

January, 2021

TEST YOURSELF

Daily Current Affairs MCQs

Q.1 With reference to the “Old Monpa Handmade Paper”, seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. It is a heritage hand paper artform of Tawang area of Arunachal Pradesh.
2. The fine-textured Monpa handmade paper will be made from the bark of a local tree called Shugu Sheng.
3. It is used for writing Buddhist scriptures and hymns in monasteries.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News- KVIC Brings Alive 1000-yr Old Monpa Handmade Paper Industry in Tawang to Revive the Heritage Art.

Option D is correct: Recently, the 1000-year old heritage art – the Monpa Handmade Paper of Arunachal Pradesh – which was driven to the extinction, has come to life once again, with the committed efforts of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC). The art of making Monpa handmade paper originated over 1000 years ago. Gradually the art became an integral part of local custom and culture in Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh. Monpas paper used to be sold to countries like Tibet, Bhutan, Thailand and Japan as no paper making industry existed in these countries at that time. The fine-textured handmade paper, which is called Mon Shugu in the local dialect, is integral to the vibrant culture of the local tribes in Tawang. The paper has great historic and religious significance as it is the paper used for writing Buddhist scriptures and hymns in monasteries. The Monpa handmade paper will be made from the bark of a local tree called Shugu Sheng, which has medicinal values too. Hence the availability of raw material will not be a problem.

Q.2 Consider the following statements:

1. Kala-azar is a neglected tropical disease which is endemic in middle and southern states of India.
2. It is caused by a protozoan *Entamoeba histolytica*.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News- Recently, the Union Minister Harsh Vardhan reviewed the status of the disease 'Kala-Azar' in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

Option D is correct: Minister of Health and Family Welfare reviewed the status of Kala-Azar in UP, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal. In India, the disease is endemic to these states. Kala-azar is a tropical disease characterised by irregular fever, weight loss, anaemia and swelling of the spleen and liver. It is caused by a protozoan *Leishmania* parasite and is transmitted to humans by the bite of infected female sandflies. Kala Azar is the 2nd largest parasitic killer in the world after Malaria and results in a 95 per cent fatality rate if the patients are not treated. Kala Azar disproportionately impacts the people at lower socio-economic strata of society whose houses are not sprayed often.

Q.3 Consider the following statements about the ‘Pong Dam lake’ seen in the news recently?

1. It is constructed on the river Ravi in the wetland of Shivalik Hills in the Himachal Pradesh.
2. It is named after the Maharana Pratap Sagar.
3. It was declared as a wildlife sanctuary and is one of the Ramsar sites in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- According to Himachal Pradesh wildlife officials, more than 750 migratory birds have been found dead under mysterious circumstances at the Pong Dam lake in Kangra in recent days.

Option B is correct: Pong Reservoir or Pong Dam Lake is also known as Maharana Pratap Sagar in India. It is named in the honour of Maharana Pratap. The reservoir or the lake is a well-known wildlife sanctuary and one of the international wetland sites declared in India by the Ramsar Convention. It has been constructed on the river Beas in the wetland of Shivalik Hills in the Himachal Pradesh. It is located in the trans-Himalayan fly path of various migratory birds.

Q.4 With reference to the Food Corporation of India (FCI), consider the following statements:

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

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Option C is correct: The food corporation of India (FCI), the nodal central agency of the Government of India, along with other state agencies undertake procurement of wheat and paddy under the price support scheme. Coarse grains are procured by the state government agencies for the central pool, as per the directions issued by the Government of India, from time to time. It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India. Its top official is designated as Chairman. It was set up in 1965 with its Initial headquarters at Chennai.

Q.5 In the “Index of Eight Core Industries”, which of the following industries has the highest weightage?

- (a) Steel Industry
- (b) Coal Industry
- (c) Electricity Industry
- (d) Refinery Products Industry

[ANS] d

[SOL] Option D is correct: The eight core sector industries include coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertiliser, steel, cement and electricity. The eight core industries comprise nearly 40% of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP). The eight Core Industries in decreasing order of their weightage: Refinery Products> Electricity> Steel> Coal> Crude Oil> Natural Gas> Cement> Fertilizers.

