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Important International/National Observance Days

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Important International/National Observance Days

Observance days are a steady favourite in general knowledge papers. Examiners ask which day falls on which date, and why it exists.

This lesson sorts the key days into two groups, global and national. Read each short card, then try the quick checks.

Observance day: a date set aside each year to mark a cause or an event. The date stays the same every year.

International day: a day proclaimed by the United Nations. Countries around the world mark it.

National day: a day chosen by one country. India picks these to honour people, science or safety.

Theme: the slogan for one year's observance. It changes every year, while the date does not.

Which Two Global Days Matter Most?

Why is 21 June Yoga Day?

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed **21 June** as the **International Day of Yoga**. That happened on **11 December 2014**, through resolution 69/131.

India proposed the day, and more than 170 member states co-sponsored the resolution. So the date and the UN origin are fixed facts.

Sources: un.org; static.un.org

Quick check 1. The United Nations proclaimed International Day of Yoga in December 2014. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

What changes on Yoga Day each year?

The date never moves, but each edition has its own theme and main venue. Questions often ask about the latest edition, so learn it as a pair.

The lesson is to keep the fixed date apart from the yearly details.

Sources: newsonair.gov.in; un.org

What happened on Yoga Day 2026?

The **12th** International Day of Yoga fell on 21 June 2026. Its theme was **Yoga for Healthy Ageing**. The theme stresses yoga as a lifelong practice for a healthy and dignified old age.

The main national event was held at **Red Road in Kolkata**. Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the common yoga protocol there.

Sources: newsonair.gov.in

Quick check 2. The main national event of Yoga Day 2026 took place in Kolkata. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Fixed every year

- Date, such as 21 June
- Origin, such as a UN decision
- Organiser, such as UNEP

Changes every year

- Theme or slogan
- Host country or city
- Main venue and event

Remember the left box as the part you can bank. The right box needs a fresh look each year.

Why is 5 June Environment Day?

World Environment Day falls on **5 June**. It is led by the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**.

The day has been held every year since **1973**, and it is the largest global platform for environmental outreach.

Sources: un.org

Where does the 5 June date come from?

The UN Conference on the Human Environment met in **Stockholm** from 5 to 16 June **1972**. It was the first world conference on the environment.

The 5 June date traces back to the opening of that conference. The first observance followed a year later.

Sources: un.org

> **Quick check 3.** World Environment Day was first held in 1973, one year after the Stockholm conference. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

How do the two global days compare?

Both days sit in June, and both began with a UN decision. They differ in date, body and starting year.

Point	Yoga Day	Environment Day
Date	21 June	5 June
UN step	Proclaimed on 11 December 2014	Held annually since 1973

Point	Yoga Day	Environment Day
Link	Resolution 69/131	Stockholm conference, 1972
Led by	UN member states, proposed by India	UNEP

A quick trick is that Environment Day comes first in June, and Yoga Day closes the month's big dates.

Sources: un.org

Which National Days Come Up in Exams?

What does National Technology Day mark?

National Technology Day is observed on **11 May**. It recalls the **1998 Pokhran nuclear tests**, which the Prime Minister has called a landmark in India's growth.

The day honours Indian scientists and engineers. CAPF (AC) 2020 asked this very link, with 11 May as the answer.

Sources: thenewsminute.com; mcqquestion.com

> **Quick check 4.** India marks its technology day on 11 May. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

What is observed on 21 May?

National Anti-Terrorism Day falls on **21 May**. It marks the death anniversary of Rajiv Gandhi, who was killed in 1991.

Offices hold a pledge against terrorism and violence on this day. CDS II 2019 asked which observance falls on 21 May.

Sources: goa.gov.in; thequint.com; mcqquestion.com

Why is 28 February Science Day?

National Science Day is on **28 February**. It marks the discovery of the **Raman Effect** by Sir C. V. Raman.

The day is a reminder that Indian research earned a place on the world map.

Sources: pmindia.gov.in

Who is honoured on 12 January?

National Youth Day falls on **12 January**. It is the birth anniversary of **Swami Vivekananda**.

The Government of India has marked it every year since **1985**. The week starting that day is National Youth Week.

Sources: static.pib.gov.in

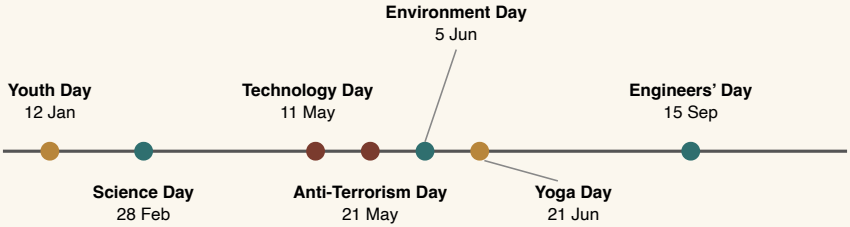
> **Quick check 5.** National Science Day is observed on 12 January. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Who is honoured on 15 September?

