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DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED

# Daily Quiz — April 18, 2026

18 April 2026



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## DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED ANSWER KEY

# Daily Quiz — April 18, 2026

18 April 2026 · 13 Questions · Answers &amp; Explanations Included

**Question 1**

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The Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill was defeated in the Lok Sabha on April 17, 2026, receiving 298 votes in favour against the 352 required for the special majority. Which of the following correctly describes the constitutional procedural requirement that the Bill failed to meet?

- A Simple majority of total membership in each House — i.e., more than 272 in the Lok Sabha and 122 in the Rajya Sabha
- B Special majority — more than 50% of total membership of each House AND two-thirds of members present and voting ✓**
- C Two-thirds majority of members present and voting in each House — without any minimum quorum-of-total-membership requirement
- D Simple majority in Lok Sabha plus ratification by all 28 state legislatures within 90 days

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

**EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** For amendments affecting representation of states in Parliament (including Article 81 — the seat allocation provision), Article 368(2) requires: (1) **Special majority** in each House — more than 50% of total membership of the House AND two-thirds of members present and voting; AND (2) ratification by at least half of all state legislatures. The 131st Amendment received 298 votes — clearing the 50%-of-membership bar (272) but failing the two-thirds-of-present test (352 if all 528 voted).

**ANALYSIS:** This was the first defeat of a constitutional amendment for the Modi government in 12 years. Following the defeat, the Centre withdrew the accompanying Delimitation Bills.

The Bill is now legislatively dead but the Women's Reservation Act (106th Amendment, 2023) remains in force — its operationalisation continuing to depend on a published-Census-based delimitation.

**CONCEPT NOTE**

Article 368 distinguishes three procedural streams: (1) **Simple majority** — for First Schedule (state/UT list), Second Schedule (salaries), Fifth/Sixth Schedule modifications; (2) **Special majority alone** — most constitutional provisions, fundamental rights, directive principles; (3) **Special majority PLUS state ratification** — provisions affecting federal structure, representation in Parliament (Article 81-82), distribution of legislative powers (Lists I-III), Supreme Court and High Court powers, election of the President. The 131st Amendment fell in stream 3.

Historical precedents needing state ratification: 42nd Amendment (1976), 44th Amendment (1978), 73rd-74th Amendments

(1992, Panchayati Raj), 84th Amendment (2001 — extended delimitation freeze), 101st Amendment (GST). Notably, the 131st defeat did not even reach the state ratification stage — it failed the very first parliamentary hurdle.

**Q1**
 **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing simple majority (for ordinary bills) with special majority (constitutional amendments). The 131st Amendment received 298 votes — more than 272 (50% of 543) but less than 352 (two-thirds of 528 if all present).  
Both conditions must be satisfied **SIMULTANEOUSLY**.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — Polity (Article 368, special majority, federal procedure); GS2 — Polity (Article 81-82, delimitation).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Constitution 131st Amendment defeat, Article 368 special majority, federal-affecting amendments, state ratification requirement, 84th Amendment 2001 delimitation freeze, Nari Shakti Vandan Adhinyam (106th Amendment 2023), Sarkaria Commission, Punchhi Commission.

 **EXAM TIP**

Special majority = more than 50% of TOTAL membership AND two-thirds of present-and-voting. Both conditions are conjunctive (AND), not disjunctive (OR).  
Memorise this.

 **INTERVIEW**

Does the defeat of the 131st Amendment validate India's federal architecture, or does it expose dysfunction in legislating contentious federal questions through majoritarian routes?

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**Question 2**

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India's 100 GW nuclear power roadmap by 2047, announced by the CEA Chairperson, requires several legislative reforms. Which of the following statutes is/are most directly required to be amended for private-sector entry into nuclear power?

- A Atomic Energy Act, 1962 only
- B Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010 only
- C **Both the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 AND the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010** ✓
- D Atomic Energy (Safe Disposal of Radioactive Wastes) Rules only — both the parent Acts already permit private entry

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** For meaningful private-sector entry into India's nuclear power generation, BOTH the **Atomic Energy Act, 1962** and the **Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (CLNDA), 2010** require amendment. The Atomic Energy Act 1962 currently restricts nuclear power generation to government-controlled entities (NPCIL) — making private operation impossible without statutory change.

The CLNDA 2010 has a "right of recourse" provision (Section 17(b)) that allows operators to sue suppliers for latent defects — a deviation from international Vienna Convention/CSC norms that has deterred international suppliers (Westinghouse, GE-Hitachi, EDF Areva). Both Acts must be amended for the 100 GW target.

**ANALYSIS:** The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) also requires statutory backing — currently it operates under executive authority, which is a credibility concern for private operators.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

India's nuclear architecture: **Atomic Energy Commission (AEC)** — apex policy body chaired by Prime Minister; **Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)** — administrative ministry; **NPCIL** — operator of existing 8.8 GW fleet (24 reactors); **BHAVINI** — operates Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor; **AERB** — regulator (executive-mandate, not statutory); **NFC, BARC, IGCAR, AMD** — research and resource arms; **NTI** — fuel transport. India's three-stage programme (Bhabha 1950s): Stage I PHWR (uranium); Stage II FBR (MOX, plutonium-uranium); Stage III thorium.

PFBR Kalpakkam achieved first criticality April 6, 2026 — moving India to Stage II. India holds ~30% of global thorium reserves but only ~1.5% of uranium. India is not an NSG member (China-blocked) but has Civil Nuclear Agreement with USA (2008) under NSG waiver.