Q.6 With reference to the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), consider the following statements:

1. It is an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

2. It is located in Hyderabad and was established in 1999.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **In News:** The Union Minister for Science and Technology recently launched the 'Digital Ocean' platform of **Indian National Centre for Oceanic Information Services (INCOIS)**.

Option B is correct: Indian National Centre for Oceanic Information Services (INCOIS) is an **autonomous organisation** under the Ministry of Earth Sciences. It **prioritises requests for specific services** from its diverse user community that ranges right from fishermen to offshore oil exploration industries. The **targeted users are** fishermen, marine fishery resource managers, researchers, ecologists, and environmentalists.

Q.7 With reference to the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), consider the following statements:

- 1. It capped the limit of Trans Fatty Acids (TFA) in fats and oils at five per cent by 2022 from the current permissible limit of 10 per cent.
- 2. It is an autonomous body established under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries.
- 3. Eat Right Movement and Heart Attack Rewind mass media campaign are the initiatives of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** India Ruled To Cap TFA In Fats, Oils At 2 Per Cent By 2022

Option A is correct: Recently, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has capped the amount of Trans Fatty Acids (TFA) or Trans fats in oils and fats to 3% for 2021 and 2% by 2022 from the current permissible limit of 5%. In 2011, India first passed a regulation that set a TFA limit of 10% in oils and fats, which was further reduced to 5% in 2015. Trans fat is the most harmful type of fats which can have much more adverse effects on the human body than any other dietary constituent. These fats are largely produced artificially but a small amount also occurs naturally. Artificial TFAs are formed when hydrogen is made to react with the oil to produce fats resembling pure ghee/butter (a process called "Hydrogenation."). FSSAI has been established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, which consolidates various acts and orders that have hitherto handled food-related issues. It works as an autonomous body established under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. FSSAI launched two initiatives for reducing consumption of TFAs viz. Eat Right Movement and Heart Attack Rewind mass media campaign.

Q.8 In the context of the Indian economy, consider the following statements:

- 1. Treasury Bills have a maximum maturity period of 364 days.
- 2. They are issued at a discount to the original value and the buyer gets the original value upon maturity.
- 3. They are issued by both central and state government of India.
- 4. They are available for a minimum amount of Rs.25,000 and in multiples of Rs. 25,000.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

(d) 1, 3 and 4 only

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** Recently, RBI in consultation with the Government of India has issued the calendar for the auctioning of the Treasury Bill.

Option A is correct: Treasury bills, or T-bills, have a maximum maturity period of 364 days. So, they are categorised as money market instruments (money market deals with funds with a maturity of less than one year). At present, treasury bills are issued in three maturities — 91-day, 182-day and 364-day. In 1997 the government also issued 14-day immediate treasury bills. Treasury bills are issued at a discount to the original value and the buyer gets the original value upon maturity. For example, a Rs 100 treasury bill can be availed of at Rs 95, but the buyer is paid Rs 100 on the maturity date. Treasury Bills are issued only by the central government in India. The State governments do not issue any treasury bills. Interest on the treasury bills is determined by market forces. Treasury bills are available for a minimum amount of Rs. 25,000 and in multiples of Rs. 25,000.

Q.9 With reference to Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF), consider the following statements:

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

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] b

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

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

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

Q.10 ‘Majuli Island’ was seen in the news, it is located in which of the following states?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **In News-** Majuli is disappearing at an alarming rate due to soil erosion and heavy floods that are reducing the size of the island gradually.

Option D is correct: Majuli is the world's largest river island situated on the Brahmaputra River in Assam. It sprawls over an extensive area of 352 sq km. It has important cultural centres of Assam since the 16th century with the primary hub of the neo-Vaishnavite culture.

Q.11 With reference to the Indian Pangolins, species seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. These are mostly distributed in the arid region of India.
2. These are only found in India and Bangladesh.

3. These are categorised as Critically Endangered under the IUCN Red List.

Which of the given statements is/are not correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **In News:** Recently, The Odisha Forest department stressed the need for **stricter monitoring** of social media platforms to check **pangolin poaching and trading**.

