

December, 2020

**TEST YOURSELF**

Daily Current Affairs MCQs

**Q.1** With reference to the the State of the Global Climate 2020 report, consider the following statements:

1. It states that the 2011-20 will be the warmest decade on record, with the warmest six years all coming since 2015.
2. It is released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** The State of the Global Climate 2020 report was released by the World Meteorological Organization.

Option A is correct: According to the report, the year 2020 is expected to go down as one of the warmest in history with global temperatures about 1.2°C above the pre-industrial (1850-1900) level. The report says that 2011-20 will be the warmest decade on record, with the warmest six years all coming since 2015. The warmest year on record is 2016, followed closely by 2020. The State of the Global Climate 2020 report released by the World Meteorological Organization.

**Q.2** With reference to the recently released World Malaria Report 2020, consider the following statements:

1. India is the only high endemic country which has reported a decline of 17.6% in 2019 as compared to 2018.
2. India has sustained Annual Parasitic Incidence (API) less than one since the year 2012.
3. High Burden to High Impact (HBHI) is the initiative of India to deal with malaria.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has released the World Malaria Report (WMR) 2020.

**Option A is correct:** The World Malaria Report (WMR), 2020 was recently released by WHO. It indicates that India has made considerable progress in reducing its malaria burden. According to the report, India is the only high endemic country which has reported a decline of 17.6% in 2019 as compared to 2018. The Annual Parasite Incidence (API) reduced by 27.6% in 2018 compared to 2017 and by 18.4% in 2019 as compared to 2018. India has sustained API less than one since year 2012. India has also contributed to the largest drop in cases region-wide, from approximately 20 million to about 6 million. WHO has initiated the High Burden to High Impact (HBHI)

initiative in 11 high malaria burden countries, including India. Implementation of HBHI initiative has been started in four states i.e. West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh in July, 2019.

**Q.3** Which of the following countries recently blocked the import of cotton from China?

- (a) India
- (b) USA
- (c) UK
- (d) Israel

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, the United States decided to block imports of cotton that, it says, is harvested with "slave labour" in China's Xinjiang region.

**Option B is correct:** The United States decided to block imports of cotton it says are harvested with "slave labour" in China's Xinjiang region. As, China has come under intense international criticism over its policies in the resource-rich territory, where rights groups say as many as one million Uighurs and other mostly Muslim minorities are being held in internment camps.

**Q.4** 'Uighurs', a Muslim minority community recently in the news, are related to which of the following regions?

- (a) Xinjiang
- (b) Rakhine
- (c) Jerusalem
- (d) Wuhan

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, reports have emerged that China is involved in a brutal set of practices in its Xinjiang province that many experts have termed as the attempted ethnic cleansing of Uighur Muslims.

**Option A is correct:** The Uighurs are a Muslim minority community concentrated in China's northwestern Xinjiang province. They speak a language close to Turkish and are culturally and ethnically closer to Central Asia than the rest of China. They live in Xinjiang, the largest and most western of China's administrative regions. Xinjiang has long had a rebellious and autonomous streak, with the indigenous ethnic Uighurs clashing with the authorities. There was a spike in demonstrations and demands for independence in the early 1990s as the collapse of the Soviet Union gave birth to new nations, but these were rapidly crushed.

**Q.5** With reference to the Fundamental Rights under the Indian Constitution, consider the following statements:

1. They are protected and enforced by the Constitution.
2. They can be amended by a simple majority.
3. The Supreme Court is the guardian of Fundamental Rights.
4. All Constitutional rights are fundamental rights.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 3 and 4 only

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is correct:** The Fundamental Rights are enshrined in Part III of the Constitution from Articles 12 to 35. The Fundamental Rights are guaranteed by the Constitution to all persons without any discrimination. The Fundamental Rights are named so because they are guaranteed and protected by the Constitution, which is the fundamental law of the land. They are 'fundamental' also in the sense that they are most essential for the all-round development (material, intellectual, moral and spiritual) of the individuals.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Any changes to the fundamental rights require a constitutional amendment that should be passed by both the Houses of Parliament. The amendment bill should be passed by a special majority of Parliament.

**Statement 3 is correct:** They are defended and guaranteed by the Supreme Court. The aggrieved person can directly go to the Supreme Court, not necessarily by way of appeal against the judgement of the high courts. Article 32 and 224, Writs of five types are testimony to this. Hence, SC act as the guardian of the Fundamental Rights.

**Statement 4 is not correct:** All Constitutional rights are not fundamental rights. The Constitution has itself mentioned what rights are fundamental in nature.

**Q.6** Consider the following statements:

1. The expression 'contempt of court' has been defined by Article 129 of the Indian Constitution.
2. The power to punish for contempt of court is with the Supreme Court and High Court only.
3. The AG's consent is mandatory when a private citizen wants to initiate a case of contempt of court against a person.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal has given his consent to a law student to initiate contempt of court proceedings against artist Rachita Taneja for her tweets and cartoons.

**Option B is correct:** The prior consent in writing of the Attorney General is required for the Supreme Court to initiate criminal contempt action in a case a/c to the Contempt of Court Act, 1971. As per the Contempt of Courts Act 1971, contempt refers to the offence of showing disrespect to the dignity or authority of a court. It divides contempt into civil and criminal contempt.

**Civil contempt:** It is willful disobedience to any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other processes of a court or wilful breach of an undertaking given to the court.

**Criminal contempt:** It is any act which may result in scandalising the court by lowering its authority, interference in the due course of a judicial proceeding, an obstruction in the administration of justice. The expression 'contempt of court' has not been defined by the Constitution.

**Q.7** Consider the following statements:

1. The prior consent of the Attorney General is required for the Supreme Court to initiate criminal contempt action in a case.
2. The Attorney General has the right of audience in all Courts in India as well as the right to participate in the proceedings of the Parliament.

3. The Attorney General is a member of the Central cabinet.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** Recently, Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal has given his consent to a law student to initiate contempt of court proceedings against artist Rachita Taneja for her tweets and cartoons.

**Option A is correct:** The Constitution (Article 76) has provided for the office of the Attorney General for India. He is the highest law officer in the country. The Attorney General (AG) is appointed by the president. He must be a person who is qualified to be appointed a judge of the Supreme Court. The prior consent of the Attorney General is required for the Supreme Court to initiate criminal contempt action in a case. As per the Contempt of Courts Act 1971, contempt refers to the offence of showing disrespect to the dignity or authority of a court. It divides contempt into civil and criminal contempt.

- **Civil contempt:** It is willful disobedience to any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other processes of a court or wilful breach of an undertaking given to the court.

- **Criminal contempt:** It is any act which may result in scandalising the court by lowering its authority, interference in the due course of a judicial proceeding, an obstruction in the administration of justice. The expression 'contempt of court' has not been defined by the Constitution.

The AG is not a member of the Central cabinet. There is a separate law minister in the Central cabinet to look after legal matters at the government level.

**Q.8** Recently, an ancient idol of the goddess Annapurna, stolen from India about a century ago, is being brought back from which of the following countries?

- (a) Canada
- (b) UK
- (c) Egypt
- (d) Iran

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** Canada is returning the 18th-century goddess Annapurna statue to India which was stolen over a century back.

**Option A is correct:** An 18th-century statue of goddess Annapurna will be returned to India, where it was stolen more than a century ago and transported to Canada. Annapurna is the goddess of food. The statue is believed to be originally from Varanasi and was part of the University of Regina's collection housed at the MacKenzie Art Gallery.

**Q.9** Recently, the first-ever virtual 'Aadi Mahotsav - Madhya Pradesh' was held, consider the following statements in this regards:

1. It is a national tribal festival to promote Indian tribal products in the global market.
2. It is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs & Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only

- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, the Union Minister for Tribal Affairs launched the virtual edition of Aadi Mahotsav- Madhya Pradesh.

**Option B is correct:** Aadi Mahotsav is a national tribal festival and a joint initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India & Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED). The Aadi Mahotsav – A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Crafts, Cuisine and Commerce – is a successful initiative that was commenced in 2017. The festival showcases traditional art and handicrafts and cultural heritage of the country. It is an attempt to familiarise the people with the rich and diverse craft, the culture of the tribal communities across the country, in one place.

**Q.10** Which of the following flagship initiatives are launched by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)?

- 1. Honey mission
- 2. Project DigniTEA
- 3. Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** KVIC engaged hundreds of migrant workers in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and engaged them with its flagship schemes like Honey Mission and Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana.

**Option D is correct:** All the initiatives are launched by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC). **Honey Mission** was launched by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) in August 2017 in line with Prime Minister's call for 'Sweet Revolution' in 2016 while introducing Banas Honey project at Deesa in Gujarat's Banaskantha district. **Project DigniTEA** is an innovative project of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC). Under the project, the cycle-mounted tea/coffee selling units have been distributed to 6 unemployed local youths. And, **Kumhar Sashaktikaran Program** is an initiative of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission(KVIC) for the empowerment of potters community in the remotest of locations in the country. The program reaches out to the potters in U.P., M.P., Maharashtra, J&K, Haryana, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Assam, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Telangana and Bihar.

**Q.11** The 'Ziro Valley' was in the news recently, it is located in which of the following states?

- (a) Sikkim
- (b) Uttrakhand
- (c) Arunachal Pradesh
- (d) Himachal Pradesh

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News-** The kiwis that grow wild in Arunachal Pradesh's Ziro Valley are the only certified organic fruit of their kind in the country.



**Option C is correct:** The kiwis of Arunachal Pradesh's Ziro Valley region are the only certified organic fruit of their kind in the country. Kiwis of Ziro Valley – located in Lower Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh were certified as organic following a standard three-year-process. In October, Arunachal Pradesh became the first state in the country to obtain organic certification for its kiwis.

**Q.12** 'Saryu river' was in the news recently, it originates in which of the following states of India?

- (a) Arunachal Pradesh
- (b) Andhra Pradesh
- (c) Uttarakhand
- (d) Uttar Pradesh

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] News-** 'Ramayan Cruise Tour' on the Saryu river in Ayodhya will be launched soon. The cruise will be equipped with all luxury comfort and facilities along with all essential safety and security features at par with the global standard.

**Option C is correct:** The Sarayu is a river that originates in Uttarakhand. It flows through Uttar Pradesh in India. It is a tributary of the Sharda River.

**Q.13** With reference to the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), consider the following statements:

1. It is a statutory body formed by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956.
2. It is an apex organisation under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** Responding to the Prime Minister's call for Aatmanirbhar Bharat, Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) engaged hundreds of migrant workers in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar with its flagship scheme like Honey Mission.

**Option A is correct:** The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a statutory body formed in April 1957 (as per an RTI) by the Government of India, under the Act of Parliament, 'Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956'. It is an apex organisation under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. It has six zonal offices: Delhi, Bhopal, Bangalore, Kolkata, Mumbai and Guwahati.

**Q.14** Consider the following statements with reference to the 'Zebrafish' recently seen in the

1. It is mostly found in tropical and subtropical regions.
2. It is a large freshwater fish.
3. It has the unique property of heart regeneration.

Which of the given above statements are correct?

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

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, Indian scientists have used the Zebrafish model and identified its genes that can promote heart regeneration.

**Option D is correct:** Zebrafish is a small (2-3 cm long) freshwater fish found in the tropical and subtropical regions. The fish is native to South Asia's Indo-Gangetic plains, where they are mostly found in the paddy fields and even in stagnant water and streams. The ability of Zebrafish to heal their heart after injury makes them an attractive model to investigate mechanisms governing the regenerative process. Researchers worldwide are actively working to understand the mechanism behind the heart regeneration in Zebrafish for the last two decades.

**Q.15** With reference to the North-Eastern Council, consider the following statements:

1. It is the statutory body established for the economic and social development of Sixth Schedule areas in the North-Eastern States.
2. The council is headed by the Prime Minister.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct:** North-Eastern Council (NEC) is the statutory body established after amending the North-Eastern Council Act, 1971 in the year 2002. It is the nodal agency for economic and social development of 8 North Eastern Region States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura including the four states having Schedule six areas. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The Home Minister is the ex-officio chairperson of the Council. The DoNER Minister is the Vice-Chairman. The council has Governors and Chief Ministers of all eight northeastern states as its members.

**Q.16** With reference to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), consider the following statements:

1. It is an UN-mandated inter-governmental body established in 1989 on the initiative of the G20 nations.
2. Countries that are supporting terror funding and money laundering activities are placed in the Blacklist.
3. As of 2020, FATF has blacklisted only North Korea over terror financing.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** FATF recently held its annual joint experts' meet. It was attended by participants from various government agencies all over the world and international bodies such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and Interpol.

**Option B is correct:** The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body decision-making body. It was established in 1989 during the G7 Summit in Paris to develop policies against money laundering. India became an Observer at FATF in 2006. Since then, it had been working towards full-fledged membership. On June 25, 2010, India was taken in as the 34th

country member of FATF. As of 2020, FATF has blacklisted North Korea and Iran over terror financing. Twelve countries are in the grey list, namely: Bahamas, Botswana, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Pakistan, Panama, Sri Lanka, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia and Yemen.

**Q.17** Consider the following statements:

1. The option of NOTA was first introduced in Lok Sabha polls by the Election Commission in the year 2010.
2. A NOTA vote requires the involvement of the Presiding Officer.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, an advocate has moved the Supreme Court for a direction that fresh elections should be held in a constituency where NOTA ('None of the above' option) garnered the maximum number of votes.

**Option D is correct:** NOTA means "None of the Above" options which enables the voter to officially register a vote of rejection for all candidates who are contesting. If a voter chooses to press NOTA on the EVM, it indicates that the voter has not chosen to vote for any party. The option of NOTA for Lok Sabha and assembly elections as prescribed by the SC in 2013. The option of NOTA in RS polls was introduced by the EC in 2014. The EVMs have the NOTA option at the end of the candidates' list. Earlier, in order to cast a negative ballot, a voter had to inform the presiding officer at the polling booth. A NOTA vote doesn't require the involvement of the presiding officer.