**Q2**  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Assuming the Atomic Energy Act 1962 is sufficient — the CLNDA 2010 supplier-recourse provision is the binding deterrent on international suppliers. Both Acts must change.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Science & Technology (nuclear strategy, three-stage programme, AERB); GS2 — Polity (statutory architecture, Atomic Energy Act); GS3 — Economy (energy security, base-load, climate transition).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

NPCIL, BHAVINI, PFBR Kalpakkam, three-stage nuclear programme, Homi Bhabha, PHWR, MOX fuel, thorium reserves, AERB, CLNDA 2010, Atomic Energy Act 1962, Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, Vienna Convention, CSC, India-USA Civil Nuclear Agreement 2008, NSG.

 **EXAM TIP**

The CLNDA 2010 Section 17(b) ("right of recourse" for operator against supplier) is the specific provision that has deterred international suppliers — making it different from international Vienna Convention norms which channel liability exclusively to operators.  
Memorise this distinction.

 **INTERVIEW**

Should India fully align CLNDA with international norms (channelling liability to operators) to attract international nuclear investment, or does Indian sovereign discretion over supplier liability remain a defensible safety provision?

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**Question 3**

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India announced withdrawal of its bid to host COP33 (originally offered at COP28 Dubai, December 2023). The COP framework is part of which broader international architecture, and which of the following correctly identifies India's most recent climate commitments at COP26?

- A Paris Agreement framework only — India committed to 50% emission reduction by 2030 and net-zero by 2050
- B **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) — India committed to 50% non-fossil installed capacity by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2070 ✓**
- C Kyoto Protocol framework only — India committed to absolute emission reduction targets binding under international law
- D Stockholm Conference (1972) framework — India committed to keeping per-capita emissions constant and net-zero by 2080

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** COP (Conference of Parties) is the supreme decision-making body under the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**, adopted at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. The **Paris Agreement (COP21, 2015)** is implemented through the UNFCCC architecture.

At **COP26 (Glasgow, November 2021)**, India committed to: (1) reducing emission intensity by 45% from 2005 levels by 2030; (2) achieving 50% non-fossil installed power capacity by 2030; (3) reaching **net-zero emissions by 2070**; (4) reducing 1 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions cumulatively by 2030; (5) creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes through forests by 2030. **ANALYSIS:** India's COP33 withdrawal does not reverse these NDCs but raises questions about diplomatic positioning.

South Korea has emerged as the leading alternative host. The decision aligns with India's strategic focus on plurilateral platforms (ISA, CDRI, GBA) over UNFCCC-system hosting.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

India is a party to multiple international environmental agreements: **UNFCCC (1992)**, **Kyoto Protocol (1997 — India did not have binding cuts as developing country)**, **Paris Agreement (2015)**, **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, 1992)**, **Stockholm Convention (POPs)**, **Basel Convention (hazardous waste)**, **Vienna Convention/Montreal Protocol (ozone)**, **Ramsar Convention (wetlands)**, **CITES (endangered species)**. India's climate diplomacy platforms: **International Solar Alliance (ISA, 2015)**, **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI, 2019)**, **Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA, 2023)**, **Mission LiFE (2022)**. India's NDCs were updated in August 2022 post-Glasgow. The Loss and Damage Fund was operationalised at COP27 (Sharm el-Sheikh, 2022) — initial pledge ~USD 700 million against estimated need of ~USD 400 billion/year.

The New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) at COP29 set USD 300 billion/year by 2035 — well below the USD 1.3 trillion sought by Global South.

**Q3**  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing the Paris Agreement (a treaty within UNFCCC) with the broader UNFCCC framework. UNFCCC is the parent convention; Paris Agreement is the implementing treaty.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Environment (UNFCCC, Paris Agreement, NDCs, climate finance); GS2 — IR (climate diplomacy, Voice of Global South, ISA, CDRI).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

UNFCCC, COP33 withdrawal, COP28 Dubai bid, COP29 Baku NCQG, Paris Agreement, NDC, Net Zero 2070, ISA, CDRI, Global Biofuels Alliance, Mission LiFE, Loss and Damage Fund, Article 6 carbon markets, EU CBAM.

 **EXAM TIP**

Memorise the COP year-host mapping: COP26 Glasgow (2021), COP27 Sharm el-Sheikh (2022), COP28 Dubai (2023), COP29 Baku (2024), COP30 Belém Brazil (2025), COP31 Türkiye (2026), COP32 Ethiopia (2027), COP33 — host TBD post India withdrawal.

 **INTERVIEW**

Does India's COP33 withdrawal weaken its Voice of Global South positioning, or does it free India to focus on more impactful plurilateral climate coalitions like ISA and CDRI?

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**Question 4**

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A Supreme Court PIL seeks to extend the fundamental right under Article 21A to children aged 3-6 years (Early Childhood Care and Education). Which constitutional amendment originally inserted Article 21A, and what was the corresponding modification to Article 45?

