MISSION X FOR UPSC

XTERRA

WEEKLY

Weekly Current Affairs Compilation · 4 – 10 November 2026 · 10 Topics

A new scorpion from Similipal, Karnataka's state amphibian and a rare white stork at Okhla headline the species list, Siri cattle get a Sikkim centre, Sathyamangalam faces a resort crackdown and blackbucks head back to Gomarda. The Supreme Court's two-day green cracker window, GRAP and the Forest Advisory Committee anchor the policy pages.

SPECIES & BREEDS
5 topics

PROTECTED AREAS
2 topics

POLLUTION & FOREST POLICY
3 topics

"innovation in learning"

CONTENTS

10 topics, grouped by theme for faster revision

SPECIES & BREEDS

01 Liocheles similipalensis: New Scorpion Species Found in Odisha's Similipal 3

02 Malabar Tree Toad: Karnataka's State Amphibian and India's Only Arboreal Toad 4

03 Siri Cattle: Centre of Excellence Planned in Sikkim for the Himalayan Breed 5

04 White Stork Spotted at Okhla Bird Sanctuary, a Rare Winter Visitor to Delhi-NCR 6

05 Golden Jackal: Tenkasi Forest Division Proposes Student 'Ambassadors' Scheme 7

PROTECTED AREAS

06 Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve: Solar Water for Tribal Hamlets and a Resort Crackdown 8

07 Gomarda Wildlife Sanctuary: Blackbucks to Return After Over Five Decades 9

POLLUTION & FOREST POLICY

08 Green Crackers: Supreme Court Allows Two-Day Diwali Window in Delhi-NCR 10

09 CAQM and GRAP: Stage II Invoked Across Delhi-NCR as AQI Crosses 300 11

10 Forest Advisory Committee: How In-Principle Forest Clearance Works 12

SPECIES & BREEDS

Liocheles similipalensis: New Scorpion Species Found in Odisha's Similipal

WHY IN NEWS

Researchers described Liocheles similipalensis, a new scorpion, from Similipal Tiger Reserve in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district, as reported on 6 to 8 November 2026. It was found at about 1,000 m in moist deciduous forest, mostly in rock crevices or under rocks. It is the first confirmed record of the genus Liocheles in Odisha and the seventh known species in the genus.

44–53 mm Body length of the new scorpion



Liocheles scorpion (illustrative image)

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Similipal Biosphere Reserve**
   Use the find to show how a tiger reserve and UNESCO biosphere reserve still hides undescribed invertebrates.
2. **Invertebrate Taxonomy Gaps**
   Cite a new scorpion as proof that arachnid diversity in eastern India is under-surveyed.
3. **Lithophilic Habitats**
   Link its rock-crevice life to the need to protect rocky microhabitats inside forests.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Scientific name	Liocheles similipalensis
Group	Scorpion (Arachnida), genus Liocheles
Type locality	Similipal Tiger Reserve, Mayurbhanj, Odisha
IUCN status	Not assessed (newly described)
Size	44 to 53 mm
Appearance	Dark black body with a glossy bluish sheen
Habitat	Moist deciduous forest at about 1,000 m, in rock crevices and under rocks
Genus clue	Setae beneath tarsomere II, a leg segment

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS
This is the first confirmed record of the genus Liocheles in Odisha, and the species is known only from its type locality in Similipal.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Liocheles similipalensis | Similipal Tiger Reserve | Mayurbhanj, Odisha | Lithophilic scorpion | 7th species of genus | Type locality

EXAM TRAP
Do not read the name as a plant or a tiger-related find. It is a scorpion, an arachnid, described from rocky forest at about 1,000 m, not from the sal forest floor.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Liocheles similipalensis, recently in the news, is a

(a) newly described scorpion from Odisha
(b) newly described orchid from Odisha
(c) river fish of Mayurbhanj
(d) tree frog of the Western Ghats

Answer: (a) newly described scorpion from Odisha

APPROACH
The species epithet points to Similipal, and the genus Liocheles is a scorpion group, so only the first option fits.