**Q.18** Consider the following statements:

1. Battle of Saraighat is regarded as one of the great battles fought between the Mughal and the Ahom Kingdom.
2. It was fought on the Gange River near West Bengal.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** Lachit Diwas is celebrated every year on 24th November to commemorate the heroism of Lachit Borphukan and the victory of the Assamese army at the Battle of Saraighat.

**Option B is correct:** The Battle of Saraighat was the last battle in the last major attempt by the Mughals to extend their empire into Assam. The Battle was fought in 1671 between the Mughal Empire, led by Raja Ramsingh I and the Ahom Kingdom, led by Lachit Borphukan, on the Brahmaputra River at Saraighat. The battle was a decisive one but it didn't bring the Mughal-Ahom conflict to an end. Later in the battle of Itakhuli in 1682 the Mughal presence in Assam came to an end.



**Q.19** With reference to the Indian peacock soft-shell turtle, recently in the news, consider the following statements:

1. It is a riverine turtle endemic to India, Nepal, and Bangladesh regions only.
2. It is herbivorous and nocturnal in nature.
3. It is considered as Critically Endangered on IUCN Redlist.

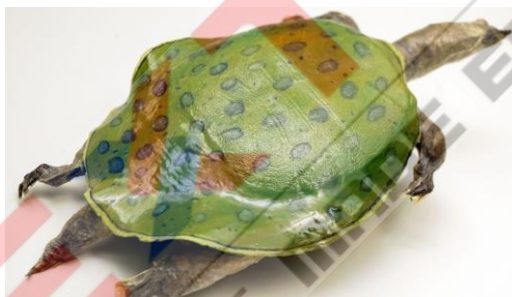
Which of the statements given above are not correct?

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

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, Peacock soft-shelled turtle has been rescued from a fish market in Assam's Silchar.

**Option D is correct:** The Indian Peacock softshell turtle named *Nilssonia hurum* is present as a vulnerable species on the Schedule 1 in the IUCN Red List. This species is endemic to the freshwater bodies of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. In India, it can be found in the northern and central parts of the subcontinent. These are found in rivers, streams, lakes and ponds with mud or sand bottoms, which means only in freshwater bodies. They are generally omnivorous (predominantly carnivorous) and nocturnal. These are not saltwater animals. The species is characterised by a large head, a snout turned down and a low, oval carapace, with olive to dark green colour and has a yellow rim. Hence, all the statements are not correct.



**Q.20** With reference to the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), consider the following statements:

1. It indicates the activity of only the manufacturing sector in the domestic economy.
2. It is based on a quarterly survey of supply chain managers across major industries.
3. A figure above 50 denotes expansion in the business activity and below 50 denotes contraction.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** India's manufacturing PMI slips to 3-month low in November 2020.

**Option B is correct:** PMI or a Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) is an indicator of business activity -- both in the manufacturing and services sectors. The PMI is derived from a series of qualitative questions. Executives from a reasonably big sample, running into hundreds of firms, are asked whether key indicators such as output, new orders, business expectations and employment were stronger than the month before and are asked to rate them. The PMI is based

on a monthly survey of supply chain managers across 19 industries, covering both upstream and downstream activity. A figure above 50 denotes expansion in business activity. Anything below 50 denotes contraction. Higher the difference from this mid-point greater the expansion or contraction. The PMI is usually released at the start of the month, much before most of the official data on industrial output, manufacturing and GDP growth becomes available.

Option PMI or a Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) is an indicator of business activity – both in the manufacturing and services sectors.

It is a survey-based measures that asks the respondents about changes in their perception of some key business variables from the month before.

It is calculated separately for the manufacturing and services sectors and then a composite index is constructed.

A figure above 50 denotes expansion in business activity. Anything below 50 denotes contraction. Higher the difference from this mid-point greater the expansion or contraction

**Q.21** 'Hayabusa2 mission' which recently carried samples from the Ryugu asteroid to Earth, is launched by which of the following countries?

- (a) China
- (b) Japan
- (c) Vietnam
- (d) South Korea

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** Japan's Hayabusa-2 capsule returns to Earth with pristine asteroid samples.

**Option B is correct:** Recently, Japan's Hayabusa-2 has returned to Earth with samples taken from Ryugu asteroid that revolves around the Sun. The Hayabasu2 mission was launched in December 2014. The spacecraft was sent on a six-year-long voyage to study the asteroid Ryugu and collect samples. NASA's OSIRIS-REX mission also brought back samples from asteroid Bennu late in October 2020. According to the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), this is the first time that a probe has visited a celestial body that is less than 100 metres in diameter.

**Q.22** With reference to 'Houbara Bustards' bird species, recently seen in the news, which of the following statement(s) is/are correct?

1. It lives in temperate climates.
2. It is categorised as Critically Endangered under the IUCN Red List.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, Pakistan has issued special permits to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and two other members of the royal family to hunt the internationally protected Houbara bustards during the hunting season 2020-21.

**Option D is correct:** The Houbara bustard lives in arid climates, they come in two distinct species as recognised by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, one residing in North Africa (*Chlamydotis undulata*) and the other in Asia (*Chlamydotis macqueenii*). The population of the Asian houbara bustards extends from northeast Asia, across central Asia, the Middle East, and the Arabian Peninsula to reach the Sinai desert. Some Asian houbara bustards live and breed in

the southern part of their ranges including parts of Iran, Pakistan and Turkmenistan. The birds migrate in the thousands from Central Asia to Pakistan every winter - giving the Pakistani elite a chance to engage in "soft diplomacy". IUCN Red List Status: Vulnerable. Hence, both statements are not correct.

**Q.23** 'Bhasan Char island' was seen in the news, it is under the administrative control of which of the following nations?

- (a) Myanmar
- (b) China
- (c) Bangladesh
- (d) Indonesia

**[ANS]** c

**[SOL]** In News- Recently, Bangladesh started shifting Rohingyas to Bhasan Char island.

**Option C is correct:** Bangladesh has begun relocating Rohingyas from refugee camps near Ukhiya in Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh to Bhasan Char -- an island in the Bay of Bengal. Bhasan Char (Floating Island) also known as Char Piya or Thengar Char Island, is an island in Hatiya, Bangladesh. It surfaced only 20 years ago and was never inhabited. It was formed with Himalayan silt from the mouth of river Meghna in 2006 spanning 40 square kilometres. The Rohingya people are stateless, Indo-Aryan ethnic group who reside in Rakhine State, Myanmar.



**Q.24** 'HL-2M Tokamak reactor', called as "artificial sun" is initiative of which of the following countries?

- (a) USA
- (b) Israel
- (c) Japan
- (d) China

**[ANS]** d

**[SOL]** In News- Recently, China has powered up its nuclear fusion reactor for the first time.

**Option D is correct:** The HL-2M Tokamak reactor is China's largest and most advanced nuclear fusion experimental research device that can potentially unlock a powerful clean energy source. HL-2M Tokamak device is used in it to replicate the nuclear fusion process that occurs naturally in the sun.

**Q.25** Which of the following is/are the freshwater lakes?

1. Kolleru lake
2. Pulicat lake
3. Loktak lake
4. Tsomoriri lake
5. Wular lake

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 2 and 5 only
- (b) 1, 4 and 5 only
- (c) 1, 3 and 5 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is correct:** Kolleru lake is a freshwater lake in Andhra Pradesh.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Pulicat lake is a saline and lagoon lake located at the border of Andhrapradesh and Tamilnadu.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Loktak lake is freshwater lake having inland drainage in Manipur.

**Statement 4 is not correct:** Tsomoriri is a salty lake of Jammu and Kashmir.

**Statement 5 is correct:** Wular Lake is a freshwater lake and it was created due to tectonic activities. It is located in Jammu and Kashmir.

**Q.26** With reference to the Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) technology, consider the following statements:

1. It is a remote sensing method that uses light in the form of a pulsed laser to measure the distance of the subject.
2. It can be used in archaeology.
3. It can function well in fog, rain, snow and dusty weather.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited will be adopting Light Detection and Ranging Survey (LiDAR) technique using Laser enabled equipment mounted on a Helicopter for conducting the ground survey for the preparation of Detailed Project Report for the proposed Delhi-Varanasi HSR corridor.

**Statement 1 is correct:** Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) is a remote sensing method that uses light in the form of a pulsed laser to measure ranges (variable distances) to the Earth. A lidar instrument principally consists of a laser, a scanner, and a specialized GPS receiver. A LiDAR sensor fires off beams of laser light and then measures how long it takes for the light to return to the sensor.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Recently, National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited will be adopting Light Detection and Ranging Survey (LiDAR) technique using Laser enabled equipment mounted on a Helicopter for conducting the ground survey for the preparation of Detailed Project Report for the proposed Delhi-Varanasi HSR corridor. This technology can be used in a wide range of land management and planning efforts, including hazard assessment (including lava



flows, landslides, tsunamis, and floods), forestry, agriculture, geologic mapping, and watershed and river surveys.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** LiDAR can measure the distance to surrounding objects up to 5 meters away, but won't fare well in identifying objects in the vicinity. It can't perform well in fog, rain, snow and dusty weather.

**Q.27** Consider the following statements:

1. Tharu tribals belong to the lowlands located in the Shiwalik ranges.
2. They are mostly forest dwellers and some practised agriculture.
3. They don't practice idol worship and are the followers of Jainism philosophy.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** The Uttar Pradesh government has recently launched a Homestay scheme to take the unique culture of the Tharu tribes all over the world.

**Option A is correct:** The community belongs to the Terai lowlands, amid the Shivaliks or lower Himalayas. Most of them are forest dwellers and some practised agriculture. The word tharu is believed to be derived from sthavir, meaning followers of Theravada Buddhism. The Tharus live in both India and Nepal. In the Indian Terai, they live mostly in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar. Tharu women have stronger property rights than is allowed to women in mainstream North Indian Hindu custom. The Tharu tribals speak Tharu language. It is a language of the Indo Aryan subgroup and the variant of Urdu, Hindi and Awadhi. The Tharu of Nepal speaks a variant of Bhojpuri. Peace tribals worship Lord Shiva as Mahadev.

**Q.28** Consider the following statements:

1. Mahaparinirvan Diwas is observed to commemorate the birth anniversary of Dr B R Ambedkar.
2. Dr B R Ambedkar launched the fortnightly newspaper "Mooknayak".
3. He participated in all the round-table conferences.

Which of the above are correct?

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** Mahaparinirvan Diwas is observed every year on 6th December to commemorate the death anniversary of Dr B R Ambedkar.

**Option B is correct:** The term 'parinirvan' has a deep meaning in Buddhist traditions and refers to someone who has attained nirvana in his lifetime and after death. December 6 is observed to commemorate Dr B R Ambedkar unfathomable contribution to society and his achievements. He established a fortnightly newspaper "Mooknayak" in 1920 which laid the foundations of an assertive and organised Dalit politics. He founded Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha (1923), devoted to spreading education and culture amongst the downtrodden. He was appointed by the Bombay Presidency Committee to work in the Simon Commission in 1925. He participated in all three



round-table conferences. In 1932, he signed the Poona pact with Mahatma Gandhi, which abandoned the idea of separate electorates for the depressed classes (Communal Award). He was awarded the Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian honour of India, posthumously in 1990.

**Q.29** Which of the following first Union Territory recently that has opted 100 per cent organic farming?

- (a) Jammu & Kashmir
- (b) Lakshadweep
- (c) Puducherry
- (d) Andaman & Nicobar

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] Option B is correct:** After Sikkim, Lakshadweep is the first Union Territory to become 100 per cent organic as all farming is carried out without the use of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides, providing access to safer food choices and making agriculture a more environment-friendly activity.

**Q.30** Consider the following statements:

1. XP100 is the brand of 100 Octane petrol recently launched by Indian Oil Corporation (IOC).
2. Currently, petrol available in India has 91 Octane.
3. It is usually used in luxury vehicles which demand high-performance.

Which of the above are correct?

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

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has launched **100 Octane petrol in India** and branded as XP100.

**Option D is correct:** Recently, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) launched Octane 99 and now IOC has come to the market with XP100. XP100 premium petrol will initially be available at select outlets of IOC in 10 cities Delhi, Gurgaon, Noida, Agra, Jaipur, Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Mumbai, Pune, and Ahmedabad. The fuel costs Rs 160 per litre in Delhi. XP100 premium-grade fuel will improve engine performance, engine longevity, and fuel-efficiency. Furthermore, it also meets BS6 emission norms. It is usually used in luxury vehicles which demand high-performance. Octane ratings are measures of fuel refinement that help with improved combustion and avoid engine knocking, which occurs when fuel is prematurely ignited in the cylinder, which degrades efficiency and can cause damage to the engine in the long run.

**Q.31** With reference to the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), consider the following statements:

1. It was constituted under the Companies Act, 2013.
2. The chairperson of the Tribunal is appointed on the selection committee headed by the Finance minister.
3. Term of office of chairperson and members is 5 years and they cannot be reappointed further.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only

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

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] Option A is correct:** National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) was often seen in the news related to the reinstatement of Cyrus Mistry as the Tata Sons Private Ltd's chairman. National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) was constituted under Section 410 of the Companies Act, 2013 for hearing appeals against the orders of National Company Law Tribunal(s) (NCLT), with effect from 1st June 2016. The President of the Tribunal and the chairperson and Judicial Members of the Appellate Tribunal shall be appointed after consultation with the Chief Justice of India. Term of office of chairperson and members is 5 years and they can be reappointed for additional 5 years.