- A 83rd Amendment (1999) inserted Article 21A; Article 45 was repealed entirely
- B **86th Amendment (2002) inserted Article 21A (right to education for ages 6-14); Article 45 was amended to provide for early childhood care and education for children below 6 years (as DPSP) ✓**
- C 93rd Amendment (2005) inserted Article 21A as right to higher education; Article 45 was elevated to Fundamental Right
- D 97th Amendment (2011) inserted Article 21A; Article 45 was amended to focus on cooperative education only

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The **86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002** inserted **Article 21A** — the right to free and compulsory education for children aged 6-14 years as a fundamental right. The same amendment modified **Article 45** (a Directive Principle of State Policy) to provide for **early childhood care and education for all children below the age of 6 years** — but this remained a non-justiciable DPSP. The amendment also inserted **Article 51A(k)** — fundamental duty of parents/guardians to provide opportunities for education to children aged 6-14. Article 21A was operationalised through the **Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009** (effective April 1, 2010). **ANALYSIS:** The PIL seeks to elevate the 3-6 age range from Article 45 (DPSP) to Article 21A (Fundamental Right) — making early childhood education justiciable and enforceable. The bench led by CJI Surya Kant issued notice to the Centre, States, and UTs.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

NEP 2020 restructured Indian education into Foundational (3-8 years), Preparatory (8-11), Middle (11-14), Secondary (14-18) stages. The Foundational Stage explicitly includes ages 3-6 as ECCE — recognising that 85% of brain development occurs by age 6.

Heckman (Nobel Economics) research demonstrates 7-10% rate of return on early childhood interventions — the highest among educational investments. Existing ECCE delivery is through ICDS Anganwadi Centres (~13.9 lakh nationwide under MoWCD), private pre-schools, and some KVS-NVS pre-primary integration.

Currently only ~40% of 3-6 age band attends organised ECCE. NEP 2020 commits to universal ECCE by 2030. Education is on the Concurrent List (Schedule VII Entry 25) — requiring Centre-state coordination through CABE (Central Advisory Board of Education).

Article 350A directs states to provide mother-tongue education at primary level for linguistic minorities.

**Q4**  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing the 86th Amendment (which created Article 21A as fundamental right) with earlier judicial recognition in *Unni Krishnan v. State of AP (1993)* — the SC had held education to be implicit in Article 21, but it was not yet an explicit fundamental right until the 86th Amendment.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — Polity (Article 21A, 86th Amendment, Article 45, Article 51A(k), Concurrent List Entry 25);  
 GS2 — Schemes (NEP 2020, RTE Act, ICDS, Anganwadi).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Article 21A, 86th Constitutional Amendment 2002, Article 45 DPSP, RTE Act 2009, NEP 2020 Foundational Stage, ICDS, Anganwadi, Saksham Anganwadi 2.0, Vidya Pravesh, Heckman ROI, Maneka Gandhi 1978, Unni Krishnan 1993.

 **EXAM TIP**

The 86th Amendment is unique — it simultaneously inserted Article 21A (FR), modified Article 45 (DPSP), AND inserted Article 51A(k) (Fundamental Duty).  
 It touches all three categories of constitutional rights/duties in one amendment.

 **INTERVIEW**

Should India extend Article 21A to ages 3-6 immediately, or does the fiscal cost (~₹1.05-1.40 lakh crore/year) require a phased constitutional approach?

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**Question 5**

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India and China held bilateral consultations under the SCO framework on April 16-17, 2026 — the first such meeting after the Ladakh disengagement. The Special Representatives (SR) mechanism for India-China boundary discussion operates at which level?

- A At the level of the Foreign Secretary of India and Deputy Foreign Minister of China, meeting bi-monthly
- B At the National Security Adviser-equivalent level, with the Indian NSA and Chinese counterpart engaging on political-strategic boundary issues ✓**
- C At the Corps Commander-equivalent military level, with operational decisions on patrol patterns and force deployment
- D At the Joint Secretary level under the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC), focused on operational coordination

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The **Special Representatives (SR) mechanism** for India-China boundary discussion operates at the **National Security Adviser-equivalent level** — Indian NSA Ajit Doval engaging with the Chinese counterpart on political-strategic boundary issues. This is the highest formal political-level mechanism for the boundary question, established in 2003 to address the unsettled India-China boundary at a strategic level above day-to-day operational coordination.

**ANALYSIS:** The boundary architecture has multiple layers: (1) **Special Representatives (SR)** at NSA-equivalent level — political; (2) **Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC)** at Joint Secretary level — operational coordination; (3) **Corps Commander talks** (Chushul-Moldo border meeting points) — military operational; (4) **Hotlines** — service-to-service confidence-building. Each layer addresses different dimensions of the boundary management challenge.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

India-China relations key timeline: **1962 War** — India-China boundary war; ceasefire November 1962. **1993 Agreement** — Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along LAC. **1996 Agreement** — Confidence Building Measures (CBM) including no use of weapons within 2 km of LAC. **2003** — Special Representatives mechanism established.

**2005 Agreement** — Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for boundary settlement. **2013 Border Defence Cooperation Agreement (BDCA)** — additional CBMs. **2020 Galwan clash** (June) — 20 Indian and at least 4 Chinese soldiers killed.

**2024 Kazan summit** (October, BRICS margins) — Modi-Xi reset; Demchok-Depsang disengagement framework. **2026 SCO bilateral** — first formal post-disengagement bilateral.

India joined SCO as full member in 2017 (along with Pakistan); SCO secretariat in Beijing; current members: India, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Iran (2023), Belarus (2024) — 9 full members.

**Q5**  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing the SR mechanism with WMCC. SR is high-level political (NSA equivalents); WMCC is Joint Secretary-level operational. Both exist in parallel.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — IR (India-China relations, SCO, Quad, BRICS, multi-alignment, SR mechanism); GS3 — Internal Security (LAC, PLA modernisation, border infrastructure, Press Note 3).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

India-China bilateral, SCO, Galwan clash 2020, LAC, Demchok-Depsang, Modi-Xi Kazan 2024, Special Representatives, WMCC, Press Note 3, multi-alignment, Quad-SCO balance, BRICS expansion, RATS.

