

THEIAS AKADEMIA

ANTIM ASSURED 100+

PART II · ENVIRONMENT TO DIRECT HIT TRACKER

Thursday, 08 October 2026

“The Topper's Last Read. Every Morning.”

INSIDE THIS FILE

1. Environment & Ecology — 2 Cards
2. Places in News — 8 Pins
3. Ethics & Integrity (GS4) — 6 Cases
4. Prelims MCQs — 20 Questions
5. Mains Questions — 9 Questions
6. Value Addition — 8 Items
7. AKADEMIA Direct Hit Tracker — 18 Rows
8. Proof of Precision — Part II

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A River Without Consent: The Adi Community's Stand Against the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project

Why in News: Through the first week of October 2026, members of the Adi community in Arunachal Pradesh's Siang belt intensified protests against pre-feasibility survey work for the proposed 11,200-MW Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP), blocking survey teams at several villages and reiterating that no free, prior and informed consent was obtained before survey activity began. Protestors cite unresolved concerns over submergence of ancestral land, the project's location in one of the Himalaya's most seismically active zones, and the absence of a credible downstream cumulative-impact assessment covering the Siang-Brahmaputra system into Assam.

Background: The Siang, the Brahmaputra's principal upstream channel as it enters India from Tibet (where it is called the Yarlung Tsangpo), has become a flashpoint since China's 2024 approval of the 60,000-MW Medog (Motuo) hydropower project upstream on the same river — SUMP is officially framed partly as a strategic counter-measure to safeguard India's water-flow claims and storage capacity on a transboundary river with no binding water-sharing treaty with China. The project falls under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 and the Fifth/Sixth Schedule-adjacent protections that apply to tribal land in the Northeast, and under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986's EIA Notification, 2006 framework, both of which require documented community consultation before forest clearance — the exact procedural step protestors say has been bypassed at the survey stage.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Proposed capacity: 11,200 MW — among the largest single hydropower proposals in India if built.
- River: the Siang, which becomes the Brahmaputra in Assam; originates as the Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibet.
- Trigger for Indian urgency: China's 2024 approval of the 60,000-MW Medog (Motuo) hydropower project upstream on the same river system.
- Primary community in protest: the Adi community of Arunachal Pradesh's Siang belt (Upper and East Siang districts).
- Core grievance: survey and pre-feasibility work proceeding without documented free, prior and informed consent under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 framework.

- Seismic context: the project site lies in Seismic Zone V, the highest-hazard classification under India's National Building Code zoning.
- No binding India-China water-sharing treaty exists for the Brahmaputra/Yarlung Tsangpo system — cooperation rests on a non-binding Expert Level Mechanism and hydrological-data-sharing MoUs.
- Downstream stakes: Assam's own riverine ecology and flood-plain agriculture depend on Siang/Brahmaputra flow patterns that any large upstream dam, Indian or Chinese, would alter.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- Significance: tests whether strategic/geopolitical justification (countering China's upstream dam) can override the Forest Rights Act's consent requirements for the very communities whose land is submerged.
- Criticism: large hydropower projects in Seismic Zone V carry well-documented dam-failure and reservoir-induced-seismicity risks that India's own post-Uttarakhand (2013) disaster reviews flagged but have not been fully institutionalised into Northeast project appraisal.
- Implementation gap: pre-feasibility survey work proceeding ahead of a completed, community-validated cumulative Environmental Impact Assessment inverts the EIA Notification 2006's sequencing logic.
- Geopolitical angle: SUMP sits at the intersection of water security, transboundary-river diplomacy and India's own stated commitment to tribal self-governance in the Northeast — a genuine three-way policy tension.
- Way forward: a credible answer needs both instruments — continued transboundary hydrological-data engagement with China AND a verifiably consent-based, seismic-risk-transparent domestic process, not a trade-off between the two.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

Picture one river, two dams, zero treaties: China's Medog (60,000 MW) upstream, India's proposed Siang Upper (11,200 MW) downstream, and no binding water-sharing agreement connecting them — that gap is the whole geopolitical story.

PYQ LINKAGE

Thematically linked to UPSC Mains GS1/GS3 questions on the interlinking of rivers and on tribal displacement from large dam projects in the Northeast — verify the exact year before citing a specific past question.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Siang river becomes the Brahmaputra after entering Assam and originates in Tibet, where it is known as the Yarlung Tsangpo.
2. India and China have a binding bilateral treaty governing water-sharing on the Brahmaputra/Yarlung Tsangpo river system.