**Q.32** 'Operation Blackface' was often seen in the news, it is related to which of the following?

- (a) Child sex ratio
- (b) Monetary help to Disabled people
- (c) Child pornography
- (d) Delivery mechanism of COVID-19 vaccine

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] Option C is correct:** 'Operation Blackface' is part of the larger action taken against Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) across the country. Acting on the tip-off provided by NCRB, Maharashtra Cyber cops forward complaints to the districts where FIR's were registered against accused persons.

**Q.33** Which of the following relates to the formation of the Himalayas?

- (a) Folding of the earth's crust
- (b) Accumulation of loess deposits
- (c) Folding of the geosyncline
- (d) Faulting of the earth's crust

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL]** The Himalayas are of tectonic origin. Geosyncline between the Indian plate and the Eurasian plate was folded and uplifted as these plates moved towards each other.

Educational Objective: to know how the Himalayas formed.

**Q.34** Which of the following are minor plates of Earth?

1. Caroline Plate
2. Arabian Plate
3. Aegean Plate
4. Fuji Plate

Choose the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only

- (b) 2,3 and 4 only
- (c) 1,2 and 3 only
- (d) All of the above

[ANS] d

[SOL] **Explanation:** Plate tectonics is the theory that Earth's outer shell is divided into several plates that glide over the mantle, the rocky inner layer above the core.

Earth has 7 major and many minor plates. The major plates are Antarctica and the surrounding oceanic plate, North American plate, South American plate, Pacific plate, India-Australia-New Zealand plate, African plate and the Eurasian plate. Some Minor plates are Nazca, Cocos, Turkish, Aegean, Fuji, Arabian etc.

**Q.35** 'Boko Haram' a militant group, often seen in the news, belongs to which country?

- (a) Niger
- (b) Nigeria
- (c) Chad
- (d) Cameron

[ANS] b

[SOL] **In News-** An attack by the extremist group Boko Haram has left 110 farmers dead in Nigeria.

**Option B is correct:** The name "**Boko Haram**" is translated as "**Western education is forbidden**" and it is the militant group in northern Nigeria that has killed tens of thousands of people.

- It was founded upon the **principles of the Salafism advocating Sharia law** and developed into a Jihadist group in 2009.
- Boko Haram militants mainly **inhabit areas in the northern states of Nigeria**, specifically Yobe, Kano, Bauchi, Borno and Kaduna.
- It opposes the **Westernization of Nigerian society** and the concentration of wealth among a small political elite, **mainly in the Christian south of the country**.

**Q.36** With reference to the Ken-Betwa Interlinking Project, consider the following statements:

1. It is India's first river interlinking project.
2. Ken and Betwa rivers originate in Madhya Pradesh and are the tributaries of Yamuna.
3. Betwa river passes through Panna tiger reserve in Madhya Pradesh.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

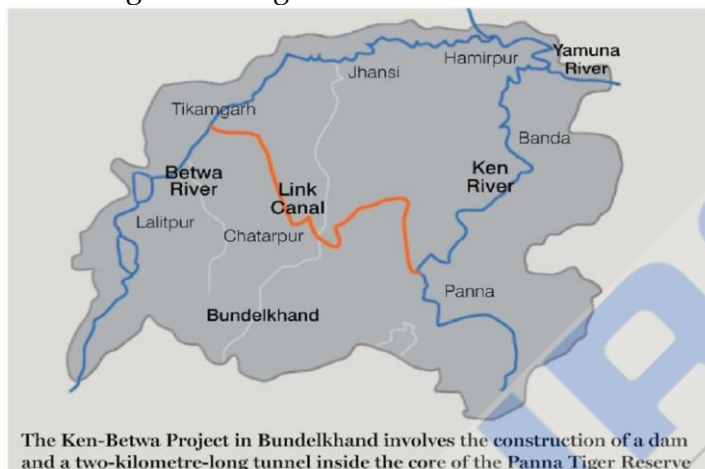
- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** An expert panel of India's environment ministry has deferred environment clearance for the Lower Orr Dam, which is part of the Ken-Betwa river interlinking project.

**Option A is correct:** The Ken-Betwa Link Project (KBLP) is the River interlinking project that aims to transfer surplus water from the Ken river in MP to Betwa in UP to irrigate the drought-prone

Bundelkhand region spread across the districts of two states mainly Jhansi, Banda, Lalitpur and Mahoba districts of UP and Tikamgarh, Panna and Chhatarpur districts of MP. It is the country's first interlinking river project. It was given the Union Cabinet's approval in July 2014 but was stalled because of protests from environmentalists and wildlife conservationists. Both the rivers, Ken and Betwa originate in MP and are the tributaries of Yamuna and meet it in Banda district of UP. Ken River passes through Panna tiger reserve.



**Q.37** With reference to the 'PM-WANI' project, consider the following statements:

1. It will set up public WiFi networks across the country through public data offices (PDOs).
2. There will be a licence and nominal fee criteria for the public data offices (PDOs).
3. Under this, users can connect to a public WiFi system for an unlimited time.

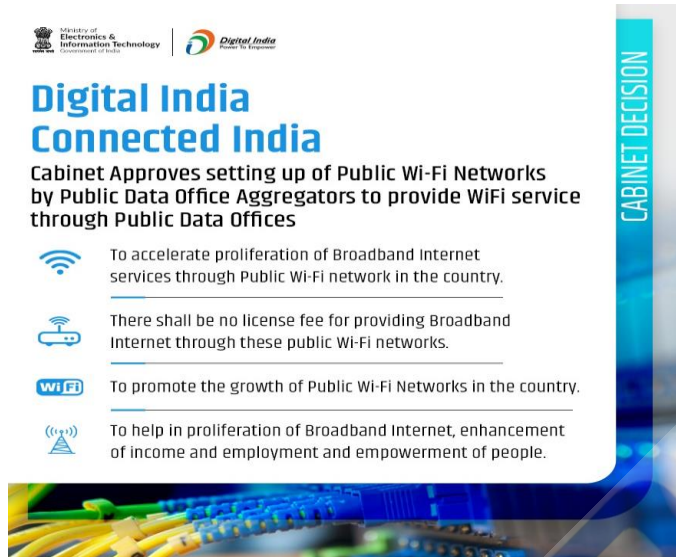
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, the Union Cabinet approved setting up of public WiFi networks across the country under the PM WANI project.

**Option A is correct:** In the recently launched PM-WANI project, the Centre's public Wi-Fi network scheme will provide a boost to ease of doing business and boost the proliferation of broadband internet services. The public network will set up by the public data office aggregators (PDOAs) to provide Wi-Fi service through the public data offices (PDOs) spread throughout the country. No license fee will be charged for providing broadband internet services. There will be a certain time limit of data usage. In addition to the PDOs, there will also be PDO aggregators, which will look after the authorisation and accounting of PDOs. A third layer will of app providers, available for download on the Play Store as well as the Apple Store, will enable users to register for using the public WiFi at a particular place.



**Q.38** In the recently released report by PwC on the Artificial Intelligence (AI), consider the following statements:

1. India reported a 45 per cent increase in the use of AI, highest among all the nations.
2. India is the founding member of the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News-** As per a report by PwC (a global network of firms), India reported a 45% increase in the use of Artificial Intelligence, the highest among all countries, following the outbreak of the virus.

**Option C is correct:** According to the PwC report on AI, India reported a 45 per cent increase in the use of AI, the highest among all countries, while the US recorded a 35 per cent rise, the UK 23 per cent and Japan 28 per cent, following the outbreak of the virus. The sectors with the highest Covid-19 led disruption adopted AI solutions in a more definitive manner. In the travel and hospitality sector, 89% of firms have implemented AI in some form. Recently, India joins Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) as a founding member to support the responsible and human-centric development and use of AI.

**Q.39** 'Beresheet 2 project' was seen in the news, it is launched by which of the following countries?

- (a) Afghanistan
- (b) UAE
- (c) Iran
- (d) Israel

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, Israel launched the Beresheet 2 project aimed at landing an unmanned craft on the moon in 2024.

**Option D is correct:** Recently, Israel launched the Beresheet 2 project aimed at landing an unmanned craft on the moon in 2024, after a previous such mission had crashed into the lunar



surface. The original Beresheet, Hebrew for "Genesis", was a tall, oddly shaped 585-kilogram spacecraft built by Israeli NGO SpaceIL and state-owned Israel Aerospace Industries. It had reached the moon in April 2019 but suffered an engine failure as it prepared to land.

**Q.40** With reference to Zero Hour of Parliamentary proceedings, consider the following statements:

1. It is a formal device mentioned under the Rules of Procedure.
2. It is the interregnum between the end of Question Hour and the beginning of the regular proceedings.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct:** It was during the 1960s when several issues of national and international importance used to be raised by members of Parliament immediately after Question Hour. On one such occasion, a member raised an issue pertaining to policy announcements made by the ministers outside Parliament when Parliament was in session. This act triggered an idea among other members who called for another provision for discussing important matters in the House. Zero Hour doesn't find a mention in the Rules of Procedure and hence it's considered an informal procedure for the members of Parliament to raise matters of serious importance.

**Statement 2 is correct:** It is the time gap between the end of Question Hour and the beginning of the regular business of the House.

**Q.41** With reference to the Codex Alimentarius Commission, often seen in the news, which of the following is/are correct?

1. It is an international food standards body aimed for ensuring fair practices in food trade.
2. It is established by the World Trade Organization (WTO).
3. Codex Standards issued by the commission is mandatory and binding on the member nations.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) in his research has found that 77 per cent of the samples were adulterated with sugar syrup.

**Option A is correct:** The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) is an intergovernmental body with over 180 members, within the framework of the Joint Food Standards Programme. It was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), with the purpose of protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade. The Commission also promotes coordination of all food standards work undertaken by international governmental and non-governmental organizations. Codex texts are voluntary and non-binding.

**Q.42** Consider the following statements:

1. United Nations Population Award is given for outstanding contributions to population and reproductive health issues.
2. It is established by the United Nations Security Council.
3. HelpAge India is the first Indian NGO to receive UN Population Award for 2020 under the institutional category.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, HelpAge India has been presented the UN Population Award for 2020 (institutional category)

**Option C is correct:** UN Population Award is established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1981 and recognises contributions in the fields of population and reproductive health. HelpAge India gets the first Indian NGO to be awarded the prestigious 2020 UN Population Award in the institutional category. It is a leading charity in India working with and for disadvantaged elderly for nearly 4 decades. It was set up in 1978 and is registered under the Societies' Registration Act of 1860. Only two Indians have been awarded in the past four decades since the award was established in 1981: former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1983 and industrialist-philanthropist J.R.D. Tata in 1992. Bhutan's Queen Mother Gyalum Sangay Choden Wangchuck has been awarded the United Nations Population Award in the individual category for 2020 for her work on sexual health and ending gender violence.

**Q.43** Which of the following is correct with reference to Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) test?

- (a) It is a technique used in determining the content and purity of a sample.
- (b) It is widely used in domestically in India but not used for export.
- (c) It is not used in ascertaining the composition of a product at the molecular level.
- (d) None of the above

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] Option A is correct:** Recently, the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) claimed that honey marketed by prominent brands failed a key test of purity. The food researchers selected 13 brands of raw and processed honey and subjected them to tests that are required under national food regulatory laws.

- Most of the brands passed muster but when subjected to the Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) only three brands passed.
  - The NMR tests were carried out in Germany.
  - The NMR test is not required by Indian law for honey that is being marketed locally but is needed for export.
- It is an analytical chemistry technique used in quality control and research for determining the content and purity of a sample as well as its molecular structure.
- It ascertains the composition of a product at the molecular level.

**Q.44** Which one among the following items was not added to the Concurrent List of the Constitution of India under the provisions of the 42nd Amendment Act, 1976?

- (a) Forest

- (b) Agriculture
- (c) Weights & Measures
- (d) Administration of Justice

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Option B is correct:** Agriculture comes under the State List i.e. it forms a part of the state list of our Constitution, which essentially means that states are supposed to address all the issues related to agriculture.

**Q.45** With reference to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), consider the following statements:

1. It is the second-largest organization after the United Nations.
2. India is a member of the OIC.
3. It is headquartered at Abu Dhabi.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News:** Recently, India criticised the **Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)** for making **factually incorrect** and **unwarranted** references to **Jammu and Kashmir**.

**Option A is correct:** Established in **September 1969**, headquartered at **Jeddah, Saudi Arabia**. It is the **second-largest organization** after the **United Nations** with a **membership of 57 states** spread over four continents. It is the **collective voice of the Muslim world** and endeavours to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world.

• **Key bodies:** **The Islamic Summit**, **The Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM)**, **The General Secretariat** and **three permanent committees** concerned with science and technology, economy and trade, and information and culture. India is not the member state of this.

**Q.46** With reference to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), consider the following statements:

1. The retired **Chief Justice** of India can only be the chairperson of the commission.
2. It is a constitutional body.
3. It can't investigate a case after three years of its occurrence.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **In News-** Recently, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has celebrated Human Rights Day on 10th December.

**Option B is correct:** NHRC is a statutory body, constituted under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, to protect and promote human rights related to life, liberty, equality and dignity of individuals NHRC (National Human Rights Commission) consists of:

- The chairperson should be retired Chief Justice of India.
- One Member who is, or has been, a Judge of the Supreme Court of India
- One Member who is, or has been, the Chief Justice of a High Court.
- Two Members to be appointed from among persons having knowledge of, or practical experience in, matters relating to human rights.
- In addition, the Chairpersons of four National Commissions of Minorities

It can't investigate a case after 1 year of its occurrence. It only has recommendatory powers with no penal provisions for its non-implementation.

