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T H E H I N D U
ANALYSIS



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GS PAPER II · INDIAN POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Judiciary, Legislation & Rights

1 Supreme Court Bars Retrospective (Ex Post Facto) Environmental Clearances

GS-III · ENVIRONMENT

GS-II · POLITY

CONTEXT

On 30 July 2026 a Bench headed by **CJI Surya Kant** quashed — with **prospective effect** — a **2021 Office Memorandum (OM)** that granted *ex post facto* environmental clearances to infrastructure projects.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2021 OM was an **administrative order** creating a *perpetual regime* for clearing projects begun **without prior clearance**; it **supplanted the 2006 EIA Notification** (delegated legislation) through an instruction — **impermissible in law**.
- ‘**No parallel route**’: an *amnesty* cannot become a permanent channel bypassing prior clearance; it must be a **rare exception, finite and confined to its class**.
- The 2006 regime is **mandatory** (highways, airports, real-estate, townships, mining); it can be amended only via a **proper amnesty notification** for ‘supervening public interest’ projects.
- The Centre is **barred from admin orders** for future retrospective clearances; the Court's **Article 142** power is preserved. Quashing made prospective to shield ongoing projects (AIIMS Odisha, Vijayapura Airport, irrigation).

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

The judgment reaffirms the **precautionary principle** and the primacy of the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**: the executive cannot dilute statutory safeguards by fiat, and the ‘pollute-and-then-pay’ model yields to sustainable development.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986** — umbrella law enacted after the **Bhopal Gas Tragedy (1984)** and to implement the **Stockholm Conference (1972)** under **Article 253**; empowers the Centre to issue notifications like the EIA.
- **EIA Notification, 2006** makes **prior Environmental Clearance** mandatory; four stages — **Screening, Scoping, Public Consultation, Appraisal**.
- **Category A** projects are appraised by the **MoEFCC** (via the Expert Appraisal Committee); **Category B** by the **State/SEIAA & SEAC** (B1 needs EIA, B2 does not).
- Guiding principles read into law: **Precautionary Principle, Polluter Pays, Sustainable Development, Public Trust Doctrine** — affirmed in **Vellore Citizens Welfare Forum v. UoI (1996)** and the **M.C. Mehta** cases.
- Constitutional hooks: **Art. 21** (right to a clean environment — *Subhash Kumar*), **Art. 48A** (DPSP) and **Art. 51A(g)** (Fundamental Duty).
- Key institutions: **MoEFCC, CPCB & SPCBs** (Water Act 1974, Air Act 1981), and the **National Green Tribunal (NGT Act, 2010)**.
- The controversial **Draft EIA 2020** had proposed legitimising *post-facto* clearances — widely criticised.
- **Article 142** lets the Supreme Court pass any order for ‘complete justice’.

2

Lok Sabha Passes the ‘Paper-Leak’ Bill — Public Examinations (Amendment) Bill, 2026

GS-II · GOVERNANCE

POLITY

CONTEXT

The Lok Sabha passed the **Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026** amid Opposition protests over police action during the NEET-UG 2026 agitation.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Time-bound process**: investigation to be completed in **2 months** and trial in **3 months**; States/UTs may designate **sessions courts as fast-track special courts** for day-to-day trials.

- **Harsher penalties:** for organised crime, a **minimum 7 years** jail and fine up to **₹10 crore** (up from ₹1 crore); debarment of errant service providers raised from **4 to 8 years**; a special **task force** may be constituted.
- Govt. cites 'learning from experience' after the 2024 law: **52 FIRs** filed and paper-leak-linked suicides said to have declined.
- **PRS concerns:** no remedy specified if deadlines are missed; a fixed outer time-limit for trials may conflict with a **2002 SC ruling**; the 2024 Act has secured **no conviction** in two years; fast-track courts already carry **>2 lakh** pending cases.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Highlights the shift from ad-hoc responses to institutional reform of examinations (linked to the **K. Radhakrishnan Committee** blueprint for the NTA), but raises questions of **capacity, feasibility and conviction rates** rather than mere deterrence.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- Parent law: **Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024** — offences are **cognizable, non-bailable and non-compoundable**; up to **10 years** jail and **₹1 crore** fine.
- It covers exams of the **UPSC, SSC, RRB, IBPS and the NTA**, plus Central government departments.
- **National Testing Agency (NTA)** — autonomous body (2017) that conducts **NEET-UG, JEE (Main), UGC-NET, CUET and CMAT**.
- The **Dr. K. Radhakrishnan Committee (2024)** recommended NTA reforms, secure exam centres and biometric/tech safeguards.
- **Education** is in the **Concurrent List** (shifted by the **42nd Amendment, 1976**); linked to **NEP 2020**.
- **Fast-track courts** and special courts already exist under laws such as **POCSO, 2012**.
- Relevant: right to education (**Art. 21A**, 86th Amendment) and equality of opportunity (**Art. 14, 16**).

