

DAILY MCQs COMPILATION

with

EXPLANATIONS

AUGUST 2023

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HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

1. With reference to the Anna Bhau Sathe, consider the following statements:
 1. He was a social reformer, writer and folk poet of Maharashtra.
 2. He was influenced by the socialist ideology.
 3. He dedicated his most famous novel Fakira to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.How many statements given above are correct?
 - (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
2. Consider the following statements regarding the Special Development Councils (SDCs) initiative:
 1. It is a move towards preserving, promoting, and popularising tribal culture.
 2. Under the initiative, Artisan ID cards have been issued to over 40,000 tribal artisans.
 3. The initiative is launched by the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED).Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 1 and 2 only
 - (c) 3 only
 - (d) 2 and 3 only
3. Which one of the following is the context in which the term 'Gnanamuyarchi' is mentioned?
 - (a) an ancient river channel found on the India-China border.
 - (b) a manuscript discovered in Italy.
 - (c) an idol of medieval time found in Mexico.
 - (d) a plant species discovered after hundred years of extinction.
4. With reference to Subramania Bharathi, consider the following statements:
 1. He was a poet, freedom fighter and social reformer from Bengal.
 2. He was known as Mahakavi Bharathiyar.
 3. He opposed child marriage, dowry and supported widow remarriage.How many statements given above are correct?
 - (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
5. With reference to the Bakhshali manuscript, an ancient Indian text, consider the following statements:
 1. It was found in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu.
 2. It contains one of the earliest origins of the zero symbol.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

6. With reference to the National Manuscripts Authority (NMA), which was envisioned in the National Manuscripts Bill, 2023, consider the following statements:
1. It would be the apex policy making body for manuscripts.
 2. It will have the powers of a civil court.
- 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
7. The term "Outstanding Universal Value" is related to which of the following institutions?
- (a) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
(b) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
(c) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
(d) The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
8. Sadbhavana Diwas or Harmony Day is celebrated on the birth anniversary of which of the following personalities?
- (a) Mother Teresa (b) Mahatma Gandhi
(c) Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam (d) Rajiv Gandhi
9. Consider the following pairs:
- | <i>Akademi</i> | <i>Well known for</i> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Sangeet Natak Akademi | Theatre training institution |
| 2. National School of Drama | Performing arts |
| 3. Sahitya Akademi | Visual Arts |
| 4. Lalit Kala Akademi | Development of Indian letters |
- How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?
- (a) Only two pairs (b) All four pairs
(c) All three pairs (d) None of the pairs
10. With reference to 'India Club', Consider the following statements:
1. It was originally set up by the India League.
 2. It has early roots in the Indian independence movement as a hub for nationalists including Krishna Menon.
- 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
11. With reference to Indian art form, Consider the following pairs :
- | <i>Art Form</i> | <i>State</i> |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Burrakatha | Andhra Pradesh |
| 2. Seethakali | Kerala |
| 3. Yakshagana | Rajasthan |
- How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?
- (a) Only one pair (b) Only two pairs
(c) All three pairs (d) None of the pairs

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: Tukaram Bhaurao Sathe later came to be known as Annabhau Sathe was born in a Dalit family on August 1, 1920 in Maharashtra's Wategaon village in Satara district.

- He belonged to the **Matang community among Dalits**.
- **He was a social reformer, writer and folk poet of Maharashtra.**
- He is also known as a pioneer of dalit literature.

Statement 2 is not correct: He was **influenced by the communist ideology** and is often known as the 'Maxim Gorky of Maharashtra', having been inspired by the Russian writer-activist's work, as well as the Russian Revolution.

Statement 3 is correct: Literary Contributions: In 1939, he wrote his first ballad 'Spanish Povada'.

- Several of his works like 'Aklechi Goshta,' 'Stalingradacha Povada,' 'Mazi Maina Gavavar Rahili,' 'Jag Badal Ghaluni Ghav' were popular across the state.
- His 'Bangalchi Hak' (Bengal's Call) on the Bengal famine was translated into Bengali and later presented at London's Royal Theatre.
- **He dedicated his most famous novel Fakira to Dr Ambedkar.**

2. (b)

Odisha's Special Development Councils (SDCs) initiative

- **About:**
 - In a significant move towards **preserving, promoting, and popularising tribal culture** while also continuing with the development process, the **Odisha government** launched the Special Development Councils (SDCs) initiative in 2017. **Hence statement 1 is correct and statement 3 is incorrect.**
 - This is an **active effort to preserve the culture and heritage of 62 tribes** in the State under one umbrella while keeping economic development on course in the regions.
 - The scheme, which **covered nine tribal-dominated districts and 60 lakh tribal households in 117 blocks**, has now been expanded to 23 districts covering more than 84 lakh tribal people.
- **SDC's model:** In this model, important cultural markers that are a reflection of tribal identity are identified and promoted.
 - **Language:**
 - ♦ Language is recognised as an important marker of culture.
 - ♦ As Odisha is a land of over 22 diverse tribal languages, the focus is on the use and propagation of these languages.
 - ♦ Over 21 tribal proficiency centres have been established.
 - ♦ These have modules to educate frontline workers like ASHA workers and non-Odia speakers about tribal culture and dialect.
 - **Sacred Groves:**
 - ♦ More than 4,500 sacred groves that were close to vanishing from the village landscape are now being conserved.
 - ♦ These groves hold immense cultural and conservational value for the tribal population, as they are considered to be inhabited by the gods. Resource extraction in these groves is strictly prohibited.

- ♦ More than 4,730 sacred groves are under protection in nine districts, and 1,609 tribal cultural clubs have been set up.
- **Artisan ID cards:**
 - ♦ Artisan ID cards have been issued to over 40,000 tribal artisans. **Hence statement 2 is correct**
 - ♦ This initiative not only preserves culture, but also enables employment opportunities.
- **Tribal Resource Centres:**
 - ♦ To ensure an efficient transfer of knowledge, more than 50 Tribal Resource Centres have been constructed in Sundargarh district. More are coming up in the remaining districts.

3. (b)

The **Gnanamuyarchi**, a palm manuscript from the 18th Century, is discovered in an **Armenian monastery in northern Italy**.

- It is a copy of the first **Tamil translation of Spiritual Exercise, written by St. Ignatius of Loyola** in the 16th century.
 - The translation is most likely by **Michele Bertoldi**, known in Tamil as **Gnanaprakasasamy**.

4. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: C. Subramania Bharathi was a poet, freedom fighter and social reformer from Tamil Nadu.

Statements 2 and 3 are correct: He was known as **Mahakavi Bharathiyar** and the laudatory epithet Mahakavi means a great poet.

- His songs on nationalism and freedom of India helped to rally the masses to support the Indian Independence Movement in Tamil Nadu.
- Bharathi was also against the **caste system**. He declared that there were only two castes-men and women and nothing more than that.
- He believed in **women's rights, gender equality** and women emancipation. He opposed **child marriage, dowry and supported widow remarriage**.

5. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The **Bakhshali manuscript**, an ancient Indian text, was found in 1881, buried in a field in a village called **Bakhshali, near Peshawar, now in Pakistan**.

Statement 2 is correct: Radiocarbon dating reveals the fragmentary text, which is inscribed on 70 pieces of birch bark and contains hundreds of zeroes, dates to as early as the 3rd or 4th century. This makes it one of the **world's oldest recorded origins of the zero symbol** that we use today.

6. (c)

Government plans law on protection of Indian manuscripts:

- The government is planning to introduce the **National Manuscripts Bill, 2023**, with the aim to document and catalogue Indian heritage texts wherever they may be, in India or abroad, maintain accurate and up-to-date information about them, and detail the conditions under which they may be consulted.
- It envisages setting up a 10-member **National Manuscripts Authority (NMA)**.
- The **Culture Minister as a Chairperson** and the other members would include the Secretaries of Culture, Finance and Education, the Vice-Chancellor of Central Sanskrit University, special invitees representing the States, and private agencies.

Statement 1 is correct:

About National Manuscripts Authority (NMA):

- It would be the **apex policy making body** with regard to **digitisation, conservation, preservation, editing, and publication work of manuscripts.**

Statement 2 is correct:

- NMA would have the **powers of a civil court** to regulate the allocation of access to manuscripts and would also have an investigation wing for the purpose of conducting an inquiry into thefts and desecration of texts.

7. (a)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage sites are designated as having **“Outstanding Universal Value”** under the **Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage**. This document was adopted by **UNESCO in 1972 and formally took effect in 1975.**

- It provides a framework for international cooperation in preserving and protecting cultural treasures and natural areas throughout the world.

8. (d)

The birth anniversary of India's **sixth prime minister Rajiv Gandhi** is observed as **Sadbhavana Diwas or Harmony Day** every year on August 20 in the country.

- **‘Sadbhavana’** in English means **goodwill.**
- It is dedicated to the cause of encouraging peace, national integration, and communal harmony among all religions in the country.
- The day was first observed in **1992**, more than a year after Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in a suicide bomb attack in Tamil Nadu.
- Rajiv Gandhi became the **youngest Prime Minister of India** when he assumed the post at the **age of 40.**
- He was posthumously awarded country's highest civilian honour, **Bharat Ratna in 1991.**

9. (d)

None of the pairs are correctly matched.

- **Sangeet Natak Akademi:** It is the apex body in the **field of performing arts** in the country. It was set up in 1953 for the preservation and promotion of India's diverse culture expressed in forms of **music, dance and drama.**
- **The National School of Drama:** It is one of the foremost **theatre training institutions** in the world and the only one of its kind in India. It was set up by the Sangeet Natak Akademi as one of its constituent units in 1959. In 1975, it became an independent entity.
- **The Sahitya Akademi (India's National Academy of Letters):** It was formally inaugurated on 12 March 1954 to work actively for the **development of Indian letters and to set high literary standards**, to foster and co-ordinate literary activities in all the Indian languages.
- **Lalit Kala Akademi (National Academy of Art):** It was established on 5th August 1954 to focus on activities **in the field of Visual Arts.**

10. (c)

Both statement 1 and 2 are correct:

The India Club in London, with its early roots in the Indian independence movement is a hub for nationalists including Krishna Menon.

- This is a historic meeting venue and eatery and has its roots in the India League, which campaigned for Indian independence in Britain, with its founding members including Krishna Menon – who went on to become the first Indian High Commissioner to the UK.

11. (b)

Pair 1 and 2 are correctly matched and Pair 3 is incorrectly matched.

Burra Katha or Burrakatha

- It is an oral storytelling technique in the Jangam Katha tradition, performed in **villages of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana**.
- It is a narrative entertainment that consists of prayers, solo drama, dance, songs, poems and jokes.

Seethakali

- It is a centuries-old **Dravidian dance form** which is a blend of songs, storytelling and fast movements.
- Seethakali is believed to have originated at Perinad in Kollam district of **Kerala**.
- This art form was first performed some 150 years back by the people of **Vedar** and **Pulayar** communities. The folk art form was a part of **Onam festivities** in the past.

Yakshagana

- Yakshagana is a traditional theatre, developed in Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, and western parts of Chikmagalur districts, in **Karnataka** and in Kasaragod district in **Kerala**.
- It combines dance, music, dialogue, costume, make-up, and stage techniques with a unique style and form.

INDIAN SOCIETY

1. Regarding the State of Elementary Education in Rural India report, consider the following statements:
 1. It was conducted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
 2. It encompassed 8 to 18-year-old children in rural areas across 21 states in India.
 3. It revealed that more children used smartphones for entertainment rather than for studies.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) 3 only
2. With reference to Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U), consider the following statements:
 1. It was launched in June 2015 by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
 2. It is implemented through two verticals namely Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) and Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP) only.
 3. It promotes women empowerment by providing the ownership of houses in the name of female members.Which of the statements given above are correct?
 - (a) 1 and 2
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) 1 and 3
 - (d) 3 only

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

In News: Recently, The State of Elementary Education in Rural India report was released by the Union Education Minister.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct: State of Elementary Education in Rural India report is based on a survey conducted by the **Development Intelligence Unit (DIU)**, a collaboration between Transform Rural India and Sambodhi Research and Communications.

- It covered responses of **6,229 parents** of **schoolchildren aged 6 to 16 in rural** communities across **21 States**.
 - Of the 6,229 parents surveyed, 6,135 had school-going children, 56 had children who dropped out of school, and 38 had children who had never enrolled in school.

Statement 3 is correct: It revealed that more children used smartphones for entertainment rather than for studies.

- 49.3% of students in rural India have access to smartphones.
- However, among parents whose children have access to gadgets, 76.7% said the latter primarily used mobile phones to play video games.

2. (c)

In News : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of the 77th Independence Day announced a host of schemes for skilled workers, women self-help groups and the urban poor among others.

Statements 1 and 3 are correct : The government already has a scheme to address the housing shortage for the urban poor called the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U)** .

- It is a flagship mission of the government which is implemented by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**.
- It was launched in **June 2015** to provide an all-weather dwelling unit to eligible beneficiaries across all urban areas.
 - The Mission has been extended up to 31st December 2024
- Uttar Pradesh had the largest number of houses completed.
 - Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh were other high-performing States.
- The Mission promotes **women empowerment by providing the ownership of houses in the name of female members or in joint name.**

Statement 2 is not correct: The scheme is implemented through four verticals i.e., **Beneficiary Led Construction (BLC), Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP), In-Situ Slum Redevelopment (ISSR) and Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS)** based on eligibility criteria as per scheme guideline.

- All houses under PMAY-U have basic amenities like toilets, water supply, electricity and kitchen.