**Q.47** With respect to the El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO), consider the following statements:

1. El Nino events are sometimes referred to as the warm and wet half phase of ENSO and La Nina as the cold phase of the ENSO.
2. Under the El Nino event, the surface temperature of the Pacific ocean increases more than usual causing heavy rainfalls in Australia.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In news-** As per latest findings, nearly six out of 10 droughts, in non-El Nino years, that occurred during the Indian summer-monsoon season in the past century may have been driven by atmospheric disturbances from the North Atlantic region.

**Statement 1 is not correct:** ENSO is a single climate phenomenon, it has three states or phases. The two opposite phases are El Niño and La Niña. El Niño is the warming of the ocean surface, or above-average sea surface temperatures (SST), in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. And, La Nina is basically the opposite of an El Niño: Ocean temperatures along the eastern half of the tropical Pacific cool down and that part of the world dries out.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** During an El Niño event, the surface of the tropical Pacific Ocean gets warmer than usual, particularly at the equator and along the coasts of South and Central America. Warm oceans lead to low-pressure systems in the atmosphere above, which in turn leads to a lot of rain for the western coasts of South America.

**Q.48** The division of powers between the union and the states is defined under which of the following schedules of the Indian Constitution?

- (a) Sixth Schedule
- (b) Fourth Schedule
- (c) Seventh Schedule

(d) Fifth Schedule

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- Recently, Fifteenth Finance Commission chairman N.K. Singh has called for a fresh look at the Constitution's Seventh Schedule, which forms the basis for allocating subjects to the Centre and States.

**Option C is correct:** The seventh schedule under Article 246 of the constitution deals with the division of powers between the union and the states. It contains three lists- Union List, State List and Concurrent List. The union list details the subjects on which Parliament may make laws while the state list details those under the purview of state legislatures. The concurrent list on the other hand has subjects in which both Parliament and state legislatures have jurisdiction. However, the Constitution provides federal supremacy to Parliament on concurrent list items in case of a conflict.

**Q.49** Consider the statements:

1. There are five kinds of malarial parasites.
2. Plasmodium Ovale, one among the parasites causes severe illness among the patients.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

[ANS] a

[SOL] In news- A not very common type of malaria, Plasmodium ovale, has been identified in a jawan in Kerala.

**Option A is correct:** There are five kinds of malarial parasites Plasmodium falciparum, Plasmodium vivax (the commonest ones), Plasmodium malariae, Plasmodium ovale and Plasmodium knowlesi. Malaria is caused by the bite of the female Anopheles mosquito, if the mosquito itself is infected with a malarial parasite. P ovale rarely causes severe illness and is no more dangerous than getting a viral infection.

**Q.50** With reference to Western disturbances, sometimes seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. These are extra-tropical cyclones originating over the Mediterranean sea.
2. A general decrease in the prevailing night temperature at a place indicates its arrival in India.
3. They are brought into India by the Subtropical westerly jet streams.
4. These are good for the Kharif crop, especially wheat.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 4 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (d) All of the above



[ANS] a

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct:** They are extratropical storms originating in the Mediterranean region that brings sudden winter rain to the north-western parts of the Indian subcontinent, they originate from the Mediterranean Sea.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The increase in the prevailing night temperature generally indicates an advance in the arrival of these cyclones disturbances.

**Statement 3 is correct:** It is a non-monsoonal precipitation pattern driven by the Subtropical westerlies Jet stream.

**Statement 4 is not correct:** The Western disturbances are of great **help to rabi crops** (precipitation needed by them is favourable). Though too much of it is harmful to the crops the winter shower is necessary especially wheat (Wheat is a staple food in India).

**Q.51** The 'Myristica swamp treefrog' species was seen in the news, which of the following statements is/are correct in this regard?

1. They are rare arboreal species endemic to the Western Ghats.
2. Their breeding season, unlike for other frogs, starts in the pre-monsoon season and ends before the monsoon becomes fully active.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** Myristica swamp treefrog, that bears the scientific name *Mercurana myristicapalustris*, has been recorded for the first time in the north of the Shencottah gap in the **Vazhachal Reserve Forest in Kerala.**

**Option C is correct:** Myristica swamp treefrog is a rare arboreal species endemic to the Western Ghats. These frogs are rare and elusive for the reason that they are arboreal and active only for a few weeks during their breeding season. During the breeding season, there is a large aggregation of males that descend from the high canopy of the trees. The males vocalise in groups from the low perches in the swamps. They exhibit unique breeding behaviour. The breeding season, unlike for other frogs, starts in the pre-monsoon season (May) and ends before the monsoon becomes fully active in June. Before the end of the breeding season, the female frogs along with their male counterparts descend on the forest floor. The female digs the mud and lays eggs in shallow burrows in mud. After breeding and egg-laying, they retreat back to the high canopies of the tree and remain elusive till next breeding season.



**Q.52** Recently, the UNESCO has recently declared the year 2021 as:

- (a) International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements
- (b) International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development
- (c) International Year of Disabled Persons
- (d) International year of artefacts.

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** The UNESCO has decided to launch an international prize in the field of 'creative economy' in the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

**Option B is correct:** The UNESCO has decided to launch an international prize in the field of 'creative economy' in the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. In this regards, the UN declares 2021 as International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development.

**Q.53** With reference to the Inner Line Permit (ILP) system, consider the following statements:

- 1. It puts an obligation on the mentioned set of outsiders (foreigners and Indian natives) to reside in the protected area.
  - 2. It is issued for the residential purpose only.
  - 3. An Inner Line Permit issued by the Governor on the recommendation of the President of India.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) None of the above

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] Option D is correct:** An Inner Line Permit is a document that allows an Indian citizen to visit or stay in a state that is protected under the ILP system. An **Inner Line Permit** is a travel document that is required by non-natives to visit four Northeastern states, namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland. Both the **duration of stay and the areas** allowed to be accessed for any non-native are determined by the ILP. The ILP is **issued by the concerned state government** and can be availed both by applying online or in person. All foreigners are required to have the Protection Area Permit or PAP for entering into an ILP system state. They can obtain the Protected Area Permit. Hence, all the statements are not correct.

**Q.54** Consider the following statements:

1. The Morocco country is surrounded by both the Atlantic Ocean and the Caspian Sea.
2. The Strait of Gibraltar is controlled by Spain to the north and Morocco to the south.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, Morocco and Israel have agreed to normalise relations in a deal brokered by the USA.

**Option B is correct:** It is a map-based question as Morocco and Israel have agreed to normalise relations in a deal brokered by the USA. Morocco is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean in the west and the Mediterranean Sea in the north. And, the Strait of Gibraltar is controlled by Spain to the north and Morocco to the south. Hence, statement 1 is not correct but 2 is correct.



**Q.55** Consider the following statements:

1. The Boreal forests are mostly prevalent in permafrost regions with heavy snowfalls.
2. The soils of the Boreal forests are often acidic with low on nutrients.
3. There is a wide range of temperature between the lows of winter and highs of summer.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**[ANS] d**

[SOL] **Option D is correct:** Boreal forests, or taiga, represent the largest terrestrial biome. Occurring between 50° and 60° north latitudes, these can be found in the broad belt of Eurasia and North America. Boreal Forests are dominated by conifers, especially spruces and firs. These are dotted with lakes, bogs, and marshes. There is **little rainfall in the boreal biome**. Precipitation comes in the form of fog and snow, with a little rain during the summer months. There are long, service winters (up to six months with mean temperature below freezing) and short summers (50 to 100 frost-free days), as is a **wide range of temperature between the lows of winter and highs of summer**. The soils of the **boreal forest are often acidic**, due to falling pine needles, and **low on nutrients** since the cold temperature does not allow much foliage to rot and turn into dirt. Hence, statements 2 and 3 are correct.

**Q.56** With reference to the 'Better Than Cash Alliance' group, recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. It is an UN-based partnership of governments, companies and international organizations that accelerates the transition from cash to digital payments.
2. India is one of the founding members of this organisation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** India and **UN-Based Better Than Cash Alliance** organized a joint Peer learning exchange on fintech solutions for responsible digital payments at the last mile.

**Option A is correct:** The UN-Based Better Than Cash Alliance was **created in 2012** as a partnership of governments, companies and international organizations that accelerates the transition from cash to responsible digital payments.

**Member nations-** The Alliance has **75 members** which are committed to digitizing payments. India **became a member of the Better Than Cash Alliance in 2015** to digitize payments to achieve financial inclusion

**Q.57** With reference to the Paris Agreement, consider the following statements:

1. It targets to limit the global temperature rise well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.
  2. It is a non-legally binding international treaty on climate change.
  3. There is no difference between developing and developed countries, unlike the Kyoto Protocol.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** Recently, Virtual Climate Ambition Summit has co-convened by the UN to mark the five years of the Paris Agreement.

**Option B is correct:** The Paris Agreement is a landmark in the multilateral climate change process because, for the first time, a binding agreement brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects. The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. The Paris Agreement works on a 5- year cycle of increasingly ambitious climate action carried out by countries.

**Q.58** Which of the following countries recently launched Millionaire's tax on its wealthiest people?

- (a) Argentina
- (b) Peru
- (c) Bolivia
- (d) Brazil

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, Argentina introduced a new tax named **Millionaire's tax**.

Option A is correct: Recently, Argentina introduced a new tax named **Millionaire's tax**. Under MillionaireTax, the country's wealthiest people have to pay for medical supplies and relief measures in context to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Argentina has been rather **adversely affected** by the **pandemic**, becoming the **fifth country globally** to report **one million confirmed cases in October**.

**Q.59** With reference to BRICS, consider the following statements:

1. BRICS nations have adopted the Brasilia Declaration.
2. New Development Bank (NDB) and Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) are the outcomes of the Johannesburg Declaration.
3. The first summit of BRICS took place in Brazil in 2009.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is correct:** The 11th BRICS Summit took place from 13th-14th November 2019 in Brasilia, Brazil. The theme of the 2019 BRICS summit is "Economic Growth for an Innovative Future." BRICS countries adopted the Brasilia Declaration. BRICS is an acronym for the grouping of the world's leading emerging economies, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. In 2001, the British economist, Jim O'Neill, coined the term BRIC to describe the four emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** BRICS's New Development Bank and BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement agreements signed in Fortaleza in 2014.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The BRICS was officially formed in 2006, originally including Brazil, Russia, India and China. Its first summit took place in Russia in 2009.



**Q.60** Recently, 'Project Loon' seen in the news, it is related to which of the following?

- (a) A project aims to deliver internet access to remote parts of the world.
- (b) A project that enables scientists and researchers to store, search and run virtual simulations on the vast amount of data.
- (c) It is NASA's project to study the planet Jupiter and its moon.
- (d) None of the above

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] Option A is correct:** Google's Helium balloons stayed in the air for almost a year, providing internet. Google has a subsidiary called Project Loon, which comprises of helium-filled balloons that aim to deliver internet access to remote parts of the world. These high-altitude balloons are found in the stratosphere and create aerial wireless networks. By using machine-learning algorithms, they have found a way to predict the weather with enough accuracy to make it possible to hover balloons over a relatively small area for a long period of time.

**Q.61** With reference to the 'Himalayan serows' species, often seen in the news, consider the following statements:

- 1. They are omnivorous in nature and are typically found at higher altitudes.
- 2. They are mostly found in the Trans Himalayan region.
- 3. They are categorised as 'critically endangered' in the IUCN Red List.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** A Himalayan serow has been sighted for the first time in the Himalayan cold desert region.

**Option D is correct:** A Himalayan serow has been sighted for the first time in the Himalayan cold desert region. The Himalayan serow, or *Capricornis sumatraensis* thar, is restricted to the Himalayan region. **Himalayan serows are herbivores** and are typically found at altitudes between 2,000 metres and 4,000 metres (6,500 to 13,000 feet). They are known to be found in eastern, central, and western Himalayas, **but not in the Trans Himalayan region**. Previously assessed as 'near threatened', the Himalayan serow is **now been categorised as 'vulnerable'** in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Hence, all the statements given are not correct, so D is the correct answer.

**Q.62** With reference to the recently released Global Health Estimates 2019 report by the World Health Organisation (WHO), consider the following statements:

- 1. Tuberculosis has remained the leading cause of death at the global level for the last 20 years.
- 2. Life expectancy has increased by more than 6 years between 2000 and 2019 from 66.8 years in 2000 to 73.4 years in 2019.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

- (a) 1 only

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- Recently, **Global Health Estimates 2019** released by the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**.

**Option A is correct:** **Global Health Estimates 2019** released by the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**. The report presents **comprehensive and time-series data** from 2000 onwards for health-related indicators, including life expectancy, healthy life expectancy, mortality and morbidity, as well as disease burden at global and domestic level.

**Key highlights-** Heart disease is remained the leading cause of death at the global level for the last 20 years. Noncommunicable diseases make up 7 of the world's top 10 causes of death. This is an increase from 4 of the 10 leading causes in 2000. Global decline in deaths from communicable diseases but still a major challenge in low- and middle-income countries. Deaths from diabetes increased by 70 per cent globally between 2000 and 2019, with an 80 per cent rise in deaths among males.

**Q.63** "San Isidro Movement" was seen in the news, it is related to which of the following nations?

- (a) Brazil
- (b) Venezuela
- (c) Cuba
- (d) Argentina

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- In Cuba, a campaign by artists and activists demanding greater freedom of expression has been in news recently.

