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EDITORIALS DECODED FOR UPSC



Home and abroad

The Modi Europe visit may pave the way for collaboration on energy security



Putin, Xi, and a growing asymmetry



Power equation

Peak demand being capably met, but storage important

New Inclusion



**PYQ
COMPASS**
UPSC PREVIOUS YEARS QUESTIONS

Practice questions

A dedicated section featuring UPSC-style Prelims and Mains practice questions based on the major issues, concepts, and debates discussed in today's newspaper.

Full coverage of mains and prelims dimensions with every topic

Parents, students challenge CBSE three-language rule for Class 9

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has made the study of three languages compulsory for Class 9 students from July 1, 2026, with at least two being native Indian languages. The move aligns the secondary curriculum with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) syllabus and the recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020 and National Curriculum Framework for School Education 2023. The issue is significant because it concerns language policy, federal sensitivities, educational equity, implementation challenges, and the balance between multilingualism and student burden.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

Three-Language Formula (TLF)

Educational policy requiring students to learn three languages during schooling

Objective : Promote multilingualism, national integration, cognitive development, and preservation of Indian languages

Origin : Recommended by the Kothari Commission (1964–66)

Current CBSE Provision : Three languages mandatory in Class 9; at least two must be native Indian languages.

To reduce academic pressure on students, CBSE has decided that the third language (R3) will not have a Class 10 board examination and will instead be assessed internally by schools.

Constitutional & Legal Provisions on Language

Article 29 : Protection of linguistic and cultural minorities

Article 30 : Rights of minorities to establish educational institutions

Article 343 : Hindi as official language of the Union

Articles 345–347 : Powers of states regarding official languages

Article 350A : Instruction in mother tongue at primary stage for linguistic minorities

Eighth Schedule : Recognises 22 scheduled languages

Concurrent List (Entry 25) : Education falls under shared jurisdiction of Union and States

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) What is the purpose of Vidyanjali Yojana'?

1. To enable the famous foreign educational institutions to open their campuses in India.
2. To increase the quality of education provided in government schools by taking help from the private sector and the community.
3. To encourage voluntary monetary contributions from private individuals and organizations so as to improve the infrastructure facilities for primary and secondary schools. Select the correct answer using the code given below :

a) 2 only b) 3 only c) 1 and 2 only d) 1 and 3 only

Practice questions

1. With reference to the three-language formula under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, consider the following statements:

1. The third language is compulsory for all students up to Class 10 board examination level.
2. CBSE has proposed that at least two of the three languages studied in Class 9 must be native Indian languages.
3. Assessment of the third language at Class 10 level may be conducted internally by schools.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

RELEVANCE

GS II : Issues relating to development and management of Education

Centre promised more legislative powers for Ladakh, says delegation

The Union government has proposed granting Ladakh greater legislative, financial and administrative powers within the existing Union Territory framework through a possible “UT with legislative powers” model. Discussions were held between the Ministry of Home Affairs and representatives of the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), who have sought constitutional safeguards similar to provisions under Article 371 and the Sixth Schedule. The issue is significant because it concerns democratic representation, federalism, border governance, regional autonomy, ecological protection and the constitutional integration of strategically sensitive frontier regions.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

Background of the Ladakh Issue

2019 Reorganisation : Ladakh separated from Jammu & Kashmir and made a Union Territory without legislature

Current Demand : Legislative powers, constitutional safeguards and greater local autonomy

Key Organisations : Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA)

Core Concerns : Land rights, employment, cultural identity, ecological protection and political representation

Arguments Against Ladakh's Statehood

- **Strategic location** : Ladakh's strategic location near China and Pakistan requires stronger central control for national security and border management.
- **Financial dependence** : Ladakh's limited revenue-generating capacity and heavy dependence on central financial assistance makes full statehood administratively and fiscally challenging.
- **Administrative decentralisation** : The government has instead favoured administrative decentralisation through additional districts and local governance mechanisms.

Counter Arguments in Favour of Greater Autonomy

- Administrative decentralisation cannot substitute for democratic representation through an elected legislature with law-making powers.
- Strategic sensitivity should strengthen, rather than weaken, political participation and constitutional integration in border regions.
- Need for local control over land, culture, employment and ecological protection, especially amid increasing infrastructure and renewable energy projects in Ladakh.
- Several Indian states (particularly in the Northeast) rely heavily on central transfers while enjoying full constitutional and legislative powers.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) Discuss whether formation of new states in recent times is beneficial or not for the economy of India.