GEOGRAPHY

1. Which of the following statements is **not** correct regarding Cocos (Keeling) Islands (CKI), which was recently in the news?
 - (a) It is located in the Southern Indian Ocean.
 - (b) It comprises two coral atolls made up of 27 smaller islands.
 - (c) It is occupied by the People's Republic of China following the Battle of the Paracel Islands (1974).
 - (d) None of the above.
2. The area known as 'Aïr Massif' sometimes appears in the news, located in:
 - (a) Spain
 - (b) Niger
 - (c) South Africa
 - (d) Australia
3. Which of the following atomic minerals are recently allowed to the private sector for mining by the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill 2023?
 1. Lithium
 2. Beryllium
 3. Zirconium
 4. TitaniumSelect the correct answer using the code given below:
 - (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2, 3 and 4 only
 - (c) 1, 3 and 4 only
 - (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
4. Batagaika crater, recently seen in the news, is located in which of the following countries?
 - (a) France
 - (b) Russia
 - (c) Papua New Guinea
 - (d) Australia
5. With reference to the Kuril Islands, which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. The Island is disputed between China and Japan.
 2. It is situated between the Sea of Okhotsk and the Pacific Ocean.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
6. With reference to the Danube River, consider the following statements:
 1. It is the most international river in the world.
 2. It is the longest River in Europe.
 3. Major tributaries include the Tisza, Drava, Sava, Inn, and Prut rivers.How many statements given above are correct?
 - (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None

- 7.** With reference to Suriname which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is a small country in Central America.
 2. The country is bordered by Costa Rica and Honduras to the North and the Pacific Ocean to the east.
- 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 |
- 8.** Recently, the 1st Foreign Office Consultations(FOC) between India and Samoa was held. In context of the above statement, Samoa is related to which of the following?
- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| (a) Indian Ocean | (b) Atlantic Ocean |
| (c) Pacific Ocean | (d) Arctic Ocean |
- 9.** With reference to the North Sea, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. The North Sea connects to the Eastern Pacific Ocean via the English Channel.
 2. Its Neighboring countries are Great Britain, Netherlands, Norway, and Denmark.
- 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 |
- 10.** The Nagarnar Steel Plant, famous for its production of Hot Rolled (HR) Coil, is located in which of the following Indian states?
- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| (a) Jharkhand | (b) Odisha |
| (c) Chhattisgarh | (d) Karnataka |
- 11.** With reference to Terai Arc Landscape (TAL), which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is between the Yamuna and Bhagmati river.
 2. It is spread across only two states of India namely Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.
 3. It is shortlisted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) as the World Restoration Flagship.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below.
- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| (a) 1 and 2 Only | (b) 2 Only |
| (c) 2 and 3 Only | (d) 1 and 3 Only |
- 12.** The 'Tiranga point' and 'Jawahar Point' were mentioned in the news. They are the names of which of the following places?
- | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|
| (a) Islands in South Andaman |
| (b) Peak Points on Mount Everest |
| (c) Newly established Research Stations on Antarctica |
| (d) Sites on the Moon |
- 13.** The country was recently in the news as mutinous soldiers seized power and put the President under house arrest, hours after he was declared the winner in an election. It is a former French colony and a member of OPEC lying on the west coast of Africa, astride the Equator.
- Which of the following countries has been described above?
- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| (a) Nigeria | (b) Niger |
| (c) Gabon | (d) Angola |

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

Cocos (Keeling) Islands (CKI)

- The island is located in the **Southern Indian Ocean**, close to Indonesia and strategic maritime choke points. **Hence, Statement a is correct.**
- The CKI is an **Australian external territory located in the Indian Ocean**, approximately 3,000 km north-west of Perth in western Australia.
- **Statement b is correct:** The island comprises **two coral atolls** made up of **27 smaller islands**.

**Significance for India**

- **Cocos can be an important base** for refuelling and **Operational Turnaround for the Indian military**, especially once the runway there is expanded to accommodate large aircraft like the P-8 long range maritime patrol aircraft.
- Cocos Islands had been a **point of cooperation between the space agencies of the two countries** for India's Gaganyaan human space flight mission.
- **Australia's active support in establishing a temporary ground station at CKI for the Gaganyaan missions** offers potential opportunities for cooperation in earth observation, satellite navigation, space situational awareness, weather and climate studies using satellite data.

2. (b)

Niger is **rich in Uranium deposits**, in the **Aïr Massif area or Aïr Mountains** (triangular massif located in northern Niger within the Sahara), producing **07 % of global supplies** and has been exporting a quarter of it to France. **Niger supplies 25.4 % of Uranium to the EU countries.**

3. (d)

In News: Parliament passed the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2023.

- The Bill amends the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.

- The Bill omits at least six previously mentioned atomic minerals from a list of 12 which cannot be commercially mined.
 - Being on the atomic minerals list, the exploration and mining of these six — **lithium, beryllium, niobium, titanium, tantalum and zirconium**, was previously reserved for government entities.

4. (b)

In News : The Batagaika crater is expanding at an alarming rate due to the thawing of the permafrost.

Batagaika crater is situated in Russia's Far East.

- It is located in the Sakha Republic and reaches depths of up to 100 metres.
- It is the world's largest one kilometre-long permafrost crater.

5. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct and 2 is correct.

- The Island is disputed between **Japan and Russia**.
- The Kuril Islands are a volcanic archipelago administered as part of Sakhalin Oblast in the Russian Far East.
- The Islands stretch approximately 1,300 km northeast from Hokkaido in Japan to Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia, separating the **Sea of Okhotsk from the Pacific Ocean**.



6. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: Crossing through **ten countries** and draining some 817,000 km² and the territory of 18 countries, the Danube is the **most international river in the world**.

- Flowing from Germany's Black Forest to the Danube Delta in Romania and Ukraine and the Black Sea, the Danube is Europe's only major river which flows west to east, from Central to Eastern Europe.



- **Statement 2 is not correct:** The Danube is the **longest river of the European Union** and **Europe's second-longest after the Volga**.
- The European Commission now recognizes the Danube as the **"single most important non-oceanic body of water in Europe"** and a **"future central axis for the European Union"**.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Major tributaries of the Danube include the **Tisza, Drava, Sava, Inn, and Prut** rivers.

7. (d)

Both the statements are incorrect.

- Suriname is a small country on the northern coast of **South America**.
- Suriname is bordered by the **Atlantic Ocean** to the north, by **French Guiana** to the east, by **Brazil** to the south, and by **Guyana** to the west.
- **Capital:** Paramaribo



8. (c)

Samoa is a group of Polynesian islands and islets in the **south-central Pacific Ocean**. It consists of the nine inhabited and five uninhabited islands west of the meridian.



9. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct and 2 is correct.

- The North Sea connects to the **Atlantic Ocean** via the **English Channel** in the southwest and the **Baltic Sea** in the east via the **Kattegat and Skagerrak straits**.
- **Neighboring countries:** Great Britain (Scotland and England), Netherlands, Belgium, France, Norway, Denmark and Germany.
 - The North Sea is the mouth of the rivers such as **Rhine** and **Elbe**. The Sea hosts two of the world's largest ports i.e. **Hamburg and Rotterdam**.

10. (c)

The Nagarnar Steel Plant: NMDC's Integrated Steel Plant (NISP):

- It is located in the Nagarnar in **Bastar region of Chhattisgarh**.
- The Plant is set to produce **high grade Hot Rolled (HR) steel**, with a capacity of 3 million tonnes per annum (MTPA).
- Its competitive advantage also stems from its iron ore supply linkage with Bailadila mines, barely 100 kms from Nagarnar.
- It has the unique distinction of internationally being the only steel plant to be set up by a mining company.

11. (d)

In News: The poop of tigers has helped a team of scientists at the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) understand the prey selection patterns of the striped feline in the Indian part of the **Terai-Arc Landscape (TAL)**.

Statements 1 and 3 are correct : Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) is a stretch between the river **Yamuna** in the west and the river **Bhagmati** in the east, comprising the **Shivalik hills**, the adjoining bhabhar areas and the Terai flood plains. Terai Arc Landscape has been shortlisted by **FAO as the "World Restoration Flagship"** as a part of the ongoing UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration Campaign (2021-2030).

Statement 2 is not correct : TAL is spread across the Indian states of **Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh** and **Bihar**, and the low lying hills of Nepal.

- **About 22% of the wild tiger population** in India is found across the TAL, living amidst some of the highest human and livestock densities on the subcontinent.

12. (d)

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has announced that the point where the Chandrayaan-3 lander touched down on the lunar surface will be named '**Shiv Shakti**'.

- The point where Chandrayaan-2 left its imprints would be named as '**Tiranga point**'. **Chandrayaan-1** crashed in 2008 is named as '**Jawahar Point**'.

Who decides the names?

- The **International Astronomical Union (IAU)** is the leading authority in assigning official names to lunar features. India is one of the 92 members of the space body.
- The **IAU has been the arbiter of planetary and satellite nomenclature** since its inception in 1919.
- Many countries have been giving informal names to the spots on the moon during lunar missions. The United States gave informal names to lunar sites during Apollo missions.
- Most of the informal names assigned during the Apollo mission were later given "official" status by the IAU. In 2021, the IAU approved China's application for naming eight new features on the moon around the landing site of the Chang'e-5 probe.

13. (c)

Gabon:

- It is a country lying on the **west coast of Africa, astride the Equator**. A former French colony, Gabon retains strong ties to France and to the French language and culture.
- Gabon is a **member of OPEC**, with a production of some 1,81,000 barrels of crude a day
- **Capital**: Libreville.
- Gabon is bordered by **Equatorial Guinea and Cameroon** to the north, the **Republic of the Congo** to the east and south, and the **Atlantic Ocean** to the west; the islands of **Sao Tome and Principe** are situated off the coast.



- The Atlantic's northward-flowing **Benguela Current** softens Gabon's southern coastline by creating sandbars.

INDIAN POLITY AND CONSTITUTION

1. Consider the following statements about the Bar Council of India:

1. It is a statutory body created by Parliament under the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879.
2. It sets standards for legal education and grants recognition to Universities whose degree in law will serve as qualification for enrolment as an advocate.
3. It also performs representative functions by protecting the rights, privileges and interests of advocates.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| (a) Only one | (b) Only two |
| (c) All three | (d) None |

2. Consider the following pairs:

<i>Election to the Post</i>	<i>Minimum age</i>
1. President of India	25 Years
2. Member of Rajya Sabha	35 Years
3. Member of Legislative Assembly	21 Years

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| (a) Only one | (b) Only two |
| (c) All three | (d) None |

3. With reference to the Eighth Schedule of Indian Constitution which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It lists the 22 languages as official languages of India.
2. The 92nd Amendment Act of 2003 added the Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santali languages to the schedule.

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 |

4. Consider the following statements regarding the Scheduled Tribes of India:

1. The President through a public notification can declare the tribes or tribal communities as Scheduled Tribes.
2. The Constitution is silent about the criteria for the specification of a community as a Scheduled Tribe.
3. The term Scheduled Tribes is nowhere defined in the constitution of India.

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

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

5. Consider the following statements:

1. The CBI is a statutory body established through the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.

2. The CBI is a nodal body for all matters related to INTERPOL.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

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

6. Consider the following statements:

1. The term "bail" is defined in India's Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 (CrPC).
2. The CrPC elucidates on "Bailable Offence" and "Non-Bailable Offence".
3. The number of bail appeals filed in India's High Courts have seen considerable decline post 2020.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

7. With reference to the e-Court project, consider the following statements:

1. It was conceptualised on the basis of the National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology in the Indian Judiciary.
2. It is a Pan-India Project, monitored and funded by the Supreme Court for the District Courts 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

8. The 'Godavarman Case of Supreme Court of India' is related to which one of the following?

- (a) Coastal Economic Zones (b) Forests in India
(c) Economic Reform (d) Interlinking of Rivers

9. Lily Thomas vs. Union of India Case 2013 recently seen in the news, it is related to?

- (a) Section 8(4) of the Representation of People Act, 1951
(b) Section 69(A) of the Information Technology Act, 2000
(c) Section 13 of The Right To Information Act, 2005
(d) Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code, 1870

10. With reference to the RTI Online Portal, consider the following statements:

1. It is administered by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).
2. It requires very high internet bandwidth to serve users.

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

11. With reference to Article 35A of the Constitution of India, consider the following statements:

1. It was incorporated into the Constitution in 1954 by an order of the then President Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.
2. It barred anyone from outside Jammu and Kashmir who is not a permanent resident from owning a property in the state.

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

12. With reference to the Money Bills, consider the following statements:

1. Speaker is the final authority to decide a bill as a Money Bill.
2. If the Lok Sabha rejects the recommendations of Rajya Sabha, the Bill is deemed to have passed by both Houses.
3. The President can summon a joint sitting in case of deadlock.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| (a) Only one | (b) Only two |
| (c) All three | (d) None |

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: It is a **statutory body** created by Parliament **under the Advocates Act, 1961** to regulate and represent the Indian bar.

Statement 2 is correct: It **sets standards for legal education and grants recognition to Universities** whose degree in law will serve as qualification for enrolment as an advocate.

Statement 3 is correct: In addition, it performs certain **representative functions** by protecting the rights, privileges and interests of advocates and through the creation of funds for providing financial assistance to organise welfare.

2. (d)

All pairs are incorrect.

The minimum age for a person to contest various elections is as follows:

- **President and Vice President of India: 35 Years.**
- **Rajya Sabha or the State Legislative Council: 30 years.**
- **Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly polls: 25 years.**

3. (c)

Both the Statements are correct. The **eighth schedule** includes the recognition of the following 22 languages:

- Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili and Dogri are the 22 languages presently in the eighth schedule to the Constitution.
- Of these languages, 14 were initially included in the Constitution. Subsequently, Sindhi was added in 1967; Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were added in 1992; and Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santali were added by the 92nd Amendment Act of 2003.

4. (c)

Scheduled Tribes of India

- **About:** As per Article 342 of the Constitution, the President through a public notification can declare the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within these tribes and tribal communities as Scheduled Tribes. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **Criteria:** The Constitution is silent about the criteria for the specification of a community as a Scheduled Tribe. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - Primitiveness, geographical isolation, shyness, and social, educational & economic backwardness are the traits that distinguish Scheduled Tribe communities from other communities.

- **Article 366 (25):** It defined scheduled tribes as “such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this constitution”. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

5. (b)

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) was established by a **resolution of the Ministry of Home Affairs**, Government of India, dated April 1, 1963.
- The CBI is **not a statutory body** but derives its **power to investigate from the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946**.
- The **CBI functions under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions** of the central government, and is exempted from the purview of the Right to Information (RTI) Act.
- The **Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption** recommended the establishment of the CBI.
- In **1963, the CBI was established by the Government of India** with a view to investigate serious crimes related to the defence of India, corruption in high places, serious fraud, cheating, and embezzlement and social crime, particularly hoarding, black marketing, and profiteering in essential commodities, having all-India and inter-state ramifications.
- **Section 6 of the DPSE Act** authorises the central government to direct CBI to probe a case within the jurisdiction of any state on the recommendation of the concerned state government.
- CBI can **suo-moto take up investigation of offences only in the Union Territories**.
- The CBI is a **nodal body for all matters related to INTERPOL**.