 **EXAM TIP**

Know the four-layer India-China boundary architecture: SR (political) > WMCC (operational coordination) > Corps Commander (military operational) > Hotlines (service-to-service). Each operates at different escalation levels.

 **INTERVIEW**

Has India's post-2020 multi-alignment strategy — engaging Quad and SCO simultaneously — proven sustainable in the post-disengagement era, or does deepening Russia-China alignment threaten this balance?

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**Question 6**

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Meghalaya has granted official status to Khasi and Garo languages — neither yet in the Eighth Schedule. The Eighth Schedule of the Constitution currently lists how many languages, and which constitutional amendment last expanded the list?

- A 18 languages; expanded by the 71st Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992
- B 22 languages; expanded by the 92nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003 (added Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Santali) ✓**
- C 24 languages; expanded by the 105th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2021 (added Tulu, Bhojपुरi)
- D 20 languages; expanded by the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002 (added Konkani, Manipuri)

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The Eighth Schedule of the Constitution currently lists **22 languages**. The most recent expansion was through the **92nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003**, which added four languages: **Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, and Santali** — bringing the total from 18 to 22.

Earlier expansions: **21st Amendment (1967)** added Sindhi (15 → expanded base); **71st Amendment (1992)** added Konkani, Manipuri, Nepali. **ANALYSIS:** Khasi (~14 lakh speakers, Austroasiatic family) and Garo (~10 lakh speakers, Tibeto-Burman family) are not yet in the Eighth Schedule despite long-standing demands.

Other languages seeking inclusion include Bhojपुरi (5+ crore speakers), Rajasthani, Tulu, Mizo, Bhili, Magahi, and Kokborok. Adding a language requires a Constitutional Amendment under Article 368 — special majority, but not state ratification (since it does not touch federal-structure provisions in Article 368(2) proviso).

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

Original Eighth Schedule (1950) listed 14 languages: Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu. Expansions: **21st Amendment (1967)** — Sindhi (15); **71st Amendment (1992)** — Konkani, Manipuri, Nepali (18); **92nd Amendment (2003)** — Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Santali (22).

Eighth Schedule recognition confers: official recognition under Article 351; UPSC examination medium choice; translation rights; cultural promotion (Sahitya Akademi awards); judicial use possibility (Article 348 with Presidential approval);

Linguistic Minorities Commissioner (Article 350B) representation. The Pahwa Committee (1996) and Sitakant Mahapatra Committee (2003) examined criteria for inclusion but did not produce a definitive framework.

India ranks among the world's most linguistically diverse nations: Census 2011 documented 121 languages with 10,000+ speakers and 1,369 mother tongues.

**Q6**
 **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Forgetting that Hindi has a separate constitutional status under Article 343 (Official Language of the Union) — distinct from being one of the 22 Eighth Schedule languages. Hindi is BOTH the Article 343 official language AND an Eighth Schedule language.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — Polity (Eighth Schedule, Article 343, Article 345, Article 348, Article 350A, Article 350B); GS1 — Society (linguistic diversity, Northeast cultural identity).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Eighth Schedule, 22 scheduled languages, Khasi, Garo, Article 343, Article 345, Article 348, Article 350A, Article 350B, 21st Amendment 1967, 71st Amendment 1992, 92nd Amendment 2003, Pahwa Committee, Sitakant Mahapatra Committee, Austroasiatic, Tibeto-Burman, matrilineal society, Census 2011 linguistic data.

 **EXAM TIP**

The 92nd Amendment 2003 (Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Santali) is one of the most-tested constitutional amendments. Memorise the four added languages and the year.

 **INTERVIEW**

Should India formally codify criteria for Eighth Schedule inclusion (e.g., minimum speakers, distinct script, literary tradition) — or does political-cultural judgement remain appropriate for a question of constitutional language recognition?

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**Question 7**

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India's three-stage nuclear programme conceptualised by Dr. Homi Bhabha leverages India's specific resource endowment. Which of the following correctly describes the three stages and their fuel basis?

- A** Stage I: Light Water Reactors with enriched uranium; Stage II: Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors with natural uranium; Stage III: Fusion reactors using deuterium-tritium
- B** Stage I: Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors using natural uranium (producing plutonium); Stage II: Fast Breeder Reactors using plutonium-uranium MOX (breeding more fissile material); Stage III: Thorium-based reactors using the thorium-U-233 fuel cycle ✓
- C** Stage I: Boiling Water Reactors with low-enriched uranium; Stage II: Heavy Water Reactors with deuterium; Stage III: Helium-cooled reactors using thorium dioxide
- D** Stage I: Fast Breeder Reactors with plutonium; Stage II: Pressurised Water Reactors with natural uranium; Stage III: Uranium-plutonium mixed oxide reactors

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

FACT: India's three-stage nuclear programme — conceptualised by **Dr. Homi Bhabha** in the 1950s — is designed to leverage India's unique resource constraint (limited natural uranium ~1.5% of world reserves but vast thorium ~30% of world reserves). **Stage I:** Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) using natural uranium as fuel; produce plutonium as by-product.

The current 8.8 GW Indian fleet is in this stage. **Stage II:** Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs) using plutonium-uranium mixed oxide (MOX) fuel; sodium-cooled; "breed" more fissile Plutonium-239 from U-238 than they consume.

The PFBR Kalpakkam (500 MWe) achieved first criticality on April 6, 2026 — the entry milestone for Stage II. **Stage III:** Thorium-based reactors using the thorium-U-233 fuel cycle — designed to leverage India's vast thorium reserves. Long-term goal; reactors include the Advanced Heavy Water Reactor (AHWR).