3

Rajya Sabha Passes Bill to Criminalise Disrespect to *Vande Mataram*

GS-I · CULTURE

GS-II · POLITY

CONTEXT

The Rajya Sabha passed the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026** (Opposition walked out), extending protection to the National Song.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Amends the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971** to punish **obstruction in the singing of Vande Mataram**, alongside insults to the National Flag, the Constitution and the National Anthem.
- *Vande Mataram* was penned by **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1875)** (in the novel *Anandamath*) and adopted as the **National Song in 1937**.
- The Bill now goes to the Lok Sabha for consideration and passage.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Touches the constitutional status of national symbols and **Fundamental Duties (Article 51A)**; also revives the historic debate over the song's place vis-à-vis the National Anthem.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- **National Song** = *Vande Mataram*; **National Anthem** = *Jana Gana Mana* — both given status by the Constituent Assembly on **24 January 1950** (statement by President Rajendra Prasad).
- *Vande Mataram* — written by **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1875)** in the novel ***Anandamath* (1882)**; first sung at the **1896 Calcutta session of the INC** by Rabindranath Tagore.
- *Jana Gana Mana* — composed by **Rabindranath Tagore**, first sung at the **1911 Calcutta INC session**; formal playing time ~**52 seconds**.
- Other national symbols: **National Flag** (design by Pingali Venkayya; **Flag Code, 2002**), **State Emblem** (Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka), **National Calendar** (Saka, 1957).
- Parent law: **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971** (protects the Flag, Constitution & Anthem).
- **Fundamental Duties (Art. 51A)** — added by the **42nd Amendment (1976)** on the **Swaran Singh Committee's** recommendation; **51A(a)** covers respect for national symbols.
- Case law: **Bijoe Emmanuel v. State of Kerala (1986)** upheld the right *not* to sing the Anthem (Art. 19 & 25); **Shyam Narayan Chouksey** case on Anthem in cinemas.

4 Supreme Court Closes the Coal-Block ('Coalgate') Case Against Manmohan Singh

GS-II · POLITY / GOVERNANCE

CONTEXT

A three-judge Bench (CJI Surya Kant) gave **posthumous relief** to former PM Dr. Manmohan Singh, agreeing with the CBI's closure reports in the coal-block allocation matter.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The Court accepted the **CBI's two 2014 closure reports** that gave Dr. Singh a clean chit and found **no 'compelling reason'** for the trial judge to have rejected them and taken cognisance.
- Rather than dismissing the case as merely *infructuous* on his demise, the Bench examined the record and **set aside the adverse observations**, closing the case **on merits**.
- Dr. Singh passed away in December 2024; the adverse trial-court observations had lingered since.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Clarifies the distinction between a **CBI closure report** and a magistrate's power to take cognisance, and the standard of 'sufficient material' needed to proceed against a public functionary.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- **'Coalgate'** — alleged arbitrary allocation of coal blocks (1993-2010); a **CAG** report (2012) put the notional loss at ~**₹1.86 lakh crore**.
- In **2014 the Supreme Court cancelled 214** coal-block allocations as illegal/arbitrary.
- Allocation shifted to transparent **auctions** via the **Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015**; **commercial coal mining** opened up in 2020.
- Coal was nationalised via the **Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973**.
- **CAG — Articles 148-151**; audits Union & State accounts; 'friend, philosopher and guide' of the **Public Accounts Committee**.
- **CBI** derives powers from the **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946** (not a statutory creation); under **Lokpal** oversight for certain cases.
- Procedure: a **closure report** is filed under **CrPC Sec. 173 / BNSS Sec. 193** when no case is made out; a magistrate takes **cognisance** under **CrPC Sec. 190**.

5 Can the Centre's Assurance Override Statutory FIR Processes? — SC Interim Order

GS-II · POLITY / FEDERALISM

CONTEXT

Amid protests over NEET-UG, the SC allowed States to continue investigating FIRs against student protesters but **restrained coercive action** against 'protesting students' without criminal antecedents.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The Court directed police across States to **release protesters and drop charges** where they are **minors and have no criminal background**.
- Experts note the Centre's assurance of 'no punitive action' cannot override statutory processes: once an **FIR is registered**, it ends only via a **closure report** (by the agency) or **withdrawal from prosecution** (by the public prosecutor) — both under **judicial scrutiny**.
- Ex-SC judge **Justice Abhay Oka**: except Delhi, police are under **State** control, so the Union cannot assure closure on their behalf.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Illustrates **police as a State subject**, the limits of executive assurances, and the balance between the right to protest and lawful investigation.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- **Police and Public Order** are **State subjects** — Entries 1 & 2 of the **State List (List II, 7th Schedule)**.
- An **FIR** is registered under **Sec. 154 CrPC / Sec. 173 BNSS**; **Lalita Kumari (2014)** made FIR mandatory for a cognizable offence.
- A case ends via a **closure report** (police) or **withdrawal from prosecution** under **Sec. 321 CrPC / Sec. 360 BNSS** (public prosecutor), both under judicial scrutiny.
- New criminal codes (in force July 2024): **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)**, **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS)**, **Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA)** — replacing the IPC, CrPC & Evidence Act.
- **Right to protest / assemble peacefully** — **Art. 19(1)(a) & 19(1)(b)**, subject to reasonable restrictions under **19(2) & 19(3)**.
- **Article 142** — Supreme Court's power to do complete justice.

6**High Courts on Personal Liberty & Welfare**

GS-II · POLITY / RIGHTS

CONTEXT

Two notable High Court interventions expanded personal-liberty and welfare jurisprudence this week.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Allahabad HC** quashed an FIR against an adult couple who married by choice, holding the police have '**no business to be nosy parkers**' in marriages of consenting adults; it invoked **Article 21** liberty and imposed costs on the police and complainant.
- **Kerala HC** directed the State to decide within **three months** on **paid menstrual leave** for women bus conductors of the KSRTC, observing a limited provision would advance employee welfare and inclusivity.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Reinforces the constitutional right to **choice of partner** (Shafin Jahan, Shakti Vahini) and the emerging discourse on **gender-sensitive labour welfare**.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- **Art. 21** — right to life & personal liberty; the 'procedure established by law' was read to require **due process** in **Maneka Gandhi (1978)**; privacy affirmed in **Puttaswamy (2017)**.
- Right to choose one's partner: **Lata Singh (2006)**, **Shakti Vahini (2018)** (against honour crimes), **Shafin Jahan / Hadiya (2018)**; adult autonomy in **Navtej Johar (2018)**.
- **High Courts** issue writs under **Art. 226** (wider than Art. 32); the Supreme Court under **Art. 32** (the 'heart and soul' of the Constitution — Ambedkar).
- Inter-faith/inter-caste unions are enabled by the **Special Marriage Act, 1954**.
- **Menstrual leave** has no central law; Bihar has offered it since **1992**; Kerala provides it for students — it remains a policy, not statutory, matter.
- Women's welfare hooks: **Art. 15(3)** (special provisions), **Art. 39** and **Art. 42** (just & humane conditions of work).

