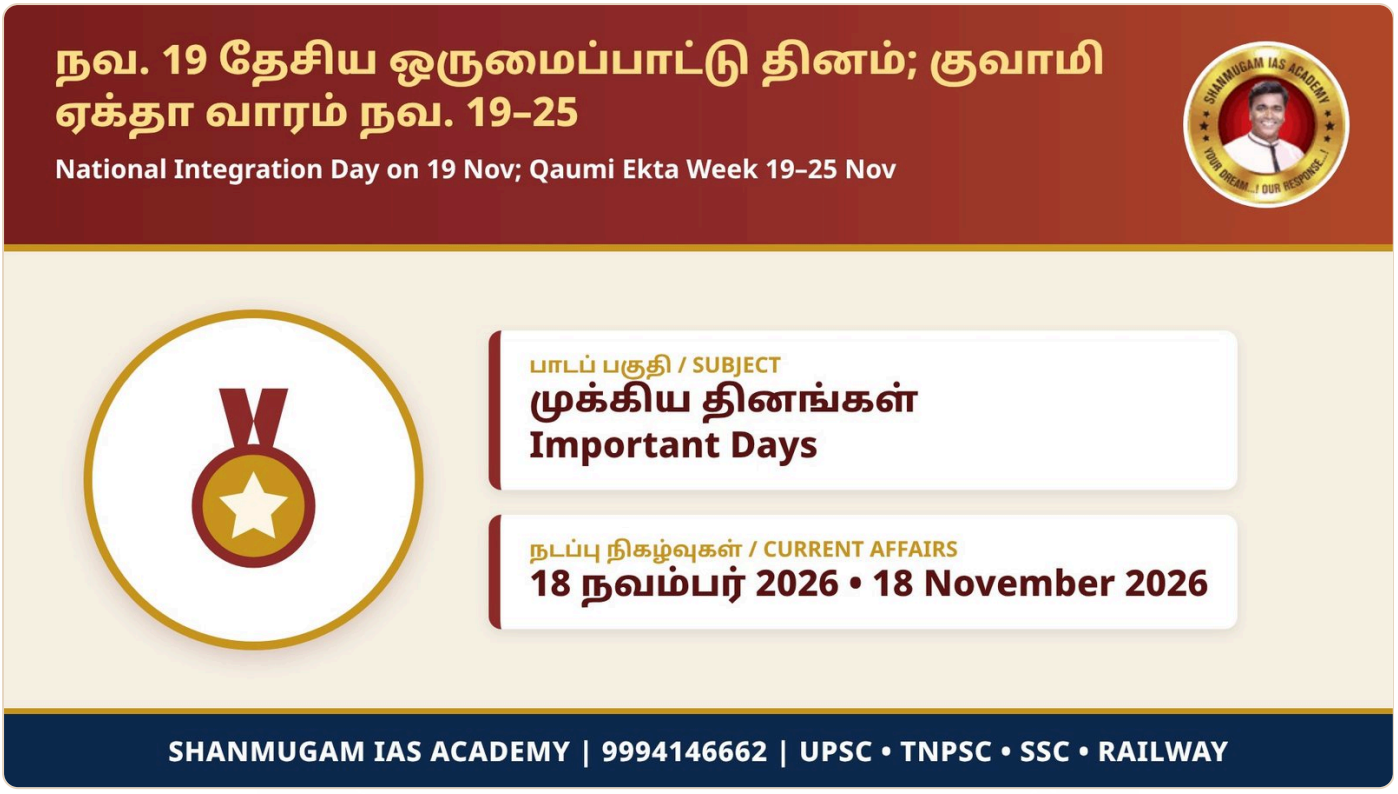
National Integration Day on 19 Nov; Qaumi Ekta Week 19–25 Nov

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News

19 November, the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, is observed every year as National Integration Day. From this day to 25 November, the Qaumi Ekta Week (National Integration Week) is held; the Union Ministry of Home Affairs asks the Union and State governments to observe it. The days are: 19 Nov – National Integration Day; 20 – Welfare of Minorities Day; 21 – Linguistic Harmony Day; 22 – Weaker Sections Day; 23 – Cultural Unity Day; 24 – Women's Day; 25 – Conservation Day. Meetings and seminars on secularism, anti-communalism and non-violence are held on the first day. The National Foundation for Communal Harmony (NFCH), an autonomous body under the Home Ministry, runs a Communal Harmony Campaign during the week and observes Communal Harmony Flag Day on 25 November. 2026 marks Indira Gandhi's 109th birth anniversary (born 19 November 1917). Note: National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas), observed on 31 October (Sardar Patel's birth anniversary), is a different observance.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Day	19 November – National Integration Day
Linked to	Indira Gandhi's birth anniversary (19 Nov 1917, Allahabad)
Week	Qaumi Ekta Week: 19–25 Nov