**Option C is correct:** The **Movimiento San Isidro** started two years ago to protest state censorship of artistic works, and has now become a platform for Cuban dissidents both within and outside the Caribbean nation. The movement started in September 2018, when the Cuban government sought to enforce Decree 349, a law that would have given powers to the nation's Culture Ministry to restrict cultural activity it did not approve of. To protest against the decree, artists, poets, journalists and activists gathered in San Isidro, a Black-majority locality that is among Havana's poorest yet most culturally active wards, and which also forms part of the Old Havana UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**Q.64** Consider the following statements:

1. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman called the "Father of the Nation" in Bangladesh.
2. He served as the first Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only

- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** The UNESCO has decided to launch an international prize in the field of 'creative economy' in the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

**Option A is correct:** Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was a Bangladesh politician and statesman and is also called the 'Father of the Nation' in Bangladesh. Mujibur Rahman served as the first President of Bangladesh and then later as the Prime Minister of the country from April 17, 1971, until his assassination on August 15, 1975.

**Q.65** With reference to the Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), consider the following statements:

1. These schemes are 100% funded by the Union government and implemented by the respective state government machinery.
2. They are mainly formulated on the subjects in the Union List.
3. MGNREGA comes under the category of Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct:** In India's development plan exercise we have two types of schemes i.e central sector and centrally sponsored scheme. Under Central sector schemes, it is 100% funded by the Union government and implemented by the Central Government machinery. Central sector schemes are mainly formulated on subjects from the Union List. Under Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) a certain percentage of the funding is borne by the States in the ratio of 50:50, 70:30, 75:25 or 90:10 and the implementation is by the State Governments.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Centrally Sponsored Schemes are formulated in subjects from the State List to encourage States to prioritise in areas that require more attention.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The centrally sponsored schemes are divided into two categories - core of the core schemes and core schemes. MGNREGA or the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act falls under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes: Core of the core schemes.

**Q.66** Consider the following statements:

1. The stone chariot at Hampi is located in the temple complex of Vijaya Vittala.
2. It was built in the Vesara style during the reign of Devaraya II of the Vijayanagara Empire.
3. The temple has Ranga Mandapa which consists of 56 musical pillars, also known as SaReGaMa pillars.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News:** Recently, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) cordoned off the Iconic Chariot at Vijaya Vittala Temple, Hampi by a protective ring in order to check the damages to the structure.

**Option C is correct:** It is a shrine built like a chariot, also called the "Stone Chariot". It is on the axis of the massive Vittala Temple and faces the sanctum of Vittala Temple. Earlier the shrine had the icon on Garuda. Vijaya Vittala Temple is dedicated to Lord Vittala, a form of Lord Vishnu. It was built in the 15th century AD during the reign of Devaraya II of the Vijayanagara Empire. The temple has been built in the Dravidian style and is located in the northeastern part of Hampi, near the banks of the Tungabhadra River. It has Ranga Mandapa which consists of 56 musical pillars, also known as SaReGaMa pillars. Hence, statements 1 and 3 are correct here.

**Q.67** Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the term 'Tiger Economy', often seen in the news?

- 1. A tiger economy is a term used to describe several booming economies in the South Asia region.
- 2. The Asian tiger economies typically include India, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

[ANS] d

[SOL] **Option D is correct:** A tiger economy is the economy of a country which undergoes rapid economic growth, usually accompanied by an increase in the standard of living. A tiger economy is a term used to describe several booming economies in Southeast Asia. The Asian tiger economies typically include Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan as India is not the member of this. Hence statement 2 is also not correct.

**Q.68** With reference to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is legally binding on the member states.
- 2. India is a signatory to this convention.
- 3. The treaty mainly includes species that are protected in at least one country.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News:** The Central Government has come out with an **advisory on a one-time voluntary disclosure scheme** that allows owners of exotic live species to declare their stock to the

government. It has **defined exotic live species** as animals named under the Appendices I, II and III of the CITES.

**Option A is correct:** Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international legally binding agreement aimed at ensuring “that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival”. India is a signatory to this convention and has also ratified it in 1976. It has three appendices: Appendix I includes species threatened with extinction. Trade-in specimens of these species are permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Appendix II provides a lower level of protection. Appendix III contains species that are protected in at least one country, which has asked other CITES Parties for assistance in controlling.

**Q.69** Consider the following statements:

1. Currency Manipulators is a label given by the WTO to countries that engaged in “unfair currency practices”.
  2. Recently, India was added to the list of Currency Manipulators for the first time.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** The United States has once again included India in its monitoring list of countries with potentially “questionable foreign exchange policies” and “currency manipulation”.

**Option D is correct:** The ‘currency manipulator’ tag is given by the US government to countries it feels are engaging in “unfair currency practices” by deliberately devaluing their currency against the dollar. The practice would mean that the country in question is artificially lowering the value of its currency to gain an unfair advantage over others. An economy meeting two of the three criteria in the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 is placed on the Monitoring List. This includes:

- A “significant” bilateral trade surplus with the US – one that is at least \$20 billion over a 12-month period.
- A material current account surplus equivalent to at least 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) over a 12-month period.
- “Persistent”, one-sided intervention – when net purchases of foreign currency totalling at least 2 percent of the country’s GDP over a 12 month period are conducted repeatedly, in at least six out of 12 months.

**Q.70** Consider the following statements:

1. S-400 Triumf is a mobile, surface-to-air missile system (SAM) designed by Russia.
2. Recently, the US has imposed Countering America’s Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) on Turkey over acquisition of S-400 air defence systems.
3. Countering America’s Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) was enacted in 2018 primarily to sanction North Korea.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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



(d) 1, 2 and 3

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- The United States has imposed sanctions on Turkey (NATO allies) over acquisition of Russian S-400 air defence systems.

**Option A is correct:** The S-400 Triumf, (NATO calls it SA-21 Growler), is a mobile, surface-to-air missile system (SAM) designed by Russia. It is the most dangerous operationally deployed modern long-range SAM (MLR SAM) in the world, considered much ahead of the US-developed Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (THAAD). Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) was passed unanimously by the US Congress and signed reluctantly by US President Donald Trump. Enacted on August 2, 2017, its core objective is to counter Iran, Russia and North Korea through punitive measures. Title II of the Act primarily deals with sanctions on Russian interests such as its oil and gas industry, defence and security sector, and financial institutions, in the backdrop of its military intervention in Ukraine and its alleged meddling in the 2016 US Presidential elections.

**Q.71** With respect to the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC), consider the following statements:

1. It aimed to oversee the financial regularities mainly in the banking sector.
2. It is an executive body constituted under the Executive Order by the Ministry of Finance.
3. The Finance Secretary is the Chairman of the FSDC.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- Recently, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had a meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) to discuss the state of the economy, budget proposals and to prepare a roadmap for India's recovery for the next financial year amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

**Option B is correct:** The Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) was constituted in December 2010. The FSDC was set up to strengthen and institutionalise the mechanism for maintaining financial stability, enhancing inter-regulatory coordination and promoting financial sector development. An apex-level FSDC is not a statutory body.

The membership of the FSDC is- The Finance Minister is the Chairman of the FSDC.

Members of FSDC include Heads of the Financial Sector Regulators listed below:

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA)
- Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
- Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)
- Other members are Finance Secretary, Chief Economics Advisor and Secretary of the Department of Financial Services.

**Q.72** With reference to the Inter-State Council, consider the following statements:

1. It is a permanent constitutional body established under Article 263 of the Indian constitution.
2. It is established by the President of India.
3. The Union Home Minister is the chairman of the council.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct:** The Inter-State Council is a non-permanent constitutional body set up by a presidential order on the basis of provisions in Article 263 of the Constitution of India. The Council is formed to discuss or investigate policies, subjects of common interest, and disputes among states.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The Inter-State Council was set up in 1990 following the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission. Article 263 empowers the President of India to set up an inter-state council to deal with federal issues.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The council is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes six Union ministers and all chief ministers as members.

**Q.73** With reference to the Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER), consider the following statements:

1. It compares a nation's currency value against the weighted average of a basket of other major currencies.
2. The decrease and increase in the index denote depreciation and appreciation of the Rupee respectively.
3. It takes into account inflation as well.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct:** The Reserve Bank of India tabulates the rupee's Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER) in relation to the currencies of 36 trading partner countries. Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER) is a weighted index that is, countries with which India trades more are given greater weight in the index.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The decrease in this index denotes depreciation in rupee's value; an increase reflects appreciation.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Nominal effective exchange rate (NEER) don't take into account inflation but Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER) is the weighted average of nominal exchange rates, adjusted for inflation.

**Q.74** With reference to Project 75 of the Indian Navy, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Scorpene-Class attack submarines are being developed under the project.
2. Under the project, diesel powered and nuclear powered submarines with Air Independent Propulsion systems will be developed.
3. It involves Transfer of Technology from the French company Naval Group.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News:** The Submarine Day is celebrated annually on the 08th Dec to mark the birth of the Indian Navy's Submarine Arm with the commissioning of its first submarine, erstwhile INS Kalvari.

**Option B is Correct:** Project 75 is a programme of the Indian Navy to induct six Scorpene-Class attack submarines in their fleet.

It involves the transfer of technology from the French company Naval Group (formerly known as DCNS) and the submarines are to be built at the Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL), Mumbai.

The submarines are powered by the conventional diesel-electric propulsion system with Air-Independent Propulsion technology.

INS Kalvari and INS Khanderi are two scorpene class submarines in service.

**Q.75** With reference to North Eastern Region Power System Improvement Project, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Central Sector Scheme.
2. The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region is the nodal body for execution of the project.
3. The project is being supported by the Asian Development Bank.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News:** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the Revised Cost Estimate (RCE) of North Eastern Region Power System Improvement Project (NERPSIP) at an estimated cost of Rs. 6,700 crore.

**Option A is correct:** It is a Central Sector Scheme, launched in 2014.

It is being implemented by Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) in association with six North Eastern States namely Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura.

The project is being supported financially by the World Bank.

**Q.76** Consider the following statements:

1. Eurasian curlew and common greenshank are the migratory species arriving in India every year.
2. India has five migratory flyways that are used by the migratory birds.
3. The 13th Conference of Parties (COP) of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) was held in Bali, Indonesia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- Recently, Bihar held a bird festival for the first time as part of its initiative to save migratory birds that arrive in the state in large numbers every year.

Option A is correct: The Eurasian curlew and common greenshank are among the migratory birds. There are lot of migrating birds arriving in the region like steppe eagle, Eurasian curlew, Ferruginous duck, Eurasian coot, common greenshank, great crested grebe. India has three migratory flyways. They are the flight paths used by the birds. The flyways are Asian East Asian Flyway, Central Asian Flyway and East Asian Australasian Flyway. Recently, the Union environment ministry has approved a three-year study called the 'Bird Sensitivity Mapping Tool' to chart the pathways of migratory bird under the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) across India. COP 13 was the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory species of Wild Animals was held in India in February 2020.

Q.77 Which of the following is often called 'Mini Kaziranga' because of a similar landscape and a sizeable population of the one-horned rhino?

- (a) Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary
- (b) Chakrashila Wildlife Sanctuary
- (c) Manas National Park
- (d) None of the above

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- Too many cattle are robbing the one-horned rhinos of Assam's Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, referred to as 'Mini Kaziranga' for similar features, of their nutritious food.

**Option A is correct:** Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary is also known as 'Mini Kaziranga' because of similar landscape and a sizeable population of the one-horned rhino. Pobitora WLS is located on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra in Morigaon district in Assam. It was declared in 1987 and covers 38.85 km<sup>2</sup> (15.00 sq mi), providing grassland and wetland habitat for the Indian rhinoceros.

It provides a habitat and food resource for the Indian rhinoceros, hosting Assam's second-largest population.

Q.78 Human Development Index(HDI) measures the average achievements of a country in which of the following dimensions of human development?

- 1. Life expectancy at birth
- 2. Mean years of schooling
- 3. Maternal mortality rate
- 4. Gross National Income (GNI) per capita

Select the correct answer using the codes below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (b) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- United Nations Development Program(UNDP) has released the Human Development Index(HDI) 2020.

**Option B is correct:** India slipped two spots to rank 131 among 189 countries in the 2020 human development index, a report released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). According to the 2020 Human Development Report, life expectancy of Indians at birth in 2019

was 69.7 years while Bangladesh has a life expectancy of 72.6 years and Pakistan 67.3 years. Human Development Index(HDI) measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions of human development:

A long and healthy life- measured by Life expectancy at birth

Access to knowledge: measured by Mean years of schooling and Expected years of schooling

A decent standard of living- measured by Gross National Income (GNI) per capita (PPP US\$).

**Q.79** With reference to Tharu Tribes, seen in the news, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The tribe is mostly located in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar.
2. The word Tharu traces its roots to Theravada Buddhism.
3. They speak various dialects including Nepali and Maithili.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL]** In News- The Uttar Pradesh government has recently launched a scheme to take the unique culture of its ethnic Tharu tribe across the world.

Option D is correct: The community belongs to the Terai lowlands, amid the Shivaliks or lower Himalayas. The tribe lives in both India and Nepal. In the Indian, they are mostly located in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar. Members of the tribe survive on wheat, corn and vegetables grown close to their homes and a majority of them still live off the forest. The word Tharu is believed to be derived from sthavir, meaning followers of Theravada Buddhism.

**Q.80** Consider the following statements:

1. He is known as the father of the modern Tamil literature style.
2. He was a social reformer and raised voice against casteism, child marriage and untouchability
3. To honour his contributions, Bharathi Award was constituted in 1994 to be conferred for laudable service in any field of social relevance.

Which famous personality is described best by the above-given statements?

- (a) Na Chidamabara Subramanian
- (b) Subramanya Bharati
- (c) M V Venkataram
- (d) C. Rajagopalachari

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL]** In News: The Prime Minister recently addressed the International Bharathi Festival 2020 and paid tributes to the Bharathiyar on his 138th birth Jayanti.

**Option B is Correct**

Subramanya Bharati was an outstanding Indian writer of the nationalist period and is regarded as the father of the modern Tamil style. He is also known as 'Mahakavi Bharathiyar'.

