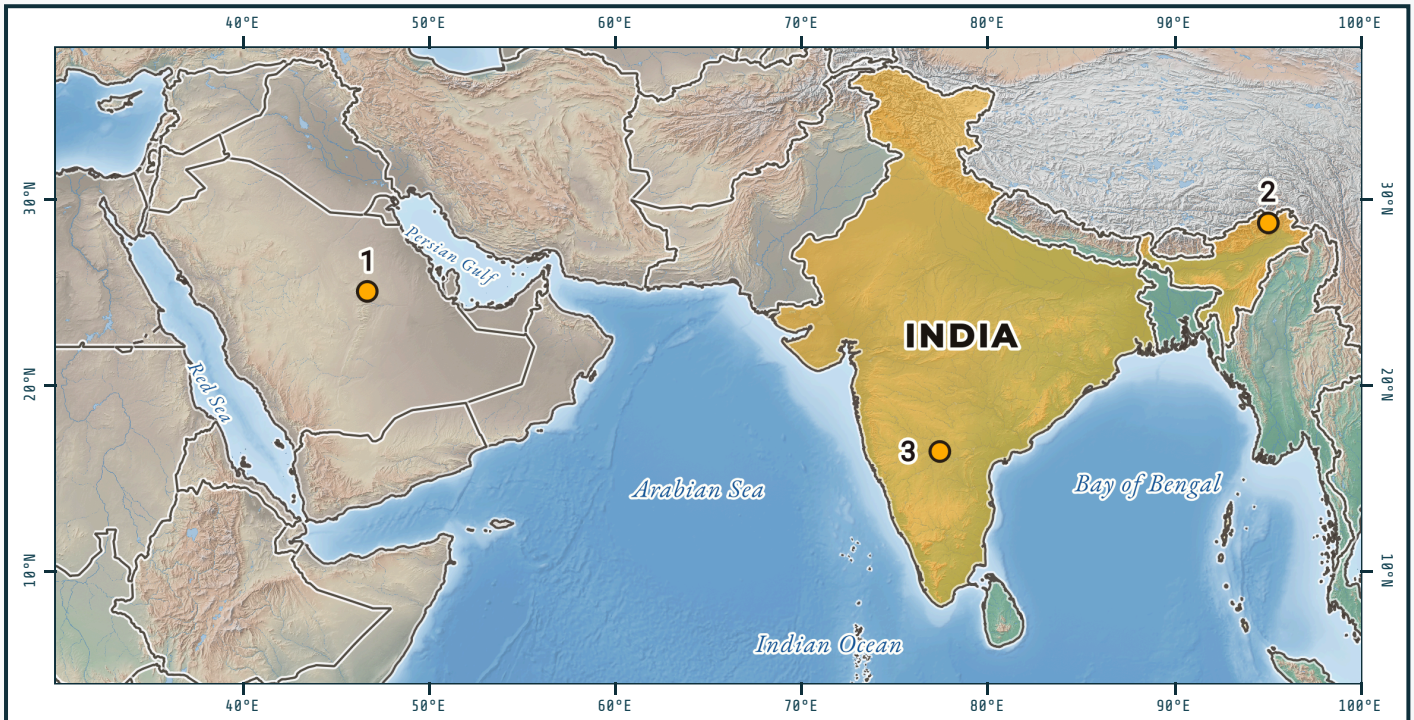


Places *in* News

**OCT 2026
WEEK 2**

News of 8-14 October 2026

MAP · FACTS · PYQ · MAINS



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▶ **WATCH** 3D map video · Hindi + English audio

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■ WHY IN NEWS

On **10 Oct 2026** a missile hit the domestic terminals of the **international airport in Saudi Arabia's capital**: 13 dead (one Indian), 300+ injured; they were hit again on **11 Oct**. Saudi Arabia blames Yemen's **Houthis**, an Iran-backed armed group.



Red dots = airports attacked, 7–11 Oct. Pipeline path is indicative (only its two ends are sourced). The SUMED pipeline (Egypt) is not drawn.

■ KEY FACTS

- **Why now?** Saudi Arabia backs Yemen's government and has led a coalition against the Houthis since **2015**. Attacks surged after its **5 Oct** offensive to retake Yemen's **Red Sea coast**, seized by the Houthis a month earlier.
- **Why that coast?** Saudi oil fields lie in the **east**, by the Persian Gulf. With **Hormuz** blockaded by Iran, more oil is piped west to the **Red Sea** — and an attack on **4 Oct** halted that pipeline again.
- **Bab-el-Mandeb** = the Red Sea's only southern exit, off Yemen. From that coast the Houthis can watch ships; both sides claim the strait.
- Saudi Arabia covers **~four-fifths of the Arabian Peninsula**, with coasts on the **Red Sea (W)** and **Persian Gulf (E)**.
- **Yemen border:** the **Asir highlands** (country's highest point) in the south-west, then mostly the **Rub' al-Khali**; undemarcated until **2000**.

