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Dr. GINDI'S IAS ACADEMY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

COVER ALL IMPORTANT CURRENT UPDATES
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MAY 21, 2026



Dr. GINDI'S I.A.S. ACADEMY
Civils & Competitive Careers
TRANSFORMING ASPIRANTS INTO ACHIEVERS

A/C CAMPUS

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1. Caste Enumeration in Census 2027

A. Core Idea

India will include a nationwide caste count in Census 2027. The Supreme Court said that deciding whether caste data should be collected is the government's policy matter.

B. Why in News

The Supreme Court dismissed a petition challenging caste enumeration in Census 2027.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Census is conducted by the Central Government.
- Last full caste census before this: **1931 Census**.
- Census 2027 has:
 - **Phase I** – House Listing Operation (HLO)
 - **Phase II** – Population Enumeration
- 2011: Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) conducted.
- Census is covered under **Entry 69, Union List**.
- Legal framework: **Census Act, 1948**.

D. Important Terms

- **Caste Enumeration**: Collection of caste-related population data.
- **Policy Domain**: Area where government takes decisions without court interference unless rights are violated.
- **SECC**: Survey collecting socio-economic and caste information.



E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- Supreme Court of India
- Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India
- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
- Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **Census Act, 1948** – Governs census operations.
- **Article 15(4)** – Special provisions for backward classes.
- **Article 16(4)** – Reservation in jobs for backward classes.
- **Article 340** – Commission for backward classes.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Census is a **Union Subject**.
- 1931 was the last complete caste census before 2027.
- SECC was conducted in 2011.
- Census Act passed in 1948.
- Article 340 relates to backward class commission.
- SC/ST data has been collected regularly after Independence.
- Census 2027 includes caste-based data collection.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Match Article with purpose.
- Which list contains Census?
- Year-based question on SECC.
- Statement-based question on caste census.
- Question on Census Act, 1948.

2. India–Italy Special Strategic Partnership

A. Core Idea

India and Italy upgraded their ties to a “Special Strategic Partnership” to improve defence, trade, technology, and connectivity cooperation.

B. Why in News

The partnership was announced during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Rome.

C. Key Facts & Figures

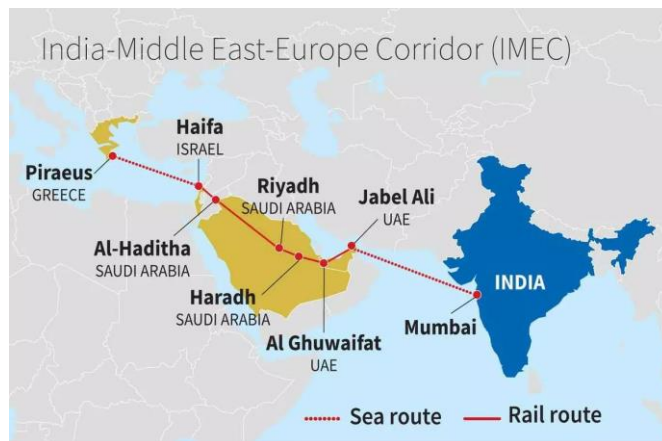
- Trade target: **€20 billion by 2029**
- Focus sectors:
 - Defence
 - AI
 - Semiconductors
 - Critical minerals
 - Maritime security
- IMEC = India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor
- Joint Strategic Action Plan: **2025–2029**

D. Important Terms

- **Special Strategic Partnership:** High-level long-term cooperation between countries.
- **Co-Production:** Joint manufacturing by two countries.
- **Critical Minerals:** Minerals needed for advanced technologies.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- India
- Italy
- European Union (EU)
- FATF
- United Nations (UN)



F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- Joint Strategic Action Plan (2025–2029)
- Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement
- India-EU Free Trade Agreement (proposed)

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Italy is a European country.
- Trade target fixed at €20 billion.
- IMEC connects India with Europe through West Asia.
- Partnership includes defence co-production.
- Focus on maritime security and freedom of navigation.
- Cooperation in AI and semiconductors.
- Italy's Africa outreach plan is called the Mattei Plan.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- IMEC-related question.
- Match country with initiative.
- Statement-based question on India-Italy ties.
- Trade target-related MCQ.
- Questions on FATF and EU.

3. Development Plan for Bastar after Decline of Naxalism

A. Core Idea

The government plans to develop Bastar by improving roads, banking, electricity, and rehabilitation after the decline of Naxal activities.