He was an avid social worker and was vocal against the caste system and consistently spoke about women's issues, against social issues such as child marriage, untouchability through his writings.

Bharathi Award was instituted in 1994 by Vanavil Cultural Centre.



It is conferred every year to eminent persons who have done laudable service in any field of social relevance.

**Q.81** Consider the following statements:

1. Pratas Islands are located in the southern part of the South China Sea, west to the Philip-pines.
2. They are under the jurisdiction of Vietnam.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, experts have issued a warning of possible Chinese attack to capture the Pratas Islands.

**Option D is correct:** It is a map-based question. Pratas Islands also known as Dongsha Islands. It is located in the northern part of the South China Sea under the jurisdiction of the Republic of China (Taiwan) Diagram. There are three undersea features in the waters associated with Pratas Island: Pratas Atoll, North Vereker Bank and South Vereker Bank.



**Q.82** The “Shahtoot dam” was often in the news, it is proposed between India and which of the following countries?

- (a) Myanmar
- (b) Bangladesh
- (c) Afghanistan
- (d) Mongolia

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News-** India and Afghanistan soon likely to sign an agreement on building the **Shahtoot dam across the Maidan river, a tributary of River Kabul in Afghanistan.**

**Option C is correct:** Shahtoot dam is to be built on **the Maidan river, a tributary of River Kabul in Afghanistan** which originates from Sanglakh Range of Hindu Kush mountain. The river flows **through Kabul, Surobi and Jalalabad in Afghanistan** before flowing into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan. The Shahtoot dam is proposed to be built in on a tributary of Kabul river in Chahar

Asiab district near the capital of Afghanistan. **Uses-** The dam will provide irrigation, drinking water for the Kabul province of the country.

**Q.83** Consider the following statements:

1. Kavaratti is the administrative capital of Lakshadweep islands.
2. The 9 Degree Channel separates the islands of Minicoy and Maldives.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

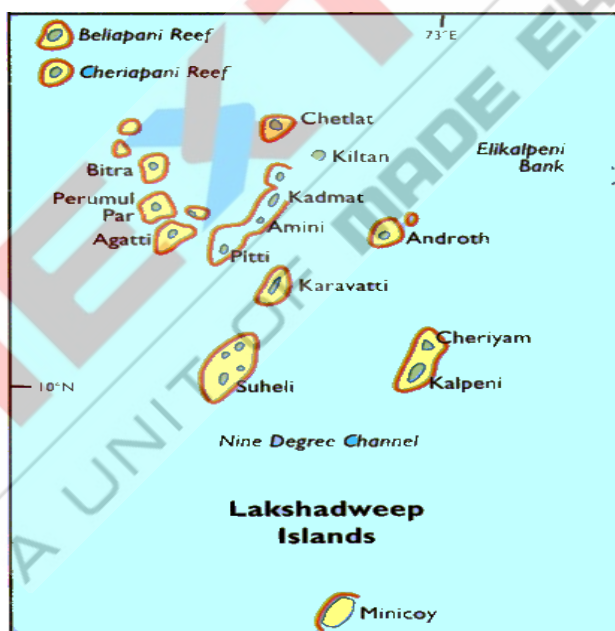
- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News:** Recently, the Union Cabinet approved the Submarine Optical Fibre Cable connectivity between Mainland (Kochi) and Lakshadweep Islands (KLI Project).

**Option A is correct:** It is a **group of 36 islands** located in the Arabian Sea. It is the smallest Union Territory with an area of 32 sq km. It comprises **12 atolls, 3 reefs, 5 submerged banks and 10 inhabited islands**. **Kavaratti is the administrative capital**. Other important inhabited islands are Kalpeni, Agati, Amini, Androth, Minicoy, Bangaram, Bitra, Chetlat, Kiltan and Kadmat. It has a **tropical climate** and it has an average temperature of 27° C – 32° C. There is an **absence of forests** in the island regions.

**Important Channels:** The **8 Degree Channel** separates the islands of Minicoy and Maldives; The **9 Degree Channel** separates the island of Minicoy from the main Lakshadweep archipelago.



**Q.84** Consider the following pairs:

**Indigenous Games – State of Origin**

1. Thang-Ta – Tripura
2. Gatka – Punjab
3. Mallakhamb – Madhya Pradesh
4. Kalaripayattu – Andhra Pradesh

Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** The Sports Ministry has approved the inclusion of four Indigenous Games to be a part of Khelo India Youth Games 2021, scheduled to take place in Haryana.

**Option B is correct:** The Sports Ministry has approved the inclusion of four Indigenous Games to be a part of Khelo India Youth Games 2021, scheduled to take place in Haryana. The games include: Gatka, Kalaripayattu, Thang-Ta and Mallakhamba. Kalaripayattu has its origin from Kerala and has practitioners all over the world. Mallakhamba, meanwhile, has been well-known across India and Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra have been the hotspots of this sport. Gatka originates from the State of Punjab and this traditional fighting style of the Nihang Sikh Warriors is used both as self-defence as well as a sport. Thang-Ta, a Manipur martial art has passed into oblivion in recent decades.

**Q.85** With reference to Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a traditional Indian practise of rearing animals and cultivating crops together.
- 2. It relies on the principles of Agroecology.
- 3. It uses fermented microbial culture that adds nutrients to the soil.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct:** Zero budget natural farming (ZBNF) is a method of chemical-free agriculture drawing from traditional Indian practices. It was originally promoted by Maharashtrian agriculturist and Padma Shri recipient Subhash Palekar. The ZBNF promotes the application of jeevamrutha — a mixture of fresh desi cow dung and aged desi cow urine, jaggery, pulse flour, water and soil — on farmland. The rearing of animals and cultivation of crops together are called mixed farming.

**Statement 2 is correct:** ZBNF principles are in harmony with the principles of Agroecology and it brings down the cost of production to nearly zero and returns to a pre-green revolution style of farming.

**Statement 3 is correct:** ZBNF promotes the application of jeevamrutha — a mixture of fresh desi cow dung and aged desi cow urine, jaggery, pulse flour, water and soil — on farmland. This is a fermented microbial culture that adds nutrients to the soil, and acts as a catalytic agent to promote the activity of microorganisms and earthworms in the soil.

**Q.86** With reference to the Winter Solstice, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is the shortest day in the Northern Hemisphere.
- 2. It occurs when the sun is directly over the Equator.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only

- (c) Both 1 and 2  
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News: December 21 marks **the Winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere**. The same day marks the Summer Solstice in the Southern Hemisphere.

**Option A is correct:** It is the **shortest day** in the Northern Hemisphere. On December 22 the **day will be one second longer** and gradually the duration of day time will increase. This **situation will be reversed six months** from now, on June 21, 2021, when the Northern Hemisphere will see the Summer Solstice. The day will be the year's longest on the Summer Solstice. It occurs **when the sun is directly over the Tropic of Capricorn**, located at 23.5° latitude South.

**Q.87** Consider the statements:

1. Sentinelese are the occupants of the Northern Andaman and have a population of about 1000.
2. They belong to negrito tribe and are categorised as particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTG).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only  
(b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2  
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News: In a recent **policy document**, the Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) has mentioned that any commercial exploitation of the North Sentinel Island of the Andamans will endanger the survival of the Sentinelese tribes.

**Option B is correct:** They are the **occupants of the Northern Sentinel Island** and have a population of about 50 to 100. They are **a negrito tribe** and have not faced incursions and remain hostile to outsiders. The tribe has **been categorised as particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTG)**. PVTGs are more vulnerable among the tribal groups. They have declining or stagnant population, low level of literacy, pre-agricultural level of technology and are economically backward. They generally inhabit remote localities having poor infrastructure and administrative support. The inhabitants are **connected to the Jarawa** on the basis of physical, as well as linguistic similarities. They **speak their own language** and the translation of their language cannot be done till the present day.

**Q.88** With reference to the Food Corporation of India (FCI), consider the following statements:

1. FCI is the only agency which undertakes procurement of wheat and paddy.
2. Coarse grains are also procured by FCI.
3. It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Option C is correct:** The food corporation of India (FCI), the nodal central agency of the Government of India, along with other state agencies undertake procurement of wheat and paddy under the price support scheme. Coarse grains are procured by the state government

agencies for the central pool, as per the directions issued by the Government of India, from time to time. It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India. Its top official is designated as Chairman. It was set up in 1965 with its Initial headquarters at Chennai.

**Q.89** With reference to Biofuels, which of the following statement(s) is/are correct?

1. First-generation biofuels produced from microorganisms like algae.
2. National Biofuel Policy 2018 categorises biofuels into four generations.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News:** Recently, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways published a draft notification to seek comments from the public for the adoption of E20 fuel.

**Option D is correct:** Biofuels are broadly classified into four categories based on their raw materials. They are First-generation biofuels: Made from sugar, starch, vegetable oil, or animal fats using conventional technology. Common first-generation biofuels include Bioalcohols, Biodiesel, Vegetable oil, Bioethers, Biogas. Second-generation biofuels: Produced from non-food crops, such as cellulosic biofuels and waste biomass (stalks of wheat and corn, and wood). Examples include advanced biofuels like biohydrogen, bioethanol. Third-generation biofuels: Produced from microorganisms like algae.

Fourth-generation biofuels: Made from genetically engineered crops which consume high amounts of carbon. The crops are then converted into fuel using second-generation techniques. National Biofuel Policy 2018: It categorises biofuels as “Basic Biofuels” viz. First Generation (1G), Second Generation (2G) and Third Generation (3G) biofuels.

**Q.90** Which of the following tribes of Andaman and Nicobar island has been listed as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)?

1. Jarwa
2. Onges
3. Shompen
4. Great Andamanese

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 1,2 and 4 only
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News:** In a recent policy document, the Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) has mentioned that any commercial exploitation of the North Sentinel Island of the Andamans will endanger the survival of the Sentinelese tribes.

**Option B is correct:** The Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) are Jarwa, Onges, Great Andamanese and Sentinelese. PVTGs are more vulnerable among the tribal groups. They have declining or stagnant population, low level of literacy, pre-agricultural level of technology and



are economically backward. They generally inhabit remote localities having poor infrastructure and administrative support.

**Q.91** Consider the following statements:

1. Dhokra artefacts are made from Iron metal casting style that uses the lost-wax technique.
2. The term “Dhokra” has been named after the Dhokra Damar tribes that originated from the Odhisa state.
3. One of the oldest Dhokra artefacts is the “Dancing girl of Mohenjo Daro”.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News-** Aesthetic Dhokra Decorative Pieces Added to the Tribes India Collection.

**Option C is correct:** Dhokra (also spelt Dokra) is non-ferrous metal casting using the lost-wax casting technique. This sort of metal casting has been used in India for over 4,000 years and is still used. While Dhokra art originated in West Bengal, over time the tribes moved to Jharkhand, West Bengal, Orissa and Chhattisgarh as well as places like Kerala and Rajasthan. Hence, art has now spread all over India. Most Dhokra artefacts are human or animal figurines. In fact, one of the earliest known lost wax casting artefacts is the legendary dancing girl of Mohenjo Daro. Hence, statements 1, 2 are not correct and statement 3 is correct.

**Q.92** With respect to Status of Leopards in India 2018 report, consider the following statements:

1. India's leopard population has increased by more than 20% compared to 2014.
2. Maharashtra has the highest concentration of leopard in India.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, Union Minister for Environment released the Status of Leopards report 2018.

**Option B is correct:** There are 12,852 leopards in India as of 2018 as compared to the previous estimate of 7910 conducted in 2014, an increase of 60% in 4 years.

The highest concentration of the leopard in India is estimated to be in Madhya Pradesh (3,421) followed by Karnataka (1,783) and Maharashtra (1,690). Recent meta-analyses of leopard status and distribution suggest 48–67% range loss for the species in Africa and 83–87% in Asia. In the Indian subcontinent, poaching, habitat loss, depletion of natural prey and conflict are major threats to leopard populations.

All these have resulted in changing the species status from ‘Near Threatened’ to ‘Vulnerable’ by the IUCN.

**Q.93** ‘Kilauea volcano’ was in the news, it is located in which of the following?

- (a) Italy
- (b) Indonesia

- (c) Hawaii
- (d) Atlantic Ocean

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** Recently, the Kilauea volcano in Hawaii's Big Island erupted which was followed by an earthquake of magnitude 4.4.

**Option C is correct:** Kilauea, also called Mount Kilauea ("Much Spreading" in Hawaiian), is located in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park on the southeastern part of the island of Hawaii, U.S.A.

**Q.94** Consider the following statements:

1. The Boreal forests are mostly prevalent in permafrost regions with heavy snowfalls.
2. The soils of the Boreal forests are often acidic with low on nutrients.
3. There is a wide range of temperature between the lows of winter and highs of summer.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **Option D is correct:** Boreal forests, or taiga, represent the largest terrestrial biome. Occurring between 50° and 60° north latitudes, these can be found in the broad belt of Eurasia and North America. Boreal Forests are dominated by conifers, especially spruces and firs. These are dotted with lakes, bogs, and marshes. There is little rainfall in the boreal biome. Precipitation comes in the form of fog and snow, with a little rain during the summer months. There are long, service winters (up to six months with mean temperature below freezing) and short summers (50 to 100 frost-free days), as is a wide range of temperature between the lows of winter and highs of summer. The soils of the boreal forest are often acidic, due to falling pine needles, and low on nutrients since the cold temperature does not allow much foliage to rot and turn into dirt. Hence, statements 2 and 3 are correct.