■ CONCEPT · A BYPASS ROUND HORMUZ

Bypass = a route round a blocked point: the **East-West pipeline** takes crude from near the Persian Gulf to a **Red Sea port**.



Why it matters: keeps oil moving while Hormuz is blocked; pre-war, it went mostly to **Europe**.

Status: **5 million barrels/day**; halted again by an attack on **4 Oct 2026**.

Remember: ships of **Bahrain and Qatar** must cross Hormuz to reach the Indian Ocean (asked in Prelims 2026).

■ MAP MEMORY

- **7 land neighbours:** Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Yemen. **Bahrain** = island (causeway).
- **Rub' al-Khali** = world's largest area of continuous sand, > ¼ of Saudi Arabia.
- **No permanent rivers**, only wadis; no river enters the Red Sea (PYQ 2024).

■ INDIA ANGLE

An Indian died and 11 were hurt on 10 Oct. **~27 lakh Indians** live there; **13.81%** of India's crude imports (FY 2025-26). India's foreign ministry: attacks 'must cease immediately'.

■ UPSC PRELIMS PYQ · 2024

Statement-I: Sumed pipeline is a strategic route for Persian Gulf oil and natural gas shipments to Europe.

Statement-II: Sumed pipeline connects the Red Sea with the Mediterranean Sea.

(a) Both correct; II explains I

(b) Both correct; II does not explain I

(c) I correct, II incorrect

(d) I incorrect, II correct

✓ (a) — SUMED runs through Egypt from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, so Gulf oil reaching the Red Sea can go on to Europe.

■ MAINS LINK · 2026 GS-II

"India's global diaspora acts as a living bridge, as a critical economic factor and knowledge network in transforming cultural heritage into geopolitical influence and strategic leverage worldwide." Critically examine this statement.

■ PRACTICE QUESTION

Consider the following countries:

1. Bahrain 2. Iraq 3. Jordan 4. Oman 5. Qatar 6. Syria

How many of the above share a land border with Saudi Arabia?

(a) Only two

(b) Only three

(c) Only four

(d) Only five

Answer on the last page

WHY IN NEWS

In Arunachal Pradesh's **Siang valley**, protests go on against the proposed **Siang Upper Multipurpose Project** (11,200 MW, NHPC) – India's largest hydropower station if built. Forces have been there for nearly a month so surveys can go on. On **10 Oct 2026** four protesters were detained under a state law.



No dam site is final, so only the valley is marked. China's project marker is approximate (Great Bend area).

KEY FACTS

- **One river, three names:** it rises near **Mansarovar** lake and flows ~1,200 km east across southern Tibet as the **Tsangpo**.
- Near **Namcha Barwa** it bends through one of the world's **deepest gorges** into Arunachal as the **Siang**. After the **Dibang** and **Lohit** join, it is the **Brahmaputra**.
- **Why dams here?** Perennial, steep rivers give Arunachal India's **highest hydropower potential** (NCERT).
- **China upstream:** at the Great Bend, just before India, China approved a project in **Dec 2024** and began it in **July 2025** – five stations, reported at ~60,000 MW.
- **The Adi**, Arunachal's largest tribe, farm the flat riverbank. They fear losing villages, fields and ancestral land, and say consent was taken selectively; the area is in seismic **Zone V**.

CONCEPT · STORAGE DAM VS RUN-OF-RIVER

Run-of-river = power from the flowing river; it does not store water. **Storage** = a big reservoir that holds water and releases it when needed.



Why it matters: a reservoir can soften a sudden release or diversion upstream, and ease floods.

Status: only at the **pre-feasibility** survey stage – nothing built; size and site not final.

Remember: **Lower riparian** = the downstream country on a shared river – India on the Brahmaputra.

MAP MEMORY

- **Brahmaputra:** Tibet → India → Bangladesh, where the **Tista** joins and it is called the **Jamuna**.
- **Antecedent rivers** (NCERT): Sutlej, Kosi, Subansiri. Prelims 2026 Q35: Brahmaputra = decoy (Sutlej, coaching keys).
- **Majuli** (Assam) = world's largest riverine island.

WHAT NEXT

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju (8 Oct) called for talks with Adi elders; the State promises a transparent, peaceful, people-centric survey. Adi groups want the forces withdrawn.

