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1. Western Disturbance

Focus

- Aspirants need to understand what a western disturbance is and how it will affect the Indian Monsoon.

Western Disturbance

- What is it?: It is a non-monsoonal precipitation pattern that induces low-pressure systems in the lower layers of the atmosphere and causes rainfall in the plains and snowfall in the mountains.
- Impact
 - Lack of snowfall in the mountains affects the yield of Rabi crops
 - Availability of water in the mountains
 - Horticulture crops like apples will be severely affected due to changes in snowfall.
 - The tourism sector will also be affected.
 - They can also cause fog, cold waves, and result in landslides.

2. **Bacillus subtilis as the State Microbe of Kerala**

- It is a gram-positive, catalase-positive bacterium, found in soil and the gastrointestinal tract of ruminants, humans and marine sponges.
- It is widely used to produce enzymes , antibiotics, and vitamins.
- **USES** (Has application in various sectors, but these areas are more focused on by UPSC)
 - Biofertilizer
 - Bioremediation
 - Probiotics

3. Hirakud Wetland

- Hirakud Reservoir is **one of the largest man-made reservoirs in India**, built across the Mahanadi River in Odisha.
- It is home to many migratory birds like River Terns, Little Terns, Gull-billed Terns, Pratincoles, Plovers, Egrets, and more.
- It is designated as a **Ramsar Site**.