Option D is correct: Pangolins are scaly anteater mammals of the order Pholidota and they have large, protective keratin scales covering their skin and they are the only known mammals with this feature. They are nocturnal, and their diet consists of mainly ants and termites, which they capture using their long tongues. Indian Pangolin is widely distributed in India, except the arid region, high Himalayas and the North-East. The species is also found in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. IUCN status- Indian pangolin – Endangered; Chinese pangolin – Critically Endangered. Chinese Pangolin is found in the Himalayan foothills in Eastern Nepal, Bhutan, Northern India, North-East Bangladesh and through Southern China.

Q.12 Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Strait of Hormuz?

- 1. It is the waterway separating Iran and Oman, linking the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.
- 2. On the north coast lies Iran, and on the south are Oman and Qatar.
- 3. It provides the only sea passage from the Persian Gulf to the open ocean.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** Iran has resumed enriching uranium up to 20% in violation of the 2015 nuclear deal and also seized a South Korean-flagged tanker near the crucial **Strait of Hormuz**.

Option C is correct: Strait of Hormuz is the waterway separating Iran and Oman, linking the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. On the north coast lies Iran, and on the south are the UAE and Musandam, an enclave of Oman. The Strait is 21 miles wide at its narrowest point, but the shipping lane is just two miles wide in either direction. The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most strategically important choke points. Two-thirds of the oil and half the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Indian imports come through the strait between Iran and Oman.

Q.13 With reference to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is an intergovernmental organisation established under the aegis of the United Nations.
- 2. It has more than 80 members.
- 3. Putting a country in “grey list” involves a direct penal action against the country.

Which of the statements given above not are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **In News-** The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) had deferred its once-a-decade evaluation of India's anti-money laundering regime scheduled for this year, citing the COVID-19 pandemic

Option D is correct: All the statements are not correct. It is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 during the G7 Summit in Paris. It has 37 members currently and India is also a member. Its objectives are to set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system. Putting a country in “grey list” does not involve a direct legal or penal action but involves increased scrutiny from watch dogs, regulators and financial institutions. There are only two countries on the FATF's blacklist - North Korea and Iran.

Q.14 With respect to the El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO), consider the following statements:

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

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] d

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

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

Q.15 REPLACE initiative was seen in the news, it is related to which of the following?

- (a) Promotion of Organic food
- (b) Elimination of Trans Fats
- (c) Elimination of e-waste system
- (d) Opting renewable energy resources

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News: Recently, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has capped the amount of **Trans Fatty Acids** (TFA) or **Trans fats** in oils and fats to **3% for 2021** and **2% by 2022** from the **current permissible limit of 5%**.

Option B is correct: REPLACE trans fat is the initiative by WHO provides a strategic approach to eliminating industrially-produced trans fat from national food supplies, with the goal of global elimination by 2023. The six areas of action include:

- Review dietary sources of industrially-produced trans fat and the landscape for required policy change.
- Promote the replacement of industrially-produced trans fat with healthy fats and oils.
- Legislate or enact regulatory actions to eliminate industrially-produced trans fat.
- Assess and monitor trans-fat content in the food supply and changes in trans fat consumption in the population.
- Create awareness of the negative health impact of trans fat among policy-makers, producers, suppliers, and the public.
- Enforce compliance with policies and regulations.

Q.16 Consider the following statements:

1. TRIFOOD Parks are the initiative of the Ministry of Food Processing.
2. The parks procure raw materials from the Van Dhan Kendras and process them to be sold across the country through Tribes India outlets.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- TRIFOOD Parks to be set up in Madhya Pradesh.

Option B is correct: The TRIFOOD is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Ministry of food processing industry and TRIFED. It was launched under Van Dhan Yojana in August 2020. The TRIFOOD Parks are food processing centres. They will aim to promote value addition to the minor forest produce. The TRIFOOD Parks will procure raw materials from Van Dhan Kendras. They will then be processed and sold across the country through the tribes India outlets.