**Q.95** Recently, the USA has awarded the 'Legion of Merit' to the Prime Ministers of which of the following nations?

1. India
2. Japan
3. Australia
4. United Kingdom

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1, 2, and 3
- (b) 1, 2 and 4
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

[ANS] d

[SOL] **In News-** Recently, the USA has awarded the 'Legion of Merit' to the Prime Ministers of India, Japan and Australia.

**Option D is correct:** The 'Legion of Merit' is one of the USA's highest military decorations, the award was instituted in 1942 by former President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It is awarded to members of the USA armed forces and also members of foreign (i.e. non-USA) armed forces and sometimes

heads of state or government. There have been two Indian recipients of the honour in the past: Field Marshal K M Cariappa in 1950, and Gen S M Srinagesh in 1955.

**Q.96** reference to the 'Black Fungus', recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. It is a serious fungal infection caused by a group of molds called mucormycetes.
2. It is zoonotic in nature.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** Doctors have witnessed increased cases of Covid-19 triggered Mucormycosis.

**Option A is correct:** Mucormycosis is also known as **Black Fungus or Zygomycosis**. It is a serious but rare fungal infection caused by a group of moulds called mucormycetes which exist in the environment. It is not a zoonotic disease, which cannot spread between people or between people and animals. People get mucormycosis through contact with fungal spores in the environment. Mucormycosis most commonly affects the sinuses or lungs after inhaling fungal spores from the air, or the skin after the fungus enters through a cut, burn or other types of skin injury. According to the advisory, it can occur in any part of the body. It needs to be treated with prescription antifungal medicine. Often, mucormycosis also requires surgery to cut away the infected tissue.

**Q.97** The Joint Air Exercise "Eagle-IX" was in the news, it is between which of the following nations?

- (a) Pakistan and Russia
- (b) Pakistan and China
- (c) Saudi Arabia and Pakistan
- (d) Iran and Russia

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, Pakistan and China Began Joint Air Exercise Shaheen (Eagle)-IX.

**Option B is correct:** The air forces of Pakistan and China commenced a joint exercise named Exercise Shaheen (Eagle)-IX designed to deepen practical cooperation and improve the actual-combat training level of the two sides. Every year, this exercise is held alternatively in China and Pakistan.

**Q.98** Which of the following recommendation(s) was/were made by the Sarkaria Commission with reference to President Rule?

1. Sparing use of Article 356
2. Governors should follow constitutional conventions in case of hung assemblies.
3. Localized Emergency in specific troubled areas.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is correct:** Sarkaria Commission was set up in June 1983 to examine the relationship and balance of power between state and central governments and suggest changes within the framework of the Constitution. He recommended that the state assembly should not be dissolved unless the proclamation is approved by the parliament and sparing use of article 356 of the constitution should be made.

**Statements 2 and 3 are not correct:** The other two recommendations in statement 2 and statement 3 were made by Punchhi Commission, which was constituted by the Government of India in 2007 as a Commission on Centre-State relations. It sought to protect the interests of the States by trying to curb their misuse by the Centre. The commission recommended that the centre should try to bring only the specific troubled area under its jurisdiction and that too for a brief period, not more than three months. That means, the Commission sought to localize the emergency provisions under Articles 355 and 356. The governor should follow “constitutional conventions” in the case of a hung Assembly.

**Q.99** Consider the following statements about Hydroponics method of agriculture:

1. It is a method of growing plants, usually crops, without soil on the water which is rich in essential nutrients.
2. It is a looped system and does not require flushing of the water.
3. Chemical nutrients are used for nutrition.
4. It is low in yield.

Which of the given above statements are correct?

- (a) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (b) 2 and 4 only
- (c) 1,3 and 4 only
- (d) 1 and 3 only

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] Explanation:** Hydroponics is a method of growing plants, usually crops, without soil on the water which is rich in essential nutrients. Chemical nutrients are used for providing essential nutrients to the plants. The yield is low here. The system requires regular flush up and replacement with nutrient-rich water, due to salt build-up.

**Q.100** Recently, the ‘fire bird diverters’ have been installed in Rajasthan by the Wildlife Conservation Society to protect which of the following birds?

- (a) Siberian Crane
- (b) Amur Falcon
- (c) Great Indian Bustard
- (d) Indian Red Headed Vulture

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In news-** To protect the critically endangered great Indian bustard from colliding with live wires, the Wildlife Conservation Society- India (WCSI) is installing 1,848 bird diverters on high-tension wires along a 6.5km stretch in Pokhran, Rajasthan.

**Option C is correct:** The Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) along with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) India has come up with a unique initiative – a “firefly bird diverter” for overhead power lines in areas where Great Indian Bustard (GIB) populations are found in the wild. GIB is one of the most critically threatened species in India, with less than 150 birds left in the wild. Firefly bird diverters are flaps installed on power lines. They work as reflectors for bird species like the GIB. Birds can spot them from a distance of about

50 meters and change their path of flight to avoid collision with power lines. Smaller birds can change their direction [swiftly] but for larger bird species, it is difficult because their body weight and other factors

**Q.101** With reference to the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN), consider the following statements:

1. Under the scheme, all small and marginal farmers will be provided with income support of Rs. 6,000 per year in three equal installments.
2. It is a Central Sponsored Scheme, launched in the year 2019.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL]** In News- Recently, the Prime Minister has virtually released the next instalment of financial benefit under Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN).

**Option A is correct:** It is a central sector scheme under the government of India which provides income support to the farmers and their families. During the 2019 Interim Union Budget of India, Piyush Goyal announced the implementation of this scheme as a nationwide project. Under this scheme, all small and marginal farmers will be provided with income support of Rs. 6,000 per year in three instalments which will be deposited directly to their bank accounts. It was first implemented as the Rythu Bandhu scheme by the Government of Telangana where a certain amount was handed directly to the eligible farmers.

**Q.102** Which of the following states the Zomi ethnic group are demanding for the creation of Zoland Territorial Council (ZTC) under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution?

- (a) Manipur
- (b) Meghalaya
- (c) Mizoram
- (d) Assam

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL]** In News- Zomi ethnic group has renewed its demand for the creation of Zoland Territorial Council (ZTC), a self-administered zone on the lines of the Bodoland Territorial Council in Assam.

**Option A is correct:** Manipur's Zomi ethnic group has renewed its demand for the creation of Zoland Territorial Council (ZTC) under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, a self-administered zone on the lines of the Bodoland Territorial Council in Assam. The Zou people or Zomi are an indigenous community living along the frontier of India and Burma. They are a subgroup of the Zo people (Mizo-Kuki-Chin). In India, the Zou are officially recognized as one of the thirty-three indigenous peoples within the state of Manipur, and are one of the Scheduled tribes.

**Q.103** Recently, the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) has recognized the 'BBX11 gene', Which of the following is true in this regard?

- (a) It helps in ripening of fruits faster and for better seed germination.
- (b) It will make the crops drought and pest resistant.



- (c) It is useful in regulation of the amount of protochlorophyllide synthesized by the plant.
- (d) It increases Cytokines that promote cell division in plant roots and shoots.

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) have identified a gene that facilitates in the greening of plants.

**Option C is correct:** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) have identified a gene that facilitates in the greening of plants by playing a crucial role in regulating the levels of protochlorophyllide – an intermediate in the biosynthesis of the green pigment chlorophyll. The researchers discovered a mechanism where two proteins oppositely regulate the BBX11 gene to maintain optimum ranges of BBX11. BBX11 plays a vital role in regulation of the amount of protochlorophyllide synthesized by the plant. Protochlorophyllide is an intermediate in the synthesis of chlorophyll. If it is less, plants are unable to efficiently green in order to harvest sunlight and if the amount of protochlorophyllide is more, then photobleaching occurs. Photobleaching is loss of colour by a pigment.

**Q.104** With reference to the Arctic Council, consider the following statements:

1. It was established by the eight Arctic States through the Ottawa Declaration.
2. It is a treaty-based international legal entity for the allocation of resources to the member states.
3. India is one of the observer member states of the Council.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct:** The Arctic Council was established by the eight Arctic States – the countries whose territories fall in the Arctic region – through the Ottawa Declaration of 1996. The eight Arctic States – Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States – are the only members of the Arctic Council.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The Arctic Council is not a treaty-based international legal entity like the UN bodies or trade, military or regional groupings like WTO, NATO or ASEAN. It is only an intergovernmental 'forum' to promote cooperation in regulating the activities in the Arctic region. It is a much more informal grouping.

**Statement 3 is correct:** India was given the Observer status in 2013, along with five other countries – China, Italy, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore. Prior to this, only France, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom were granted Observer status.

**Q.105** Consider the following statements:

1. Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya was given the title of 'Mahamana' by Mahatma Gandhi.
2. He was the second President of India.
3. He was given the status of a 'Karmayogi' by the Jawahar Lal Nehru.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

**[SOL] In News-** December 25 is the birth anniversary of Madan Mohan Malaviya, the famed Indian educationist and freedom fighter who is also called 'Mahamana'.

**Option A is correct:** He was born in Allahabad, Malaviya took early education under the 'pathshala' system, and was proficient in Sanskrit. In 1879, he graduated from the Muir Central College (today's Allahabad University) and started working as a teacher at a local high school. Malaviya joined the Indian National Congress at its Calcutta session in 1886. Malaviya rose up the ranks, and became president four times – in 1909 (Lahore), in 1918 (Delhi), in 1930 (Delhi), and in 1932 (Calcutta). Malaviya was part of the Congress for almost 50 years. Malaviya was one of the early leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha, and helped found it in 1906. He was a social reformer and a successful legislator, serving as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council for 11 years (1909–20). In 1930, when Mahatma Gandhi launched the Salt Satyagraha and the Civil Disobedience Movement, he participated in it and courted arrest. In 2015, the government bestowed Malaviya with the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour, 68 years after his death. He was given the title of 'Mahamana' by Mahatma Gandhi and the second President of India, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan gave him the status of a 'Karmayogi'.

**Q.106** With reference to the Inner Line Permit (ILP) system, consider the following statements:

1. It puts an obligation on the mentioned set of outsiders (foreigners and Indian natives) to reside in the protected area.
  2. It is issued for the residential purpose only.
  3. An Inner Line Permit issued by the Governor on the recommendation of the President of India.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) None of the above

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, the Union Home Minister has highlighted the importance of Inner-Line Permit (ILP) system in Manipur, while inaugurating several development projects in Manipur.

**Option D is correct:** An Inner Line Permit is a document that allows an Indian citizen to visit or stay in a state that is protected under the ILP system. An **Inner Line Permit** is a travel document that is required by non-natives to visit four Northeastern states, namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland. Both the **duration of stay and the areas** allowed to be accessed for any non-native are determined by the ILP. The ILP is **issued by the concerned state government** and can be availed both by applying online or in person. All foreigners are required to have the Protection Area Permit or PAP for entering into an ILP system state. They can obtain the Protected Area Permit. Hence, all the statements are not correct.

**Q.107** "Thoubal Multipurpose Project" was seen in the news, it is located in which of the following states?

- (a) Assam
- (b) West Bengal
- (c) Meghalaya
- (d) Manipur

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, the Union Home Minister inaugurated several development projects in Manipur.

**Option D is correct:** He inaugurated the e-office and Thoubal Multipurpose Project (Thoubal Dam) in Imphal through virtual mode which will irrigate 35,104 hectares. The Thoubal Multipurpose Project on river Thoubal, a tributary of Manipur river, is located near the village Phayang at 35 km from Imphal town in Manipur.

**Q.108** Which of the following statements is/are correct in regards to 'Namghars', seen in the news?

1. They are traditional Vaisnavite monasteries of Assam.
2. These are mainly used for worship, and also function as meeting houses for congregations, as well as theatres for dramatic performances.

Choose the correct option using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, the Union home minister decided to distribute financial grants to 8,000 Namghars (traditional Vaisnavite monasteries) in Assam.

**Option C is correct:** Namghars literally Name House are places for congregational worship associated with the Ekasarana religion of Assam. In the Assamese language, 'Naam' means prayer and 'Ghar' means house. Hence, it is called Naamghar. Besides forming the primary structure used for worship, they also function as meeting houses for congregations, as well as theaters for dramatic performances ( bhaona). The Namghar, also called the kirtanghar, is also the central structure in the Sattras (monasteries of the Ekasarana religion) where the other buildings are positioned around it. Namghars are widespread in Assam, and very often more than one namghar exists in a single village, signifying many congregational communities.

**Q.109** With reference to PM-JAY Sehat, consider the following statements:

1. It will provide free-of-cost insurance cover to all residents of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir.
2. The benefits of the scheme will be portable across the country.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News:** Recently, the Prime Minister launched the Ayushman Bharat PMJAY SEHAT scheme for residents of J-K.

**Option C is correct:** It aims to ensure universal health coverage, and focus on providing financial risk protection and ensuring quality and affordable essential health services to all individuals and communities. It will provide free-of-cost insurance cover to all residents of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir. The benefits of the scheme will be portable across the country and the hospitals empanelled under the PM-JAY scheme shall provide services under this scheme as well.

**Q.110** With reference to 'Main Bhi Digital (me too digital)' drive, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It will enable the street vendors to accept and make payments digitally.
2. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs will be the nodal implementing agency for the drive.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 2 only
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] Option A is correct:** The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) is going to launch 'Main Bhi Digital (me too digital)' drive for the street vendors to enable them to accept and make payments digitally. The drive has been encouraged by the success of the Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PMSVANidhi) scheme which was launched as the aftermath of the Covid-19 lockdown, to provide street vendors microcredit to restart their business.