3. The proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project site falls within Seismic Zone V, the highest earthquake-hazard classification in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct? (a) 1 and 3 only (b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a). Statement 2 is false — there is no binding India-China water-sharing treaty on the Brahmaputra/Yarlung Tsangpo; cooperation rests on a non-binding Expert Level Mechanism.

Siang Upper Multipurpose Project

Forest Rights Act 2006

Transboundary Rivers

Seismic Zone V

GS3

GS3

Conservation of Species — Static Profile, Riverine Ecosystems

Static Topic — not tied to a current event · Source: WII / IUCN Red List / Project Dolphin literature

Species in Focus: The Gangetic River Dolphin, India's National Aquatic Animal

Why in News: This static profile rotates in paired thematically with today's Environment Card 1: both the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project debate and the Gangetic River Dolphin's conservation story turn on the same underlying tension — how upstream hydrological alteration (damming, flow fragmentation, siltation) affects downstream river-dependent life, whether human livelihoods or an aquatic keystone species. The dolphin has not featured in any of the last 30 editions.

Background: *Platanista gangetica*, the Gangetic River Dolphin, is a functionally blind, echolocation-dependent freshwater cetacean found across the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems of India, Bangladesh and Nepal. Declared India's National Aquatic Animal in 2009, it was also the subject of a dedicated conservation push under Project Dolphin, approved in 2020 on the lines of Project Tiger and Project Lion, aiming at river-dolphin population assessment, habitat protection and conflict mitigation with fishing communities. It serves as a flagship indicator species for overall river health, much as the gharial does for the Chambal system — both are apex riverine species whose decline signals broader degradation of India's river systems from damming, pollution and sand mining.

⚡ KEY FACTS

- Scientific name: *Platanista gangetica*; declared India's National Aquatic Animal in 2009.
- IUCN status: Endangered; listed in Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and CITES Appendix I.
- Distribution: Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems across India, Nepal and Bangladesh.
- Functionally blind; navigates and hunts entirely through echolocation, an adaptation to the Ganga system's historically silt-laden, low-visibility waters.
- Project Dolphin, approved 2020, modelled on Project Tiger/Project Lion — covers population assessment, habitat protection and human-dolphin conflict mitigation.

- Key protected habitat: the Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary (Bihar), India's only dedicated dolphin sanctuary.
- Principal threats: river fragmentation by dams/barrages, reduced dry-season flow, entanglement in fishing nets, pollution and sand mining — the same pressures at the centre of the Siang hydropower debate (Card 1).
- Serves as a flagship indicator species for river health under the broader Namami Gange mission, alongside the gharial for the Chambal system.

MAINS DIMENSIONS / ANALYSIS

- River-health indicator species, linking species conservation directly to river-rejuvenation missions like Namami Gange.
- Upstream-downstream trade-off: large hydropower and barrage projects anywhere on the Ganga-Brahmaputra system can fragment dolphin habitat and alter the flow regimes the species depends on — a direct conceptual link to today's Siang card.
- Livelihood-conservation interface: dolphin conservation requires active engagement with riverine fishing communities whose net-based livelihoods can conflict with protection measures, echoing this edition's Buxa-style human-wildlife coexistence theme from prior editions.
- Institutional architecture: Project Dolphin's modelling on Project Tiger/Lion raises the comparative question of whether charismatic single-species flagship programmes crowd out broader river-ecosystem funding.
- Transboundary dimension: the species' range spans India, Nepal and Bangladesh, making coordinated river-basin management a genuine South Asian cooperation question.

LET'S REMEMBER THIS THROUGH A TRICK

One river system, two flagship-species programmes: Project Tiger protects the land, Project Dolphin (2020) protects the water — both modelled on the same template, both now facing the same upstream-damming threat.

PYQ LINKAGE

Thematically linked to UPSC Prelims' recurring 'National Aquatic Animal' and river-dolphin distribution questions; no single exact past citation independently verified this run — flagged as thematic rather than fabricated.