B. Why in News

The Union Home Minister visited Bastar and highlighted the “Naxal Mukta Bharat” mission.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Target date for ending Left-Wing Extremism: **31 March**
- Around **3,000 surrendered Naxals** to be rehabilitated.
- About **200 security camps** operating in Bastar.
- One-third camps to become service centres.

D. Important Terms

- **Naxalism / Left-Wing Extremism (LWE):** Maoist-inspired armed movement against the state.
- **PESA Act:** Gives self-governance powers to tribal Gram Sabhas.
- **Scheduled Areas:** Tribal-dominated protected regions.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
- Chhattisgarh Government
- Central Zonal Council
- Security forces

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- **UAPA, 1967** – Anti-terror law.
- **PESA Act, 1996** – Tribal self-governance.
- **Fifth Schedule** – Protection for tribal areas.
- **SAMADHAN** doctrine for anti-Naxal operations.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Bastar is in Chhattisgarh.
- Naxalism is linked with Maoist ideology.
- PESA Act passed in 1996.
- UAPA enacted in 1967.
- Fifth Schedule deals with Scheduled Areas.
- Salwa Judum was banned by Supreme Court in 2011.
- SAMADHAN is an anti-Naxal strategy.



H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Match Act with purpose.
- Questions on Scheduled Areas.
- Statement-based question on PESA.
- Location-based question on Bastar.
- Internal security MCQs.

4. India–US Nuclear Cooperation and Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)

A. Core Idea

India plans to increase nuclear power production and adopt Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) with support from international partners including the United States.

B. Why in News

A US nuclear delegation visited India after changes in India's nuclear energy policies.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- SMRs produce up to **300 MW(e)** power.
- India's net-zero target year: **2070**
- Main law: **Atomic Energy Act, 1962**
- Nuclear liability law: **CLNDA, 2010**
- Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal signed in **2008**

D. Important Terms

- **SMR (Small Modular Reactor)**: Small-sized nuclear reactor built in modules.
- **Base-Load Power**: Continuous electricity supply needed all the time.
- **PHWR**: Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- India
- United States
- NPCIL (Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited)
- US nuclear industry delegation

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

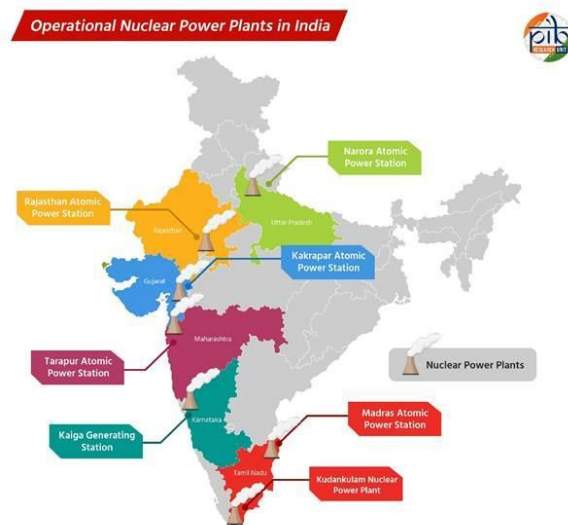
- **Atomic Energy Act, 1962** – Governs nuclear energy.
- **Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010** – Compensation for nuclear accidents.
- Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement (123 Agreement), 2008.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Atomic energy is in the Union List.
- SMRs are smaller than traditional reactors.
- PHWR is India's traditional reactor technology.
- CLNDA passed in 2010.
- India aims for net-zero emissions by 2070.
- Nuclear energy provides base-load electricity.
- NPCIL is India's major nuclear PSU.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Full form of PHWR/SMR.
- Match reactor type with feature.
- Year-based question on nuclear deal.



- Statement-based question on Atomic Energy Act.
- MCQ on base-load power.

5. Ladakh Leadership Dispute and Talks with Centre

A. Core Idea

Different groups in Ladakh are demanding statehood, Sixth Schedule protection, and job security, but internal disagreements have weakened their united stand.

B. Why in News

Ahead of talks with the Centre's High Powered Committee (HPC), leadership disputes emerged within Ladakh groups.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Ladakh became a Union Territory in **2019**.
- Over **90% population** of Ladakh belongs to Scheduled Tribes (STs).
- Main demands:
 - Statehood
 - Sixth Schedule status
 - Separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil
 - Job reservation for locals
- LPDD privatization proposal:
 - 49% : 51% equity split with REC.