SPECIES & BREEDS

Malabar Tree Toad: Karnataka's State Amphibian and India's Only Arboreal Toad

WHY IN NEWS

The Malabar tree toad (Pedostibes tuberculosus) is back in Prelims current-affairs notes after Karnataka's forest department declared it the state amphibian, the first Indian state to do so. The species is endemic to the Western Ghats and lives in trees. Its breeding depends on monsoon-fed forest streams, which makes it vulnerable to forest loss and climate change.



Malabar tree toad, calling male



Malabar tree toad

1876 **Year first described; rediscovered in 1980 at Silent Valley**

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **State Symbols and Flagship Species**
   Use the choice to show how state symbols can draw attention to neglected groups like amphibians.
2. **Amphibians as Bioindicators**
   Cite its skin and stream-linked breeding to show why amphibians signal ecosystem health.
3. **Climate Risk to Endemics**
   Link a 2024 modelling study that projected a large loss of its protected-area range under high emissions.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Scientific name	Pedostibes tuberculosus (only species in genus Pedostibes)
Local names	Malenadina Mara Gantikappe, Petu
IUCN status	Endangered
Legal status	WPA 1972 Schedule II
Range	Endemic to the Western Ghats
Behaviour	India's only arboreal toad; descends to breed in monsoon stream pools
Habitat	Evergreen to moist deciduous forest, about 50 m to over 1,000 m
Rediscovery	Silent Valley National Park, Kerala, 1980

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS
After its description in 1876 the toad went unsighted for over a century before it was rediscovered in Silent Valley in 1980.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Pedostibes tuberculosus | Endangered | Schedule II | Only arboreal toad | Karnataka state amphibian | Silent Valley 1980

EXAM TRAP
Do not treat it as a ground-dwelling toad or as a frog of the Himalayas. It is endemic to the Western Ghats and is the only toad in India that lives in trees.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Consider the following statements about the Malabar tree toad :

1. It is endemic to the Western Ghats.
2. It is the only arboreal toad in India.
3. It is categorised as Critically Endangered by the IUCN.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (b) 1 and 2 only

APPROACH
The toad is Endangered, not Critically Endangered, so Statement 3 is wrong. Statements 1 and 2 are correct.

SPECIES & BREEDS

Siri Cattle: Centre of Excellence Planned in Sikkim for the Himalayan Breed

WHY IN NEWS

The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), Government of India, plans a Centre of Excellence in Sikkim for the conservation and development of Siri cattle, as reported in the first week of November 2026. Siri is an indigenous zebu-derived breed of the Eastern Himalayas, valued for draught work on steep hill farms.



Siri cattle

425.8 kg **Average milk yield per lactation**

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Indigenous Breed Conservation**
   Use the centre to show how local breeds are conserved for climate resilience and genetic diversity.
2. **Mountain Agriculture**
   Cite Siri bullocks as the sole draught power on many hill farms where tractors cannot work.
3. **Organic Sikkim**
   Link low-input hill livestock to Sikkim's organic farming identity.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Breed	Siri (also called Trahbum), zebu-derived
Region	Sikkim, Darjeeling hills of West Bengal, and Bhutan
Type	Small, dual-purpose; mainly draught in hilly terrain
Coat	Black or brown with white patches; solid colours also occur
Hump	Cervico-thoracic hump with tufts of hair
Horns	Medium, curving outward, forward and slightly up, with sharp tips
Milk	About 425.8 kg per lactation; fat 2.8 to 5.5 percent
Conservation step	DAHD Centre of Excellence in Sikkim

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

Siri is also known as Trahbum, and in hill farms its males are sometimes the only source of draught power.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Siri cattle | Trahbum | Sikkim and Darjeeling | Zebu-derived | Draught breed | DAHD Centre of Excellence

EXAM TRAP

Do not confuse Siri with Gir. Gir is a Gujarat dairy breed, while Siri is a small Eastern Himalayan draught-type breed with low milk yield.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Consider the following statements :

Statement I :
Siri cattle are valued mainly for draught work in the hills of Sikkim and Darjeeling.