**Q.111** Consider the following statements:

1. Eru Thazuvuthal is a traditional bull-chasing sport of Tamil Nadu state.
2. The reference to the Eru Thazuvuthal finds mention in Sangam literature.
3. The bull-taming practice was prevalent during the Indus Valley Civilization.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] Option D is correct:** Jallikattu, also called Eru Thazuvuthal (literally, bull hugging), is a Tamil custom celebrated on the day of Mattu Pongal, the day after Pongal (harvest festival). It finds a mention in the Sangam literature and is being celebrated since nearly 2,500 years. An ancient reference to bull taming is found in a seal discovered at Mohenjodaro, which is dated between 2,500 BC and 1,800 BC. The term 'jallikattu,' comes from Tamil terms 'salli kaasu' which means coins and kattu which means package tied to the horns of bulls as prize money.

**Q.112** Which of the following statements is/are correct about the 'Himalayan trillium' often seen in the news?

1. It is a herb that only found in the North-Eastern regions of India.
2. It is often called Nagchatri and has been used in traditional medicine.
3. It is declared 'critically endangered' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

**[ANS] b**



**[SOL] In News-** Recently, the Himalayan trillium (*Trillium govanianum*), a common herb of the Himalayas was declared 'endangered' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

**Option B is correct:** The Himalayan trillium is found in temperate and sub-alpine zones of the Himalayas, at an altitude from 2,400-4,000 metres above sea level, the existence of the plant has been traced across India, Bhutan, Nepal, China, Afghanistan and Pakistan. In India, it is found in four states only- Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, and Uttarakhand. Often called Nagchatri, in local areas this herb grows to a height of 15-20 cm. There are several factors threatening the survival of the plant such as over-exploitation, long life cycle - slow to reach reproductive maturity - and poor capacity for seed dispersal.

**Q.113** He was born in 1889 at a small village in Midnapore district of West Bengal. He was one of the youngest leaders of the Independence movement and actively participated in the protest against the British in 1905 when Bengal was partitioned. He joined the Anushilan Samiti, an early 20th-century organisation that propounded revolutionary activities in Bengal. He is the most remembered for Muzaffarpur Conspiracy Case (1908). He was later arrested and sentenced to death.

The above description best describes which of the following personality?

- (a) Prafulla Chaki
- (b) Jatindranath Mukherjee
- (c) Khurdiram Bose
- (d) Satyendranath Bosu

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, the Union Home Minister visited the native village of Bengali revolutionary Khudiram Bose in Midnapore, West Bengal.

**Option C is correct:** Khudiram Bose was born in 1889 at a small village in Midnapore district of West Bengal. From his adolescent years, he was drawn towards revolutionary activities, being inspired by a series of public lectures given by Sri Aurobindo and Sister Nivedita, when the duo visited Midnapore in the early 1900s. In 1905, when Bengal was partitioned, he actively participated in protests against the British. At the age of 15, Bose joined the Anushilan Samiti, an early 20th-century organisation that propounded revolutionary activities in Bengal.

Within a year, he had learnt how to make bombs and would plant them in front of police stations.

**Q.114** Consider the following statements:

1. "Pneumosil" is India's first fully indigenously developed pneumococcal conjugate vaccine.
2. Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine is under Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) of India since 2014.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News-** The first indigenous vaccine against pneumonia, developed by the Serum Institute of India (SII), launched by Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan recently.

**Option C is correct:** Serum Institute of India (SII) has unveiled India's first indigenously developed pneumococcal vaccine 'Pneumosil'. The Pneumosil was developed with a



collaboration of the health organisation PATH and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The vaccine targets the pneumococcal bacterium, which causes pneumonia and other serious life-threatening diseases such as meningitis and sepsis, and is estimated to cause nearly four lakh deaths in children under five years of age each year worldwide. Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) prevents pneumococcal disease. The vaccine is a mix of several bacteria of the pneumococci family, which are known to cause pneumonia, hence 'conjugate' is included in the name of the vaccine. Conjugate vaccines are made using a combination of two different components. The Indian government has been ensuring PCV under the Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) to fight pneumococcal disease.

**Q.115** According to a recently published report of the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CBER), consider the following statements:

1. The Chinese economy will overtake the U.S. economy in the year 2028.
2. Indian economy will be the third-largest economy in 2025.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News:** According to the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CBER) report, India to become 5th largest economy in 2025, 3rd largest by 2030.

**Option A is correct:** A recent report published by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CBER) has predicted that India will again overtake the UK to become the fifth-largest economy in 2025 and race to the third spot by 2030. The Indian economy will expand by 9% in 2021 and by 7% in 2022. This growth trajectory will see India become the world's third-largest economy by 2030, overtaking the UK in 2025, Germany in 2027 and Japan in 2030. China in 2028 will overtake the USA to become the world's biggest economy, five years earlier than previously estimated due to the contrasting recoveries of the two countries from the Covid-19 pandemic. Japan would remain the world's third-biggest economy, until the early 2030s when it would be overtaken by India, pushing Germany down from fourth to fifth.

**Q.116** Which of the following sites of India are in the International Ramsar Convention on Wetlands?

1. Tso Kar Wetland Complex
2. Keetham lake
3. Ashtamudi Wetland
4. Kabartal Wetland

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3
- (b) 2, 3 and 4
- (c) 1, 3 and 4
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] In News-** Recently, India has added Tso Kar Wetland Complex in Ladakh as its 42nd Ramsar site, a conservation status conferred by International Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

**Option D is correct:** Previously, the Lonar Lake in Maharashtra, Sur Sarovar (also known as Keetham lake) in Agra and Kabartal in Bihar's Begusarai district were added to the list of Ramsar sites. Ashtamudi Lake (Ashtamudi Kayal), in the Kollam District of the Indian state of Kerala, is also included in the list of wetlands of international importance. Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted in 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar, on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea. Hence, all the statements are correct.

**Q.117** Consider the following statements:

1. Kolar leaf-nosed bat species is endemic to India only.
2. It is declared as Critically Endangered under IUCN Red List.
3. It is the only species of Bat that have been accorded legal protection under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL]** In News- The Karnataka Forest Department along with the Bat Conservation India Trust (BCIT), is on a war footing to save the Kolar Leaf-Nosed Bat species.

**Option B is correct:** According to recent estimates, there are just 150 Kolar Leaf-Nosed Bats left in these caves in the village of Hanumanahalli in Kolar district of Karnataka. It is endemic to India. It is categorised as Critically Endangered species under the IUCN Red List. It has not been accorded legal protection under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. Bats are one of the least studied mammals in the country, though there are 130 species in India. They are very adaptable creatures and therefore can often be found near human habitation or even in urban settlements, which makes them vulnerable.

**Q.118** With reference to the Security And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) mission of India, consider the following statements:

1. It is India's strategic vision to seeks economic and security cooperation with nations of Indo Pacific Region.
2. It was launched in the year 2014.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL]** In News- Recently, the Indian Naval Ship (INS) Kiltan has arrived at Sihanoukville Port, Cambodia as part of ongoing Mission Sagar-III. This Mission is being undertaken in accordance with the Security And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) vision.

**Option D is correct:** Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) is India's policy or doctrine of maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean region. It was first launched in 2015 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Through SAGAR, India seeks to deepen economic and security cooperation with its maritime neighbours and assist in building its maritime security capabilities. Further, India seeks to safeguard its national interests and ensure the IOR to become inclusive,

collaborative and respect international law. The key relevance of SAGAR emerges when seen in conjunction with India's other policies impacting the maritime domain like Act East Policy, Project Sagarmala, Project Mausam, focus on Blue Economy etc.

**Q.119** Recently, the Prime Minister has flagged off the 100th "Kisan Rail" service between which of the following states?

- (a) Maharashtra to Odisha
- (b) Maharashtra to West Bengal
- (c) Gujarat to West Bengal
- (d) Punjab to Maharashtra

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] Option B is correct:** Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the 100th run of Kisan Rail. The train, starting from Sangola in Maharashtra and culminating in Shalimar in West Bengal, will cover a distance of 2,132 km with more than 400 tonnes of cargo at a speed of 54.6 kmph in around 39 hours. It is carrying pomegranate, custard apples, grapes and oranges.

**Q.120** Consider the following statements:

1. Digital Ocean platform is the first platform to provide ocean data related services at one place.
2. It is developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) launches Digital Ocean app for Ocean Data Management.

**Option A is correct:** 'Digital Ocean' first of its kind platform for ocean data management and contributes to the Digital India Programme of the GoI. Digital Ocean will serve as a one-stop-solution for all the data related needs of a wide range of users including research institutions, operational agencies, strategic users, the academic community, maritime industry, policymakers and the public. It will play a central role in the sustainable management of our oceans and expanding our 'Blue Economy' initiatives. It will also be expected to bring a sea-change in how the oceanographic data is served for a better understanding of oceans that surround the Country. It is launched by Hyderabad-based Indian National Centre for Ocean Information System (INCOIS) which is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).

**Q.121** Proxima Centauri was in the news recently, it is

- (a) The closest star to Sun
- (b) An asteroid between Mars and Venus
- (c) An Exoplanet
- (d) The nearest galaxy to Milky Way

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News-** Astronomers running the world's largest initiative to look for alien life have recently picked up an "intriguing" radio wave emission from the direction of Proxima Centauri.

**Option A is correct:** Proxima Centauri is 4.2 light-years away from the Sun – considered a close distance in cosmic terms. Its mass is about an eighth of the Sun's, and it is too dim to be seen with the naked eye from Earth.

**Q.122** Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to “Goldilocks zone”, recently seen in the news?

1. It is regions inside the Earth-like planets in outer space.
2. Earth is in the Sun’s Goldilocks zone.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] Option B is correct:** A habitable zone, also called the “Goldilocks zone”, is the area around a star where it is not too hot and not too cold for liquid water to exist on the surface of surrounding planets. Our Earth is in the Sun’s Goldilocks zone. If Earth were where the dwarf planet Pluto is, all its water would freeze; on the other hand, if Earth were where Mercury is, all its water would boil off. Life on Earth started in water, and water is a necessary ingredient for life as we know it.

**Q.123** Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the recently released data on police organisations by Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD)?

1. The Backward Classes, Dalits and Tribals constitute half of the representation in police forces in the country.
2. Only STs have better representation in police forces in comparison to their share in the population.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News-** The latest data on police organisations released by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D).

**Option C is correct:** The latest data on police organisations released by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) shows that only Scheduled Tribes have better representation in police forces in comparison to their share in population while all other backward classes fare poorly. BACKWARD CASTES, Dalits and tribals constitute almost 67 per cent of India’s population, but their representation in police forces in the country is only at 51 per cent. The Other Backward Classes (OBCs) fare the worst on the representation front. The data shows against a 41 per cent share in the population, OBCs constitute only 25 per cent of the police forces, causing a deficit of almost 40 per cent in representation.

**Q.124** With reference to the ‘Dibru-Saikhowa National Park’, seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. It is situated in the south bank of the Dibru river and bounded by the Brahmaputra and Lohit rivers in the north in the Assam state.
2. It is the largest swamp forest in north-eastern India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

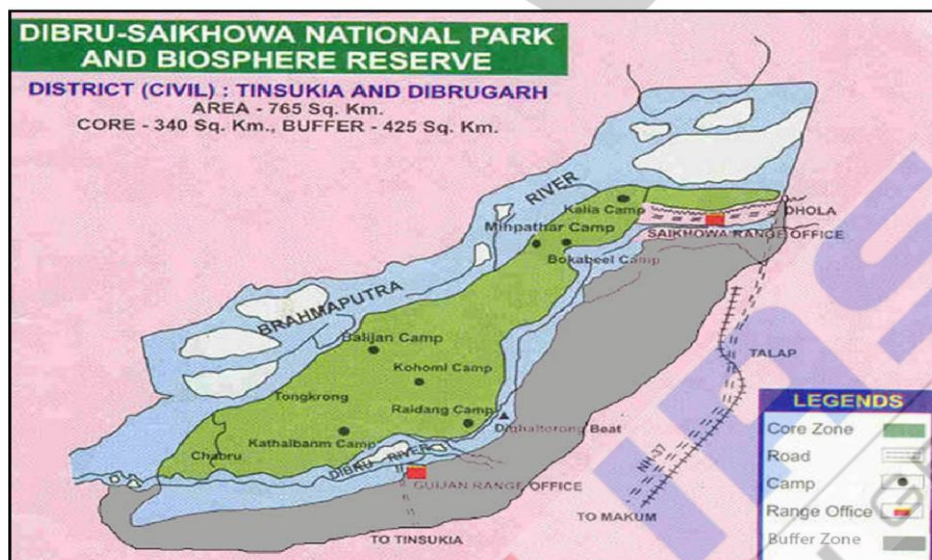
**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News-** Assam CM sets Jan. 31 deadline to rehabilitate Dibru-Saikhowa National Park dwellers.

**Option B is correct:** Dibru-Saikhowa National Park is situated in the south bank of the river Brahmaputra in Assam. It is the largest swamp forest in north-eastern India. Since 1999 when the Dibru-Saikhowa



Wildlife Sanctuary was upgraded to a national park. It is an identified Important Bird Area (IBA), notified by the Birdlife International. It is most famous for the rare white-winged wood ducks as well as feral horses. The forest type comprises semi-evergreen forests, deciduous forests, littoral and swamp forests and patches of wet evergreen forests. Maguri Motapung wetland is a part of the Reserve.



**Q.125** With reference to the North-Eastern Council, consider the following statements:

1. It is the statutory body established for the economic and social development of Sixth Schedule areas in the North-Eastern States.

2. The council is headed by the Prime Minister.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct:** North-Eastern Council (NEC) is the statutory body established after amending the North-Eastern Council Act, 1971 in the year 2002. It is the nodal agency for economic and social development of 8 North Eastern Region States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura including the four states having Schedule six areas. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The Home Minister is the ex-officio chairperson of the Council. The DoNER Minister is the Vice-Chairman. The council has Governors and Chief Ministers of all eight northeastern states as its members.