D. Important Terms

- **Sixth Schedule:** Constitutional protection for tribal areas through Autonomous District Councils.
- **Union Territory (UT):** Region directly administered by the Central Government.
- **High Powered Committee (HPC):** Committee formed by MHA to discuss Ladakh issues.



E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
- Apex Body Leh
- Kargil Democratic Alliance
- REC (Rural Electrification Corporation)

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019
- Article 239A – Union Territories
- Article 3 – Formation of states and UTs
- Sixth Schedule – Tribal autonomous councils

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Ladakh became UT in 2019.
- Ladakh has no legislative assembly.
- Sixth Schedule relates to tribal autonomous areas.
- REC = Rural Electrification Corporation.
- Leh and Kargil are districts of Ladakh.
- Article 3 deals with creation of states.
- Majority population in Ladakh is ST.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Questions on Sixth Schedule.
- Statement-based question on Ladakh UT.
- Match Article with provision.
- Questions on autonomous councils.
- Location-based question on Leh/Kargil.

6. Maharashtra Wetlands Mapping and Protection

A. Core Idea

Maharashtra completed scientific mapping of wetlands to provide legal protection against encroachment and pollution.

B. Why in News

The NCSCM completed verification of more than 23,000 wetlands in Maharashtra.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Total wetlands mapped: **23,415**
- Highest concentration:
 - Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar Division – 5,196
 - Nagpur Division – 5,086
- Ahmednagar district:
 - 1,596 wetlands
- Wetland Atlas updated in **2020**

D. Important Terms

- **Wetland:** Land area covered permanently or seasonally with water.
- **Ground Truthing:** Physical field verification of satellite data.
- **Wetland Reclamation:** Converting wetlands into dry land.



E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management
- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
- Supreme Court of India

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017
- Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
- Article 48A – Protection of environment
- Article 51A(g) – Fundamental duty to protect environment

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Wetland Rules notified in 2017.
- Wetland Rules come under Environment Protection Act.
- Ground truthing verifies satellite observations.
- NCSCM works under MoEFCC.
- Wetlands help in flood control.
- Wetlands are biodiversity hotspots.
- Article 51A(g) is a Fundamental Duty.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Match institution with function.
- Questions on environmental articles.
- Statement-based question on wetlands.
- Questions on Fundamental Duties.
- MCQ on Wetlands Rules, 2017.

7. Crisis in Cuttack Silver Filigree Industry

A. Core Idea

Odisha's famous silver filigree craft is facing problems due to rising silver prices and restrictions on silver imports.

B. Why in News

Artisans of Cuttack's GI-tagged Rupa Tarakasi craft are facing economic difficulties.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Customs duty on gold and silver increased from **6% to 15%**.
- Silver prices rose by over **200% since January 2025**.
- Artisan numbers:
 - 3,000 in 1996
 - About 500 now
- GI tag granted in **March 2024**.

D. Important Terms

- **Rupa Tarakasi**: Traditional silver filigree craft of Cuttack.
- **GI Tag**: Protection given to products linked with a geographical area.
- **Restricted Imports**: Imports needing government approval.



E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)
- Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- RBI-approved banks
- Cuttack

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- Geographical Indications of Goods Act, 1999
- Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992
- Article 43 – Promotion of cottage industries

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Rupa Tarakasi belongs to Odisha.
- GI Act passed in 1999.
- DGFT controls import regulations.
- Silver filigree received GI tag in 2024.
- Silver demand increased due to solar panels and EVs.
- Cuttack is famous for silver craft.
- Article 43 relates to cottage industries.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Match handicraft with state.

- GI-tag related questions.
- Questions on DGFT.
- Statement-based question on silver imports.
- Questions on traditional handicrafts.

8. Coercive Diplomacy and Strait of Hormuz

A. Core Idea

Countries sometimes use threats, economic pressure, and strategic locations instead of direct war to influence other nations.

B. Why in News

Global tensions in West Asia renewed discussions on coercive diplomacy and the importance of the Strait of Hormuz.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Strait of Hormuz is a major global oil route.
- 1962 – Cuban Missile Crisis.
- 1990–91 – Gulf War.
- 1999 – Kargil Conflict.
- Thomas Schelling wrote *The Strategy of Conflict* in 1960.