6. (b)

About the 'Bails'

- **Meaning:** The term “bail” is **not defined** in India’s **Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 (CrPC)**. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - The bail is described as a security such as money or bond, especially required by a court for the release of a prisoner who must appear at a future date.
 - As such, “bail” refers to the **release of a person** from legal custody.
 - **Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973:** Section 438 of the CrPC clearly states that anticipatory bail is only granted in case of non-bailable offences. CrPC defines the terms “Bailable Offence” and “Non-Bailable Offence”. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Only the term “Bailable Offence” and “Non-Bailable Offence” defined under CrPC:**
 - **Bailable:** In the case of bailable offences, the police may grant bail to the offender at the moment of arrest or detention.
 - **Non-Bailable:** A non-bailable offence is one in which bail cannot be granted as a matter of right unless ordered by a competent court. In such instances, the accused may seek bail under Sections 437 and Section 439 of the Criminal Procedure Code of 1973.
- **Bail appeals:**
 - The number of bail appeals filed in India’s High Courts surged post 2020, according to the ‘**High Court dashboard**’ by DAKSH. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
 - ♦ DAKSH is a think-tank focussed on law and justice system reforms.
 - **Bail appeals went up** from around 3.2 lakh to 3.5 lakh each year before 2020, to 4 lakh to 4.3 lakh thereafter.

- Consequently, the **number of pending bail appeals in High Courts** also surged from around 50,000 to 65,000 to between 1.25 lakh to 1.3 lakh.
- ♦ Between July 2021 and June 2022, 4.3 lakh bail appeals were filed in High Courts.

7. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: e-Courts, a **Mission Mode Project** was conceptualised on the basis of the “**National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the Indian Judiciary – 2005**” submitted by e-Committee, Supreme Court of India **with a vision to transform the Indian Judiciary** by ICT enablement of Courts.

Statement 2 is not correct: It is a **Pan-India Project**, monitored and funded by the **Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India** for the District Courts across the country.

8. (b)

The Supreme Court in the case of **T N Godavarman (1996)** accepted a wide definition of forests under the Act.

- “The word ‘forest’ must be understood according to its dictionary meaning, which covers all statutorily recognised forests, whether designated as reserved, protected or otherwise for the purpose of **Section 2 (1) of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980**.
- The term ‘forest land’ occurring in **Section 2** will be any areas recorded as forest in the government record **irrespective of the ownership**.

9. (a)

Recently, **Section 8(4)** of the Representation of People Act 1951 was seen in the news because of Disqualification of Rahul Gandhi of the Congress party.

- In the landmark 2013 ruling in ‘Lily Thomas v Union of India’, the Supreme Court struck down **Section 8(4) of the RPA** as unconstitutional.
- Under the **RPA, Section 8(4)** stated that the disqualification takes effect only “after three months have elapsed” from the date of conviction.
- Within that period, lawmakers could file an appeal against the sentence before the High Court. It had allowed a three-month period within which to appeal. Disqualification was not to take effect during this period; when the appeal is admitted, disqualification would depend on the final outcome of the appeal.

10. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: **RTI Online portal: Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) administers and disseminates training and standards** for government officials who handle RTI applications.

Statement 2 is not correct: According to the National Informatics Centre (NIC), it requires very little internet bandwidth to serve users, and maximum data load on RTIOnline was 8Mbps.

11. (b)

In News: Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud said Article 35A denied fundamental rights to others.

Statement 1 is not correct: Article 35A was incorporated into the Constitution in **1954** by an order of the then **President Rajendra Prasad** on the advice of the Jawaharlal Nehru Cabinet.

Statement 2 is correct: Article 35A of the Indian Constitution was an article that empowered the Jammu and Kashmir state’s legislature to define “permanent residents” of the state and provide special rights and privileges to them.

- The state of Jammu and Kashmir defined these privileges to include the ability to **purchase land and immovable property**, seeking government employment and availing oneself of other state benefits such as higher education and health care.
 - The **Article 35A barred** anyone from outside Jammu and Kashmir (who is not a permanent resident) **from getting a state job or owning a property in the state.**

12. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: A Money Bill is a specific type of Finance Bill, that must deal only with **matters specified in Article 110 (1) (a) to (g)**. It is a Financial Bill that is **certified by the Speaker**.

- **Article 110 defines a “Money Bill”** as one containing provisions dealing with taxes, regulation of the government’s borrowing of money, and expenditure or receipt of money from the Consolidated Fund of India.

Statement 2 is correct: Money Bill can originate only in the Lok Sabha, and after being passed, it was sent to the Rajya Sabha for its recommendations.

- Within 14 days, the Rajya Sabha must submit the Bill back to the Lok Sabha with its non-binding recommendations. If the Lok Sabha rejects the recommendations, the Bill is deemed to have passed by both Houses in the form in which it was passed by the Lok Sabha without the recommendations of the Rajya Sabha.

Statement 3 is not correct: There is no provision for a joint sitting for differences over a Money Bill.

- Thus, when it comes to Money Bills, the Rajya Sabha only has a recommendatory role and is somehow restricted.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India & Australia are part of/share which of the following multilateral institutions?
 1. Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)
 2. Group of 20 (G20)
 3. The Quadrilateral Framework (QUAD)
 4. South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)Select the correct answer using the code given below:
 - (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
 - (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
2. With reference to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), consider the following statements:
 1. It links the Gwadar Port in Pakistan's western region of Balochistan with China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in the northwest.
 2. It is not a part of China's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative.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
3. The term 'ECOWAS' sometimes mentioned in the news, is related to:
 - (a) Environmental challenges of oil spillage.
 - (b) Regional bloc of countries focusing on common issue.
 - (c) Intellectual Property Rights.
 - (d) Economic development strategies for least developed countries.
4. Which one of the following countries is associated with the development of the East Container Terminal (ECT) in Sri Lanka?
 - (a) China
 - (b) USA
 - (c) Germany
 - (d) Japan
5. CHIPS Act, that was recently in news, is related to which of the following?
 - (a) United States' policy to Produce Semiconductors
 - (b) European Union's Right to Information Policy
 - (c) China's Personal Information Protection Law
 - (d) European Data Protection law
6. Which of the following are included in official languages of the United Nations ?
 1. Russian
 2. Arabic
 3. French
 4. Japanese
 5. Spanish

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

7. Consider the following pairs:

<i>Multilateral Development Bank</i>	<i>Headquarters</i>
1. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	New York
2. Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Beijing
3. European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	London
4. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	Washington

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one pair (b) Only two pairs
(c) Only three pairs (d) All four pairs

8. With reference to the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) which of the following statements is/are correct?

- The regional group was established in 1975 through the Lagos Treaty with a mandate of promoting economic integration among its members.
- Its headquarter is located in Accra, Ghana.

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

9. Recently, the term 'sponge cities' initiative was in the news, it is mentioned in context of which of the following countries?

- (a) Australia (b) Philippines
(c) Nigeria (d) China

10. Consider the following statements, with reference to the African Union (AU):

- It is a continental body consisting of the 55 member states.
- AU Member States are divided into five geographic regions which were defined by the Organisation of African Unity in 1976.

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

11. Which of the following statements are correct about G20?

- The G20 Summit is held annually with a rotating presidency, and in 2023, India holds the presidency.
- The group has a permanent secretariat at Paris, France.
- The G20 Summit is formally known as the "Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy".

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

12. Kampala Declaration that was recently in news, is related to which of the following?
- Labour migration & freedom of association
 - Addressing the issue of climate change and human mobility in Africa
 - Recovery of tourism post pandemic
 - A Framework for a Twenty-First Century US-UK Economic Partnership

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

India-Australia Relations

- Australia looks at India as an important partner in promoting regional security and stability.
- Bilateral Engagement:**
 - Bilateral mechanisms include **high-level visits**, Annual Meetings of Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue, Joint Trade and Commerce Ministerial Commission, **India-Australia '2+2' Foreign Secretaries and Defence Secretaries Dialogue**, Defence Policy Talks, Australia-India Education Council, Defence Services Staff Talks, etc.
- Multilateral Engagement:**
 - Both countries have close cooperation in multilateral fora like **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** and **G20**.
 - The Quadrilateral Framework (QUAD) of India and Australia** along with the US and Japan emphasize the collective resolve to maintain a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region. **Hence options 2 and 3 are correct.**
- BIMSTEC:**
 - 7 countries are members of Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). The member countries are India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Nepal, Sri Lanka.
 - Hence option 1 is not correct.**
- SAARC:**
 - South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has eight member countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri-Lanka).
 - Hence option 4 is not correct.**

2. (b)

Statement 1 is correct. CPEC is a 3,000 km network of infrastructure projects linking the Gwadar Port in Pakistan's western region of Balochistan with China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in northwest.

Statement 2 is not correct. The Belt and Road Initiative includes CPEC. The 2013 launch of the BRI intends to establish a network of land and maritime connections connecting Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Gulf area, Africa, and Europe.

3. (b)

Niger is located on western African landmass, with the **capital Niamey**. The region is **divided between the** Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (the bloc of west African countries) and **Niger's immediate neighbours of Mali and Burkina Faso**.

- ECOWAS is a regional political and economic union of fifteen countries.

4. (d)

In May 2019, Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) agreed on a **Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC)** with **Sri Lanka, India and Japan** to develop the **East Container Terminal (ECT)**.

- Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) would retain 100% ownership, while a jointly-owned Terminal Operations company would run the terminal **51% stake with Sri Lanka and 49% with India and Japan**.

In Feb 2021, Sri Lanka booted India and Japan out of a 2019 deal to jointly develop the East Container Terminal (ECT) at the Colombo Port, as trade unions and sections of the Buddhist clergy vehemently opposed foreign involvement in the strategic national asset.

5. (a)

About the CHIPS Act

- The United States' **Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors and Science Act of 2022 (CHIPS Act)** recently completed one year as a law.
- The Act authorises \$52.7 billion over five years to boost American competitiveness, innovation and national security in semiconductors.
- As industrial policy has become a default policy of choice for nation-states, the Act provides a clear window into the capabilities and structures needed to execute such policies.

6. (a)

In News: China had objected to the use of non-UN languages like Sanskrit in any of the G-20 texts being negotiated. The Ministry of External Affairs said it uses only the "English version" of the phrase — **"One Earth, One Family, One Future"** — in its summary documents and outcome statements.

Multilingualism enables communication between the UN's linguistically and culturally diverse Member States within the meeting rooms and halls of the UN.

- There are six official languages of the UN.
 - **These are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.**
- The correct interpretation and translation of these six languages, in both spoken and written form, is very important to the work of the Organization, because this enables clear and concise communication on issues of global importance.

7. (b)

Pairs 1 and 2 are not correct:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| • International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) | Rome, Italy |
| • Asian Development Bank (ADB) | Manila, Philippines |
| • European Bank for Reconstruction and Development | London, UK |
| • International Bank for Reconstruction and Development | Washington DC, USA |

8. (a)

What is ECOWAS?

- It is a regional group established in **1975** through the **Lagos Treaty** – with a mandate of promoting economic integration among its members.
- **ECOWAS has 15 members:** Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo.
- **Headquarters:** Abuja, Nigeria.
- **ECOWAS aims to** have a single common currency and create a single, large trading bloc in areas of industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, financial issues, and social and cultural matters.

9. (d)

China has been hit by devastating floods in recently inundating cities and causing deaths and infrastructural damage, as well as raising questions about the effectiveness of its **2015 “sponge city” initiative** aimed at reducing urban flood risks.

Why was the “sponge city” initiative Launched?

- China has long sought to improve the way it handles extreme weather, and make highly populated cities less vulnerable to flooding and drought.

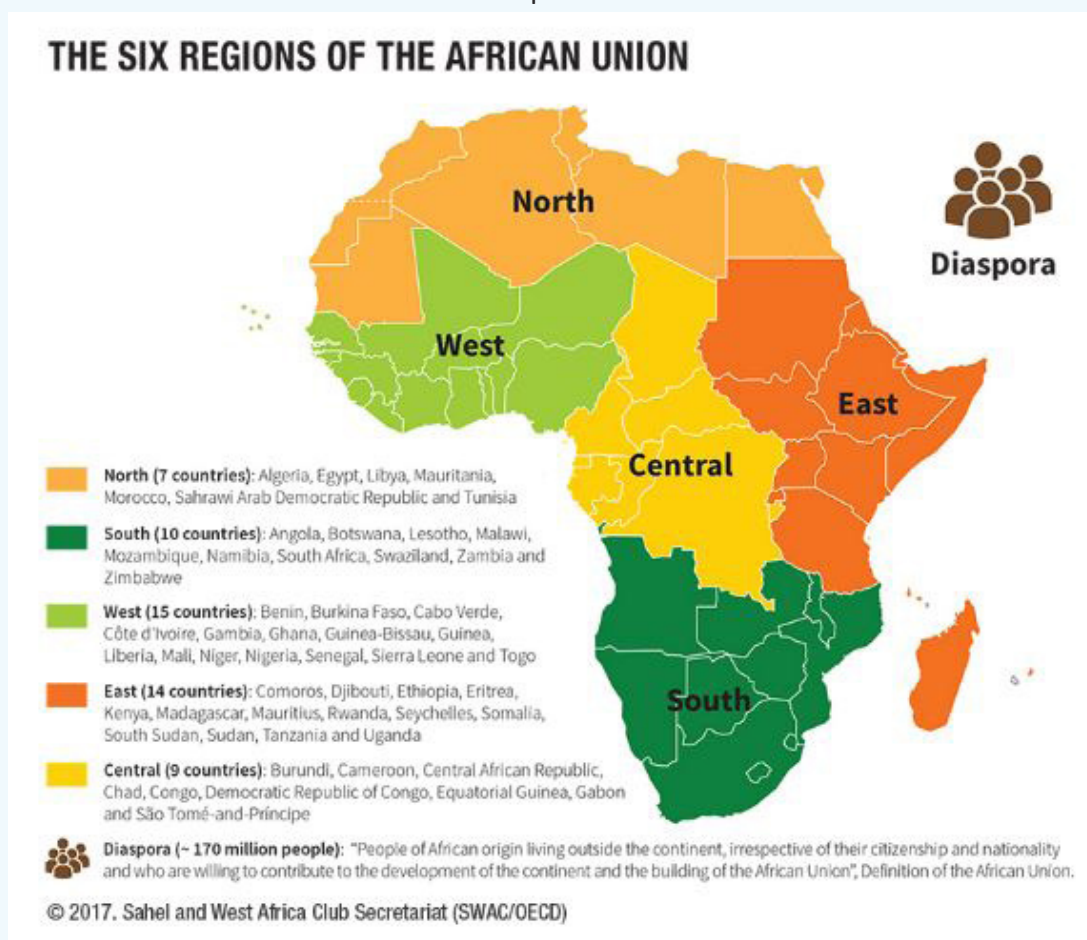
A sponge city is a city that is designed to passively absorb, clean and use rainfall in an ecologically friendly way that reduces dangerous and polluted runoff. Instead of funnelling rainwater away, a sponge city retains it for use within its own boundaries.