(GS I : Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country. – 2018)

Practice questions

Q.) Consider the following statements regarding Ladakh:

1. Ladakh became a Union Territory after the abrogation of Article 370.
2. Article 371 provides special constitutional provisions for certain states.
3. The Sixth Schedule currently applies to Ladakh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

RELEVANCE

GS I : Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country



Home and abroad

Narendra Modi visited the United Arab Emirates and several European countries including Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Italy amid growing geopolitical uncertainty and efforts to deepen India-Europe strategic engagement. The visit focused on trade diversification, energy security, green partnerships, AI governance, critical minerals, Arctic cooperation and strengthening a rules-based international order. The 3rd India-Nordic Summit in Oslo elevated India-Nordic relations into a “Trusted Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership”, reflecting expanding cooperation in sustainability, technology and global governance.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

3rd India–Nordic Summit : 2026

Venue : Oslo, Norway (2026)

Previous Summits : Stockholm (2018), Copenhagen (2022)

Participants : India, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Iceland, Sweden

Core Outcome : Elevation to “Trusted Green Technology and Innovation Strategic Partnership”

Major Partnerships and focus points

Sweden : Innovation, clean technology, defence

Norway : Maritime sector, energy, Arctic research

Denmark : Wind energy, shipping

Finland : Education, telecom, digital systems

Iceland : Geothermal energy, Arctic cooperation

Major Themes of the Visit

- India and the Nordic countries expressed concern over rising geopolitical instability caused by conflicts such as the Russia–Ukraine war and tensions in West Asia, along with coercive economic practices affecting global stability.
- The countries reaffirmed their support for a rules–based international order founded on international law, multilateralism, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the principles of the UN Charter.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) Clean energy is the order of the day.' Describe briefly India's changing policy towards climate change in various international fora in the context of geopolitics. (GS II - International Relations - 2022)

Q.) Consider the following countries:

- I. Austria
- II. Bulgaria
- III. Croatia
- IV. Serbia
- V. Sweden
- VI. North Macedonia

How many of the above are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization?

- (a) Only three
- (b) Only four
- (c) Only five
- (d) All the six

Practice questions

Q. With reference to the India–Nordic partnership, consider the following statements:

1. The India–Nordic cooperation framework includes collaboration in green technology, innovation and sustainable development.
2. Nordic countries are important partners for India in areas such as maritime cooperation and Arctic research.
3. The India–Nordic Summit is conducted under the framework of the European Union.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

RELEVANCE

GS II : Global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Putin, Xi, and a growing asymmetry

Vladimir Putin visited China amid deepening Russia-China strategic cooperation and rising global geopolitical competition involving the United States. The visit highlighted expanding economic, technological and geopolitical coordination between Moscow and Beijing, especially after Western sanctions on Russia following the Ukraine conflict. The evolving Russia-China partnership has major implications for the global balance of power, the emerging multipolar order, and India's strategic calculations regarding China, Russia and the US.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

Historical Evolution of Russia–China Relations

1. **Imperial Period** : Russia expanded into Chinese territories during China's "Century of Humiliation"
 2. **Soviet Phase** : Initial communist cooperation after 1949 followed by Sino–Soviet split
 3. **Post–Soviet Phase** : Gradual rapprochement leading to strategic partnership in 1992
- Xi–Putin Era** : Deepening "No–Limits Partnership" since 2022

Treaty of Friendship (1950) : Formal Soviet–China cooperation after Chinese Revolution

Sino–Soviet Split (1960s) : Ideological and geopolitical conflict between USSR and China

1969 Border Clashes : Armed confrontation between China and Soviet Union

Ping–Pong Diplomacy (1971) : US–China rapprochement initiated through sports diplomacy

Key Aspects of Russia–China Relations

- Russia and China have developed a complementary economic relationship : Russia supplies energy, raw materials and defence products, while China provides technology, finance, electronics and manufactured goods.
- Western sanctions imposed after the Ukraine conflict pushed Russia closer to China by reducing Russia's access to Western markets, technology and investment.
- China has emerged as Russia's largest trading partner and a major buyer of Russian energy exports, increasing Russia's economic dependence on Beijing.
- Bilateral trade is increasingly conducted in **yuan and ruble**, reflecting efforts by both countries to **reduce dependence on the US dollar**.
- Although both countries cooperate strategically to promote a multipolar world order and counter Western influence, the growing economic asymmetry has given China greater leverage in the partnership.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) "With the waning of globalization, post–Cold War world is becoming a site of sovereign nationalism." Elucidate. (GS II : Important International institutions, agencies and fora– their structure, mandate – 2025)