Point	Details
Directed by	Union Ministry of Home Affairs
20 / 21 Nov	Welfare of Minorities Day / Linguistic Harmony Day
22 / 23 Nov	Weaker Sections Day / Cultural Unity Day
24 / 25 Nov	Women's Day / Conservation Day
Flag Day	25 Nov – Communal Harmony Flag Day (NFCH)
Do not confuse	31 Oct – National Unity Day (Sardar Patel)

Background

- Indira Gandhi (1917–1984): daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, born at Anand Bhavan, the Nehru family home in Allahabad (now Prayagraj). Prime Minister in 1966–77 and 1980–84; India's first (and so far only) woman Prime Minister. Bank nationalisation (1969), victory in the 1971 Bangladesh war and the 1974 Pokhran nuclear test came in her time. She was assassinated on 31 October 1984.
- Constitution: the 42nd Amendment (1976) changed 'unity of the Nation' in the Preamble to 'unity and integrity of the Nation', and also added the words 'socialist' and 'secular'. Among the Fundamental Duties added by the same amendment is the duty to uphold the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India.
- National Integration Council (NIC): set up under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru following the National Integration Conference of 1961, to combat communalism, casteism, regionalism and linguistic chauvinism. Chaired by the Prime Minister, it includes Union Ministers, Chief Ministers and party leaders; it was reconstituted in 2010.
- National Foundation for Communal Harmony (NFCH): an autonomous body under the Union Home Ministry. It gives financial help for the relief and rehabilitation of children orphaned or left destitute by communal, caste, ethnic or terrorist violence, and runs the Communal Harmony Campaign alongside Qaumi Ekta Week.
- 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' (EBSB): a Union programme to build people-to-people links between States. Under it, the 'Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam' was held at Somnath, Gujarat, in April 2023, celebrating the bond of the Saurashtrian community that migrated from Saurashtra centuries ago and lives mainly in and around Madurai.

Tamil Nadu link: the Madurai-centred Saurashtrian community (speakers of Saurashtra) is a living example of national integration; the Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam of 2023 was held to celebrate it. In a week that includes Linguistic Harmony Day (21 Nov), schools and colleges can also recall Tamil, declared India's first classical language in 2004.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Day: 19 November – National Integration Day; Linked to: Indira Gandhi's birth anniversary (19 Nov 1917, Allahabad); Week: Qaumi Ekta Week: 19–25 Nov; Directed by: Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

What is the background to this news?

Indira Gandhi (1917–1984): daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, born at Anand Bhavan, the Nehru family home in Allahabad (now Prayagraj).

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Which body observes Communal Harmony Flag Day on 25 November, the last day of Qaumi Ekta Week?

A) NHRC

B) Minorities Commission

C) NFCH

D) UN Human Rights Council

Answer: C – Explanation: The National Foundation for Communal Harmony (NFCH) – autonomous, under the Home Ministry; helps children left destitute by violence.

2. Under which Prime Minister was the National Integration Council first set up to tackle communalism and regionalism?

A) Lal Bahadur Shastri

B) Jawaharlal Nehru

C) Indira Gandhi

D) Morarji Desai

Answer: B – Explanation: Jawaharlal Nehru – after the 1961 National Integration Conference. The PM chairs it; Chief Ministers and party leaders are members.

3. In which city was Indira Gandhi, whose birth anniversary is National Integration Day, born?

A) Lucknow

B) Varanasi

C) New Delhi

D) Prayagraj (Allahabad)

Answer: D – Explanation: Allahabad (now Prayagraj) – Anand Bhavan, the Nehru family home. India's first woman Prime Minister (1966–77, 1980–84).

4. Which Amendment added the word 'integrity' to the Preamble of the Constitution?

A) 42nd Amendment

B) 44th Amendment

C) 24th Amendment

D) 52nd Amendment

Answer: A – Explanation: The 42nd Amendment (1976) – 'unity and integrity'; 'socialist' and 'secular' were added then too. The 52nd is the anti-defection law.

5. The Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam (2023) at Somnath celebrated the Saurashtrian community centred in which Tamil Nadu city?

A) Thanjavur

B) Madurai

C) Kanchipuram

D) Tirunelveli

Answer: B – Explanation: Madurai – a weaving community that migrated from Saurashtra centuries ago. Held under the 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' programme.

Sources: PIB, Ministry of Home Affairs (PRID 1553067); PIB, Ministry of Defence (PRID 1917291); Constitution of India – legislative.gov.in; Lok Sabha debates 1962 – eparlib.nic.in. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.