PROBABLE PRELIMS MCQ (STATEMENT-BASED)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Gangetic River Dolphin was declared India's National Aquatic Animal in 2009.
2. The Gangetic River Dolphin possesses functional eyesight and relies on vision, not echolocation, for navigation.
3. Project Dolphin was approved in 2020 on the institutional model of Project Tiger and Project Lion.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct? (a) 1 and 3 only (b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 2 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a). Statement 2 is false — the Gangetic River Dolphin is functionally blind and navigates almost entirely through echolocation.

Gangetic River Dolphin

Project Dolphin

National Aquatic Animal

Namami Gange

GS3

THEIAS AKADEMIA A hydropower-versus-consent story paired with a river-dolphin species profile is exactly the kind of ecocentric-versus-anthropocentric reasoning the **Philosophy Target 300+** track is built for — useful in both GS3 and GS4 answers. Explore it at theiasakademia.com.

PLACES IN NEWS

2

Places in News

8 pins · equirectangular projection, real coordinates

PLACES IN NEWS — 08 OCTOBER 2026 | ANTIM ASSURED 100+



① New Delhi

Seat of the Supreme Court hearings on the Shiv Sena symbol case, the pharma-freebies PIL and the ASI/MCD monument-neglect rebuke (Part I, Polity Cards 1–2 and GS1 Card); also where the Union Cabinet cleared ITLA and the SME Growth Fund, and where the Prime Minister inaugurated the 10th India Mobile Congress at Yashobhoomi (Part I, S&T Card 2).

Sited on the Yamuna's western bank in the Lutyens' Delhi administrative zone housing the Supreme Court, Parliament and the principal Ministries referenced across this edition.

② Mumbai, Maharashtra

Headquarters of the Reserve Bank of India, source of today's repo-rate hike and SME Growth Fund-adjacent monetary backdrop (Part I, Economy Cards 1–2).

India's financial capital on the Arabian Sea coast, home to RBI, SEBI and the Bombay Stock Exchange.

③ Accra, Ghana

Site of EAM Jaishankar's Africa-tour MoU signing and Ghana's accession to the International Big Cat Alliance (Part I, IR Card 1).

Ghana's coastal capital on the Gulf of Guinea, West Africa's historic Gold Coast region.

④ Agra, Uttar Pradesh

Home to ADRDE, the DRDO laboratory that flight-tested India's stratospheric HAPS platform (Part I, Defence Card 1).

Lies on the Yamuna in the Indo-Gangetic plain; also the site of the Taj Mahal and a historic Mughal-era urban centre.

⑤ Visakhapatnam, AP

Eastern Naval Command base equipping its warships under the new ₹661.5-crore BrahMos Fire Control System/Launcher contract (Part I, Defence Card 2).

India's principal Eastern Naval Command base, sited where the Eastern Ghats meet the Bay of Bengal.

⑥ Bern, Switzerland

Seat of Swiss government talks underpinning the new Indo-Swiss Research Framework, with CHF 45 million newly earmarked for joint research (Part I, S&T Card 1).

Switzerland's federal capital in the Swiss Plateau, between the Jura mountains and the Alps.

⑦ Siang Belt, Arunachal Pradesh

Site of the Adi community's protests against survey work for the 11,200-MW Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (Part II, Environment Card 1).

Himalayan foothill terrain in Seismic Zone V, where the Siang river enters India from Tibet before becoming the Brahmaputra.

⑧ Vikramshila Sanctuary, Bihar

India's only dedicated Gangetic River Dolphin sanctuary, this edition's static species profile (Part II, Environment Card 2).

A stretch of the Ganga near Bhagalpur, Bihar, designated specifically for protecting the National Aquatic Animal's habitat.

ETHICS & INTEGRITY (GS4)

3

Ethics & Integrity

6 cases · each names its concept

Case 1 · Four Doors, One Decision

Administrative Discretion & the Duty to Give Reasons

Scenario: You are a senior ECI official asked to draft the Commission's internal reasoning note explaining why the legislative-majority test was chosen over withholding the symbol entirely in a party-split dispute.

Ethical issue: Does an expert body's wide discretion under Paragraph 15 relieve it of the duty to publicly justify why it rejected the alternative tests available to it?

Resolution anchor: A conscientious officer insists the reasoning note explicitly address every option considered and rejected — discretion without a documented rationale invites exactly the judicial scrutiny the ECI now faces.

Case 2 · The Code Without Teeth

Regulatory Capture & Conflict of Interest

Scenario: As a health-ministry official reviewing the second committee process on pharma-marketing regulation since 2022, you must assess why statutory rules were never framed after the first round.