Q.) "The USA is facing an existential threat in the form of a China, that is much more challenging than the erstwhile Soviet Union." Explain. (GS II : Important International institutions, agencies and fora– their structure, mandate – 2021)

Practice questions

Q.) Which of the following factors has increased Russia's dependence on China in recent years?

1. Western sanctions following the Ukraine conflict
2. China's role as a major buyer of Russian energy
3. Russia's growing access to Western technology markets

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

RELEVANCE

GS II : Important International institutions, agencies and fora– their structure, mandate.

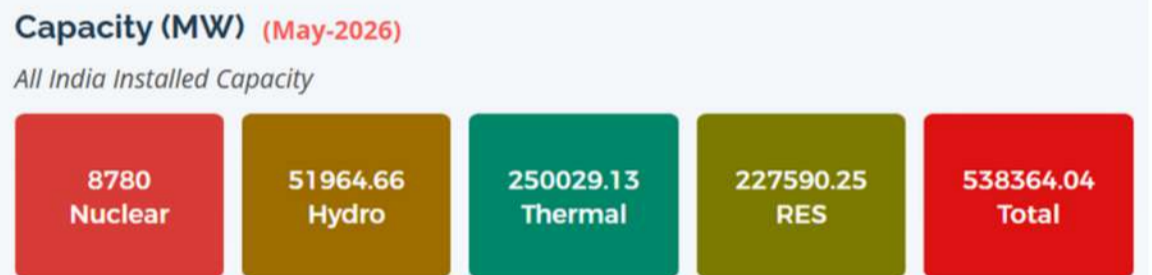
BL Power equation

India's peak electricity demand touched nearly 270 GW during the summer, exposing stress in the power system during evening hours when solar generation declines sharply. While renewable energy, led by solar energy, is increasingly supporting daytime demand, challenges remain in **grid balancing, storage, thermal power flexibility and transmission infrastructure**. The issue highlights India's broader energy transition challenge: ensuring reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity while integrating large-scale renewable energy into the national grid.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

India's Current Power Demand Scenario

- Peak electricity demand reached around 270 GW during summer afternoons and remained high during evening hours due to rising air-conditioner usage.
- Evening peak creates greater stress because solar generation declines after sunset.
- Supply gaps are partly met through captive generators and spot market purchases at high prices.



India's Power Mix and Grid Dynamics

- **Thermal Power** : Provides reliable base-load electricity but cannot quickly adjust output to match changing renewable supply.
- **Solar Power**: Helps meet high daytime demand but generation stops after sunset and depends on sunlight availability.
- **Hydropower** : Useful for quickly increasing or decreasing power supply during peak demand, but depends heavily on water availability and monsoon conditions.
- **Gas-based Power** : Acts as a flexible backup source for balancing sudden demand fluctuations, though fuel availability and costs can be constraints.
- **Wind Power** : Supplies clean renewable energy but power generation varies with wind conditions.
- **Nuclear Power** : Provides stable low-carbon electricity for long durations, but involves high initial costs and long project timelines.

PYQ Compass



Q.) Consider the following statements about 'PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana' : (2025)

I. It targets installation of one crore solar rooftop panels in the residential sector.
 II. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy aims to impart training on installation, operation, maintenance and repairs of solar rooftop systems at grassroot levels. III. It aims to create more than three lakhs skilled manpower through fresh skilling, and up-skilling, under scheme component of capacity building.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) I and II only
 (b) I and III only
 (c) II and III only
 (d) I, II and III

Practice questions

Q.) Consider the following statements regarding India's summer power demand pattern:

1. Solar power substantially supports daytime peak demand.
2. Thermal power plants can be backed down instantly without operational constraints.
3. Hydropower and gas-based plants are useful for rapid ramping during evening demand spikes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

RELEVANCE

GS II : Issues relating to development and management of Education

India, Cyprus elevate bilateral ties to strategic partnership; ink pact for defence cooperation