Engineers' Day falls on **15 September**. It is the birth anniversary of **M. Visvesvaraya**.

Every year leaders pay tribute to him and greet India's engineers on this day.

Sources: newsonair.gov.in



Seven dates, one year. May and June hold four of them, so mix-ups happen there most.

What Stays Fixed and What Changes?

How should you answer observance-day questions?

Most questions fall into three groups. Spot the group first, and the answer comes quickly.

- **Date to day:** 11 May is technology, 21 May is anti-terrorism, 5 June is environment, 21 June is yoga.
- **Day to origin:** Pokhran for technology, Raman for science, Vivekananda for youth.
- **Latest edition:** the theme and venue change, so check the current year.

If two dates sit close together, test them against the person or event behind each day.

Sources: un.org; pmindia.gov.in

How can you remember the year in order?

Walk through the calendar one month at a time. Each month has a person or event to hang the date on.

- **January:** Youth Day, for Vivekananda.
- **February:** Science Day, for Raman.
- **May:** Technology Day on the 11th, then Anti-Terrorism Day on the 21st.
- **June:** Environment Day on the 5th, then Yoga Day on the 21st.
- **September:** Engineers' Day, for Visvesvaraya.

The 11th and 21st of May, and the 5th and 21st of June, are the pairs that trip students most.

Sources: static.pib.gov.in; pmindia.gov.in; newsonair.gov.in

Which dates are easy to mix up?

Two pairs cause most wrong answers. Both pairs sit in the same month, so read the option dates slowly.

Technology Day and Anti-Terrorism Day are ten days apart in May. Environment Day and Yoga Day are sixteen days apart in June.

Anchor each date to its story, and the confusion fades. Pokhran belongs to the 11th, and Rajiv Gandhi belongs to the 21st.

Sources: thenewsminute.com; goa.gov.in; un.org

> **Quick check 6.** Yoga Day shifts to a new calendar date every year. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Practice MCQs

1. National Technology Day is observed on which date?

A. 5 June

B. 21 May

C. 11 May

D. 28 February

See answer ↓

2. The International Day of Yoga is held on which date?

A. 21 June

B. 5 June

C. 11 May

D. 15 September

See answer ↓

3. Which UN body leads World Environment Day?

A. UNESCO

B. WHO

C. UNICEF

D. UNEP

See answer ↓

4. Which observance is held on 21 May?

A. National Youth Day

B. National Science Day

C. Engineers' Day

D. National Anti-Terrorism Day

See answer ↓

5. National Science Day commemorates the discovery of which effect?

A. Raman Effect

B. Zeeman Effect

C. Compton Effect

D. Doppler Effect

See answer ↓

6. Engineers' Day in India honours whose birth anniversary?

A. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

B. Swami Vivekananda

C. M. Visvesvaraya

D. C. V. Raman

See answer ↓

Answer Key

1. **C.**
   National Technology Day falls on 11 May and recalls the 1998 Pokhran tests.
   Sources: The News Minute: Technology Day · CAPF (AC) 2020 paper, Q32.
   ↑ Q1
2. **A.**
   The UN proclaimed 21 June as the International Day of Yoga in December 2014.
   Sources: United Nations: Yoga Day · UN General Assembly statement.
   ↑ Q2
3. **D.**
   The United Nations Environment Programme, or UNEP, leads World Environment Day.
   Sources: United Nations: Environment Day · United Nations: Stockholm 1972.
   ↑ Q3
4. **D.**
   21 May is National Anti-Terrorism Day. It marks the death anniversary of Rajiv Gandhi.
   Sources: Goa Government: Anti-Terrorism Day · CDS II 2019 paper, Q20.
   ↑ Q4
5. **A.**
   The day on 28 February marks the Raman Effect, found by Sir C. V. Raman.
   Sources: PM India: National Science Day · United Nations: Yoga Day.
   ↑ Q5
6. **C.**
   Engineers' Day on 15 September marks the birth anniversary of M. Visvesvaraya.
   Sources: News on AIR: Engineers' Day · PIB: National Youth Day.
   ↑ Q6

Quick-check answers

1. **True.** The proclamation came on 11 December 2014, and the day is held on 21 June. ↑ 1

2. **True.** The Red Road in Kolkata hosted the main event, and the PM led the practice. ↑ 2
3. **True.** The conference met in 1972, and the day began in 1973. ↑ 3
4. **True.** 11 May recalls the Pokhran tests of 1998. ↑ 4
5. **False.** 12 January is National Youth Day. Science Day is on 28 February. ↑ 5
6. **False.** It always falls on 21 June. Only the theme and venue change. ↑ 6

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