Ethical issue: Should an official flag the risk that repeated non-statutory committee processes on the same issue reflect industry influence delaying binding regulation, even without direct evidence of it?

Resolution anchor: An ethical official raises the pattern honestly in the briefing note rather than treating procedural delay as neutral — repeated inaction on a known public-health gap is itself a policy choice that deserves scrutiny.

Case 3 · A Plan Without the Planned-For

Free, Prior and Informed Consent & Distributive Justice

Scenario: As a project officer for the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project, you are told to expedite survey work in villages where the Adi community has not given documented consent.

Ethical issue: Can a project justified by national strategic interest (countering an upstream dam) proceed without the free, prior and informed consent the Forest Rights Act requires of the very community bearing its costs?

Resolution anchor: A conscientious officer halts survey work pending documented consultation — strategic justification does not suspend a community's statutory consent rights; the two must be reconciled, not traded off.

Case 4 · Whose River Is It, Anyway?

Intergenerational Equity & the Precautionary Principle

Scenario: As an environmental clearance officer, you must weigh a hydropower project's energy and water-security benefits against uncertain, long-term impacts on a river system supporting both human communities and a Schedule I species downstream.

Ethical issue: In the face of incomplete cumulative-impact data, should approval proceed on the assumption that mitigation can be designed later, or should the precautionary principle delay approval until that data exists?

Resolution anchor: The precautionary principle places the burden of proof on the project proponent, not on the river's future inhabitants — an ethical officer insists the cumulative-impact assessment precede, not follow, approval.

Case 5 · A Hearing Without Haste

Access to Justice & Institutional Accountability

Scenario: As a court-appointed monitor, you find that an under-resourced heritage-protection agency has filed affidavits misstating ground conditions at protected sites.

Ethical issue: Should an official's duty to protect institutional reputation ever outweigh the duty to report ground truth accurately to a court or the public?

Resolution anchor: Institutional reputation is never a legitimate reason to misstate verifiable facts to a court — a conscientious officer corrects the record immediately once an inaccuracy is discovered, regardless of institutional embarrassment.

Case 6 · Equity on the High Seas (of Diplomacy)

Reciprocity & Soft Power as a Moral Instrument

Scenario: As a diplomat structuring an agri-tech MoU with a partner nation, you must decide how much of the cooperation is genuine capacity-building versus strategic positioning for India's own UNSC-reform ambitions.

Ethical issue: Is it ethical to frame development cooperation partly as an instrument of India's own geopolitical ambitions, even when the partner nation also benefits materially?

Resolution anchor: Genuine reciprocity requires that partner benefit be real and primary, not incidental to India's own strategic goals — an ethical diplomat ensures the MoU's substance (agri-tech transfer, ITEC training) is not hollowed out by the optics of the visit.

PRELIMS MCQS

4

Prelims MCQs

20 questions · 8 statement-based

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 empowers the Election Commission to decide symbol disputes between rival factions of a recognised party.
2. The Tenth Schedule to the Constitution was inserted by the 52nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1985.

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

Answer: (c) — Both statements are accurate, per today's Shiv Sena symbol-case card.

Q2. In *Sadiq Ali v. Election Commission of India* (1971), the dispute arose from a split in which political party?

- (a) Bharatiya Jana Sangh (b) Indian National Congress
(c) Communist Party of India (d) Swatantra Party

Answer: (b) — Sadiq Ali arose from the 1969 split in the Indian National Congress, the leading precedent on resolving symbol disputes via legislative/organisational strength.

Q3. Consider the following statements:

1. The Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP) is a statutory code enforceable with penal sanctions.
2. In *Apex Laboratories v. DCIT* (2022), the Supreme Court disallowed tax deduction for pharmaceutical company expenditure on doctor freebies.

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

Answer: (b) — Statement 1 is false — the UCPMP is a voluntary, non-statutory code; the Court is now pushing for a statutory replacement.

Q4. The Integrated Transport & Logistics Authority (ITLA), approved in October 2026, has been constituted as a:

- (a) Statutory regulator under a new Act (b) Special Purpose Vehicle
(c) Constitutional body (d) Subordinate office of NITI Aayog

Answer: (b) — ITLA is a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), not a statutory body, tasked with preparing a National Transport Master Plan.