D. Important Terms

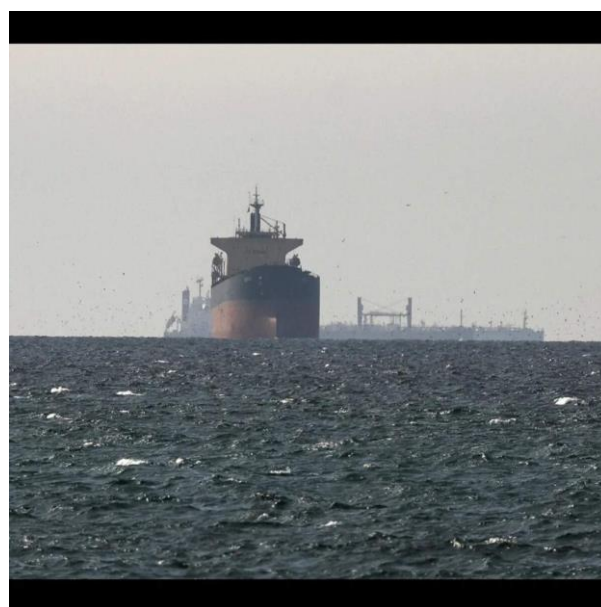
- **Coercive Diplomacy:** Using threats or pressure to influence another country.
- **Asymmetric Warfare:** Weaker side using unconventional methods.
- **Freedom of Navigation:** Free movement of ships through international waters.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- United Nations (UN)
- UNCLOS framework
- Global energy and maritime agencies

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- UNCLOS – Law governing seas and navigation.



- Strategic doctrine of deterrence and brinkmanship.

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Strait of Hormuz is important for oil trade.
- Kargil War took place in 1999.
- Cuban Missile Crisis occurred in 1962.
- Thomas Schelling was linked with game theory.
- UNCLOS deals with maritime law.
- Asymmetric warfare is used by weaker actors.
- Gulf War occurred in 1990–91.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Map-based question on Strait of Hormuz.
- Match event with year.
- Statement-based question on UNCLOS.
- Questions on Kargil conflict.
- International relations MCQs.

9. Supreme Court and Abortion Law Reform for Minor Rape Survivors

A. Core Idea

The Supreme Court allowed a minor rape survivor to terminate a 30-week pregnancy and suggested changes in abortion laws for minors.

B. Why in News

The Supreme Court allowed termination beyond the normal legal limit under special circumstances.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Pregnancy involved: **30 weeks**
- Minor survivor age: **15 years**
- MTP Amendment Act updated in **2021**
- Normal abortion limit:
 - Up to 20 weeks: one doctor's approval

- Up to 24 weeks: two doctors' approval for special categories

D. Important Terms

- **Reproductive Autonomy:** Right of a woman to decide about pregnancy and childbirth.
- **Curative Petition:** Final legal remedy in Supreme Court after review petition.
- **MTP:** Medical Termination of Pregnancy.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- Supreme Court of India
- All India Institute of Medical Sciences
- Union Government

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Amendment Act, 2021
- Article 21 – Right to life and personal liberty
- Article 142 – Supreme Court power to ensure complete justice

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- MTP Act amended in 2021.
- Article 21 includes dignity and privacy.
- Article 142 gives special powers to Supreme Court.
- Curative petition is the final judicial remedy.
- Special category includes rape survivors and minors.
- AIIMS opposed late-term termination on medical grounds.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Questions on Article 21 and Article 142.
- Statement-based question on MTP Act.
- Match legal term with meaning.
- Questions on Supreme Court powers.
- MCQ on abortion time limits.

THE ABORTION LAW

➤ The existing Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act of 1971, sought to 'liberalise' the British-era 'very strict penal law', which was in existence for over a century

➤ Before the 1971 Act, abortion was a crime for which 'the mother as well as the abortionist could be punished except where it had to be induced in order to save the life of the mother'



➤ The government brought in the MTP Act as a 'health measure'

➤ It allowed abortion 'when there is danger to the life of or risk to physical or mental health of the woman', 'on humanitarian grounds – such as when pregnancy arises from a sex crime like rape or intercourse with a lunatic woman', and 'eugenic grounds – where there is substantial risk that the child, if born would suffer from deformities and diseases'

THE 20-WEEK BAR: Section 3(2) of the MTP Act bars termination of pregnancy beyond 20 weeks by any doctor

Up to 12 weeks it requires no reason. **Between 12 and 20 weeks** it requires two registered doctors to opine in good faith:

➤ That continuance of the pregnancy would involve a risk to the life of the pregnant woman or grave injury physical or mental health

➤ That there is a substantial risk that if the child were born, it would suffer from such physical

or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped

➤ Under section 5 of the MTP Act there is an exception to the 20-week bar if doctors certify serious risk to the pregnant woman's life in case it is continued

10. Modern Drone Warfare and Counter-Drone Systems

A. Core Idea

Modern wars increasingly use drones and AI-based systems because they are cheaper and can attack from long distances.

