

EXPECTED



Prelims Sure Shot Topics For IAS Prelims 2026

BASED ON **LAST 45 YEARS PYQs** & **LAST 1.5 YEARS CURRENT AFFAIRS**

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

International Relations Prelims Sure Shot topics have been meticulously curated through a comprehensive analysis of UPSC Prelims Previous Year Questions spanning the last 45 years, integrated with the most relevant developments from the past 1.5 years of current affairs. It aims to provide aspirants with a list of expected topics which have a very high chance to be reflected in IAS Prelims 2026.

Developed under the academic guidance of **S.A. Majid Sir**, this resource reflects the rigorous research and collective expertise of the content team at RICE IAS.



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EXPECTED PRELIMS TOPICS - 2026

BASED ON LAST 45 YEARS PYQs & LAST 1.5 YEARS CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

CHAPTER	EXPECTED THEME	SURE SHOT TOPICS FOR PRELIMS - 2026	JUSTIFICATION
1. PLACES IN NEWS	Iran	Iran Nuclear sites	War in West Asia. The USA and Israel are attacking Iran's nuclear sites. (THE HINDU)
		Other strategic location (Kharg Island)	Recently appeared in the news due to the USA and Israel's attack. (THE HINDU)
		Lake Urmia	UPSC asked a lake-related question in 2022. Lake Urmia is in the news because it is drying up. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
		Strait of Hormuz	Iran blocked the Strait of Hormuz. (THE HINDU)
	Israel	Port Haifa	A key hub for the IMEC corridor, it was hit by an Iranian missile (THE HINDU). Moreover, Port is an important theme. UPSC has asked a question on Chabahar Port in 2017.
		Eilat Port	Faced closure in late 2025 due to a Houthi naval blockade. (THE HINDU)
		Golan Heights	UPSC asked a question on this in 2015. This year it is again in news due to Israel-Syria conflict so question can be asked.
		Dead Sea	UPSC frequently asks questions on water bodies (e.g., North Sea – 2024).
		Sea of Galilee	Sea of Galilee — It mysteriously turned red, alarming locals and tourists. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
		West Bank	Kafr Qaddum
	Gaza	Yellow Line	A demarcation line in Gaza, as part of a US-brokered ceasefire agreement. (THE HINDU)
		Philadelphi Corridor	Israeli forces reasserted control over this corridor. (THE HINDU)
		Magen Oz Corridor	A new Corridor Established by Israeli Military. (THE HINDU)
		Morag Corridor	A new Corridor Established by Israeli Military. (THE HINDU)
		Netzarim Corridor	Following a ceasefire with Hamas, Israel withdrew from the Netzarim Corridor. (THE HINDU)
	Syria	Suwayda	Ethnic Violence Between Druze Community and Bedouin Militias. Questions have been asked about places in the news in Syria in 2018.

	Jordan	Petra city	Celebrating 75 Years of Ties, India And Jordan Entered into A 2025 Cultural Pact That Twinned Ellora Caves with a Heritage Site In Jordan. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
	Yemen	Socotra	UAE and who have launched two-year programme to address child malnutrition on Socotra island. (THE HINDU). Moreover, questions have been asked on Yemen in 2018.
Hodeidah Port		Israel conducted its first ever naval strike on Yemen Hodeidah port. (THE HINDU)	
	Afghanistan	Pakistan-Afghanistan border	The war between Afghanistan and Pakistan has constantly been in the news+ UPSC has repeatedly asked questions on Afghanistan in 2018 and 2022.
	Europe	Black sea	Various ports in the black sea are in the news due to Russia- Ukraine war. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
		Baltic sea	Russian military aircraft entered Baltic Airspace (THE HINDU) + (North Sea -related question asked in 2024 Prelims)
		Operation Sindhu	Evacuation of Indian students from Tehran via Armenia. (THE HINDU)
		Nagorno-Karabakh region	Armenia residents were transferred from Nagorno -Karabakh. (THE HINDU) UPSC asked question on Nagorno-Karabakh region in 2023.
		Cyprus	PM's visit to balance PAK-Turkey relationship. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
		Croatia	First Indian pm to visit this country. (THE HINDU)
		Salamis Bay	INS Trikand arrived at salamis bay. (THE HINDU)
		Mount Etna	Recurrent eruption throughout 2025. (THE HINDU)
		Dardanelles strait	Temporarily closed to maritime traffic due to wildfires. (THE HINDU)
		Caspian Sea	Shrunk drastically. Previously UPSC has asked question on shrinking of lake in 2022. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
		Greenland	Trump's Threat to take over Greenland + Greenland's Parliament adopted