10. (c)

Both statements 1 and 2 are correct:

About African Union

- The African Union (AU) is a **continental body** consisting of the **55 member states** that make up the countries of the African Continent.
 - It was officially **launched in 2002** as a successor to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU, 1963-1999).
 - AU Member States are divided into **five geographic regions** which were defined by the OAU in 1976.
- The African Union was established to **promote the unity and solidarity of African countries**, defend state sovereignty, eradicate colonialism, promote international cooperation, and coordinate and harmonize Member States' policies.



11. (c)

Statement 1 and 3 are correct: The G20 Summit is held annually with a rotating presidency, and in 2023, India holds the presidency.

- The G20 Summit is formally known as the “**Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy**”.

Statement 2 is not correct: The group **does not have a permanent secretariat** and is supported by the previous, current, and future holders of the presidency, known as the **troika**.

12. (b)

Kampala Declaration

- Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment and Climate Change (KDMECC) was co-hosted by the Governments of Kenya and Uganda with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- The declaration aims to address the **nexus of human mobility and climate change** in the continent.
- The Declaration is the first comprehensive, action-oriented framework led by Member States to address **climate-induced mobility** in a **practical and effective manner**.

ECONOMY

1. Consider the following statements regarding Geographical Indication (GI) tag:
1. It is governed by the World Trade Organisation's (WTO's) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
 2. In India, Geographical Indications registration is administered by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.
 3. The first product in India to be accorded with GI tag was Tamil Nadu's famous Cumbum grapes.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 (b) 2 only
(c) 1 and 3 (d) 3 only
2. With reference to the 'Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005', consider the following statements:
1. It aims to enhance livelihood security in urban areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year.
 2. It has the provision of one ombudsperson per district, responsible for registering and disposing complaints.
- 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
3. The term "India Stack" is referred to in which of the following contexts?
- (a) Milk fat production in the country.
 - (b) Commodities taxed under the Goods and Services Tax (GST).
 - (c) India's digital public infrastructure (DPI) ecosystem.
 - (d) India's defence infrastructure.
4. With reference to the Coastal Aquaculture Authority (Amendment) Bill 2023, consider the following statements:
1. Coastal aquaculture is carried out in fresh and brackish water.
 2. The Bill expands the scope of coastal aquaculture to include allied activities such as hatcheries and nucleus breeding centres.
 3. The bill penalises unregistered farms or farms in prohibited areas, with imprisonment up to three years.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None

5. With reference to the Deflation, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. Deflation is a general decline in prices for goods and services during which the purchasing power of currency rises over time.
 2. Deflation benefits consumers and can harm borrowers.
- 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
6. The RBI has recently focused on its stance of 'withdrawal of accommodation'. Which of the following means 'withdrawal of accommodation'?
- (a) The central bank is prepared to expand the money supply to boost economic growth.
 - (b) Reducing the money supply in the system which will rein in inflation further.
 - (c) A point where the economy is running just perfectly — neither high inflation nor faltering GDP growth.
 - (d) None of the above
7. With reference to the Goods and Service Tax (GST) Council, consider the following statements:
1. It consists of the Union Finance Minister and representatives from all States and Union Territories.
 2. It is empowered to levy any special tax rate for a specified period to raise additional resources during any natural calamity or disaster.
- 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
8. With reference to the thermal energy, consider the following statements:
1. It is generated by converting nuclear energy into electricity.
 2. India produces around 75% of electricity through thermal power plants.
- 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
9. With reference to the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS), consider the following statements:
1. It was established after the recommendation of the Mudaliar Committee.
 2. It is an international ship classification society providing certification and technical inspection services.
- 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
10. Regarding Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), consider the following statements:
1. It is the National Mission for Financial Inclusion which was announced in 2016.
 2. It offers free of cost RuPay debit cards with inbuilt accident insurance of Rs 3 lakh.
 3. PMJDY accounts are eligible for Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

11. Regarding Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion ("SANKALP"), consider the following statements:

1. It is a Centrally sponsored scheme with loan assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) .
2. It is a placement linked skill development scheme for rural poor youth under National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM).

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

12. The term 'Network Planning Group (NPG)' sometimes mentioned in the news, in the context of:

- (a) Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Programme
(b) PM Gati Shakti
(c) Digital India
(d) Core Banking Solution

13. Which among the following is the objective of 'Mera Bill Mera Adhikaar' scheme?

- (a) To reduce the medical bills in the public and private hospitals.
(b) To encourage the culture of customers asking for invoices/bills for all purchases.
(c) To reduce the digital divide in the country.
(d) To make the freight transportation more reasonable.

14. The 'G. Padmanabhan Committee', sometimes seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Uniform Civil Code
(b) Defence Policy
(c) Highway Projects in Himalayan Region
(d) Onshoring the Indian Innovation

15. It is an agency of the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry, established in 1991 and is responsible for administering laws regarding foreign trade and foreign investment in India and for the execution of India's import and export Policy. It offers facilitation to exporters in connection with developments in international trade such as WTO Agreements, Rules of Origin etc.

Which of the following bodies has been described above?

- (a) Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)
(b) The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)
(c) Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs
(d) Export Promotion Councils (EPCs)

16. "The Amitabh Kant Committee", recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Revival of Public Sector Banks
(b) Finding ways to boost climate finance in India

- (c) Develop state of the art military infrastructure in the country
- (d) Suggesting ways to revive stalled real estate projects

17. Consider the following statements regarding Consumer Price Index (CPI):

1. It captures the average movement of wholesale prices of goods and is primarily used as a GDP deflator.
2. It is calculated for a fixed list of items including food, housing, apparel, transportation, electronics, medical care, education, etc.

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

18. Which one of the following is correct about the 'Government Producer Scheme'?

- (a) Setting up of one manufacturing unit per district in India.
- (b) Setting up of solar photovoltaic power projects.
- (c) Setting up of biogas plants with viability gap funding.
- (d) Setting up of agricultural mandi in every districts of India.

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

In News: Seven products from across India including four from Rajasthan were given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct : Geographical Indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.

- In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place.
- Geographical Indications are covered as a component of intellectual property rights (IPRs) under the **Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property**.
- At the **International level**, GI is governed by the **World Trade Organisation's (WTO's) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)**.
- In India, Geographical Indications registration is administered by the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999** which came into force with effect from September 2003.

Statement 3 is not correct : The first product in India to be accorded with GI tag was **Darjeeling tea** in the year 2004-05.

2. (b)

'Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005' is a poverty alleviation programme of the Government of India, which provides the legal Right to Work in exchange for money to the citizens of the country.

Statement 1 is not correct: It aims to enhance livelihood security in **rural areas** by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

Statement 2 is correct: According to the MGNREGA, there should be **one ombudsperson per district**, responsible for registering suo-moto complaints and disposing of them within 30 days.

- It has directed State governments to provide the facility to ombudspersons.

3. (c)

India's DPI experiment - "India Stack":

- The remarkable transformation of India's digital landscape has been made possible by pioneering digital public infrastructure (DPI) experiments.
- The **Indian DPI ecosystem envisioned as "India Stack"** has been pivotal in unlocking the power of identity, payments, and data sharing to drive economic growth and foster a more inclusive digital economy.
- Its transformative ability lies in
 - Its potential to be used across multiple use cases,
 - Enabling the creation of novel solutions that drive innovation,
 - Inclusion and competition in the digital realm through its modular layers.

4. (a)

Statement 1 is not correct: Coastal aquaculture includes the farming of marine life such as shrimp, prawn or fish in controlled conditions. **It is carried out in saline and brackish water.**

Statement 2 is correct: The Bill amends the **Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act, 2005.**

- The Act defines coastal aquaculture as farming, under controlled conditions, of: (i) shrimp, (ii) prawn, (iii) fish or (iv) any other aquatic life in saline or brackish water.
- The **Bill expands the scope** of coastal aquaculture to include **allied activities such as hatcheries and nucleus breeding centres.**
- It also **decriminalises certain offences** under it to promote the ease of doing business.

Statement 3 is not correct: Penalties: The 2005 Act penalises unregistered farms or farms in prohibited areas, with imprisonment up to three years and/or a fine of one lakh rupees.

- **The Bill replaces this** and specifies that if coastal aquaculture is carried out illegally: (i) the activity may be suspended, (ii) structure may be removed, (iii) crop may be destroyed, (iv) the registration may be cancelled, and/or (v) a penalty may be imposed.

5. (c)

Both the Statements are correct.

What is Deflation?

- Deflation is a general decline in prices for goods and services, typically associated with a contraction in the supply of money and credit in the economy.
- During deflation, the purchasing power of currency rises over time.

Impact of Deflation

- **Deflation benefits consumers** because they can purchase more goods and services with the same nominal income over time.
- **Deflation can harm borrowers**, who are bound to pay their debts in money that is worth more than the money they borrowed, as well as any financial market participants who invest or speculate on the prospect of rising prices.

6. (a)

What is the 'Withdrawal of accommodative stance'?

- The RBI has focused on its stance of 'withdrawal of accommodation' until all risks to inflation dissipate.
- An accommodative stance means the central bank is prepared to expand the money supply to boost economic growth.

- Withdrawal of accommodation will mean reducing the money supply in the system which will rein in inflation further.

7. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: The GST Council, consisting of the **Union Finance Minister and representatives from all States and Union Territories**, was established to make decisions on various aspects of GST, including tax rates, exemptions, and administrative procedures. It played a crucial role in shaping the GST framework in India.

Statement 2 is correct: The Council is empowered to make recommendations to the Union and the States on the following:

- the taxes, cesses and surcharges levied by the Union, the States and the local bodies which may be subsumed in the goods and services tax;
- model Goods and Services Tax Laws, principles of levy, apportionment of Integrated Goods and Services Tax and the principles that govern the place of supply;
- the threshold limit of turnover below which goods and services may be exempted from goods and services tax;
- **any special rate or rates for a specified period, to raise additional resources during any natural calamity or disaster; etc.**

8. (b)

Thermal Power:

- **Statement 1 is not correct:** Thermal power refers to the energy that is generated by **converting heat into electricity**. It is the process of producing electricity from a primary source of heat by using a **steam turbine**, which drives an **electrical generator**.
- The **primary source of heat** can be obtained from various sources, including burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and natural gas, or through nuclear fission.
- In India, power is generated from **conventional (Thermal, Nuclear & Hydro)** and **renewable sources (Wind, Solar, Biomass etc.)**.
 - However, Major production of Electricity is achieved through **coal thermal power plant** which is **around 75%** of the total power generation. India's total power generation in Dec 2020 stood at 103.66 billion units, according to data realised by the Central Electricity Authority. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

9. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Recognizing the necessity for a leading maritime nation such as India to have its own classification society, the Government of India constituted the **Mudaliar Committee whose recommendation for formation of an Indian classification society** was accepted by the Government of India in 1974.

- Thus, **Indian Register of Shipping was established in March 1975** as a public limited company under the **Indian Companies Act, 1956** with **no share capital, no shareholders and distributing no dividends**.

Statement 2 is correct: Indian Register of Shipping is **an international ship classification society** providing ship classification and certification as well as technical inspection services.

10. (d)

In News : As per the latest reports submitted by banks the total number of Jan Dhan accounts have crossed 50 crore as on 9th August 2023.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : PMJDY was announced by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi in his **Independence Day address on 15th August 2014**

- PMJDY offers multiple advantages to account holders such as a bank account without requirement of minimum balance, **free of cost RuPay debit cards** with **inbuilt accident insurance of Rs. 2 lakh** and overdraft facility of up to Rs. 10,000.

Statement 3 is correct : PMJDY accounts are eligible for **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)**, **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)**, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Atal Pension Yojana (APY), Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Bank (MUDRA) scheme.

11. (d)

In News : The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), in collaboration with Generation India Foundation (GIF) and Amazon Web Services India Private Limited (AWS India) is providing '**cloud**' **skills** training to 1,500 learners and connecting them to employment opportunities, under project **AMBER** (co-funded by MSDE under the **SANKALP programme**).

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : SANKALP is a **Centrally sponsored scheme** of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) with loan assistance from the **World Bank**

- It was launched on 19th January 2018
- It aims to **improve short term skill training qualitatively and quantitatively** through strengthening institutions, bring in better market connectivity and inclusion of marginalised sections of the society.

12. (b)

- Recently, four infrastructure projects, costing more than ₹ 7600 crore, were assessed by the **54th Network Planning Group (NPG) of PM Gati Shakti**, which was chaired by the Special Secretary, Logistics, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
- **PM Gati Shakti** National Master Plan (NMP) is a transformative approach for integrated and holistic planning across concerned Ministries/ Departments.
 - It has a digital component in the form of a GIS based platform which integrates the geospatial data related to the infrastructure in the country and planning portals of various Ministries/ Departments of the Government.

13. (b)

In News

- The Government of India, in association with State Governments, is launching an '**Invoice incentive Scheme**' by the name '**Mera Bill Mera Adhikaar**'.

About

- **Objective:** To encourage the **culture of customers asking for invoices/bills** for all purchases.
- **Aim:** To bring a cultural and behavioural change in the general public to '**Ask for a Bill**' as their **right and entitlement**.

14. (d)

- International Financial Services Centre Authority (IFSCA) forms a committee, under the **chairmanship of G. Padmanabhan** (former executive director, Reserve Bank of India), to '**Onshoring the Indian Innovation to GIFT IFSC**'.
- It focuses on the nuances from regulatory, tax, legal and other perspectives, and to **identify measures to encourage new Fintechs to have a global outlook to set up their commercial presence in GIFT IFSC**.
- **Members:** It comprised representatives from leading Venture Capital funds, Startups, Fintechs, Law firms, Tax firms and other domain experts.