GS PAPER II · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

India & the World

7

U.S. Fast-tracks Act for 100% Tariffs on Russia's Oil Trade Partners

GS-II · IR

GS-III · ECONOMY

CONTEXT

The U.S. Senate voted **86-12** to invoke cloture, fast-tracking the '**Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026**' — which could levy up to **100% tariffs** on major buyers of Russian oil.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Tariff of '**up to 100%**' would target the **top five purchasers** of Russian crude & gas; the original 2025 version proposed a blanket **500%** tariff, revised down in July 2026.
- Buyer shares: **China ~47-50%** and **India ~36-38%** of Russian crude exports; Russian oil was **>50%** of India's oil imports in June 2026.
- Aim: deprive Russia of war revenue by targeting its leadership, financial institutions, energy sector and sanctions-evasion networks via '**targeted tariffs**'.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

For India the stakes are 'substantial' (GTRI): discounted Russian crude has lowered the **import bill**, **aided energy security and contained inflation**; signals Washington's widening use of trade tools (reciprocal tariffs, Section 301).

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- The **U.S. Congress** has the **Senate (100)** and **House (435)**; a **cloture** motion needs **60 votes** to end a **filibuster** and force a vote.
- **Secondary sanctions** penalise third countries; **CAATSA (2017)** is the law under which India risked sanctions for buying the **S-400**.
- **Section 301** of the U.S. Trade Act, 1974 allows retaliatory tariffs; the **WTO** rests on Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) treatment.
- India imports **~85%** of its crude oil; **Russia** became the largest supplier after 2022 due to discounts; the G7 set a **\$60/barrel price cap**.
- India's **Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR)** are at **Visakhapatnam, Mangaluru and Padur**.
- Rupee-rouble trade, **UPI** internationalisation and diversification (US, Gulf) cushion supply risks.

8

BRICS Summit, New Delhi — Xi & Putin Expected in September

GS-II · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

CONTEXT

India is preparing to host Presidents **Xi Jinping** and **Vladimir Putin** at the **BRICS Summit in Delhi on 12-13 September 2026**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Foreign Secretary **Vikram Misri** held talks in Beijing with CPC Vice-Minister **Sun Haiyan** on strengthening high-level interactions.
- Xi **skipped 2024 BRICS (Brazil)** but attended 2023 (South Africa) and 2024 (Kazan); the Kazan Modi-Xi talks paved **LAC normalisation**.
- Putin's attendance was signalled via FM **Lavrov's** May Delhi visit; Russia backs India's BRICS chairmanship and China reiterated support.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

A test of India's **multi-alignment** — hosting both Xi and Putin while managing the U.S. tariff threat and post-2020 India-China normalisation.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- **BRICS** — the acronym was coined by **Jim O'Neill (Goldman Sachs, 2001)**; the first summit was in **Yekaterinburg (2009)** as BRIC; **South Africa joined in 2010**.
- **2024 expansion (Jan 1)** added **Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the UAE** (Saudi Arabia invited) — now 'BRICS+'.
- Financial architecture: the **New Development Bank (NDB, 2014, Fortaleza; HQ Shanghai)** — first President **K.V. Kamath**, current head **Dilma Rousseff**; and the **Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA, \$100 bn)**.
- The chairmanship rotates annually; India previously hosted in **2012, 2016 (Goa) and 2021**.
- BRICS represents **~45% of the world's population** and a large share of global GDP; it seeks reform of global governance and de-dollarisation debates.
- India follows **strategic autonomy / multi-alignment** — also part of the **Quad, SCO and G20**.

9

U.S. and Iran Resume Fighting in West Asia

GS-II · IR

GS-III · SECURITY

CONTEXT

After a brief pause, the U.S. and Iran resumed strikes; the war began on **28 February** with U.S.-Israel attacks on Iran.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Jordan** intercepted five missiles; the U.S. said it worked with **Saudi Arabia** to strike pro-Iran militias in Iraq — **Iranian advisers** were reportedly killed.
- President **Trump** warned the U.S. 'will hit Iran hard'; renewed hostilities pushed **Brent crude +3.1% to \$84.58** a barrel.
- **Iraq** convened an emergency National Security Council meeting; a scheduled PM visit to Saudi Arabia was postponed.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Directly affects India's **energy import bill, ~9-million diaspora in the Gulf, and trade corridors** (Red Sea / Strait of Hormuz); tests India's balancing act in West Asia.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- **Strait of Hormuz** carries ~20-21% of global oil; other chokepoints: **Bab-el-Mandeb** and the **Suez Canal**.
- **JCPOA (2015)** — the Iran nuclear deal (P5+1 + EU); the U.S. withdrew in **2018** and reimposed sanctions.
- Iran's **IRGC / Quds Force** anchor the 'Axis of Resistance'; the **Abraham Accords (2020)** normalised some Arab-Israel ties.
- India's West Asia stakes: **Chabahar Port** (Shahid Beheshti terminal), the **INSTC (2000)**, the **IMEC (2023)** corridor and **I2U2 (2022)**.
- ~**9 million** Indians live in the Gulf; remittances to India (~\$100+ bn total) rely heavily on the region.
- India imports ~**85%** of its crude, so West Asian instability directly affects prices & inflation.