		legislation that limits foreigners' right to property on the Island. (THE HINDU)
South America	Venezuela	USA attack on Venezuela . (THE HINDU)
	Colombia	Colombia signed a significant cooperation pact with China under the Belt and Road Initiative. (THE HINDU)
North America	Gulf of Mexico	US President Donald Trump signed an executive order on February 9 to rename the 'Gulf of Mexico' as the 'Gulf of America' and declared February 9 as the 'Gulf of America Day'. (THE HINDU)
	Canada	The relationship between the U.S. and Canada has entered a period of extreme volatility in early 2026, characterized by aggressive trade threats from President Donald Trump. (THE HINDU)
Africa	Berrechid, Morocco	India's first overseas defense manufacturing facility. (THE HINDU)
	Somaliland	Israel has become the first un member state to officially recognize Somaliland. (THE HINDU)
	Ethiopia	PM's visit to Ethiopia . (THE HINDU)
	Afar Triangle	Recent observations of a 60-km long crack that opened in the Ethiopian desert has gained international attention. (THE HINDU)
	El Fasher, Darfur (SUDAN)	SAF vs RSF civil war. (THE HINDU) + Massive landslide in Darfur region
	Sierra Leone	Recently Gola Tiwai complex formally inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. + Nyangai and Plantain Islands, part of Sierra Leone's Turtle Islands, are shrinking due to rising sea levels. (THE HINDU)
	Lake Turkana	Decline in water levels. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
	Madagascar	Gen Z protests + military takeover (THE HINDU)
	Tanzania	Experiencing Post election Violence. (THE HINDU)
	DRC	M23 rebels were in the news multiple times + UPSC asked a question on DRC in 2023
Angola	President's Visit to Angola. (THE HINDU)	

	Botswana	President's Visit to Botswana. (THE HINDU)
	Benin	Cotonou in Benin recently witnessed a failed coup attempt by a group of soldiers. (THE HINDU)
	Mombasa, KENYA	Indian Navy's First Training Squadron made a significant port call in Mombasa. (THE HINDU)
	Atlantic migration route	As of early 2026, arrivals to the Canary Islands have plummeted by nearly 60–62% compared to the record highs of 2024. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
Misc.	Kursk Region	Ukrainian drone attack (INDIAN EXPRESS)
	Tiexian Reef	China seized this reef located near the Philippine -held Thitu Island in the South China Sea + UPSC has asked a question on the nearby Senkaku Island in 2022.
	Zangezur Corridor	Newly built corridor in Armenia. (THE HINDU)
	Transnistria	ongoing tension between Moldovan government and Russian-backed separatists. (THE HINDU)
	Myanmar	Violence in Rakhine State led to massive displacement of the Rohingya (INDIAN EXPRESS)
	Tokara island	Intense Earthquake
	USA military base in middle east (Al-Udeid Air base)	IRAN recently hit multiple USA military bases. (THE HINDU)
	Mount Taranaki	New Zealand's Mount Taranaki has been granted legal personhood, recognising it as a living entity with rights, responsibilities, and powers, in a landmark agreement with Maori tribes. (THE HINDU)
	Preah Vihear Dispute	Thailand–Cambodia Border dispute erupted in 2025. (THE HINDU)
	Mount Lewotobi	Mount Lewotobi in Indonesia's East Nusa Tenggara province erupted recently. (THE HINDU)

		Scarborough Shoal	China announced the creation of a “National Nature Reserve” at Scarborough Shoal. (THE HINDU)
		Chagos Islands	United Kingdom officially handed over sovereignty of the Chagos Islands to Mauritius. (THE HINDU)
		Mayotte	Tropical Cyclone Dikeledi (Jan 2025) struck Mayotte, a French territory in the Indian Ocean, causing severe flooding and displacing 14,500 people. (THE HINDU)
2. INTERNATIONAL BODIES, MULTILATERAL PLATFORMS, GLOBAL INITIATIVE	International Bodies	ASEAN	Recently held ASEAN–India Summit (PM participated virtually) (INDIAN EXPRESS)
		UNSC	Recent election of Non-Permanent Members. (THE HINDU)
		ECOSOC	INDIA has been elected to ECOSOC for the 2026-2028 term. (THE HINDU)
		ICJ	ICJ ruled that states have legal obligations to act on climate change to protect small island developing states. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
		UNESCO	USA's withdrawal from UNESCO. (THE HINDU)
		IAEA	IAEA Board censured Iran for breaching its Nuclear Non-Proliferation commitment. (THE HINDU)
		INTERPOL	India issued its first Silver Notice. (THE HINDU)
		UNHRC	INDIA was elected unopposed for its seventh term. (THE HINDU)
	Multilateral Platforms	BRICS	INDIA has assumed the BRICS chairmanship. (THE HINDU)
		New Development Bank	A new member was added: Algeria. (THE HINDU)
		G7	India participated as an outreach country in the 51st G7 Summit. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
		G20	First-ever G20 Summit hosted on the African Continent. (THE HINDU) + UPSC asked question on G-20 in 2022.
		IBSA Summit	Recently, a summit took place in Johannesburg, South Africa. (THE HINDU)