15. (b)

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT):

- It is an agency of the **Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry**, established in 1991 and is responsible for implementing the country's foreign trade policy.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi with 38 regional offices
- The Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) appoints the DGFT.
- It is responsible for **administering laws regarding foreign trade and foreign investment in India** and for the execution of India's import and export Policy.
- It offers **facilitation to exporters** in connection with developments in international trade such as WTO Agreements, Rules of Origin etc.

16. (d)

The Amitabh Kant committee:

- It was tasked by the Government with **suggesting ways to revive stalled real estate projects**.
- The report by the committee acknowledged the financial stress of real estate developers but recommended no direct support.
- The report has essentially suggested that all stakeholders — developers, financiers and land authorities — take "haircuts" to make the stalled projects financially viable.

17. (b)

WPI and CPI inflation rates

- **Consumer Price Index (CPI):**
 - It is an index measuring retail inflation in the economy by collecting the change in prices of most common goods and services used by consumers.
 - CPI is also called a market basket, it is calculated for a fixed list of items including food, housing, apparel, transportation, electronics, medical care, education, etc. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - The base Year for CPI is 2012.
- **The Wholesale Price Index(WPI):**
 - The new series of Wholesale Price Index(WPI) with base 2011-12 is effective from April 2017.
 - WPI captures the average movement of wholesale prices of goods and is primarily used as a GDP deflator. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
 - WPI(2011-12) reckons only basic prices and does not include taxes, rebate/trade discounts, transport and other charges.
 - WPI-based inflation data is put together by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (or DPIIT).

18. (b)

Government Producer Scheme: CPSU Scheme Phase-II

- It is for **setting up 12,000 MW grid-connected Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Power Projects** by the Government Producers with Viability Gap Funding (VGF) support for self-use or use by Government/ Government entities, either directly or through Distribution Companies (DISCOMS).
- **Objectives:** To set up solar PV projects through Government Producers using domestic cells & modules in a WTO-compliant manner to facilitate national energy security and environmental sustainability for Government purposes.
- **Financial assistance:** It can be availed through participation in bids issued by Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI) under this Scheme.

AGRICULTURE

1. Which one of the following institutions in India conduct open market sale of foodgrains?
 - (a) Respective State Governments
 - (b) National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India
 - (c) Ministry of Finance
 - (d) Food Corporation of India
2. Which one of the following contexts is correct about the 'Arka Sasya Poshak Ras'?
 - (a) Micro-nutrient in rice
 - (b) Soilless vegetable production
 - (c) Mixture for immunity booster
 - (d) A super food for TB patient
3. With reference to the Urea Gold, consider the following statements:
 1. It is a kind of urea fortified with Zinc and Magnesium.
 2. It improves the Nitrogen Use Efficiency (NUE) of urea.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
4. With reference to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI)-2023, consider the following statements:
 1. It is jointly prepared by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
 2. It is focused on 'Goal 2' of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations.
 3. More than two-third of the Indian population are not able to afford a healthy diet.How many of the statements given above are correct?
 - (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

The procurement of food grains like wheat and paddy for the central pool happens in Rabi and Kharif marketing seasons **by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State corporations** according to procurement **estimates finalised by the government of India** before the seasons. These purchases happen **as per the Minimum Support Price**.

- **Under the Open Market Sale Scheme, the FCI from time to time sells surplus food grains from the central pool** especially wheat and rice in the open market to traders, bulk consumers, retail chains and so on at predetermined prices.
- The FCI does this **through e-auctions** where open market bidders can buy specified quantities at the prices set at the start of a cycle and revised routinely.

- Usually, **states are also allowed to procure food grains through the OMSS** without participating in the auctions, for their needs beyond what they get from the central pool to distribute to NFSA beneficiaries.

2. (b)

Arka Sasya Poshak Ras is a Liquid Nutrient Formulation for Soilless Vegetable Production

- The liquid nutrient formulation (comprising solutions A & B) is a unique balanced blend of the macro (N, P, K, Ca, Mg and S) and micronutrients (Fe, Mn, Cu, Zn, B and Mo) which are required to support the growth of vegetables grown on cocopeat.
- This nutrient formulation is suitable for most commonly grown vegetables (tomato, chilli, cabbage, zucchini, cucumber, ridge gourd, French bean, peas, cow pea, dolichos etc.) and leafy vegetables (amaranthus, coriander and palak etc.)

3. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct:

- Urea Gold is **a kind of urea which is fortified with sulphur**, having **37% Nitrogen plus 17% Sulphur, while** normal urea contains 46% of a single plant nutrient i.e. Nitrogen.
- It is to deliver **Sulphur** along with **Nitrogen**.
 - Indian soils are deficient in Sulphur, which is needed by oilseeds and pulses, and the country is significantly import dependent in both.

Statement 2 is correct:

- Urea Gold improves **the Nitrogen Use Efficiency (NUE) of urea**.
 - Coating of Sulphur over urea ensures a gradual release of Nitrogen.

4. (c)

The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2023 was released by UN Agencies with the theme '**Urbanisation, agrifood systems transformation, and healthy diets across the rural-urban continuum**'.

Statement 1 is correct:

- It is an annual flagship report jointly prepared by the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**, the **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**, the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**, the **World Food Programme (WFP)** and the **World Health Organization (WHO)**.

Statement 2 is correct:

- The SOFI 2023 provides an update on global progress towards the **targets of ending hunger (SDG Target 2.1)** and **all forms of malnutrition (SDG Target 2.2)** and estimates on the number of people who are unable to afford a healthy diet.

Statement 3 is correct:

Findings: In Context of India

- India is still the lowest among the BRICS nations (including the newly added six countries) and India's neighbours for the cost of a healthy diet.
 - **74% of people in India were not able to afford a healthy diet.**
 - The cost of meals in Mumbai rose by 65% in five years, while salaries/wages rose by just 28%-37%.
 - A diet is considered too expensive if it costs more than 52% of a country's average income.

DEFENCE/INTERNAL SECURITY

1. With reference to Akira ransomware, consider the following statements:
 1. It is a specific type of ransomware designed to encrypt data on infected computers and manipulate filenames.
 2. It forces victimsto pay double ransom for recovery.
 3. It is targeting Windows and Linux-based systems.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
2. With reference to Communication Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CIS-MOA), consider the following statements:
 1. It is signed by the U.S. with its close defence allies.
 2. The US signed the first agreement with Pakistan in 2005 for 50 years.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
3. Consider the following statements regarding the Inter-Services Organisation (Command, Control and Discipline) Bill, 2023:
 1. The bill seeks to empower Commander-in-Chief and Officer-in Command of Inter-Services Organisations (ISOs).
 2. The Bill would also pave the way for greater integration and jointness amongst the three Services.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
4. The term 'Yard 76' sometimes mentioned in the news, in the context of:
 - (a) A device used for measuring land for urban planning.
 - (b) A variety of wheat grown in water-logging region.
 - (c) A new initiative for children to fight against malnutrition.
 - (d) A missile cum ammunition barge.
5. The term 'Suborbital Tech Demonstrator (SorTeD)', recently seen in News is related to which of the following,
 - (a) It's an electron spin model developed to improvise quantum theory in physics.
 - (b) It's a single-stage launch vehicle which carries payloads up to 100 kg to a low Earth orbit (LEO).
 - (c) It is a satellite launched by NASA to orbit the sun.
 - (d) It is a term associated with the testing of nuclear weapons.

6. Select the correct order of the places along India- China border from North to South:
- Depsang Plains-Galawan Valley-Pangong Tso- Demchok
 - Depsang Plains-Pangong Tso-Galawan Valley- Demchok
 - Pangong Tso -Demchok-Depsang Plains-Galawan Valley
 - Pangong Tso -Depsang Plains-Demchok-Galawan Valley
7. Doklam Plateau, often seen in the news , is a tri-junction between which of the following ?
- India, Bangladesh and Bhutan
 - Nepal, India and China
 - Afghanistan, Pakistan and India
 - India, China and Bhutan

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

In News: The Computer Emergency Response Team of India issued an alert for the **ransomware** dubbed “Akira.”

All three statements are correct: Akira ransomware is designed to **encrypt data**, create a **ransomware** note and delete Windows Shadow Volume copies on affected devices.

- The ransomware gets its name due to its ability to **modify file names of all encrypted files by appending them with the “.akira” extension**.
- It is designed to close processes or shut down Windows services that may keep it from encrypting files on the affected system.
 - It uses VPN services, especially when users have not enabled two-factor authentication, to trick users into downloading malicious files.
- Once the ransomware infects a device and steals/encrypts sensitive data, the group behind the attack extorts the victims into paying a ransom, threatening to release the data on their dark web blog if their demands are not met.
- The ransomware, found to target both **Windows and Linux devices**, steals and encrypts data, forcing victims to **pay double ransom for decryption and recovery**.
- In use since March 2023, the ransomware has steadily built up a list of victims, targeting corporate networks in various domains including education, finance, real estate, manufacturing, and consulting.
- The threat actors also steal sensitive corporate data for leverage in their extortion attempts.

2. (a)

In News: Pakistan’s Cabinet has approved the signing of a new security pact with the U.S. which is named as **Communication Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (the CIS-MOA)**.

Statement 1 is correct: CIS-MOA is a foundational agreement that the **U.S. signs** with its **allies and countries** with which it wants to **maintain close military and defence ties**.

- It also provides legal cover to the U.S. Department of Defence for ensuring the sale of military equipment and hardware to other countries.

Statement 2 is not correct : The agreement, first signed between the Joint Staff Headquarters of Pakistan and the U.S. Department of Defence in October 2005 for **15 years, expired in 2020**. The two sides have now renewed that arrangement which covers joint exercises, operations, training, basing and equipment.

3. (c)

ISO Bill 2023:

- The Lok Sabha recently passed the Inter-Services Organisation (Command, Control and Discipline) Bill, 2023.
- The Inter-Services Organisation (Command, Control and Discipline) Bill, 2023 seeks to **empower Commander-in-Chief and Officer-in Command of Inter-Services Organisations (ISOs)** with all **disciplinary and administrative powers** in respect of the personnel serving in or attached to such organisations, a Defence Ministry statement noted. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- As stated by the ministry, the 'ISO Bill-2023' is **essentially an 'enabling Act'** and it **does not propose any change** in the existing Service Acts/Rules/Regulations which are time-tested and have withstood judicial scrutiny over the last six decades or more.
- The Bill **would also pave the way for much greater integration and jointness amongst the three Services.** Hence statement 2 is correct.

4. (d)

Yard 76 (LSAM 8), a second Missile Cum Ammunition (MCA) Barge was delivered to the Indian Navy at Guttenadeevi, East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh.

- It has all major and auxiliary equipment and systems sourced from indigenous manufacturers.

5. (b)

Suborbital Tech Demonstrator (SorTeD) is a single-stage launch vehicle, **Agnibaan**, developed by the private space-tech startup Agnikul Cosmos.

- It will lift off vertically & follow a predetermined trajectory. It can **carry payloads up to 100 kg to a low Earth orbit (LEO) up to 700 km.**

6. (a)



7. (d)

In News The 13th Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the China-Bhutan boundary issues was held recently. Bhutan shares a 477 km-long border with China and among all the contentious places, the key issue is a strategic plateau called **Doklam**.

- **Doklam** is an area comprising a plateau and a valley at the trijunction between **India, Bhutan and China.**
- It is surrounded by the Chumbi Valley of Tibet, Bhutan's Ha Valley and Sikkim.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. With reference to Fuel Cells, consider the following statements:
1. A fuel cell uses the chemical energy of hydrogen or other fuels to cleanly and efficiently produce electricity.
 2. They can provide power for systems as large as a utility power station but not for small systems such as laptops/computers.
- 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
2. With reference to the Liability Convention, consider the following statements:
1. It came into force in 1972 and deals only with damage caused by space objects to other space assets.
 2. The Convention makes the launching country “absolutely liable” to pay compensation for any damage caused by its space object.
 3. The provision of the Convention has resulted in compensation payment only once to the U.S.A by Canada.
- How many statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None
3. LK-99, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
- (a) A nuclear powered submarine leased by Russia to India
(b) Newly discovered exoplanet
(c) Superconductor material at room temperature
(d) A type of Stimulant compound
4. With reference to the Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), consider the following:
1. It can produce low-carbon electricity by tapping the solar energy in battery devices.
 2. The Ministry of Environment and Forest will be the nodal agency for it in 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
5. With reference to the Aditya-L1 mission, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It shall be the first space based Indian mission to study the Sun.
 2. It will be launched by the PSLV-C57.
 3. A satellite placed in the halo orbit around the L1 point has the major advantage of continuously viewing the Sun without any occultation/eclipses.
- 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

6. Consider the following pairs:

Cosmic Event

Description

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Nebulae | Astronomical phenomena with durations of a second to years. |
| 2. Transients | Clouds of gas and dust in interstellar space. |
| 3. Supernova | Initial stage of formation of stars. |

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| (a) Only one pair | (b) Only two pairs |
| (c) All three pairs | (d) None of the pairs |

7. Consider the following statements:

- Only the United States and China have managed successful Moon landings.
- If successful, the landing of Chandrayaan-3 will make India the first country to land on Moon's south pole.
- On the south Pole region of the Moon the terrain and temperature are more hospitable and conducive for a long and sustained operation of instruments.

How many statements given above is/are correct?

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| (a) Only one | (b) Only two |
| (c) All three | (d) None |

8. With reference to 3D Printing which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 3D Printing technique was invented in the 1980s by John McCarthy.
- 3D printers construct the desired object by using the subtractive manufacturing processes.

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 |

9. Consider the following statements regarding Tritium:

- It is a nitrogen atom that has two neutrons in the nucleus and one proton.
- It is only produced artificially in laboratories.
- It is a radioactive element.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| (a) Only one | (b) Only two |
| (c) All three | (d) None |

10. With reference to the India's Lunar Missions, consider the following statements:

- Chandrayaan 1 found that the Moon's interior was dormant and didn't interact with the exosphere.
- Chandrayaan 2 confirmed that the Argon-40 (Ar-40) exists in the lunar exosphere.
- Chandrayaan 3 will measure the lunar quakes near the landing site and study the composition of the Moon's crust and mantle.

How many statements given above are correct?

