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Q9

To what factors can be the recent dramatic fall in equipment cost and tariff of solar energy be attributed? What implications does the trend have for thermal power producers and related industry?

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2015 · GS III · 12 marks · Infrastructure

Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

Facts & figures for this PYQ only.

Numbers move. Confirm the latest Budget, Economic Survey or census round. This sheet is for revision, not a substitute for the model answer.

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JNNSM

Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission: Union solar scale-up using competitive bidding and solar parks.

Reverse auction

Developers bid the lowest tariff to win a solar PPA; this mechanism drove Indian solar prices down.

Module price crash

Global crystalline-silicon module prices fell sharply in the early 2010s as Chinese manufacturing capacity surged.

Plant load factor

Utilisation of a thermal station; it comes under pressure when cheap daytime solar is must-run on the grid.

RPO

Renewable Purchase Obligation: forces DISCOMs to buy a rising share of renewable power, creating demand for solar bids.

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