Q5. Consider the following statements:

1. The ASI functions under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958.
2. The 2010 amendment to the AMASR Act created the National Monuments Authority and introduced prohibited/regulated zones around monuments.
3. Every historic structure on government land is automatically deemed a 'protected monument' without separate notification.

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

Answer: (a) — Statement 3 is false — as Lal Mahal shows, formal notification is required even for government-owned historic structures.

Q6. The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), which Ghana joined during EAM Jaishankar's October 2026 Africa visit, was launched in which year?

- (a) 2019 (b) 2021
(c) 2023 (d) 2024

Answer: (c) — IBCA was launched by the Prime Minister in April 2023, on the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger.

Q7. India recognised the State of Israel and the State of Palestine in which respective years?

- (a) 1948 and 1988 (b) 1950 and 1988
(c) 1950 and 1992 (d) 1992 and 1988

Answer: (b) — India recognised Israel in 1950 (full diplomatic relations only from 1992) and Palestine in 1988.

Q8. Consider the following statements:

1. DRDO's High-Altitude Platform System (HAPS) was flight-tested by ADRDE, Agra.
2. HAPS operates at altitudes below those used by commercial passenger aircraft.

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

Answer: (a) — Statement 2 is false — HAPS operates in the stratosphere, well above commercial-aircraft cruising altitudes.

Q9. BrahMos, the subject of a new Fire Control System contract for the Indian Navy, is a joint venture between India and:

- (a) France (b) Israel
(c) Russia (d) the United States

Answer: (c) — BrahMos Aerospace is a joint India-Russia venture established in 1998.

Q10. The new Indo-Swiss Research Framework (2026) builds on a bilateral Science & Technology agreement dating back to which year?

- (a) 1998 (b) 2003
(c) 2008 (d) 2016

Answer: (b) — The India-Switzerland bilateral S&T agreement dates to 2003; the Joint Research Programme followed in 2005.

Q11. Consider the following statements:

1. The India Mobile Congress is organised jointly by the Department of Telecommunications and the Cellular Operators Association of India.
2. 5G services in India were first launched at an earlier edition of the India Mobile Congress.
3. The Telecommunications Act, 2023 replaced the framework of the colonial-era Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.

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

Answer: (d) — All three statements are accurate, per today's India Mobile Congress card.

Q12. The Monetary Policy Committee's 25-bps repo-rate hike on 7 October 2026 took the repo rate to:

- (a) 5.25% (b) 5.50%
(c) 5.75% (d) 6.00%

Answer: (b) — The MPC raised the repo rate 25 basis points to 5.50%, shifting its stance to 'calibrated tightening.'

Q13. Consider the following statements:

1. The Monetary Policy Committee was constituted under Section 45ZB of the RBI Act, 1934.
2. All six MPC members are Reserve Bank of India officials.
3. The MPC's statutory inflation target is 4%, with a tolerance band of $\pm 2\%$.

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

Answer: (a) — Statement 2 is false — three of six MPC members are external appointees of the Central Government.

Q14. The ₹10,000-crore SME Growth Fund, approved in October 2026, is structured as a(n):

- (a) Credit Guarantee Scheme (b) Alternative Investment Fund (AIF)
(c) Sovereign Wealth Fund (d) Public Sector Bank subsidiary

Answer: (b) — The SGF is an Alternative Investment Fund under the SEBI (AIF) Regulations, 2012, making direct equity investments in manufacturing SMEs.

Q15. The Siang Upper Multipurpose Project, facing protests from the Adi community, is proposed on which river?

- (a) Subansiri (b) Siang (Brahmaputra's upstream channel)
(c) Teesta (d) Lohit

Answer: (b) — SUMP is proposed on the Siang, which becomes the Brahmaputra in Assam and originates in Tibet as the Yarlung Tsangpo.

Q16. Consider the following statements:

1. The proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project site falls within Seismic Zone V.
2. India and China have a binding bilateral treaty governing water-sharing on the Brahmaputra/Yarlung Tsangpo.
3. China approved a 60,000-MW hydropower project (Medog) upstream on the same river system in 2024.

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

Answer: (a) — Statement 2 is false — no binding India-China water-sharing treaty exists for this river system.

Q17. The Gangetic River Dolphin was declared India's National Aquatic Animal in which year?