10 Bangladesh: Ex-PM Sheikh Hasina Vows to Return by Year-End

GS-II · NEIGHBOURHOOD

CONTEXT

Fugitive ex-PM **Sheikh Hasina** said she is determined to return to Bangladesh by December despite fearing for her life.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Toppled in an **August 2024 student-led uprising**, she fled to India; the UN says up to **1,400 people** were killed in the crackdown.
- In November a Dhaka court found her **guilty of crimes against humanity** and sentenced her to be hanged — she called it 'political vengeance'.
- Dhaka has formally sought her **extradition**; New Delhi says the request is '**under examination**'.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

A delicate test for India-Bangladesh ties under the interim/Rahman dispensation; engages the **India-Bangladesh Extradition Treaty (2013)** and asylum considerations.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- The **India-Bangladesh Extradition Treaty (2013, amended 2016)** governs handovers, but a **political-offence exception** can complicate them.
- Bangladesh was born of the **1971 Liberation War**; **Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** was its founding leader; Hasina led the **Awami League** (vs the BNP/Jamaat).
- Key bilateral pillars: **Ganga Waters Treaty (1996, Farakka)**, the pending **Teesta** pact, and the **Land Boundary Agreement (2015, 100th Amendment)**.
- Connectivity: Maitri Setu, the Akhaura-Agartala rail link and inland-water transit.
- India is **not a signatory** to the **1951 Refugee Convention / 1967 Protocol** and has no domestic asylum law, though it follows *non-refoulement* in practice.
- India's **Neighbourhood First** and **Act East** policies frame the relationship; Bangladesh is a **BIMSTEC** partner.

11

West Bank: UN Says Settler Violence & Annexation 'Only Getting Worse'

GS-II · IR / UN

CONTEXT

Two years after the ICJ's advisory opinion, the UN human-rights office warned that the situation in the occupied West Bank is deteriorating.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- In a July-2024 **advisory opinion**, the ICJ held Israel's decades-long occupation of Palestinian territory to be **illegal** and said Israel must end it 'as rapidly as possible'.
- The UN flagged settler violence and outpost creation 'hitting an all-time high' and urged countries to act to end the occupation.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Illustrates the **advisory (non-binding) role of the ICJ** and the stalled two-state framework; relevant to India's balanced West Asia policy.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- The **ICJ** (1945) is the UN's principal judicial organ under **Chapter XIV** of the Charter; it sits at the **Peace Palace, The Hague**, with **15 judges** (9-year terms) — India's **Dalveer Bhandari** is a sitting judge.
- It has **contentious** jurisdiction (binding, consent-based between States) and **advisory** jurisdiction (non-binding, sought by the UNGA/UNSC/UN organs).
- Roots of the conflict: the **UN Partition Plan (Res. 181, 1947)**, the 1948 war and the **Six-Day War (1967)** (Israel took the West Bank, Gaza, Golan).
- The **Oslo Accords (1993-95)** created the Palestinian Authority and Areas **A/B/C** in the West Bank.
- The **UNGA granted Palestine 'non-member observer State' status (2012)**.
- India recognised the **State of Palestine (1988)**, has a representative office in Ramallah, and backs a **two-state solution** with East Jerusalem as capital.

GS PAPER III · ECONOMY

Science-Funding, Insurance & Energy

12 India's R&D Spending Crosses 0.83% of GDP; Private Share Overtakes Government

GS-III · ECONOMY / S&T

CONTEXT

DST data (Lok Sabha) show R&D spending rose to **0.83% of GDP in 2021-22** — the first crossing of 0.8% since 2009-10 — with **private industry now funding more than all levels of government combined**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **GERD**: ₹1.33 lakh cr (2019-20) → ₹1.27 lakh cr (2020-21, COVID) → **₹1.95 lakh cr (2021-22, +53%)** → ₹2.13 lakh cr (2022-23) → **₹2.45 lakh cr (2023-24)**.

- **Private-industry share** rose from 38.5% (2017-18) to **51.8% (2023-24)**; R&D/GDP had hit a nadir of **0.64% in 2020-21**.
- Global comparison: **China 2.4%, Japan 3.3%, South Korea 4.8%, U.S. 3.5%, Israel ~5%**; advanced economies see business fund **>70%** of research.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

A structural positive — but India's **absolute research intensity still lags**; sustaining private momentum needs stronger IP, funding and academia-industry links.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- **GERD** = Gross Expenditure on R&D (as % of GDP = research intensity); a key **SDG 9** indicator.
- Major bodies: **DST, DSIR, CSIR (1942, largest), DBT, ICMR, ICAR, DRDO, ISRO, DAE**.
- **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF Act, 2023)** — apex funding body (~₹50,000 cr, 2023-28) that subsumed the SERB; the PM is its ex-officio President.
- Policy framework: the **Science, Technology & Innovation Policy (STIP)**; statistics via **NSTMIS** (under DST).
- India ranked **~39th** in WIPO's **Global Innovation Index (2024)**; patents administered under the **Patents Act, 1970** (CGPDTM).
- Advanced economies see **business fund >70%** of R&D; India's absolute intensity still trails China (2.4%), the U.S. (3.5%) and Israel (~5%).

13 IRDAI Clears Reforms — PEPF, Perpetual Registration & a New Insurer

GS-III · ECONOMY / INSURANCE

CONTEXT

The insurance regulator **IRDAI** approved a set of reforms and permitted a new general insurer at its latest meeting.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Approved the **Policyholders' Education & Protection Fund (PEPF)** — a dedicated mechanism for insurance awareness, grievance redressal and tracing/recovery of **unclaimed amounts**.
- Introduced **perpetual registration** with an **annual fee** (replacing periodic renewal) and new penalty regulations.
- Granted a certificate to **ProTec General Insurance** — the **fourth** new insurer cleared since January.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Signals a push toward '**Insurance for All by 2047**', deeper penetration and better policyholder protection.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- IRDAI was set up under the **IRDA Act, 1999** (on the **Malhotra Committee, 1994** recommendation); it is **headquartered at Hyderabad**.
- It regulates **life and general insurance**; public insurers include **LIC (1956)** and **GIC**.
- The '**Bima Trinity**': **Bima Sugam** (digital marketplace), **Bima Vistaar** (affordable bundled cover) and **Bima Vahak** (last-mile women-led distribution).
- Goal: '**Insurance for All by 2047**'; India's insurance **penetration is ~4%** of GDP (below the global average).
- **FDI** in insurance was raised **26% → 49% (2015) → 74% (2021)**, with a move toward **100%**.
- Grievances are handled via the **Bima Bharosa (IGMS)** portal and the **Insurance Ombudsman**.