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| (a) Only one | (b) Only two |
| (c) All three | (d) None |

17. With reference to the Super Blue Moon, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. A super moon happens when the moon is passing through or is close to its perigee, and is also a New moon.
 2. The phenomenon of the Blue Moon can be seen twice every year.
- 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\

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: A fuel cell uses the chemical energy of hydrogen or other fuels to cleanly and efficiently produce electricity.

Statement 2 is not correct: They can provide power for systems as large as a utility power station and as small as a laptop computer.

2. (a)

Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects

- This convention is one of the several international agreements that complement the **Outer Space Treaty**, the overarching framework guiding the **behaviour of countries in space**.
- The **Liability Convention** came into force in **1972** and deals mainly with damage caused by space objects to other space assets, but it also applies to **damage caused by falling objects on earth**. Hence, **Statement 1 is not correct**.
- The Convention makes the **launching country “absolutely liable”** to pay compensation for any damage caused by its space object on the earth or to a flight in air. Hence, **Statement 2 is correct**.
 - The country where the junk falls can stake a claim for compensation if it has been damaged by the falling object.
 - The amount of compensation is to be decided **“in accordance with international law and the principles of justice and equity”**.
- This provision of the Convention has resulted in compensation payment **only once so far** — when **Canada sought damages from the then Soviet Union**, for a satellite with radioactive substance that fell into an uninhabited region in its northern territory in 1978. The Soviet Union is reported to have paid 3 million Canadian dollars. Hence, **Statement 3 is not correct**.

3. (c)

Named after two scientists, Lee and Kim, and the year of its discovery — 1999 — **LK-99 is a compound which is a room-temperature superconductor working at ambient pressure**.

4. (d)

Statement 1 is not correct: SMRs are advanced nuclear reactors that have a power capacity of up to 300 MW(e) per unit, which is about one-third of the generating capacity of traditional nuclear power reactors.

Statement 2 is not correct: SMRs are based on nuclear reaction technology, which will come under the provisions of **Atomic Energy Act, 1962**.

5. (d)

All three statements are correct:

- **Aditya-L1** is the first space-based Indian observatory to study the Sun. It will be launched by the **PSLV-C57**.
- The solar mission will not see the spacecraft actually go to the sun, it will instead create a space observatory at a point from which the sun can be observed even during an eclipse.
- The spacecraft is planned to be placed in a halo orbit around the **Lagrange point 1 (L1)**, around 1.5 million km from the Earth, of the Sun-Earth system.
 - A satellite placed in the **halo orbit around the L1 point** has the major advantage of continuously viewing the Sun without any occultation/eclipses. This will provide a **greater advantage of observing the solar activities** and its effect on space weather in real time.
- It is equipped with seven payloads (instruments) on board with four of them carrying out remote sensing of the Sun and three of them carrying in-situ observation.
- The mission will focus on study of the **Solar upper atmospheric (chromosphere and corona)** dynamics. It will also study the chromospheric and coronal heating, physics of the partially ionized plasma, initiation of the coronal mass ejections, and flares.

6. (d)

None of the pairs are correctly matched.

- Nebulae are **enormous clouds of gas and dust in interstellar space**.
- Transients refer to astronomical phenomena with **durations of fractions of a second to weeks or years**. Typically they are extreme, **short-lived events** associated with the total or partial destruction of an astrophysical object.
- A supernova is **the colossal explosion of a star**. It happens when a star has **reached the end of its life** and explodes in a brilliant burst of light.

7. (a)

Statement 1 is not correct: Only **three countries** have managed successful Moon landings: **the Soviet Union, the United States and China**.

Statement 2 is correct: South Pole of the Moon:

- The lunar south pole is of particular interest to scientists, who believe the permanently shadowed polar craters **may contain frozen water in the rocks** that future explorers could transform into air and rocket fuel.
- Until now, all previous lunar landings have been concentrated within the **equatorial region**, positioned just a few degrees north or south of the lunar equator.
- A previous attempt by India, **Chandrayaan-2**, to land at the south pole in 2019 ended when the spacecraft crashed into the Moon's surface.
- India's **Chandrayaan-3** will also be attempting a **landing on the south pole** on August 23.
 - If India achieves the landing as intended, it will join the coveted list of countries such as Russia, the United States and China to have previously achieved a controlled landing and will be the **first to land on Moon's south pole**.

Statement 3 is not correct: The polar regions of the Moon, however, are a **very different, and difficult**, terrain. Many parts lie in a **completely dark region** where sunlight never reaches, and temperatures can go below 230 degrees Celsius.

- Lack of sunlight and extremely low temperatures create difficulty in the **operation of instruments**.
- In addition, there are large craters all over the place, ranging from a few centimetres in size to those extending to several thousands of kilometres.

8. (d)

Both the statements are not correct.

- India's first 3D printed Post Office was inaugurated in Bengaluru's Cambridge Layout.
- **3D Printing** is a process that uses computer-created design to make three-dimensional objects layer by layer.
- **3D Printing was invented** in the **1980s by Charles W. Hull**.
- 3D printers construct the desired object by using a **layering method**, opposite of the subtractive manufacturing processes.
 - Here layers of a material like plastic, composites or bio-materials are built up to construct objects that range in shape, size, rigidity and color.

9. (a)

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct.

- Tritium (T) is a **hydrogen atom** that has two neutrons in the nucleus and one proton.
- It is **produced naturally in the upper atmosphere when cosmic rays strike nitrogen molecules** in the air. It is also produced during **nuclear weapons explosions**, and as a byproduct in nuclear reactors.
- Tritium is a **radiogenic and radioactive isotope of hydrogen** with a half-life of 12.3 years. **Hence, Statement 3 is correct.**

10. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Moon's interior is dynamic: Findings from Chandrayan 1 also showed that the Moon's interior was **dynamic and interacted with the exosphere**, contrary to the belief that it was dormant.

- The terrain mapping camera found evidence of volcanic vent, lava pond, and lava channels as recent as **100 million years old**, indicating **recent volcanic activity**.
- Measurements of carbon dioxide by the MIP also pointed towards **de-gassing from the surface**. This shows an interaction of the lunar surface with the exosphere even in the absence of impacts by meteors.

Statement 2 is correct: Distribution of gas in lunar atmosphere: Chandrayaan 2 confirmed that the **Argon-40 (Ar-40)** exists in the lunar exosphere but the knowledge of its distribution at higher latitudes was lacking. The findings were crucial for developing **insights into the dynamics of the lunar exosphere**.

Statement 3 is correct: Mission experiments of Chandrayaan 3. The lander has **four experiments on board**.

- Study of the **electrons and ions near** the surface of the moon and how they change over time.
- The **thermal properties of the lunar surface near the polar region**. Chandrayaan-3 has landed around 70 degree south latitude, the closest that any spacecraft has reached to the lunar south pole.
- To **measure the lunar quakes** near the landing site and study the composition of the **Moon's crust and mantle**.
- The LASER Retroreflector Array (LRA) is a passive experiment sent by NASA that acts as a target for lasers for very accurate **measurements for future missions**.

11. (b)

Phases of soft landing, the 15 minutes of terror:

- **The Rough Braking Phase:** It includes reducing the lander's horizontal speed from a range of 1.68 km/sec at a height of 30 km from the lunar surface, **to almost zero for a soft landing** at the designated site.

- **Attitude Hold Phase:** At a height of 7.42 km from the surface, the lander is to go into an ‘attitude hold phase’ lasting around 10 seconds, during which it should tilt from a horizontal to a vertical position while covering a distance of 3.48 km.
- The “fine braking phase” lasts around 175 seconds, during which the lander is to move fully into a vertical position.
- “Terminal descent” is the final stage, when the spacecraft is supposed to descend totally vertically onto the surface.

12. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct and 2 is correct: Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) primarily aimed to solve the biggest limitations of PSLV:

- It can deliver a payload of about **1,750 kg to a lower Earth orbit**, up to an altitude of 600 km from the Earth’s surface; and it can go a few hundred kilometers higher in **Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO)**, though only with a reduced payload.
 - The latest configuration of GSLV with a cryogenic engine can put a payload of up to 2500 kilograms in the Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO).
 - GSLVs use **cryogenic engines** — they consist of liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen — that provide far greater thrust than the engines used in the older launch vehicles.

13. (a)

Statement 1 is correct and 2 is not correct.

- **Sodium-ion batteries** generate electricity through a chemical reaction and are made up of an **anode, cathode, separator and an electrolyte**.
- In a sodium-ion battery, lithium ions are replaced with **sodium ions** in the battery’s cathode, and **lithium salts** swapped for sodium salts in the electrolyte.
- **Sodium-ion batteries are affordable** as the materials used in sodium-ion batteries tend to be cheaper than those in lithium-ion batteries. It doesn’t use the expensive raw materials like cobalt, copper, lithium and graphite. Including potentially lower cost due to the abundance of sodium, which could make them more affordable than lithium-ion batteries.
- **Sodium-ion batteries have lower energy density:** They store less energy per unit of weight or volume.

14. (b)

Online content found across the Internet, such as social media posts, news articles, Wikipedia, e-books, **form a significant part of the dataset used to train ChatGPT.**

- This data is **put together by scraping it off the Internet**. The ‘**crawlers**’ are used to scan web pages, hoover up content and put it together in a dataset that can be used to train their **Large Language Models (LLMs)**.

Statement 1 is correct:

- OpenAI calls it ‘**web crawlers**’ because crawling is the term for **automatically accessing a website and obtaining data using software**.

Statement 2 is not correct:

- **GPTBot** is OpenAI’s web crawler that is being used to collect massive amounts of data from the internet to train ChatGPT that **can improve future artificial intelligence models like GPT-4 and the future GPT-5**.

Statement 3 is correct:

- Allowing GPTBot to access the site can help **AI models become more accurate** and improve their general capabilities and safety.
- OpenAI also provided instructions on disabling the GPTBot from accessing a website – either partially or fully.

15. (c)

Both statements 1 and 2 are correct

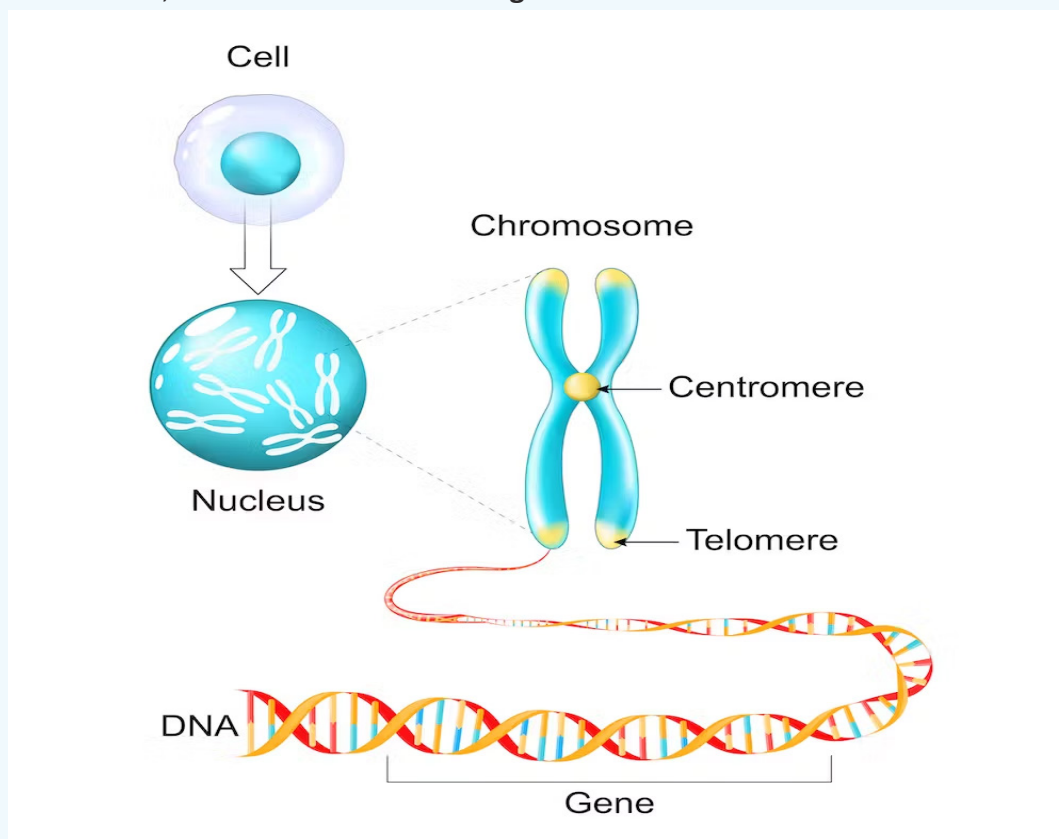
- The ChaSTE (Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment) by ISRO, **examines the temperature profile of the lunar topsoil near the south pole.**
- ChaSTE is a temperature probe that can be driven into the moon's surface using a motor to a depth of up to 10 cm. It has 10 sensors
- It was created by a group led by the **Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad, and the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre's Space Physics Laboratory (VSSC).**

16. (a)

Statement 1 is correct and 2 is incorrect.

What is a chromosome?

- **Chromosomes are thread-like structures** located inside the nucleus of cells. Each chromosome is made of protein and a single molecule of **deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA)**.
- Passed from parents to offspring, DNA contains the specific instructions that make each type of living creature unique.
- Human cells have **23 pairs of chromosomes** (22 pairs of autosomes and one pair of sex chromosomes), giving a total of 46 per cell.
- **sex chromosomes** determine birth sex in humans and other mammals. Females have a **pair of X chromosomes**, whereas males have a **single X and a Y chromosome**.



17. (d)

Both the Statements are not correct. The phenomenon of a “blue moon” and a “super moon” was witnessed on 30 August 2023.

What is a Supermoon?

- A super moon happens when the moon is passing through or is close to its **perigee**, and is also a **full moon**.
- **A full moon occurs** when the moon is directly opposite the sun (as seen from earth), and therefore, has its entire day side lit up.

What is a blue moon?

- A blue moon is the situation when a **full moon is seen twice in a single month**.
- Because the new moon to new moon cycle lasts **29.5 days**, a time comes when the full moon occurs at the beginning of a month, and there are days left still for another full cycle to be completed.
- For example if the full moon is seen on the 1st or 2nd, there will be a second full moon on the 30th or 31st and this happens **every two or three years**.