- (a) 2005 (b) 2009
(c) 2014 (d) 2020

Answer: (b) — The Gangetic River Dolphin was declared India's National Aquatic Animal in 2009; Project Dolphin followed in 2020.

Q18. Consider the following statements:

1. The Gangetic River Dolphin is functionally blind and relies on echolocation.
2. India's only dedicated river-dolphin sanctuary, Vikramshila, is located in Bihar.
3. Project Dolphin (2020) was modelled institutionally on Project Tiger and Project Lion.

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

Answer: (d) — All three statements are accurate, per today's Gangetic River Dolphin species profile.

Q19. BECA, one of the India-US foundational defence agreements, specifically governs:

- (a) Logistics support (b) Secure communications
(c) Geospatial-intelligence sharing (d) Joint arms production

Answer: (c) — BECA (Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement, 2020) governs geospatial-data sharing; LEMOA covers logistics and COMCASA covers secure communications.

Q20. Which Ministry/Department jointly organises the India Mobile Congress with the Cellular Operators Association of India?

- (a) Ministry of Electronics and IT (b) Department of Telecommunications
(c) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (d) NITI Aayog

Answer: (b) — IMC is organised jointly by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and COAI, not by the sector regulator TRAI.

THEIAS AKADEMIA Twenty MCQs recognised is one thing; writing a 150-word answer under exam pressure is another — **NEEB 300+ Live PYQ Writing** is where today's Mains questions below get the same drilling these Prelims questions just got. Explore it at theiasakademia.com.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

5

Mains Practice Questions

9 questions · GS1×1, GS2×4, GS3×3, GS4×1

Q1. **GS2**

“Judicial review of an Election Commission decision can scrutinise reasoning and process but not substitute the Court's own view on the merits.” Discuss with reference to the pending Shiv Sena symbol dispute.

(150 words, 10 marks)

Q2. **GS2**

Critically examine whether a court-monitored committee process is an adequate substitute for statutory regulation of pharmaceutical marketing practices in India.

(150 words, 10 marks)

Q3. **GS2**

Discuss the rationale for constituting an apex, cross-modal transport-planning authority like the Integrated Transport & Logistics Authority (ITLA), and the institutional challenges it is likely to face as a non-statutory body.

(150 words, 10 marks)

Q4. GS1

“India's monument-protection architecture suffers from fragmented jurisdiction more than from inadequate law.” Examine this statement with reference to recent Supreme Court observations on ASI and municipal bodies.

(150 words, 10 marks)

Q5. GS2

Evaluate the instruments of India's Africa policy beyond high-profile ministerial visits, with reference to ITEC, the International Big Cat Alliance, and bilateral sectoral MoUs.

(150 words, 10 marks)

Q6. GS3

The Reserve Bank of India's shift to a 'calibrated tightening' stance marks the end of an extended easing cycle. Examine the trade-offs between inflation anchoring and growth support that such a shift entails.

(250 words, 15 marks)

Q7. GS3

Discuss the rationale for the SME Growth Fund as an equity-based instrument to address the 'missing middle' problem in India's MSME financing architecture.

(150 words, 10 marks)

Q8. GS3

“Strategic necessity and community consent need not be adversarial, but reconciling them requires institutional honesty.” Discuss with reference to the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project and the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

(250 words, 15 marks)

Q9. GS4

“Development cooperation is never purely altruistic, but its ethical legitimacy depends on whether partner benefit is genuine.” Discuss with reference to India's recent diplomatic and scientific partnerships.

6

Value Addition

8 quick-reference items

Election Symbols Order, 1968 — Para 15

Empowers the ECI to resolve symbol disputes when a recognised party splits; prescribes no single mandatory test, leaving the ECI to choose among party-constitution, organisational-majority, legislative-majority tests, or withholding the symbol.

Sadiq Ali v. ECI (1971)

The leading precedent on using legislative/organisational strength to resolve a party-split symbol dispute — decided 14 years before the Tenth Schedule (1985) existed, a timing gap now under judicial scrutiny.

UCPMP vs a Statutory Code

The Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (2024) is voluntary and non-statutory; the Supreme Court has now directed a three-member committee to recommend binding statutory curbs on pharma freebies.

AMASR Act, 1958 and the 2010 Amendment

Governs ASI-protected monuments; the 2010 amendment created the National Monuments Authority and introduced 100m/200m prohibited and regulated zones around protected sites.