Statement II :
Siri cattle are among India's highest milk-yielding dairy breeds.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I

(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I

(c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct

(d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

Answer: (c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct

APPROACH

Siri is a small dual-purpose breed with low yield of about 425.8 kg per lactation, so Statement II is wrong.

SPECIES & BREEDS

White Stork Spotted at Okhla Bird Sanctuary, a Rare Winter Visitor to Delhi-NCR

WHY IN NEWS

A white stork (Ciconia ciconia) was spotted at Okhla Bird Sanctuary, at the Uttar Pradesh-Delhi border, from about 1 November 2026, drawing birdwatchers. The species breeds in Europe, Asia Minor, North Africa and the Middle East and winters in tropical Africa, the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent. The sanctuary lies on the Yamuna, where the river enters Uttar Pradesh from Delhi.



White stork

183–217 cm **Wingspan of the white stork**

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Migratory Flyways**
   Use the sighting to show how Central Asian and Eurasian birds reach India along migratory flyways.
2. **Urban Wetlands**
   Cite Okhla, a barrage-fed lake beside Delhi, as an urban wetland holding migratory birds.
3. **Bird Monitoring**
   Link such records to citizen birdwatching data used in IBA and flyway monitoring.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Scientific name	Ciconia ciconia (family Ciconiidae)
IUCN status	Least Concern
Appearance	White body with black wing and shoulder feathers; red bill and legs
Size	Height 95 to 110 cm; wingspan 183 to 217 cm
Habitat	Meadows, farmland, steppes, savannas and shallow wetlands
Behaviour	Gregarious, non-territorial; soars; lives up to 40 years
Sanctuary	Okhla, Gautam Budh Nagar, UP; about 4 sq km; an IBA on the Yamuna barrage lake

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

White storks save energy by soaring on thermals, flying with the neck extended and legs trailing.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Ciconia ciconia | Least Concern | Okhla Bird Sanctuary | Yamuna barrage | Winter migrant | IBA

EXAM TRAP

Do not place Okhla in Delhi proper. The sanctuary is in Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, at the Noida entrance, and the stork is Least Concern, not threatened.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Consider the following statements :

Statement I :
The white stork is a winter visitor to the Indian subcontinent.

Statement II :
It breeds in Europe, Asia Minor, North Africa and the Middle East.

Statement III :
It is categorised as Critically Endangered by the IUCN.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I

(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I

(c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I

(d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct

Answer: (b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I

APPROACH

It breeds in the north and then winters in India, so Statement II explains why it visits. Statement III is wrong because it is Least Concern, which also removes options (a) and (c).

SPECIES & BREEDS

Golden Jackal: Tenkasi Forest Division Proposes Student 'Ambassadors' Scheme

WHY IN NEWS

Tamil Nadu's Tenkasi forest division has proposed a Golden Jackal Ambassadors scheme to raise student awareness of the species amid concern over declining local numbers. The golden jackal (Canis aureus) is a widespread, adaptable canid found from the Himalayan foothills to the Western Ghats, and is listed Least Concern by the IUCN.



Golden jackal

LC **IUCN status of the golden jackal**

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Mesocarnivores and Scavengers**
   Use jackals to show how scavenging predators clean carcasses and control rodents.
2. **Human-Wildlife Interface**
   Cite their survival near farms and towns as an example of adaptation to human landscapes.
3. **Community Awareness**
   Link the ambassador scheme to school-based conservation outreach.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Scientific name	Canis aureus (also common jackal, reed wolf)
Family	Canidae; medium-sized, wolf-like
IUCN status	Least Concern
CITES	Appendix III
Habitat	River valleys, canals, lakes and seashores; rare in foothills and low mountains per one source
Range	North and East Africa, Southeastern Europe, South Asia to Burma
Behaviour	Monogamous pairs; nocturnal near people; dens in burrows or rock crevices
Diet	Omnivorous and opportunistic

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS
Golden jackals live in mated pairs and are strictly monogamous, unlike the pack-living dhole.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Canis aureus | Least Concern | CITES Appendix III | Tenkasi forest division | Monogamous pairs | Opportunistic omnivore

EXAM TRAP
Do not confuse the golden jackal with the dhole or the Indian wolf. It is a smaller, monogamous, Least Concern canid, and the news item is a proposed awareness scheme, not a new reserve.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Which one of the following is a feature of the golden jackal?