ANALYSIS: India is currently transitioning from Stage I to Stage II. Stage III commercialisation may take 25-30 more years.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

India's nuclear architecture: **Atomic Energy Commission (AEC)** — apex policy body chaired by Prime Minister; **Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)** — administrative ministry; **NPCIL** — operator of existing 8.8 GW fleet (24 reactors); **BHAVINI** — operates Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor; **AERB** — regulator (executive-mandate, not statutory); **Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC)** — R&D in Mumbai; **Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR)** — Kalpakkam, Stage II/III research; **Nuclear Fuel Complex (NFC)** — Hyderabad; **Atomic Minerals Directorate (AMD)** — uranium and thorium prospecting. The PFBR Kalpakkam first criticality on April 6, 2026 was preceded by years of design and construction; commercial operation expected within 1-2 years.

Successor commercial Fast Breeder Reactors (FBR-1, FBR-2, FBR-3) are planned at multiple sites.

**Q7**
 **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing Stage II (Fast Breeder, MOX fuel) with Stage III (thorium-U-233). They use different fuel cycles and serve different strategic purposes — Stage II breeds more fissile material for the Indian fuel cycle; Stage III leverages thorium abundance.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Science & Technology (three-stage nuclear programme, PFBR, MOX, AERB, BARC, IGCAR); GS3 — Economy (energy security, base-load, climate transition).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

NPCIL, BHAVINI, PFBR Kalpakkam, three-stage nuclear programme, Homi Bhabha, PHWR, MOX fuel, sodium coolant, thorium reserves, AHWR, AERB, BARC, IGCAR, NFC, AMD.

 **EXAM TIP**

The order is: Stage I (PHWR, natural uranium) → Stage II (FBR, MOX, plutonium-uranium) → Stage III (thorium, U-233).

Memorise the fuel and reactor type for each. PFBR Kalpakkam first criticality (April 6, 2026) is a major recent milestone for Stage II.

 **INTERVIEW**

Given India's 100 GW target by 2047 requires multiple reactor types, should India accelerate Stage III thorium commercialisation, or focus near-term on PHWR-LWR scale-up while letting Stage III remain a long-term R&D track?

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**Question 8**

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India's Loss and Damage Fund pledge stands at approximately USD 700 million globally, against an estimated need exceeding USD 400 billion per year. The Loss and Damage Fund was operationalised at which COP, and what is its conceptual significance for climate justice?

- A COP25 (Madrid, 2019); represents developing-country financial assistance to developed countries for climate adaptation
- B COP27 (Sharm el-Sheikh, 2022); recognises the principle that developed countries must compensate developing countries for climate-induced losses they did not cause ✓**
- C COP21 (Paris, 2015); part of the original Paris Agreement framework providing for emission trading
- D COP28 (Dubai, 2023); operationalised primarily for nuclear-renewable transition financing

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The **Loss and Damage Fund** was operationalised at **COP27 (Sharm el-Sheikh, 2022)** with the initial pledge of approximately **USD 700 million globally** — vastly below the estimated need of USD 400 billion+ per year for climate-induced losses (sea-level rise, cyclones, drought, displacement). The Fund recognises the principle of **climate justice** — that developed countries (historical emitters) bear responsibility for climate-induced damages disproportionately suffered by developing countries (lower historical emissions).

India has supported the Fund as an aggrieved country but has not contributed to it. **ANALYSIS:** The Fund's establishment was a major achievement for the Global South.

However, its actual financing remains inadequate — the COP29 (Baku, 2024) NCQG of USD 300 billion/year by 2035 is also significantly below the Global South-sought USD 1.3 trillion. India's climate diplomacy continues to push for larger financing flows.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

Climate finance architecture: **Goal at Copenhagen (2009):** USD 100 billion per year by 2020 from developed to developing countries — never fully achieved. **New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) at COP29 (Baku, 2024):** USD 300 billion per year by 2035 — significantly below USD 1.3 trillion sought.

**Loss and Damage Fund:** Initial pledge ~USD 700 million; need ~USD 400 billion/year. **Article 6 of Paris Agreement** governs international carbon markets — Article 6.4 (centralised) made progress at COP29; Article 6.2 (bilateral cooperation) rules contentious.

India's climate finance position: needs higher flows for transition; has not contributed to Loss and Damage Fund (recipient-eligible); supports developed-country compensation principle. India's climate diplomacy platforms: International Solar Alliance (ISA, 2015), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI, 2019), Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA, 2023), Mission LiFE (2022).

**Q8**  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing the Loss and Damage Fund (COP27 operationalised) with the Green Climate Fund (operational since 2010 under UNFCCC). They are distinct funds with different mandates.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Environment (UNFCCC, Loss and Damage Fund, climate finance, NCQG, Article 6); GS2 — IR (climate diplomacy, Voice of Global South, climate justice).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Loss and Damage Fund, COP27 Sharm el-Sheikh 2022, NCQG, COP29 Baku 2024, Green Climate Fund, climate finance, climate justice, \$100 billion goal Copenhagen, Article 6 carbon markets, EU CBAM.

 **EXAM TIP**

Know the year-COP-host of major climate finance milestones: COP15 Copenhagen 2009 (\$100B goal), COP21 Paris 2015 (Paris Agreement), COP26 Glasgow 2021 (India Net Zero 2070), COP27 Sharm el-Sheikh 2022 (Loss and Damage), COP29 Baku 2024 (NCQG \$300B).