HEALTH

1. Which one of the following statements is correct about the MPOWER measures of WHO?
 - (a) These are the prescriptive guidelines issued to curb the spread of Dengue and Malaria.
 - (b) They talk about achieving the target of an AIDS-free world by 2025.
 - (c) They aim to monitor tobacco use and protect people from tobacco smoke.
 - (d) They are related to empowering women in the health profession.
2. Consider the following international conventions:
 1. The Conventions on Psychotropic Substances.
 2. The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.
 3. The United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs.How many of the above have been signed and ratified by India?
 - (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
3. Consider the following statements:
 1. The Pharmacy education and profession in India upto graduate level is governed by the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.
 2. Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) is a statutory body under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
 3. PCI prescribes the minimum standard of education required for qualifying as a pharmacist and frame pharmacy education regulations in India.How many of the statements given above are correct?
 - (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
4. Which one of the following statements best describes the 'Havana Syndrome'?
 - (a) It is a genetic condition where there's an extra X chromosome present in a male's genetic code.
 - (b) It is a condition that affects only females, resulting when one of the X chromosomes (sex chromosomes) is missing or partially missing.
 - (c) It is a set of mental health symptoms which causes hearing certain sounds without any outside noise, nausea, vertigo and headaches, memory loss and balance issues.
 - (d) It is a rare disorder in which your body's immune system attacks your nerves.
5. With reference to the Drug Technical Advisory Board (DTAB), consider the following statements:
 1. It is a statutory body on technical matters related to drugs in India.
 2. It is part of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO).

3. It functions under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None

6. Conjunctivitis is an inflammation of the conjunctiva. Which of the following statements is true about the conjunctiva?

- (a) It is a thin layer of tissue that covers the optic nerve.
(b) It is a transparent membrane that lines the eyelid and eyeball.
(c) It is a lining on the passage of the tear duct.
(d) It is a transparent membrane that lines the pupil and iris.

7. With reference to the National Medical Commission, consider the following statements:

1. It has been constituted by an act of Parliament known as National Medical Commission Act, 2019.
2. One of the aims is to improve access to quality and affordable medical education.

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

8. European Union's One health approach is related to which of the following?

- (a) Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) (b) Postnatal care
(c) Nutritional intervention (d) Vaccine testing methods

9. What is Candida Auris, sometimes seen in the news?

- (a) An Invasive Species of plant (b) A type of fungus
(c) Newly discovered Satellite (d) A disease caused by virus

10. With reference to the Tuberculosis (TB), consider the following statements :

1. TB is caused by a bacterium called Pseudomonas bacteriae.
2. TB is spread from person to person through the air.
3. Most people who develop the disease are adults.

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

11. With reference to the African Swine Fever, consider the following statements:

1. It is a threat to human health, able to transmit from pigs to humans.
2. It originated in the United States and then spread to other countries.

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

12. Consider the following diseases:

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Bubonic Plague | 2. Spanish flu or Influenza |
| 3. HIV/AIDS | 4. Malaria |
| 5. Cancer | 6. Tuberculosis (TB) |

Which of the above are part of the Global Fund Programme?

- (a) 3, 4, 5 and 6 only (b) 3, 4 and 6 only
(c) 1, 2, 3 and 6 only (d) 1, 3, 4 and 6 only

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

WHO had developed the MPOWER measures for **tobacco control**.

- **Monitor** tobacco use and prevention policies;
- **Protect** people from tobacco smoke;
- **Offer** help to quit tobacco;
- **Warn** about dangers of tobacco;
- **Enforce** bans on tobacco advertising; and
- **Raise** taxes on tobacco products.

2. (c)

India is a signatory to all the conventions:

- The United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961,
- The Conventions on Psychotropic Substances, 1971, and
- The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988.

These international conventions are ratified by India broadly in the three Central Acts:

- The Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940,
- The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, and
- The Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1988.

3. (a)

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct

- The Pharmacy education and profession in India upto graduate level is **regulated by the Pharmacy Council of India (PCI)**, a body governed by the provisions of the **Pharmacy Act, 1948**.
- Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) is a statutory body **under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.

Statement 3 is correct: Functions of PCI: To prescribe the **minimum standard of education required for qualifying as a pharmacist**.

- **Framing of Education Regulations** prescribing the conditions to be fulfilled by the institutions seeking approval of the PCI for imparting education in pharmacy.
- To approve the course of study or withdraw approval.
- To approve qualifications granted outside the territories to which the Pharmacy Act extends i.e. the approval of foreign qualification.
- To maintain the Central Register of Pharmacists.

4. (c)

What is Havana Syndrome?

- **Havana Syndrome** refers to a set of **mental health symptoms** that are said to be experienced by United States intelligence and embassy officials in various countries. The word 'syndrome' simply means a set of symptoms.

- **Symptoms:** Hearing certain sounds without any outside noise, nausea, vertigo and headaches, memory loss and balance issues.
- **Origin:** It traces its roots to **Cuba in late 2016** when the US opened its embassy in the capital city Havana. Some US intelligence officials and members of the staff at the embassy began experiencing sudden bursts of pressure in their brains followed by persistent headaches, feelings of disorientation and insomnia.

Other syndromes

- **Klinefelter syndrome (KS)** is a genetic condition where there's an extra X chromosome present in a male's genetic code.
- **Turner syndrome**, a condition that affects only females, results when one of the X chromosomes (sex chromosomes) is missing or partially missing.
- **Guillain-Barre syndrome** is a rare disorder in which your body's immune system attacks your nerves.

5. (b)

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Drug Technical Advisory Board (DTAB) is a **statutory** and highest decision making body established **as per the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It is **part of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)**, and advises the Central and State Governments on technical matters related to drugs in India.
- **Statement 3 is not correct:** It functioned under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, Government of India.

6. (b)

The conjunctiva is a transparent mucous membrane that **lines both the inner surface of the eyelids and the anterior surface of the eyeball** (except the cornea).

- It allows the eyelid to move smoothly and freely over the eye, keeping it moist and protecting it from contact injury.

7. (c)

Both statement 1 and 2 are correct:

About National Medical Commission

- It has been constituted by an act of Parliament known as **National Medical Commission Act, 2019** which came into force in 2020.
- Medical Council of India constituted under section 3A of the **Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 stands dissolved thereafter**.
- The **Aim** of the National Medical Commission are to:
 - **improve access to quality and affordable medical education,**
 - ensure availability of adequate and high quality medical professionals in all parts of the country;
 - promote equitable and universal healthcare that encourages community health perspective and makes services of medical professionals accessible to all the citizens;
 - encourages medical professionals to adopt latest medical research in their work and to contribute to research;
 - objectively assess medical institutions periodically in a transparent manner;
 - maintain a medical register for India;
 - enforce high ethical standards in all aspects of medical services;
 - have an effective grievance redressal mechanism.

8. (a)

One Health approach

- The Council of the European Union (EU) adopted a set of recommendations to strengthen action against antimicrobial resistance (AMR).
- **Combating AMR in a One Health approach:** The commission submitted the proposal for a recommendation on stepping up EU actions to combat AMR in a **One Health approach**.
 - These recommendations were part of a proposal submitted by the **European Commission** to the European Council.
- **Focussing on the health of humans, animals and the environment:**
 - It recommended the prudent use of antimicrobials such as antibiotics in **human and animal health** for **reducing the risk of microorganisms** becoming resistant to medical intervention.
 - The approach was adopted because the health of humans, animals and the environment is intrinsically linked.
 - AMR can only be overcome through joint efforts across all three areas.

9. (b)

Recently, cases of Candida Auris infection have increased in the United States.

- It is a **type of fungus** that can cause severe illness and spreads easily. It is often resistant to antifungal treatments.
- **Its mortality rate was estimated at 30% to 60%, according to the CDC (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention).**

10. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: TB is **caused by a bacterium** called **Mycobacterium tuberculosis**. In humans, TB most commonly affects the lungs (pulmonary TB), but it can also affect other organs (extra-pulmonary TB).

Statements 2 and 3 are correct: TB is **spread from person to person through the air**. Its common symptoms are cough with sputum and blood at times, chest pains, weakness, weight loss, fever and night sweats.

- **Most people who develop the disease are adults.** In 2021, men accounted for 56.5% of the TB burden, adult women (32.5%) and children (11%).

11. (d)

Statement 1 is not correct:

African Swine Fever (ASF):

- It is a highly contagious and deadly viral disease affecting both domestic and feral swine of all ages.
- **ASF is not a threat to human health** and cannot be transmitted from pigs to humans.

Statement 2 is not correct:

- **Region:** ASF is **endemic in sub-Saharan Africa**, where the disease was initially discovered.
 - It has spread to the Dominican Republic and Haiti and also spread through China, Mongolia and Vietnam, as well as within parts of the European Union. **It has never been found in the United States.**

12. (b)

The Global Fund: The Global Fund is a partnership set up in 2002 **to battle AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria**, as an act of extraordinary global solidarity and leadership.

- **In 2017**, the Global Fund, along with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and other partners secured licensing agreements ensuring that **TLD could be made available in low and middle-income countries for up to \$75 per person per year** at the time an unprecedented pricing level.
- The improved pricing — a 25% reduction— allows resource-limited governments to expand access to critical HIV services.
 - It can **expand treatment programmes and invest more in prevention**, saving more lives and reducing new infections.

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. With reference to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), consider the following statements:
 1. It was set up by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature.
 2. It undertakes its own scientific study to serve as the foundation for global climate action.
 3. It is governed by 195 member states and its secretariat is in Geneva, Switzerland.How many statements given above are correct?
 - (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
2. Consider the following statements:
 1. Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was adopted during the COP 15 of the UN Convention on Biodiversity.
 2. The Global Environment Facility was established by the 1992 Rio Earth Summit.Which of the above given statements is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. With reference to the Himalayan Vultures, consider the following statements:
 1. It is categorized as Critically Endangered in IUCN Red List.
 2. Aceclofenac is the main cause of a dramatic decline of the vulture population across Asia.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
4. Consider the following statements regarding Manas National Park and Tiger Reserve:
 1. It is situated in Arunachal Pradesh.
 2. The Teesta River flows through it.
 3. It is one of the first reserves included in the tiger reserve network under Project Tiger.
 4. It is designated as a UNESCO's World Heritage site.Which of the statements given above are correct?
 - (a) 1, 2 and 3 Only
 - (b) 1, 3 and 4 Only
 - (c) 2 and 3 Only
 - (d) 3 and 4 Only
5. It is a wild cat inhabiting forest habitat, its long canine teeth resembles the Ice Age saber tooth tigers. While more closely related to big cats, it acts as a bridge between big and small cats due to its smaller stature.

Which of the following species has been described above?

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| (a) Jaguar | (b) Snow Leopard |
| (c) Indian Leopard | (d) Clouded Leopard |

6. Consider the following pairs:

Birds

IUCN Red list status

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Manipur Bush Quail | Endangered |
| 2. Himalayan Quail | Vulnerable |
| 3. Lerdon's Courser | Critically Endangered |

How many pairs given above are correctly matched ?

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| (a) Only one pair | (b) Only two pairs |
| (c) All three pairs | (d) None of the pairs |

7. With reference to Indian eagle-owl, consider the following statements:

1. It is also called the rock eagle-owl or Bengal eagle-owl.
2. It is a diurnal species usually seen in pairs.
3. It is listed as vulnerable in the IUCN Red list of threatened species.

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 |

8. Which one of the following Ministries is responsible for implementation of 'Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana'?

- (a) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- (b) Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas
- (c) Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
- (d) Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

9. With reference to the Bura Chapori Wildlife Sanctuary, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is located on the bank of the Brahmaputra river in Arunachal Pradesh.
2. The sanctuary is the home to Bengal Florican.

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 |

10. With reference to Banteng, consider the following statements:

1. It is a type of wild cattle native to North America.
2. It has been listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as vulnerable species.

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 |

11. With reference to *Tachymenoides harrissonfordi* which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a species of frog recently discovered in Eastern Ghat.

2. It has yellowish-brown skin with scattered black blotches, a black belly and a vertical streak over its copper-colored eye.

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

12. Consider the following statements regarding the World Water Week 2023:

1. It is an annual event organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
2. The 2023 edition of the event is held with the theme, "Saving Water as a Global Good".

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

13. Which among the following are the impacts of Marine Heat Waves (MHWs)?

1. High Availability of Oxygen in the Marine Environment.
2. Increase in the number of Algal Blooms.
3. Large number of Jellyfishes.

Choose 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

14. Which of the following organisms are used to estimate the minimum post mortem interval (PMImin) for human corpses?

- (a) Butterflies (b) Dragonflies
(c) Blow flies (d) Wasps

15. In which one of the following states is Hollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary located?

- (a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Meghalaya
(c) Assam (d) Manipur

16. With reference to the recently amended Forest Conservation Act of 1980, consider the following statements:

1. It has changed the name of Act to the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam.
2. Forest clearances are no longer required for security-related projects in forests within 100 km of international borders.
3. It talks about the need for forests to achieve the country's carbon neutral status by 2070.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None

17. Consider the following pairs:

<i>Species</i>	<i>IUCN Red List Status</i>
1. White-Bellied Sea Eagles	Vulnerable
2. Peregrine Falcon	Least Concern
3. Red Sand Boa	Near Threatened

How many pairs given above are correctly matched ?

- (a) Only one pair (b) Only two pairs
(c) All three pairs (d) None of the pairs

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

Statement 1 and 2 are not correct: IPCC was set up by the **World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1988.**

- It is a scientific organization whose periodic evaluations of climate serve as the foundation for global climate action. It provides a Synthesis report, which incorporates the conclusions of the five reports it has produced in the sixth assessment cycle since 2018.
- The IPCC **does not undertake its own scientific study**; instead, it requests that other experts perform their own studies on climate change.