(a) It lives in mated pairs and is an opportunistic omnivore
(b) It is a strictly vegetarian forest mammal
(c) It is endemic to the Western Ghats
(d) It is categorised as Critically Endangered

Answer: (a) It lives in mated pairs and is an opportunistic omnivore

APPROACH
Jackals are widespread, omnivorous and monogamous, so every other option contradicts what is known.

PROTECTED AREAS

Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve: Solar Water for Tribal Hamlets and a Resort Crackdown

WHY IN NEWS

Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve in Erode district, Tamil Nadu, is in the news twice. A Project Elephant initiative installed a solar-powered water system that ended a long drinking-water shortage for 10 tribal families, and the Madras High Court has ordered closure of 87 resorts reported to operate in the reserve without town-planning approval.



Tiger (illustrative image)

87 resorts **Ordered closed by the Madras High Court, as reported**

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Tiger Reserve Eco-Sensitivity**
   Use the resort order to show how tourism and construction near core habitat clash with tiger conservation.
2. **Human-Elephant Conflict**
   Cite the solar water scheme as a way to reduce conflict by supplying water to people and wildlife.
3. **Forest Dwellers and Livelihoods**
   Link the Irula and Kurumba communities to rights-based, community-friendly conservation.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Location	Erode district, Tamil Nadu; junction of the Eastern and Western Ghats
Connected reserves	Mudumalai, Bandipur and BR Hills (Karnataka)
Altitude	About 750 m to 1,649 m
Rivers	Bhavani, Moyar and Noyyal
Forest types	Dry thorn, mixed deciduous, semi-evergreen and riparian
Flora	Teak, sandalwood, bamboo, Terminalia, Albizia
Fauna	Tiger, elephant, leopard, gaur, sloth bear, Nilgiri langur
Communities	Irula and Kurumba tribes

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

The reserve links the Western and Eastern Ghats, making it a key elephant and tiger corridor between Karnataka's and Tamil Nadu's reserves.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Sathyamangalam TR | Erode, Tamil Nadu | Bhavani and Moyar | Contiguous with Mudumalai | Irula and Kurumba | 87 resorts

EXAM TRAP

Do not locate it in Karnataka or Kerala. It is in Tamil Nadu, and it joins Mudumalai, Bandipur and BR Hills, which lie in the Nilgiris, Karnataka and the Eastern Ghats.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Consider the following statements about Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve :

1. It lies at the junction of the Eastern and Western Ghats.
2. The Bhavani and Moyar rivers flow through it.
3. It is located in Kerala.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (b) 1 and 2 only

APPROACH

The reserve is in Erode district of Tamil Nadu, so Statement 3 is wrong. Statements 1 and 2 match its geography.

PROTECTED AREAS

Gomarda Wildlife Sanctuary: Blackbucks to Return After Over Five Decades

WHY IN NEWS

Chhattisgarh plans to bring about 50 blackbucks (Antilope cervicapra) back to Gomarda Wildlife Sanctuary after more than five decades. The animals will be relocated from Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary. Gomarda, in Sarangarh tehsil, was notified in 1975 and covers about 278 sq km of dry deciduous forest and open grassland.