B. Why in News

Operation Sindoor highlighted the growing use of drones and loitering munitions in warfare.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Sudarshan Chakra Mission target year: **2035**
- Drone Rules operate under Aircraft Act, 1934.
- DEWs reduce attack cost to only a few dollars per shot.
- UN forum discussing AI weapons: **CCW**

D. Important Terms

- **Drone Swarm:** Group of drones working together.
- **Loitering Munition:** Drone that waits over target area before attack.
- **Directed Energy Weapon (DEW):** Weapon using laser or energy beams.
- **CUAS:** Counter-Unmanned Aircraft System.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Civil Aviation
- United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)



F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- Aircraft Act, 1934
- Drone Rules (India)
- Sudarshan Chakra Mission 2035

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Drones are part of unmanned aerial systems (UAVs).
- Drone swarms can overwhelm air defence.
- DEWs mainly use laser technology.
- Aircraft Act regulates drone operations.
- CCW discusses autonomous weapons.
- AI integration in drones raises ethical concerns.
- Sudarshan Chakra Mission is linked with air defence.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Full form of UAV/CUAS/DEW.
- Questions on drone warfare.
- Match weapon with feature.
- Statement-based question on AI warfare.
- Questions on Aircraft Act.

11. Judicial Oral Remarks and Courtroom Conduct

A. Core Idea

The debate is about whether oral comments made by judges during hearings should affect public opinion and institutional dignity.

B. Why in News

Recent controversial remarks by judges during hearings triggered discussions on judicial conduct.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- Vijayabhaskar judgment year: **2021**
- Restatement of Values of Judicial Life adopted in **1997**
- Cardozo Standard discussed in **1921**

D. Important Terms

- **Oral Observations:** Spoken comments by judges during hearings.
- **Judicial Ethics:** Standards of conduct expected from judges.
- **Open Court Proceedings:** Court hearings accessible to public/media.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- Supreme Court of India
- Indian Judiciary
- Media and digital reporting platforms

F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- Article 19(1)(a) – Freedom of speech and expression

- Restatement of Values of Judicial Life, 1997

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Oral observations are not legally binding.
- Written judgments have legal authority.
- Judicial ethics code adopted in 1997.
- Article 19(1)(a) relates to freedom of expression.
- Live-streaming increased public visibility of court remarks.
- Judges should avoid political comments on pending matters.



H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Difference between oral remarks and judgments.
- Questions on judicial ethics.
- Statement-based question on Article 19.
- Match year with judicial code.
- Questions on open court system.

12. Ban on New Hydroelectric Projects in Upper Ganga Basin

A. Core Idea

The Central Government informed the Supreme Court that no new hydropower projects will be allowed in the upper Ganga region of Uttarakhand.

B. Why in News

The government submitted a joint affidavit in the Supreme Court regarding hydropower restrictions in the upper Ganga basin.

C. Key Facts & Figures

- More than **2,150 MW** power capacity linked with exempted projects.
- Seven old/ongoing projects exempted.
- Kedarnath disaster year: **2013**
- Flash floods mentioned: Dharali floods, 2025.

D. Important Terms

- **Upper Ganga Basin:** Upper Himalayan river system of Ganga.
- **Hydroelectric Project:** Electricity generation using flowing water.
- **Bumper-to-Bumper Dams:** Dams built very close to each other.

E. Institutions / Organisations Involved

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
- Ministry of Jal Shakti
- Ministry of Power
- Supreme Court of India



F. Government Acts / Policies / Schemes

- Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
- Article 48A – Environmental protection by State
- Article 51A(g) – Fundamental duty to protect environment

G. Direct Exam Takeaways

- Bhagirathi and Alaknanda are major Ganga tributaries.
- Tehri project is in Uttarakhand.
- Environment Protection Act passed in 1986.
- Article 48A is a Directive Principle.
- Article 51A(g) is a Fundamental Duty.
- Himalayas are seismically sensitive.
- Hydropower projects can affect river ecology.

H. PYQ / Expected Question Angles

- Questions on DPSP and Fundamental Duties.
- Match river with tributary basin.
- Statement-based question on hydropower.
- Questions on Environment Protection Act.
- Disaster-management related MCQs.

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