14

E20 Fuel & BS-III Vehicles — Centre Flags Tweaks

GS-III · ENERGY / ENVIRONMENT

CONTEXT

The MoRTH (Minister Nitin Gadkari) told Parliament that some parts in older BS-III vehicles may need attention with **E20 fuel (20% ethanol + 80% petrol)**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- In testing of **BS-III vehicles** (made before 2016), some **rubber parts and gaskets may need replacement** — manageable in routine servicing; no engine modification needed for other vehicles.
- Study conducted by **IOCL, IIP-Dehradun, SIAM and ARAI** (not yet public).
- The AAP alleged the Centre 'coerced' automakers into silence, claiming E20 can damage older vehicles and cut mileage.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Central to the **Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme**, energy import substitution and cleaner mobility — balanced against consumer/older-vehicle concerns.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- The **Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme** was launched in **2003**; the **National Policy on Biofuels, 2018 (amended 2022)** advanced the **E20** target to **2025-26**.
- Ethanol is produced from **sugarcane (molasses/juice), maize, damaged foodgrain and surplus FCI rice; 1G vs 2G** (cellulosic) ethanol.
- Benefits: cut oil imports (~**85%** import dependence), save forex, raise farmer income and lower **CO/HC** emissions.
- **Flex-Fuel Vehicles (FFVs)** can run on higher blends; India launched the **Global Biofuels Alliance** at the **2023 G20 (Delhi)**.
- Emission norms progressed from **BS-III** (pre-2016) to **BS-VI (2020)**; testing bodies include **ARAI** and **SIAM**.
- Links to **SDG 7** (clean energy) and India's **net-zero by 2070** pledge.

★ ECONOMY IN SHORTS

- **LIC** paid a **₹12,207.25 crore dividend** to the Centre; asset base ~₹59.03 lakh crore.
- **SBI** raised **₹4,691 crore** via its first Basel-III-compliant **Additional Tier-1 (AT1) bonds** this fiscal.
- **Maruti Suzuki** was India's **top EV exporter in Q1 FY27** (15,210 units; ~97% share), led by the e-Vitara.
- **Adani Enterprises** posted a Q1 net loss on a one-time **US OFAC settlement** (\$275 mn), though core EBITDA rose 49%.

GS PAPER III · ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

Conservation & Resource Governance

15

Nepal's Tiger Census (429) & International Tiger Day

GS-III · ENVIRONMENT

CONTEXT

Nepal's tiger population rose ~**20% to an estimated 429** (from 355 in 2022), announced to coincide with **International Tiger Day (29 July)**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Survey ran Dec–July over **7,300+ sq km** using **3,600 motion cameras** across 5 protected areas; individuals identified by **stripe patterns**.
- Nepal was the **first nation to double** its tigers under the **Tx2** goal: ~121 (2009) → 355 (2022); at **St. Petersburg (2010)**, 13 range countries pledged to double numbers by 2022.
- **Conflict rising**: 38 people killed in tiger attacks (2019-23); Bardiya alone hosts 112 tigers (from 18 in 2009).
- **India context**: home to nearly **70%** of the world's wild tigers; **Project Tiger (1973)** is run by the **NTCA**.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

A conservation success that also spotlights **human-wildlife conflict** and the need for co-existence models around tiger habitats.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- **Project Tiger (1973)** began with 9 reserves; the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** is statutory (2006 amendment to the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972).
- India has **50+ tiger reserves** (core & buffer zones); monitoring uses the **M-STrIPES** app and **Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE)**.
- India's quadrennial census put tigers at **3,682 (2022)** — about **75% of the world's wild tigers**.
- **International Tiger Day is 29 July** (from the **2010 St. Petersburg Tiger Summit**); the **Tx2** goal aimed to double tigers by 2022.
- The **Global Tiger Forum (1993)** — the only intergovernmental tiger body — is headquartered in **New Delhi**; there are 13 tiger-range countries.
- Status: IUCN **Endangered**, **CITES Appendix I**, WPA **Schedule I**; support bodies include the **Wildlife Institute of India (Dehradun)** and **CAMPA**.

16

CAQM Pushes Drones to Monitor Stubble Burning

GS-III · ENVIRONMENT / POLLUTION

CONTEXT

The **Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM)** urged Delhi, Haryana, U.P., Rajasthan and Punjab to deploy drones (UAVs) to monitor stubble burning.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Drones offer **rapid deployment, high-resolution real-time imaging** and flexible flight patterns that complement satellite imagery and ground inspection.
- They can detect active fire locations, map affected fields and generate **time-stamped evidence** for enforcement.
- States told to focus on **paddy-cultivation hotspots** and fire-prone villages.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Addresses recurring **NCR winter air pollution** (parali burning); reflects a shift to tech-enabled, evidence-based environmental enforcement.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- The **Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) Act, 2021** created a statutory body for the **NCR and adjoining areas** (replacing the EPCA).
- **Stubble (parali) burning** of paddy straw in Punjab, Haryana and western U.P. is a major winter pollution source.
- In-situ solutions: the **Pusa bio-decomposer, Happy/Super Seeder**; ex-situ uses: biomass power, **2G ethanol**, pelletisation.
- Response tools: the **Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)**, the **Air Quality Index (AQI)** and **SAFAR**.
- The **National Clean Air Programme (NCAP, 2019)** targets PM reductions in non-attainment cities; linked to **Art. 21** (right to clean air — M.C. Mehta).