Statement 3 is correct: It is governed by 195 member states and its **secretariat is in Geneva, Switzerland.**

2. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)

- It was adopted during the **COP 15 of the UN Convention on Biodiversity** in 2022.
- The Framework **supports the achievement of the SDGs**, and sets out an ambitious pathway to reach the global vision of a world living in harmony with nature by 2050 through **4 goals and 23 targets**.
 - Enhanced integrity of all ecosystems;
 - Valuing, maintaining or enhancing Nature's contributions to people through conservation and sustainable use;
 - Fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the utilization of genetic resources; and
 - Closing the gap between available financial and other means of implementation, and those necessary to achieve the 2050 Vision.
- In adopting the framework, all Parties committed to **setting national targets to implement it.**

Statement 2 is correct: Global Environment Facility

- It was established on the eve of the **1992 Rio Earth Summit**. Through its investments, the GEF works with partners to tackle the planet's biggest environmental issues.
- It is a **unique partnership of 18 agencies** — including United Nations agencies, multilateral development banks, national entities and international NGOs.
- It is a **financial mechanism for five major international environmental conventions**:
 - The Minamata Convention on Mercury,
 - The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs),
 - The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD),
 - The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and
 - The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- The **GEF Trust Fund** was established to help tackle our planet's most pressing environmental problems. Funds are available to developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

3. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Himalayan Vultures are vultures with stout bills, loosely feathered ruff, long wings, and a short tail.

- It is the largest of the *Gyps* species, averaging larger in every method of measurement than its relatives, and is perhaps the largest and heaviest bird in the Himalayas.

- They are categorized as **Near Threatened** in IUCN Red List.

Statement 2 is correct: Aceclofenac — an anti-inflammatory drug — was banned for veterinary use by the Government of India in 2006. It was found to be the **main cause of a dramatic decline** of the vulture population across Asia. The drug caused accidental poisoning in raptors after they fed on carcasses of cattle injected with it.

4. (d)

In News: It has been observed that Manas National Park and Tiger Reserve is almost 63% short of staff.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : **Manas National Park and Tiger Reserve** is situated in **Assam**.

- It is contiguous with the Royal Manas National Park in Bhutan.
- Manas National park is located at Himalayan foothills where it has a unique biodiversity and scenic landscapes.
- **Manas river** flows through the park with a unique blending of dense jungles and grass-land.

Statements 3 and 4 are correct : **Manas** is one of the first reserves included in the tiger reserve network under project tiger in 1973.

- It was declared as a National park in 1990.
- It is included as a site of **international importance under UNESCO's world heritage convention** as well as Biosphere Reserve.

5. (d)

Clouded leopard (Neofelis nebulosa) is a wild cat inhabiting forest habitat. It has large, **dexterous paws with specialized footpads and ankle bones** for gripping branches which allow varied positions for climbing, including climbing headfirst down trees.

- Another distinctive feature is its **long canine teeth**, resembling Ice Age saber tooth tigers. These canines are longer in proportion to skull size than those of any other species of wild cat.
- While more closely related to big cats, the clouded leopard is frequently described as **bridging the gap between big and small cats** due to its smaller stature.
- It has proportionately **short legs and a long tail**. The coat is brown or yellowish-gray and covered with irregular dark stripes, spots and blotches.



6. (b)

In News : The publication, titled 75 Endemic Birds of India, was recently released on the 108th foundation day of the ZSI. India is home to 1,353 bird species, which represents approximately **12.40% of global bird diversity**.

- Of these 1,353 bird species, 78 (5%) are **endemic** to the country and are not reported in other parts of the world. Of the 78 species, three species have not been recorded in the last few decades. They are

- the **Manipur Bush Quail** (*Perdicula manipurensis*), listed as '**Endangered**' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species with its last recorded sighting in 1907;
- the **Himalayan Quail** (*Ophrysia superciliosa*), listed as '**Critically Endangered**' with its last recorded sighting in 1876; and
- the **Jerdon's Courser** (*Rhinoptilus bitorquatus*), listed as '**Critically Endangered**' with its last confirmed sighting in 2009.

7. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: Scientific Name: *Bubo bengalensis*

- It is also called the **rock eagle-owl or Bengal eagle-owl**, it is a large horned owl species native to **hilly and rocky scrub forests** in the Indian Subcontinent.
- It was earlier treated as a subspecies of the Eurasian eagle-owl.

Statement 2 and 3 are not correct: Behaviour: It is a **nocturnal species** usually seen in pairs. It has a deep resonant booming call that may be heard at dawn and dusk.

- **Hunting:** They primarily hunt rats and mice, but will also take birds up to the size of peafowl.
- **Habitat & Distribution:** They are seen in scrub and light to medium forests but are especially seen near rocky places within the mainland of the Indian Subcontinent south of the Himalayas and below 1,500 m (4,900 ft) elevation.
 - Humid evergreen forest and extremely arid areas are avoided.
- **IUCN Status:** Least Concern.

8. (b)

Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana is aim to facilitate production of ethanol, Government had notified the "**Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN (Jaiv Indhan - Vatavaran Anukool Fasal Awashesh Nivaran) Yojana**" for providing financial support for **setting up Second Generation (2G) ethanol projects** in the country **using lignocellulosic biomass and other renewable feedstock**.

- The Project developers interested in availing benefits of the scheme, shall be submitting their proposal for review by the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) of **Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoP&NG)**.

9. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct and statement 2 is correct.

- Bura Chapori Wildlife Sanctuary is geographically located on the **south bank of the Brahmaputra river in Assam**.
- It comprises a mosaic of wet alluvial grassland, riparian and semi-evergreen forests dotted by wetland and river systems.
- This sanctuary covers an area of 44.06 sq. km. and is home to the Great Indian one-horned rhinoceros, tiger, **Bengal Florican**, Black-necked Stork, Mallard, Open billed Stork, Teal, and Whistling Duck

10. (d)

In News : According to a study, Lumpy Skin Disease Virus (LSDV) was first detected in Cambodia in a banteng .

Both the Statements are not correct : Banteng is a type of wild cattle native to **Southeast Asia**.

- The most significant known Banteng populations remaining are in Java, Cambodia and perhaps Thailand and Borneo (Sabah, Malaysia).
- **IUCN Red List status : Endangered**

11. (b)**Statement 1 is not correct and 2 is correct.**

- Researchers have named a recently discovered species of snake after actor Harrison Ford.
- The snake was discovered in May 2022 by a team of researchers from the **Otishi National Park area in Peru's Andes**.
- The snake measures **16 inches** (40.6 centimeters) **in length** and is **yellowish-brown** with scattered **black blotches**, a **black belly** and a vertical streak over its **copper-colored eye**.

**12. (d)****Both the statements are incorrect.****About World Water Week**

- It is a global event organised by **the Stockholm International Water Institute** every year since 1991. It serves as a platform for experts, policymakers, and organizations to discuss and collaborate on global water issues.
- The 2023 edition of the world water week is held in the **Waterfront Congress centre, Stockholm** with the theme, **"Seeds of Change: Innovative Solutions for a Water-Wise World"**.

13. (b)

A Marine Heat Wave (MHWs) is an extreme weather event. It occurs when the surface temperature of a particular region of the **sea rises to 3 or 4 degree Celsius above the average temperature for at least five days**. MHWs can last for weeks, months or even years.

Impact

- **Less availability of Oxygen:** Gases like oxygen and carbon dioxide dissolve better at colder temperatures, so that means the warmer the water, **the less oxygen is available to breathe. Hence, Statement 1 is not correct**
 - Conversely, higher temperatures also cause an increase in metabolism, which in turn means animals have to breathe even more than usual.
- **Statement 2 is correct: Algal Blooms:** Algal blooms are more common in hot waters. It can **deplete oxygen levels** and produce toxins harmful for fish, marine mammals and birds, for instance.
- Scientists observed **mass deaths of benthic species** along thousands of kilometers of Mediterranean coastline between 2015 and 2019.
 - Benthics like soft corals, seaweed and seagrasses provide some of the main ocean habitats.
 - Many benthic species are crucial to the marine ecosystem. They filter the water and keep seas, rivers and lakes clean by eating dead organisms.

- Some species are an important food source for other creatures or are harvested by humans.
- **Statement 3 is correct: Thriving Jellyfish:** Because of higher temperatures, as well as nutrient run-off from farms and sewage, the number of jellyfishes are increasing.
- When currents push the animals together, the Mediterranean turns into a crowded jellyfish hotspot.

14. (c)

IN NEWS: A study indicates the importance of Blow flies, in accurate assessment of post-mortem intervals.

- The **Calliphoridae** are a family of insects in the order **Diptera**, with almost 1,900 known species.
- **Characteristics:** They are **metallic blue, green, or black** in color and are noisy in flight. With an average size of **8–10 mm**, they are slightly larger than house flies but resemble them in habits.

Forensic importance of Blow flies

- **Blow flies** are usually the first insects to come in contact with carrion because they have the ability to smell dead animal matter from up to **1.6 km away**.
- Upon reaching the carrion, females deposit eggs on it. Since development is highly predictable if the ambient temperature is known, blow flies are considered a **valuable tool in forensic science**.
- Blow flies are used to **estimate the minimum post mortem interval (PMImin) for human corpses**.

15. (c)

IN NEWS: Primatologists have suggested rerouting a 1.65-km-long railway track that has divided an eastern Assam sanctuary dedicated to the western hoolock gibbon.

Hollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary

- **Location:** Jorhat district of Assam
- **Flora:** The Hollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary is classified as “**Assam plains alluvial semi-evergreen forests**” with some wet evergreen forest patches. The **Bhogdoi River** creates a waterlogged region dominated by semi-hydrophytic plants along the border of the sanctuary.
- **Fauna:** It houses about **125 hoolock gibbons**. It also shelters six other primate species — the Assamese macaque, the Bengal slow loris, the capped langur, the northern pig-tailed macaque, the rhesus macaque, and the stump-tailed macaque.

16. (c)

All the statements are correct:

Amendment in Forest Conservation Act. 1980

- The name has been changed to the **Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, which translates to the Forest (Conservation and Augmentation) Act**.
- A **preamble has been added** which talks about the need for forests to achieve the country's carbon neutral status by 2070.
- The Act is **applicable only to land** that has been recorded by the government as forests as on or after October 25, 1980.
- Forest **clearances are no longer required for security-related projects** in forests within 100 km of international borders, which leaves the majority of the biodiversity-rich Northeast vulnerable.
- In **non-border areas**, land up to 10 ha (five ha in areas affected by left-wing extremism) can be used for defence-related projects, and public utility projects.

- The Act has also **exempted non-forest activities** such as agro-forestry plantations, zoos, safari parks and ecotourism **from taking environmental clearances**.

17. (b)

White-Bellied Sea Eagles are categorised as being of '**least concern**' on the Red List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature. **(Incorrectly Matched)**

- Peregrine Falcon (**IUCN Red list status : Least Concern**) - **correctly matched**
- Red Sand Boa (**IUCN Red List Status : Near Threatened**)- **correctly matched**

MISCELLANEOUS

1. With reference to World University Games, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is the largest global sports event for student-athletes.
 2. It is organised by World Athletics every year .
 3. India has been participating in it since the inaugural edition.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 and 2 Only (b) 2 Only
(c) 1 and 3 Only (d) 3 Only
2. With reference to the Helicopter subsidy scheme, consider the following statements:
1. It is administered by the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
 2. It aims to provide evacuation during natural calamities and for urgent medical evacuation.
 3. Government bears the 40% expenditure cost of the operation.
- How many statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None
3. Consider the following statements regarding the Indian Institutes of Management (Amendment) Bill, 2023:
1. It designates the President of India as a Visitor of every Institute covered by the Act.
 2. The bill mandates prior approval of the Visitor before removing a Director of the IIM.
 3. The Bill provides the central government to prescribe the conditions and procedure for dissolving an Institute's Board.
- 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
4. Which of the following organizations has recently launched the 'Flood Watch' App to monitor the real-time flood situation in India?
- (a) National Institute of Hydrology
 - (b) Central Water Commission
 - (c) National Disaster Management Authority
 - (d) India Meteorological Department

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

In News : Prime Minister Narendra Modi has congratulated Indian athletes for their incredible performance at the 31st World University Games.

Statements 1 and 3 are correct : . World University Games are the **largest global sports events for student-athletes**.

- This celebration of international university sports and culture draws many thousands of student-athletes together to compete, making it among the world's largest and most prestigious multi-sport events.
- It was formerly known as the **Universiade**, began in 1959 .
 - India has been part of the World University Games since the inaugural edition at Turin in 1959.

Statement 2 is not correct : World University Games organised by **International University Sports Federation(FISU)**.

- The **FISU World University Games** are staged **every two years** in a different city.

2. (a)

Helicopter Services In the North Eastern States:

- **Statement 1 is not correct:** In order to provide connectivity to remote areas of NER, Helicopter subsidy scheme is being administered by **(Ministry of Home Affairs) MHA** in the NE States of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It further aims to provide **affordable passenger transport** in NER, **evacuation during natural calamities and for urgent medical evacuation etc.**
- **Statement 3 is not correct:** MHA bears expenditure of **75% of total cost** of operation after deducting passenger recovery or flat 20% of actual operation cost, whichever is more.
- For the purpose of restricting subsidy, **annual ceiling of flying hours** has been fixed for the helicopter service operating in these States.

3. (d)

Key provisions of IIM (Amendment) Bill, 2023

- **President of India as a Visitor:** It designates the President of India as a Visitor of every Institute covered by the Act. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **Appointments:** The amendment alters the selection process to include the **involvement of the Visitor (President of India)** such that the Visitor nominates the chairperson, and the selection committee for director will consist of one member (out of three) nominated by the Visitor.
- **Termination of Director:** The Board will require prior approval of the Visitor before removing a Director. It also grants the Visitor the authority to terminate the services of the Director, as may be prescribed. The Bill also states the Chairperson of the Board will be nominated by the Visitor. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Inquiries against IIMs:** The Bill proposes a new procedure for inquiries against IIMs. It confers the power of inquiry upon the Visitor.
- **Conditions for dissolving Board:** The Bill provides that the central government may prescribe the conditions and procedure for dissolving or suspending an Institute's Board. If a Board is suspended or dissolved, the central government will constitute an interim board for six months or until a new Board is constituted. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

4. (b)

The **Central Water Commission** launched the **Flood Watch app**, to forecast the chances of floods.

- The app has real-time flood monitoring where users can **check up-to-date flood situations throughout the country**.

- The app uses data from various sources. The app also provides flood forecasts at the nearest location where users can check the flood advisory at the station nearest to them.
- **About Central water Commission (CWC):**
 - It is a leading technical organization in India's water resources sector.
 - **Headquarters:** New Delhi
 - Currently, it serves as an associated office of the Ministry of Jal Shakti within the Indian government's Department of Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation.
 - It is **led by a Chairman** who serves as the Government of India's Ex-Officio Secretary.
 - The Commission is charged with the general duties or purposes of navigation, drinking water supply, flood control, irrigation, and water power development.