 **INTERVIEW**

Given the inadequacy of current climate finance flows, should India contribute to the Loss and Damage Fund as a Global South leadership signal, or insist on developed-country compensation as the moral basis of the Fund?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

**Question 9**

of 13

[Source →](#)

India's NEP 2020 restructured Indian education into four stages. Which of the following correctly identifies the four stages and their age ranges?

- A** Pre-Primary (3-5), Primary (5-11), Secondary (11-15), Higher Secondary (15-18) — totalling 15 years of formal schooling
- B** Foundational (3-8), Preparatory (8-11), Middle (11-14), Secondary (14-18) — totalling 5 years pre-primary + Grades 1-12 = 15 years ✓
- C** Early Childhood (3-6), Elementary (6-12), Junior Secondary (12-15), Senior Secondary (15-18) — totalling 15 years
- D** Pre-School (3-7), Lower Primary (7-11), Upper Primary (11-15), Higher Secondary (15-18) — totalling 15 years

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 restructured Indian education into a **5+3+3+4 framework** with four stages: **Foundational (ages 3-8, 5 years)** including 3 years of ECCE/Pre-school + Grades 1-2; **Preparatory (ages 8-11, 3 years)** covering Grades 3-5; **Middle (ages 11-14, 3 years)** covering Grades 6-8; **Secondary (ages 14-18, 4 years)** covering Grades 9-12. The Foundational Stage explicitly includes ages 3-6 as Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) — recognising research that 85% of brain development occurs by age 6.

**ANALYSIS:** This restructuring replaced the older 10+2 framework. The Article 21A PIL seeks to extend the fundamental right to include ages 3-6 (currently DPSP under Article 45) — aligning the constitutional framework with the NEP 2020 Foundational Stage.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

NEP 2020 was approved by the Cabinet in July 2020, replacing the National Policy on Education 1986 (revised 1992). Major NEP reforms: **5+3+3+4 educational structure** (replacing 10+2); **Universal Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN)** by Grade 3 — implemented through the **NIPUN Bharat Mission**; **Multilingual education** with mother-tongue at primary level; **Vocational education** integration from middle school; **Higher education restructuring** through Higher Education Commission of India (HECI proposed); **Multidisciplinary universities** with credit-banking; **Common University Entrance Test (CUET)**; **Academic Bank of Credits (ABC)**; **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (NRF, Act 2023)** for R&D. NEP 2020 commits to: education spending of 6% of GDP (currently ~3%); universal ECCE by 2030; 100% literacy.

**Q9**
 **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing the new NEP 2020 framework (5+3+3+4) with the older 10+2 system. The new system explicitly recognises ECCE (3-8) as foundational.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — Schemes (NEP 2020, Foundational Stage, NIPUN Bharat, FLN, NRF Act 2023); GS2 — Polity (education on Concurrent List, RTE Act 2009).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

NEP 2020, 5+3+3+4 framework, Foundational Stage, Preparatory, Middle, Secondary, ECCE, NIPUN Bharat Mission, foundational literacy and numeracy, FLN, NRF Act 2023, HECI, CUET, Academic Bank of Credits, multilingual education.

 **EXAM TIP**

Memorise: 5+3+3+4 = Foundational (5 yrs, ages 3-8) + Preparatory (3 yrs, 8-11) + Middle (3 yrs, 11-14) + Secondary (4 yrs, 14-18). Total 15 years of education from age 3 to 18.

 **INTERVIEW**

Has the NEP 2020 Foundational Stage framework been implemented effectively across Indian states, or does fiscal and infrastructural inequality among states make universal ECCE by 2030 unrealistic?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

**Question 10**

of 13

[Source →](#)

India is a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) since 2017. Which of the following correctly identifies the SCO's current member composition and recent expansions?

- A** 6 founding members from 2001 only — China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan; no subsequent expansion
- B** 9 full members — original 6 plus India and Pakistan (2017), Iran (2023), and Belarus (2024); India is the most recent member
- C** 9 full members — original 6 plus India and Pakistan (2017), Iran (2023), and Belarus (2024) ✓
- D** 12 full members including all SAARC and Central Asian states

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) currently has **9 full members**: the **original 6 founding members from 2001** (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) plus **India and Pakistan (joined 2017)**, **Iran (joined 2023)**, and **Belarus (joined 2024)**. The SCO was founded in **June 2001 in Shanghai**, evolved from the earlier Shanghai Five mechanism (1996).

Headquarters in **Beijing**; the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) is in Tashkent. **ANALYSIS:** India joined SCO in 2017 along with Pakistan — the first simultaneous expansion of the original 6.

Iran joined in 2023 (an 8-year application process); Belarus in 2024 (BRICS-aligned move). The SCO's expansion reflects shifting Eurasian geopolitics, particularly post-Ukraine war.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

SCO architecture: **Council of Heads of State** (annual summit); **Council of Heads of Government** (annual); **Council of Foreign Ministers** (annual + ad-hoc); **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)** in Tashkent; **Secretariat** in Beijing (Secretary-General rotating); **Business Council**; **Interbank Consortium**. SCO observer states (selected): Afghanistan, Mongolia.

SCO dialogue partners: 14+ countries including Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Maldives, Nepal, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Myanmar. India's SCO engagement focus: counter-terrorism through RATS, energy and connectivity, but maintaining strategic autonomy from China-Russia consensus on issues.

India hosted SCO Summit in 2023 (virtually). India holds positions in all SCO bodies as full member.