		BIMSTEC Summit	Has frequently appeared in the news; a summit was recently held in Bangkok. (THE HINDU)
		SCO	PM attended the SCO Summit in China. (THE HINDU)
		East Asia summit	20th East Asia Summit. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
		Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)	Due to the Iran–Israel War + UPSC has asked question on GCC in 2016.
		OPEC and OPEC+	Due to the Iran–Israel War + Brazil joined OPEC+ (THE HINDU)
		I2U2	Due to the Iran–Israel War. (THE HINDU)
		PAX SILICA	India officially joined this U.S.-led strategic alliance. (THE HINDU)
		AIIB	10 years of AIIB. (THE HINDU)
		International Maritime Organisation	India was re-elected to Category B of IMO Council for the 2026-2027 biennium. (THE HINDU)
		Indian Ocean Rim Association	India assumed the chair of IORA in 2025 for the next two years. (THE HINDU)
		C-3 alliance	India launched Cities Coalition for Circularity (C-3) at the 12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
	Initiative in News	UN High seas treaty	BBNJ agreement is set to enter into force. (THE HINDU)
		Geelong treaty	Australia–United Kingdom signed the Geelong Treaty (Nuclear powered submarine partnership and collaboration) (THE HINDU)
		Seville declaration	4th International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Seville. (THE HINDU)
		CDRI	7th edition of the Conference took place in France. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
		Group of friends	India emphasised the importance of the Group of Friends. (THE HINDU)
		Chicago and Montreal Convention	Due to the recent Air India crash, International Aviation investigation and compensation rules were in the news. (THE HINDU)
		USAID	Trump administration has systematically dismantled US Agency for International Development (USAID). (THE HINDU)

		Kimberley Process	India has officially assumed the Chairmanship of the forum for 2026. (THE HINDU)
		IMAC	Halted progress due to the Iran–Israel War. (THE HINDU)
		Sevilla Forum on Debt	Sevilla Forum on Debt was launched at the 16 th United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD16).
		INDIA- EU FTA	The India-EU FTA negotiations concluded on January 27, 2026. (THE HINDU)
		UN alliance of Civilisation	United States and Israel officially withdrew from the UNAOC in January 2026. (THE HINDU)
		Biological Weapons Convention	50 Years of the Biological Weapons Convention. (INDIAN EXPRESS)
3. MISC	Military Exercise	India -USA	Previously, UPSC has asked questions on military exercises that were in the news (e.g., Mitra Shakti- 2024).
		India- Russia	
		India- France	
		India Japan	
		Military Exercise Between India And Its Neighbours	
	Report and Indices	Responsible Nation Index	India played a key role in developing this index. (THE HINDU)
		Important Report Publish By Various Multilateral Organisation Such as WEF, World Bank and UNTAD	UPSC has asked question on report multiple times (Example- 2017,2018,2019)

We are conducting a Simulator Test based on these topics to help you practice for the IAS Prelims 2026.

To take the test, please enroll in the Simulator Test.



Key Features of the Simulator Test

- **5 Stress Management Sessions by Majid Sir** – Train your mind to stay calm, focused, and confident under real UPSC exam pressure.

- **Personal Mentoring After Each Test** – Get individual guidance to identify weak areas, improve decision-making, and avoid repeated mistakes.
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- **Offline Mode for Serious Preparation** – No distractions, ensuring complete focus like the real exam.
- **Time Management & Confidence Building** – Reduce panic, improve speed, and perform your best on exam day.

Tests Details:

SIMULATOR TEST DATE	DAY	9:30 A.M- 11:30 A.M	2:30 P.M- 4:30 PM
11 th April 2026	Saturday	General Studies	CSAT
19 th April 2026	Sunday	General Studies	CSAT
26 th April 2026	Sunday	General Studies	CSAT
3 rd May 2026	Sunday	General Studies	CSAT
10 th May 2026	Sunday	General Studies	CSAT

Attempt the Prelims Exam 10 TIMES before the actual day.