~50 **Blackbucks to be relocated from Barnawapara**



Blackbuck

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Species Reintroduction**
   Use the move to show how reintroducing locally lost herbivores restores grassland food webs.
2. **Grassland Ecosystems**
   Cite blackbuck as a grassland flagship and link to the need to protect open scrub habitats.
3. **Translocation Science**
   Link it to the habitat assessment, health screening and monitoring needed for safe translocations.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Location	Sarangarh tehsil, Chhattisgarh (Raigarh district in the source)
Notified	1975; named after Gomarda village
Area	About 278 sq km
Rivers	Laat and Manai, giving year-round water
Vegetation	Tropical dry deciduous: sal, bija, tendu, bamboo, grasslands
Fauna	Tiger, leopard, sambar, gaur, sloth bear, dhole, chital, chinkara
Blackbuck	Antilope cervicapra; only living member of its genus; IUCN Least Concern
Source herd	Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

Only male blackbucks have spiralling horns and dark coats, while females are lighter and usually hornless, and about 90 percent of the species lives in India.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Gomarda WLS | Sarangarh, Chhattisgarh | Notified 1975 | Antilope cervicapra | From Barnawapara | Laat and Manai rivers

EXAM TRAP

Do not mix up the two sanctuaries. Barnawapara is the source of the herd and Gomarda the destination, and blackbuck is a grassland antelope, not a deer of dense forest.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

With reference to the blackbuck, consider the following :

I. It is the only living species of its genus.

II. Only males bear spiralling horns.

III. Most of its global population lives in India.

IV. It is a Critically Endangered species of dense rainforest.

How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All the four

Answer: (c) Only three

APPROACH

Statements I, II and III are correct. The blackbuck is Least Concern and lives in open grassland and scrub, so Statement IV is wrong.

POLLUTION & FOREST POLICY

Green Crackers: Supreme Court Allows Two-Day Diwali Window in Delhi-NCR

WHY IN NEWS

On 2 November 2026 the Supreme Court allowed only CSIR-NEERI certified green crackers in Delhi-NCR on 7 November (6 AM to 8 PM) and 8 November (7 AM to 10 PM). The complete firecracker ban returns from 9 November. Boxes need batch-specific QR codes, and barium crackers, ladis and garlands remain banned. Delhi's AQI had crossed 300 in early November.



Green crackers (illustrative image)

9 Nov **Date the year-round ban resumes in Delhi-NCR**

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Air Pollution Governance**
   Use the order to show how courts balance cultural practice, health and pollution control.
2. **Particulate Matter**
   Cite green crackers' lower particulate and harmful gas emissions as the technical rationale.
3. **Enforcement and Traceability**
   Link the QR-code, deposit and patrol rules to the need for verifiable certification.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Case	Arjun Gopal v Union of India (2 Nov 2026)
Bench	Justices M. M. Sundresh and Prasanna B. Varale
Windows	7 Nov, 6 AM to 8 PM; 8 Nov, 7 AM to 10 PM
Certification	CSIR-NEERI approval and PESO licence
Banned items	Barium crackers, ladis, garlands, any non-approved product
No-burst zones	Within 300 m of hospitals, schools, old-age homes, silence zones
Sales	Designated sites only; online sale banned; QR code on every box
Known types	CSIR-NEERI formulations such as SWAS, STAR and SAFAL

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

Green crackers were developed by CSIR-NEERI, and its SWAS, STAR and SAFAL formulations cut particulate emissions and avoid barium-based oxidisers.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

CSIR-NEERI | PESO licence | Barium banned | QR code on boxes | 7 and 8 November | SWAS, STAR, SAFAL

EXAM TRAP

Do not read 'green' as 'pollution-free'. Green crackers only emit less particulate matter and fewer harmful gases, and the permission covered two days only.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Consider the following statements :

Statement I :
Green crackers are certified by CSIR-NEERI and emit less particulate matter than conventional crackers.

Statement II :
Green crackers produce no air pollution at all.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I

(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I

(c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct

(d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

Answer: (c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct

APPROACH

Green crackers only reduce particulate matter and harmful gases, they do not eliminate pollution, so Statement II is wrong.