**Q10**  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Forgetting that Iran (2023) and Belarus (2024) joined as full members — bringing the count from 8 to 9. The SCO has expanded notably in recent years.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — IR (SCO, India-China relations, multi-alignment, Quad-SCO balance, Eurasian geopolitics); GS3 — Internal Security (RATS, counter-terrorism).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, SCO 2001 founding, original 6 members, India 2017 entry, Iran 2023 entry, Belarus 2024 entry, RATS Tashkent, Beijing Secretariat, Modi-Xi Kazan 2024, Special Representatives.

 **EXAM TIP**

Memorise SCO membership timeline: Founded 2001 (6 members); expanded 2017 (India, Pakistan); 2023 (Iran); 2024 (Belarus) = 9 members. UPSC tests the specific years and the founding 6 frequently.

 **INTERVIEW**

Does India's SCO membership genuinely advance Indian interests, or is India increasingly an outlier in a China-Russia-dominated forum that does not align with its Indo-Pacific democracy partnerships?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

**Question 11**

of 13

[Source →](#)

The Eighth Schedule of the Constitution lists 22 languages but neither Khasi nor Garo is included. Eighth Schedule recognition confers several constitutional benefits. Which of the following is **NOT** among the typical benefits of Eighth Schedule inclusion?

- A Eligibility as a medium of examination for UPSC Civil Services Mains
- B Mandatory adoption as the sole official language of the relevant state government ✓**
- C Sahitya Akademi recognition for literary awards
- D Article 351 directive for Hindi to assimilate elements from the language for its enrichment

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** Eighth Schedule recognition does NOT automatically make a language the sole official language of the relevant state government. State official language adoption is governed by **Article 345**, which allows states to adopt one or more languages used in the state, OR Hindi, as official languages — independent of Eighth Schedule status. For example, English remains a state-level official language in Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Arunachal Pradesh by state choice, despite English not being in the Eighth Schedule. Eighth Schedule benefits include: (i) eligibility as **UPSC Civil Services Mains medium**; (ii) **Sahitya Akademi awards** and Sahitya Akademi creation; (iii) **Article 351** Hindi enrichment directive (Hindi shall draw from Eighth Schedule languages); (iv) **Article 348** judicial use possibility (with Presidential approval); (v) **Linguistic Minorities Commissioner** (Article 350B) representation; (vi) **Translation rights** for central laws and judgments.

**ANALYSIS:** The Khasi and Garo recognition by Meghalaya operates under Article 345 (state-level recognition) — independent of Eighth Schedule consideration.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

India's linguistic constitutional architecture: **Article 343** — Hindi (Devanagari script) as Official Language of the Union; **Article 344** — Official Language Commission and Parliamentary Committee; **Article 345** — state-level official language adoption; **Article 346** — language for inter-state communication; **Article 347** — special provision for languages with substantial state population; **Article 348** — language of Supreme Court, High Courts, and authoritative statutory texts (English by default; HC use of state language requires Presidential approval); **Article 350** — submission of representations in any language; **Article 350A** — directive for primary education in mother tongue (DPSP-like); **Article 350B** — Special Officer for Linguistic Minorities; **Article 351** — directive for Hindi enrichment. The Official Languages Act, 1963 (amended 1967) provides for English to continue as associate official language indefinitely.

**Q11**  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Assuming Eighth Schedule inclusion automatically grants official-language status in any state. State language adoption is independent (Article 345).  
Many states use English as official language despite English not being in Eighth Schedule.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — Polity (Eighth Schedule, Article 343-351, language constitutional architecture); GS1 — Society (linguistic diversity).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Eighth Schedule, Article 343 Hindi as Union official language, Article 345 state official languages, Article 348 judicial language, Article 350A mother tongue education, Article 350B Linguistic Minorities Commissioner, Article 351 Hindi enrichment, Sahitya Akademi, UPSC Mains medium choice, Official Languages Act 1963.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC distinguishes between Article 343 (Hindi as ONE Union official language), Article 345 (state-level adoption), and Eighth Schedule (recognised cultural-educational languages).  
All three operate at different levels.

 **INTERVIEW**

Should India explicitly codify Eighth Schedule inclusion criteria — minimum speakers, distinct script, literary tradition, geographic distribution — to provide objective basis for inclusion decisions?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

**Question 12**

of 13

[Source →](#)

India's NDC commitments updated in 2022 (post-Glasgow) include multiple targets. Which of the following correctly identifies India's emission intensity reduction commitment by 2030?

- A 20% reduction from 2010 levels by 2030
- B 45% reduction from 2005 levels by 2030 ✓**
- C 60% reduction from 2000 levels by 2030
- D 30% reduction from 2010 levels by 2030

**ANSWER & ANALYSIS**
**EXPLANATION**

**FACT:** India's updated **Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)**, communicated in August 2022 post-COP26 Glasgow, commits to: (1) **Emission intensity reduction of 45% from 2005 levels by 2030** (up from the earlier commitment of 33-35% reduction); (2) **50% non-fossil installed power capacity by 2030** (up from earlier 40%); (3) **Cumulative reduction of 1 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2030**; (4) **Additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes through forests and tree cover by 2030**; (5) **Net-zero emissions by 2070** (committed at COP26 Glasgow). **ANALYSIS:** India's NDCs are intensity-based (per unit of GDP), not absolute caps — reflecting the developing-country position that absolute caps would constrain economic growth. The 2022 update raised ambition significantly compared to the 2015 Paris commitment.