17

Cauvery: CWRC Seeks a Distress-Sharing Formula

GS-II · FEDERALISM

GS-III · WATER

CONTEXT

The **Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC)** asked Tamil Nadu and Karnataka to devise a **distress-sharing formula** for a deficient monsoon.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- CWRC ordered Karnataka to release **3,500 cusecs/day for 15 days** to Tamil Nadu at the **Biligundlu** gauge; Karnataka will **appeal to the CWMA**.
- The intermediate catchment is 'very dry'; Karnataka faces a **~60% deficit** in net inflows to its reservoirs.
- The dispute mechanism flows from the **CWDT final award (2007)**, as modified by the **Supreme Court (2018)**.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

A recurring inter-state **river-water dispute**; tests the CWMA/CWRC implementation architecture and cooperative federalism during shortage years.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- Inter-state river disputes are governed by **Article 262** and the **Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956** (which can bar court jurisdiction).
- The **Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT)** was constituted in **1990**; its **2007 final award** was **modified by the Supreme Court in 2018**.
- 2018 allocations: **Tamil Nadu 404.25 tmc, Karnataka 284.75 tmc, Kerala 30 tmc, Puducherry 7 tmc**; Bengaluru's drinking-water needs were factored in.
- Implementation is via the **Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA)** and the **Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC)** (2018).
- The Cauvery rises at **Talakaveri (Brahmagiri hills, Kodagu, Karnataka)** and drains into the **Bay of Bengal**; tributaries include the **Hemavati, Kabini, Bhavani and Amaravati**; key dams are **KRS and Mettur**.
- Water is on the **State List** (Entry 17), subject to Union power over inter-state rivers (Entry 56).

GS PAPER III · DEFENCE & SCIENCE-TECHNOLOGY

Jointness, Critical Minerals & Aviation

18

India's Theatre-isation & the Need for a Readiness Framework

GS-III · DEFENCE / SECURITY

CONTEXT

An analysis argues India's **theatre-isation** — merging **17 single-service commands into 3 integrated theatres** — must proceed but needs a formal **military-readiness framework**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Three transition risks: a **knowledge gap** at the theatre-commander level; friction over **service cultures / rank-equivalence**; and **slower decisions** as the VCDS layer sits under the CDS.
- Pace: **China** raised 5 theatre commands in 2 years (2016); the **U.S.** took ~10 years (Goldwater-Nichols Act, 1986); India has debated it for 25 years.
- India still measures **inputs** (the '4 Ms') rather than **military readiness**; proposed reforms — readiness **metrics, standards, mechanisms** (a Defence Readiness Council) and a reserve-force **hedge**.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Central to **jointness** and the two-front challenge; readiness, not structure, is the real variable that 'war does not wait for'.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- The **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)** post was created in **2020** (first CDS Gen. Bipin Rawat), heading the **Department of Military Affairs (DMA)**.
- Existing joint structures: the **Andaman & Nicobar Command (2001)** — the only geographic tri-service command — and the **Strategic Forces Command (2003)** (nuclear).
- India currently has **17 single-service commands** (Army 7, Navy 3, IAF 7); theatre-isation seeks to merge them into integrated theatres.
- Committees behind reforms: the **Kargil Review Committee (2000)**, the **Group of Ministers (2001)**, **Naresh Chandra (2012)** and **Shekatkar (2016)**.
- Supporting bodies: the **Integrated Defence Staff (IDS)** and the **Chiefs of Staff Committee**.
- Global model: the U.S. **Goldwater-Nichols Act (1986)**, which forced 'jointness' among the services.

19 'Virtual Magnet' Claims & Why EVs Need Rare-Earths

GS-III · SCI-TECH / MINERALS

CONTEXT

A Bengaluru start-up claims a 'virtual magnet' motor that replaces rare-earth **permanent magnets** with software-controlled **electromagnets** — a bid to cut rare-earth dependence.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- A motor needs a magnetic field: from a **permanent magnet** (one step, no extra energy) or from **electromagnets** (copper coils energised via software) — the latter incurs core, copper and switching **losses**.
- Hence electromagnet motors are usually **less efficient**; **permanent-magnet synchronous motors (PMSM)** dominate EVs because efficiency is prized (every 0.1% extends range).
- Alternatives explored globally: the **switched-reluctance motor (SRM)** and synchronous-reluctance motors (Honda-Enedym, Hitachi Astemo).

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Highlights India's push to reduce dependence on **rare-earth / critical minerals** for EVs and clean-energy supply chains — a strategic vulnerability given Chinese dominance.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- **Rare-Earth Elements (REEs)** are 17 metals (15 lanthanides + Scandium & Yttrium); **Nd, Pr, Dy** are critical for permanent magnets.
- **China dominates** — ~60% of mining and **~85-90% of processing** — a strategic supply-chain vulnerability.
- India's reserves lie in **monazite (thorium-bearing) beach sands** of Kerala, Odisha, Tamil Nadu & Andhra Pradesh; **IREL (India) Ltd** (under the DAE) processes them.
- Policy: the **National Critical Mineral Mission (2025)**, the **Critical Minerals list (30 minerals, 2023)** and **KABIL** for overseas assets.
- Motor types: **Permanent-Magnet Synchronous Motors (PMSM)** dominate EVs; alternatives are induction and **switched-reluctance motors (SRM)**; based on **Faraday's law of induction**.
- Rare earths are also used in **wind turbines, defence and electronics**; the **Quad** runs a critical-minerals initiative.