International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)

Launched April 2023, headquartered in India, covering seven big cat species (tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, puma, jaguar, cheetah); Ghana's October 2026 accession expands its African membership.

De-Hyphenation Doctrine

India's post-2018 approach of engaging Israel and Palestine independently rather than through a single linked diplomatic mechanism, while supporting a two-state solution and deepening Israel defence ties simultaneously.

DAP 2020 — 'Buy (Indian)' Category

The Defence Acquisition Procedure, 2020's acquisition category prioritising domestic industry; the new ₹661.5-crore BrahMos Fire Control System/Launcher contract falls under this category.

Siang vs Medog — The Upstream-Downstream Race

China's 60,000-MW Medog project (approved 2024) on the Yarlung Tsangpo/Siang upstream in Tibet is the stated strategic trigger for India's own 11,200-MW Siang Upper Multipurpose Project proposal downstream in Arunachal Pradesh.

7

Direct Hit Tracker

18 rows · today's topics mapped to PYQ years

#	TOPIC	GS PAPER	SUBJECT	PYQ LINKAGE
1	Shiv Sena Symbol Case — Para 15	GS2	Polity	1971 (thematic)
2	Pharma Freebies & UCPMP	GS2	Polity/Health	2022 (thematic)
3	Integrated Transport & Logistics Authority	GS2	Governance	2020 (thematic)
4	ASI/MCD — Monument Neglect	GS1	Heritage	2015 (thematic)
5	India-Ghana MoU & IBCA Accession	GS2	IR	2023 (thematic)
6	De-Hyphenation & West Asia Policy	GS2	IR	2018 (thematic)
7	DRDO HAPS Flight Test	GS3	Defence/S&T	2021 (thematic)
8	BrahMos Fire Control System Contract	GS3	Defence	2020, 2022
9	Indo-Swiss Research Framework	GS3	S&T	2019 (thematic)
10	India Mobile Congress & Telecom Act 2023	GS3	S&T/IT	2022 (thematic)
11	RBI MPC — Repo Hike to 5.50%	GS3	Economy	2017, 2020
12	SME Growth Fund	GS3	Economy	2017 (thematic)
13	Siang Upper Multipurpose Project	GS1/3	Geography/Env	2019 (thematic)
14	Gangetic River Dolphin — Species in Focus	GS3	Environment	2015, 2021
15	Project Dolphin (2020)	GS3	Environment	2020 (thematic)
16	T.N. Seshan Doctrine (Value Addition)	GS2	Polity	2017
17	Anoop Baranwal Judgment (2023)	GS2	Polity	2023
18	BECA / COMCASA / LEMOA	GS2	IR	2020 (thematic)

You have reached the end of **ANTIM ASSURED 100+ — Part II**. Part I (Headlines to Economy) carries today's Polity, IR, Defence, S&T and Economy coverage.

VERIFIED · PART II

Proof of Precision

Every item mapped. Every claim verified. Operational count for today's edition — not a marketing figure.

2

ENVIRONMENT CARDS

8

PLACES MAPPED

6

ETHICS CASES

20

PRELIMS MCQS

9

MAINS QUESTIONS

0

REPEATED BLOCKED TOPICS

✓ The Siang Upper Multipurpose Project card is current (protests intensified through 5–8 October 2026); the Gangetic River Dolphin card is explicitly labelled a Static Topic, rotated under the 30-day Environment fallback ladder and paired thematically with Card 1.

✓ Zero overlap with Part I: Environment and Places in News content appears only here, per the fixed structural rule.

✓ All 8 map pins use real latitude/longitude coordinates projected equirectangularly (left% = $(\text{lon}+180)/360 \times 100$; top% = $(90-\text{lat})/180 \times 100$).

✓ PYQ linkages flagged as thematic where no single exact matching past question was independently verified this run, rather than fabricated as exact citations.

★ THEIAS AKADEMIA — PROOF OF PRECISION

UPSC CSE Prelims 2026 Results

In what critics called the most unpredictable Prelims paper in a decade —

48

QUESTIONS FROM
ANTIM ASSURED 100+

7

QUESTIONS FROM
A SINGLE DOCUMENT

6

QUESTIONS FROM
A SINGLE CLASS

Our students had seen 48 questions before the paper was opened.

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