UPSC PRELIMS PYQ · 2022

Consider the following pairs:

Peak : Mountains

1. Namcha Barwa : Garhwal Himalaya
2. Nanda Devi : Kumaon Himalaya
3. Nokrek : Sikkim Himalaya

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

(a) 1 and 2

(b) 2 only

(c) 1 and 3

(d) 3 only

✓ (b) – **Namcha Barwa** is at the Himalaya's eastern end, in Tibet, where the **Tsangpo** bends; **Nokrek** is in Meghalaya's Garo hills.

MAINS LINK · 2013 GS-III

What do you understand by Run-of-river hydroelectricity project? How is it different from any other hydroelectricity project?

PRACTICE QUESTION

Consider the following statements about the Brahmaputra:

1. It rises near Mansarovar lake.
 2. It enters India in Arunachal Pradesh as the Siang.
 3. In Bangladesh, after the Tista joins, it is called the Padma.
- How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) All three

(d) None

Answer on the last page

■ WHY IN NEWS

On **14 Oct 2026** Telangana's **Department of Heritage** invited tenders to excavate the **Mudumal** menhir site, on the **Krishna** right next to the Karnataka border. Officials say the dig will shed light on the age and way of life of the people who raised the stones, and back the bid for **UNESCO World Heritage** status.



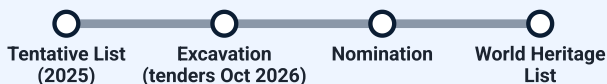
Red dot = Mudumal site (UNESCO coordinates). State outlines for orientation.

■ KEY FACTS

- **The site:** ~80 acres near the Krishna with about **80 tall menhirs** (10–14 ft). About 400 m west, a hillock has **stone circles over burials** still awaiting excavation.
- **Age:** India's UNESCO dossier says about **3,500–4,000 years**; one newspaper says 3,000. The dig is meant to settle the dates.
- **Sun alignment (dossier claim):** some menhirs line up with sunrise and sunset on the **summer and winter solstices** — perhaps an ancient observatory.
- **Saptarishi stone:** on the hillock a rock's cup marks copy **Ursa Major** (Saptarishi); two of its stars point to the **North Star**, i.e. north at night.
- **Saved by worship:** villagers call the stones **Niluralla Thimmappa**; one menhir is worshipped as Goddess **Yellamma**, so even fallen stones are left untouched.

■ CONCEPT · TENTATIVE LIST → WORLD HERITAGE

Tentative List = UNESCO's waiting list; a site must be on it before nomination. Inscription needs '**outstanding universal value**'.



Why it matters: burials never dug, age unsure — officials hope the dig gives proof for the bid.

Status: on the list since Feb 2025, under cultural criteria (v) and (vi).

Remember: Telangana's first World Heritage Site: **Ramappa temple** (2021).

■ MAP MEMORY

- **Megalith** (NCERT) = 'big stones' marking burials, from ~3,000 years ago; graves hold **Black and Red Ware** and **iron tools**.
- **Menhir** = one standing stone · **Dolmen** = uprights + a capstone · **Cist** = box-like burial.
- **Moidams** (Tai-Ahom, Assam) = royal burial grounds (Prelims 2026).

■ WHAT NEXT

Tender: ₹39.97 lakh, four months. ASI permission is in place; a megalithic park's foundation stone was laid in July 2026.

■ UPSC PRELIMS PYQ · 2024

Consider the following information:

Archaeological Site : State : Description

1. Chandraketugarh : Odisha : Trading Port town
 2. Inamgaon : Maharashtra : Chalcolithic site
 3. Mangadu : Kerala : Megalithic site
 4. Salihundam : Andhra Pradesh : Rock-cut cave shrines
- In which of the above rows is the given information correctly matched?

(a) 1 and 2

(b) 2 and 3

(c) 3 and 4

(d) 1 and 4

✓ (b) — Chandraketugarh is in West Bengal, not Odisha; Salihundam is known for Buddhist stupas and monasteries, not rock-cut caves.

■ MAINS LINK · 2018 GS-I

Safeguarding the Indian art heritage is the need of the moment.
Comment

■ PRACTICE QUESTION

Consider the following statements about the Krishna:

1. It rises near Mahabaleshwar in the Sahyadri.
2. The Bhima and the Tungabhadra are its tributaries.
3. It is the largest east-flowing Peninsular river.

How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) All three

(d) None

Answer on the last page



1. **Saudi Arabia** — (c) Iraq, Jordan, Oman and Qatar. Bahrain is an island joined by the King Fahd Causeway (no land border); Syria lies beyond Jordan and Iraq.
2. **Siang Upper Project** — (b) 1 and 2 are correct. After the Tista joins it in Bangladesh it is called the **Jamuna**, which later merges with the Padma.
3. **Mudumal** — (b) 1 and 2 are correct (NCERT). The Krishna is the **second** largest east-flowing Peninsular river.