SCI-TECH No Abnormality in Grounded AI Boeing 787 Fuel Switch, says Centre

The Centre told the Rajya Sabha that inspection at the OEM (Seattle) found **no abnormality** in the fuel-control switch of a grounded Air India Boeing 787. Fuel switches are central to the probe of the **AI-171 Ahmedabad crash (June 2025, 260 killed)**; the AAIB final report is expected **mid-September-October**.

DEFENCE India's First Department of Military Medicine

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated India's **first dedicated Department of Military Medicine** at the Command Hospital (Central Command), Lucknow, to strengthen operational medical preparedness of the Armed Forces Medical Services.

GS PAPER II / III · SOCIETY & LABOUR

The Gig Economy & Global Labour Standards

20 ILO Convention No. 193 & India's Abstention — The Platform Economy

GS-II · IR / GOVERNANCE

GS-III · ECONOMY

CONTEXT

On 12 June 2026 the International Labour Conference adopted **Convention No. 193, 'Decent Work in the Platform Economy'** — the first binding treaty for gig/platform workers. **India abstained**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Vote: **406 in favour**, 8 against, 36 abstentions; under the ILO's **tripartite** system only India's **government** abstained (its employer & worker delegates voted yes).
- The Convention gives a **floor of rights regardless of classification** (minimum pay, on-time payment, OSH, social security) and regulates **algorithmic management**; **Article 9** mandates correct classification by the facts of work.
- India's gig workforce: **~7.7 million (2020-21) → ~2.35 crore by 2029-30** (NITI Aayog); only **~15%** have social security.
- India's **Code on Social Security, 2020** defines gig/platform workers (1-2% aggregator levy) but is largely un-operationalised; real action is at State level (**Rajasthan Act, 2023**). India also hasn't ratified ILO Conventions **87, 98, 190**.

SIGNIFICANCE / ANALYSIS

Reflects the tension between **labour-market flexibility and worker protection**; abstention leaves gig workers without an enforceable rights floor even as the sector becomes systemic.

§ STATIC LINKAGE — SYLLABUS BACKGROUND

- The **ILO** was founded in **1919 (Treaty of Versailles, Part XIII)**; it is the only **tripartite** UN body (governments + employers + workers), became a UN specialised agency in 1946, is based in **Geneva**, and won the **Nobel Peace Prize (1969)**.
- India is a **founding member**; the ILO has **187 members** and **10 fundamental Conventions**.
- India has **not ratified** Conventions **No. 87** (Freedom of Association) and **No. 98** (Collective Bargaining) — two of the core eight.
- Framework: the **Decent Work Agenda** and the **1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles & Rights at Work**.
- India's **Code on Social Security, 2020** is one of the **four Labour Codes** (Wages; Industrial Relations; OSH; Social Security) — it first defined 'gig' and 'platform' worker.
- Support systems: the **e-SHRAM** portal (2021) for unorganised workers; the **NITI Aayog gig-economy report (2022)**; and **Rajasthan's Platform-Based Gig Workers Act (2023)**.
- World Bank estimate: **154-435 million** platform workers globally; **~23.5 million** will be Indian by 2030.

SPORTS

Commonwealth Games 2026 (Glasgow) & More

AG

Athletics — Gulveer Singh: Silver, Men's 10,000m

Gulveer Singh clocked **27:49.78** to become the **first Indian man to win a CWG medal in the 10,000m**; Ky Robinson (AUS) took gold (27:48.93).

AG

Weightlifting — Harjinder Kaur: Silver, Women's 69kg

Harjinder Kaur lifted a total of **227kg** for silver behind Canada's Charlotte Simoneau (240kg), improving on her previous CWG bronze.

6

Boxing — Six Indians in the Semifinals

India assured **at least 10 boxing medals** as six pugilists reached the semis: **Sakshi Chaudhary** (51kg), **Arundhati Choudhary** (70kg), **Jaismine Lamboria** (57kg), **Sachin Siwach** (60kg), **Ankush Panghal** (80kg) and **Narender Berwal** (90+kg).

TT

Table Tennis & Track — Finals & Qualifications

India's **men's and women's TT teams** reached the team finals (vs Malaysia). In athletics/throws, **Tajinderpal Singh Toor** (20.14m) and **Samardeep Singh Gill** made the shot-put final and **Animesh Kujur** qualified for the 200m semis.

GR

Records & Other Games Highlights

Cameroon's **Emmanuel Eseme** won the men's 100m in a Games-record **9.83s**; New Zealand's **Zoe Hobbs** took the women's 100m. Australia dominated the pool (28 golds).

★ CRICKET & FOOTBALL IN BRIEF

- **Duleep Trophy:** Ishan Kishan to lead East Zone (from 23 Aug, Bengaluru).
- **India Test squad (Sri Lanka tour):** uncapped off-spinner **Saransh Jain** named; **Ravindra Jadeja** returns; fitness doubts over **Sai Sudharsan & Jasprit Bumrah**. India unbeaten in Test series in Sri Lanka since 2008.
- **IPL:** Ryan ten Doeschate returns to **KKR** as head of cricket strategy.
- **Durand Cup:** Indian Air Force FT beat Defenders FC 2-1.
- **Wimbledon 2026:** record attendance of **5,50,151**.

MISCELLANY

News in Shorts · Persons & Places in News

GOVERNANCE **Delhi's Two Citizen-Service Bills**

The Delhi Assembly is set to table the **Ease of Doing Business Bill, 2026** and the **Right of Citizen to Time-Bound & Ease of Delivery of Service Bill, 2026** (a fine of ₹250/day, cap ₹5,000, for delayed services) in the Monsoon Session.

ENVIRONMENT **Yamuna: DJB Clears ₹4,500-crore Rejuvenation**

The Delhi Jal Board approved Yamuna projects worth ~₹4,500 crore, including **15 decentralised sewage treatment plants (DSTPs)**, aiming to raise treatment capacity toward **1,041 MGD**, plus revival of the **Wazirabad pondage**.