**CONCEPT NOTE**

India's climate pledge timeline: **Pre-COP21 (2015):** Submitted INDC including 33-35% emission intensity reduction by 2030 (vs 2005), 40% non-fossil by 2030. **COP21 Paris Agreement (2015):** Joined nationally determined approach. **COP26 Glasgow (2021):** Committed to Net-Zero by 2070, 500 GW non-fossil by 2030, 1 billion tonnes cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. **August 2022:** Submitted updated NDC formalising COP26 commitments — 45% emission intensity reduction; 50% non-fossil capacity. **COP29 Baku (2024):** Engaged on NCQG climate finance (\$300B/year by 2035 vs \$1.3T sought). India's NDCs are designed to be developmentally compatible — absolute emissions are projected to peak post-2040 even with these commitments, then decline toward Net-Zero 2070.

**Q12**  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing the original 2015 INDC (33-35% reduction) with the updated 2022 NDC (45% reduction). The 2022 update significantly raised ambition.

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Environment (NDCs, Paris Agreement, COP26 Glasgow, Net Zero 2070); GS3 — Economy (climate-development trade-off, energy transition).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Updated NDC 2022, 45% emission intensity reduction, 2005 baseline, 50% non-fossil capacity by 2030, 1 billion tonnes cumulative CO2 reduction, Net Zero 2070, COP26 Glasgow, INDC 2015, NDC enhancement.

 **EXAM TIP**

Memorise the FIVE updated NDC commitments (intensity 45%, non-fossil 50%, cumulative 1 GT CO2, carbon sink 2.5-3 GT, Net Zero 2070). UPSC tests these specific numbers regularly.

 **INTERVIEW**

Are India's 2022 NDCs ambitious enough given the IPCC AR6 finding that 1.5°C requires global emissions to halve by 2030, or is India's intensity-based approach appropriate for a developing economy?

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**Question 13**

of 13

[Source →](#)

In *Unni Krishnan v. State of Andhra Pradesh* (1993), the Supreme Court held that the right to education was implicit in Article 21. The Constitution (86th Amendment) Act, 2002 subsequently inserted Article 21A, formally making free and compulsory education a fundamental right. Which of the following best describes the legal-conceptual relationship between these two developments?

- A The 86th Amendment overruled *Unni Krishnan* by limiting education to a non-justiciable Directive Principle
- B *Unni Krishnan* expanded Article 21 to include right to education for all ages; the 86th Amendment formalised this for a specific age group (6-14) as an explicit fundamental right under Article 21A while moving below-6 ECCE to Article 45 DPSP ✓**
- C The 86th Amendment was unrelated to *Unni Krishnan* — it established education as an entirely new Article unconnected to Article 21 jurisprudence
- D *Unni Krishnan* held education to be a Directive Principle under Article 41; the 86th Amendment elevated this to fundamental right status without any age limit

## ANSWER &amp; ANALYSIS

**EXPLANATION**

FACT: In *Unni Krishnan v. State of Andhra Pradesh* (1993), the Supreme Court held that the right to education flowed from Article 21 (right to life) and Article 41 (DPSP — right to education to certain extent), reading them together. The Court provisioned that the State has a duty to provide education up to age 14.

The **86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002** crystallised this judicial development — inserting **Article 21A** (free and compulsory education as fundamental right for ages 6-14), modifying **Article 45** (now provides for ECCE for under-6 children as DPSP), and inserting **Article 51A(k)** (parents' fundamental duty for 6-14 education). The 86th Amendment thus formalised, narrowed (to the 6-14 age group as fundamental right), and expanded (added under-6 to DPSP and parents' duty) the *Unni Krishnan* framework.

**CONCEPT NOTE**

India's expansive Article 21 jurisprudence includes: *Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India* (1978) — procedure must be just, fair, reasonable; *Francis Coralie v. Delhi* (1981) — right to live with dignity; *Olga Tellis v. BMC* (1985) — right to livelihood; *Bandhua Mukti Morcha v. Union of India* (1984) — right to health; *Unni Krishnan v. State of AP* (1993) — right to education (later codified as Article 21A); *MC Mehta v. Union of India* (1986+ series) — right to clean environment; *Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan* (1997) — sexual harassment; *Naz Foundation* (2009, 2018 Section 377 readown) — sexuality and dignity; *Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017) — right to privacy; *Navtej Singh Johar* (2018) — same-sex relationships. The 86th Amendment exemplifies the constitutional dialogue model — judicial expansion → political-amendment crystallisation.

**Q13**  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Assuming the 86th Amendment created the right to education from scratch. In fact, *Unni Krishnan* (1993) had already judicially recognised the right within Article 21; the 86th Amendment formalised, structured, and limited it (to ages 6-14 as FR; below-6 as DPSP).

 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — Polity (Article 21A, 86th Amendment, RTE Act, Maneka Gandhi expansion of Article 21); GS2 — Social Justice (right to education as substantive equality).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Article 21A, 86th Constitutional Amendment 2002, Unni Krishnan 1993, Maneka Gandhi 1978, Bandhua Mukti Morcha 1984, MC Mehta, Article 41 DPSP, Article 45, Article 51A(k), RTE Act 2009, NEP 2020.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC frequently tests the *Unni Krishnan* (1993) → 86th Amendment (2002) chain. Know that *Unni Krishnan* came FIRST, then the constitutional amendment crystallised it.

 **INTERVIEW**

Is the constitutional dialogue model — where SC reads rights expansively, then Parliament codifies through amendment — a healthy form of constitutional development, or does it risk judicial overreach into legislative domain?

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