India and Cyprus elevated their bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership during the visit of President of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Nikos Christodoulides to India. The two sides expanded cooperation in defence, maritime security, trade, connectivity, digital technology and multilateral affairs. The development is significant because it strengthens India's engagement with the Eastern Mediterranean, enhances India-EU connectivity through Cyprus, and supports India's broader geopolitical and economic outreach via initiatives such as IMEEC and India-EU cooperation.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

Key Outcomes of the India–Cyprus Visit

Bilateral Status : Relations elevated to Strategic Partnership

Defence : Roadmap for defence cooperation (2026–31)

Maritime Cooperation : Cooperation in shipping, logistics and maritime security

Connectivity : Support for IMEEC and Eastern Mediterranean connectivity

Technology : Collaboration in AI, cybersecurity, innovation and fintech

Multilateral Cooperation : Coordination in UN, EU and global governance reforms

IMEEC (India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor)

- Multimodal connectivity corridor
- Link India, Middle East and Europe
- Components : Ports, railways, shipping, digital and energy connectivity
- Importance : Diversification of supply chains and strategic connectivity

Cyprus Issue:

- Cyprus has remained divided since the 1974 conflict, with Northern Cyprus being recognised only by Turkey.
- The United Nations supports a peaceful reunification of Cyprus through negotiations and maintains peace through the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus.
- India supports the sovereignty, territorial integrity and peaceful negotiated settlement of the Cyprus issue in accordance with international law and UN resolutions.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) Consider the following pairs: (2019)

Sea Bordering	Country
1. Adriatic Sea	Albania
2. Black Sea	Croatia
3. Caspian Sea	Kazakhstan
4. Mediterranean Sea	Morocco
5. Red Sea	Syria

Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched? a) 1, 2 and 4 only
 b) 1, 3 and 4 only
 c) 2 and 5 only
 d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

RELEVANCE

GS II : Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Practice questions

Q.) The India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) primarily aims to:

- establish a military alliance in West Asia
- connect India, Middle East and Europe through trade and connectivity infrastructure
- replace all maritime routes with railways
- create a common currency area

RBI board approves transfer of ₹2,86,588 cr. surplus to govt.

Reserve Bank of India approved a record surplus transfer of ₹2.86 lakh crore to the Central Government for the accounting year 2025–26, providing significant fiscal support amid global geopolitical uncertainty and rising crude oil prices. At the same time, the RBI sharply increased its **Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB)** to strengthen financial resilience against external shocks. The development is important because it affects fiscal deficit management, government borrowing, financial stability, monetary policy operations and the broader macroeconomic environment.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

RBI Surplus Transfer:

Surplus Transfer (FY26) : ₹2.86 lakh crore

Nature : Transfer of RBI surplus/profits to Central Government

Major Drivers : Forex trading gains, higher global interest income, strong earnings

Fiscal Impact : Improves government fiscal position and spending flexibility

Why RBI Earned Higher Surplus

RBI earned substantial gains through:

- sale of US dollars in the foreign exchange market to stabilise the rupee,
- higher returns on foreign currency assets due to elevated global interest rates,
- income from investments and securities holdings.

The depreciation pressure on the rupee increased RBI intervention in forex markets, generating trading gains.

Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB)

Financial safety cushion maintained by RBI against unexpected risks

Purpose : Protects RBI balance sheet during crises and market instability

Surplus Transfer/Dividend : RBI profit transferred to government

Forex Intervention : RBI buying or selling foreign currency to stabilise exchange rate

Lender of Last Resort : RBI's role in supporting financial institutions during crises

PYQ Compass



Q.) With reference to inflation in India, which of the following statements is correct? (2015)

- Controlling the inflation in India is the responsibility of the Government of India only
- The Reserve Bank of India has no role in controlling the inflation
- Decreased money circulation helps in controlling the inflation
- Increased money circulation helps in controlling the inflation

Practice Questions

Q.) Which of the following best describes the primary purpose of the Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB) maintained by the Reserve Bank of India?

- Providing long-term capital assistance to public sector banks during expansion of credit
- Creating a financial cushion to absorb monetary, financial and operational risks faced by the central bank
- Financing fiscal deficits of the Central Government during periods of economic slowdown
- Stabilising food inflation through direct intervention in commodity markets

RELEVANCE

GS III : Indian Economy - planning, mobilization of resources, growth and development