GOVERNANCE **HYDRAA in the Spotlight (Telangana)**

The Telangana HC ordered replacement of the **HYDRAA** chief; the anti-encroachment agency has reclaimed **3,325 acres** of public land (lakes, drains, parks) in two years — raising a debate on institutions vs individuals in tackling the real-estate mafia.

RIGHTS / IP **Salman Khan Personality Rights**

The Delhi HC ordered removal of the teaser of the proposed film *Kala Hiran*, holding it *prima facie* violated actor **Salman Khan's personality rights**.

AGRICULTURE **MP Hikes Green-Gram Procurement**

Madhya Pradesh raised green-gram (moong) procurement from **25% to 60%** of a farmer's crop after protests; the MSP e-token system was temporarily suspended pending reform.

ANSWER-WRITING PRACTICE

Mains Questions

MAINS Q1 · GS-III**10 MARKS**

The grant of ex post facto environmental clearances undermines the precautionary principle and prior appraisal. In light of the Supreme Court's recent judgment, critically examine why environmental safeguards cannot be diluted through executive instructions.

ANSWER POINTERS

- Define prior EC (EIA 2006 / EP Act 1986) & the precautionary principle.
- Court's logic: an OM cannot supplant delegated legislation; amnesty must be rare, finite, class-confined.
- 'Pollute-and-then-pay' vs sustainable development; Article 142 as a narrow exception.
- Balance: protecting ongoing public projects (prospective effect) vs deterring wilful violations.

MAINS Q2 · GS-III**15 MARKS**

"Theatre-isation is not the problem; assuming it comes at no cost is." Discuss the risks of integrating India's military commands and suggest a framework to safeguard operational readiness during the transition.

ANSWER POINTERS

- Rationale for theatre commands (jointness, two-front challenge); CDS/DMA architecture.
- Transition risks: knowledge gap, service-culture friction, slower decisions.
- Comparative lessons: China (2016), U.S. Goldwater-Nichols (1986).
- Framework: readiness metrics, standards, mechanisms (Readiness Council) & a reserve hedge.

MAINS Q3 · GS-II / III**15 MARKS**

India's abstention from ILO Convention No. 193 reflects the tension between labour-market flexibility and worker protection in the platform economy. Discuss the adequacy of India's social-security framework for gig workers.

ANSWER POINTERS

- Scale of the gig economy (NITI Aayog) & low social-security coverage.
- What Convention 193 offers: rights floor, algorithmic transparency, correct classification.
- India's framework: Code on Social Security 2020 (aggregator levy) & State laws (Rajasthan 2023).
- Way forward: operationalise the welfare fund, portable social security, data safeguards.

TEST YOURSELF

Prelims MCQs

Q1. The 2021 Office Memorandum recently quashed by the Supreme Court dealt with:

- (a) Retrospective (ex post facto) environmental clearances
- (b) Coastal Regulation Zone relaxations
- (c) Merger of State pollution boards
- (d) Forest clearance waiver for defence projects

Q2. Consider the following about the SC judgment on environmental clearances:

1. The 2006 EIA Notification was upheld as mandatory.
2. The Centre may still grant ex post facto clearance via administrative orders.
3. The Court's Article 142 power was preserved.

Which are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Q3. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 provides for:

- (a) Investigation in 2 months and trial in 3 months
- (b) Mandatory computer-adaptive testing
- (c) Abolition of the NTA
- (d) A uniform national entrance exam

Q4. Vande Mataram, protected under the recent Bill, was:

- (a) Penned by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1875); adopted as National Song in 1937
- (b) Written by Rabindranath Tagore in 1911
- (c) Adopted as the National Anthem in 1950
- (d) First sung at the 1929 Lahore session

Q5. The 'Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026' proposes tariffs on:

- (a) The top five purchasers of Russian oil & gas
- (b) All G20 members
- (c) Only NATO non-members
- (d) Arms exporters to Russia

Q6. The 2026 BRICS Summit that Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin are expected to attend will be held in:

- (a) New Delhi
- (b) Kazan
- (c) Johannesburg
- (d) Rio de Janeiro

Q7. Which ILO Conventions has India NOT ratified?

1. No. 87 (Freedom of Association)
2. No. 98 (Collective Bargaining)
3. No. 190 (Violence & Harassment)

- (a) 1, 2 and 3
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1 and 3 only

Q8. With respect to India's R&D data (2021-22 to 2023-24):

1. R&D crossed 0.8% of GDP for the first time since 2009-10.
2. Private industry funded over half of national R&D by 2023-24.

- (a) Both 1 and 2
- (b) 1 only
- (c) 2 only
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q9. 'E20' fuel refers to a blend of:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (a) 20% ethanol and 80% petrol | (b) 20% petrol and 80% ethanol |
| (c) 20% biodiesel and 80% diesel | (d) 20% CNG and 80% petrol |

Q10. The CWRC and CWMA are institutions associated with:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (a) The Cauvery water dispute | (b) Coastal zone management |
| (c) Coal-block allocation | (d) Carbon market regulation |

Q11. 'Theatre-isation' of the armed forces refers to:

- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) Merging single-service commands into integrated theatre commands | (b) Building new border cantonments |
| (c) Privatising ordnance factories | (d) Rotating officers across foreign postings |

Q12. Consider the tiger conservation facts:

1. India hosts nearly 70% of the world's wild tigers.
2. Nepal was the first nation to double its tigers under the Tx2 goal.
Which is/are correct?

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| (a) Both 1 and 2 | (b) 1 only |
| (c) 2 only | (d) Neither 1 nor 2 |

◆ **ANSWER KEY** ◆

Q1
(a)

Q2
(a)

Q3
(a)

Q4
(a)

Q5
(a)

Q6
(a)

Q7
(a)

Q8
(a)

Q9
(a)

Q10
(a)

Q11
(a)

Q12
(a)

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