POLLUTION & FOREST POLICY

CAQM and GRAP: Stage II Invoked Across Delhi-NCR as AQI Crosses 300

WHY IN NEWS

The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) invoked Stage II of the Graded Response Action Plan across Delhi-NCR on 2 November 2026 as the AQI rose from 117 on 31 October to 261 on 1 November and 324 on 2 November. Stage I measures continue, and Stage II adds stricter dust control, higher parking charges and more public transport.

324 **Delhi AQI on 2 November 2026 when Stage II was invoked**

CAQM logo

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Statutory Air Quality Body**
   Use CAQM, created by a 2021 Act, to show a single commission replacing the older EPCA arrangement.
2. **Graded Response**
   Cite GRAP's stage-wise approach to show forecast-linked, escalating emergency measures.
3. **Regional Airshed Approach**
   Link the NCR and adjoining states to the idea that pollution control must cover the whole airshed.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Body	Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas, set up under the 2021 Act
GRAP origin	First notified in 2017
Stage I	Poor, AQI 201 to 300
Stage II	Very Poor, AQI 301 to 400
Stage III	Severe, AQI 401 to 450
Stage IV	Severe+, AQI above 450
Stage II measures	Daily road sweeping, water sprinkling, stricter C&D dust checks, higher parking fees
Rule	Measures of lower stages continue when a higher stage is invoked

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

GRAP measures are cumulative, so when Stage II is invoked, Stage I actions remain in force.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

CAQM | 2021 Act | GRAP Stage II | AQI 301 to 400 | Cumulative stages | Delhi-NCR airshed

EXAM TRAP

Do not mix up the AQI bands. Stage I is Poor, Stage II Very Poor, Stage III Severe and Stage IV Severe+, and Stage II does not impose a blanket construction ban.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

With reference to GRAP in Delhi-NCR, consider the following statements :

1. It is implemented under directions of the Commission for Air Quality Management.
2. Stage II is invoked when the AQI is in the Very Poor category.
3. Stage I measures are withdrawn once Stage II is invoked.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (b) 1 and 2 only

APPROACH

Stages are cumulative, so Stage I measures continue under Stage II. Statement 3 is therefore wrong.

POLLUTION & FOREST POLICY

Forest Advisory Committee: How In-Principle Forest Clearance Works

WHY IN NEWS

The Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) of the Environment Ministry has again drawn attention for recommending in-principle approval to divert forest land for mining and infrastructure projects. It is chaired by the Director General of Forests and Special Secretary, and reviews proposals before advising state governments. An in-principle nod is not final clearance.

1980
Year of the forest conservation law that backs the FAC

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Forest Conservation Law**
   Use the FAC to explain the clearance route under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, now renamed in 2023.
2. **Compensatory Afforestation**
   Cite compensatory land and net present value payments as conditions on diverted forest land.
3. **Forest Rights Act, 2006**
   Link clearance to compliance with the rights of forest dwellers before land is diverted.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Body	Forest Advisory Committee, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Legal basis	Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980
Chair	Director General of Forests and Special Secretary, MoEFCC
Role	Reviews forest-land diversion proposals and advises state governments
Typical projects	Mining, industry, townships, infrastructure
After approval	State ensures Forest Rights Act, 2006 compliance
Conditions	Compensatory land for afforestation and net present value payment
Status of nod	In-principle approval is preliminary, not final clearance

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS
An in-principle recommendation from the FAC is only a preliminary endorsement and can carry conditions, so final forest clearance still follows.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

FAC | Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 | In-principle approval | Net present value | Compensatory afforestation | FRA 2006

EXAM TRAP
Do not treat the FAC as a court or a final authority. It is an advisory body, and its in-principle nod is not final forest clearance.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

The Forest Advisory Committee is chaired by the

(a) Union Environment Minister
(b) Director General of Forests and Special Secretary
(c) Chairman of the National Green Tribunal
(d) Secretary of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs

Answer: (b) Director General of Forests and Special Secretary

APPROACH
The FAC is an advisory body headed by the Director General of Forests and Special Secretary in the ministry, not by a minister or a tribunal.