Q.17 Consider the following statements:

1. Maitri was the first permanent settlement of India in Antarctica built in 1983.
2. India is the signatory of Arctic Treaty.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- The Government of India recently launched the 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica.

Option B is correct: The 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica was flagged off on January 05, 2021, from Mormugao Port, Goa. The chartered ice-class vessel MV Vasiliy Golovnin has been chosen for the prestigious 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica (ISEA) mission journey and will reach Antarctica in 30 days. India has two stations in the polar continent of Antarctica – Maitri and Bharati, which are being operated under NCPOR, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt. of India. Dakshin Gangotri in Antarctica was the first permanent settlement of India built in 1983. It was excavated in 1989 and is being used as a supply base and transit camp. Maitri was the second permanent settlement of India in Antarctica. The station is located close to Lake Priyadarshini. The Indian Antarctic program was launched in 1981 after India signed the Antarctic treaty. The Treaty was signed in 1961. Currently there are 54 signatories to the Treaty.

Q.18 Match the following pairs:

Theatre Forms — State

1. Mudi yettu — Tamil Nadu
2. Jatra — Madhya Pradesh
3. Yakshagana — Karnataka

Which of the above pairs is/are correctly matched?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- A Yakshagana artiste died on the stage recently.

Option C is correct: The word Yakshgana means the songs of the Demi-Gods ('Yaksha' meaning Demi-God, and 'Gana' meaning song). It traces its origin to the coastal districts of Karnataka and with roots in Sanskrit literature and theatre it emerged as a form of dance-drama in the 16th century mostly written in Telugu or in the Kannada language. It is a theatrical form of presenting mythological, historical stories and narratives drawn from the great Indian epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata and performance includes music, dance and dialogues. Mudi yettu is the traditional ritual theatre and folk dance drama from Kerala that enacts the mythological tale of a battle between the goddess Kali and the demon Darika. The ritual is a part of the bhagavathi or bhadrakali cult. Jatra art form originated in Bengal as a result of the Bhakti movement. Initially known as Krishna jatra due to Chaitanya's (spiritual founder of Gaudiya Vaishnavism) influence.

Q.19 'Grand Renaissance Dam' was seen in the news, it is a hydropower project of which of the following nations?

- (a) Sudan
- (b) Egypt
- (c) Ethiopia
- (d) South Sudan

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt agreed on Sunday to resume negotiations to resolve their decade-long complex dispute over the Grand Renaissance Dam hydropower project in the Horn of Africa.

Option C is correct: The Grand Renaissance Dam is being constructed by Ethiopia on the river Nile. Given the dam's location on the Blue Nile tributary, it would allow Ethiopia to gain control of the flow of the river's waters. Egypt lies downstream and is concerned that Ethiopia's control over the water could result in lower water levels within its own borders. Egypt depends on the Nile for approximately 97% of its drinking water and irrigation supplies

Q.20 With reference to Earthquake waves, consider the following statements:

1. S-waves are like sound waves, they can travel through solids, liquids and gasses.
2. P-waves have a peculiar quality of travelling through solids only.
3. S-waves have a larger shadow zone than P-waves.

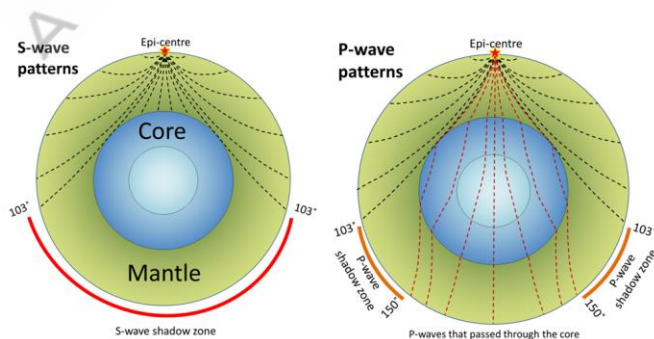
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Statement 1 and statement 2 are not correct: The S-waves are not like sound waves. The P-waves are similar to sound waves. P-waves can travel through gaseous, liquid and solid materials.

Statement 3 is correct: The shadow zone of S-wave is much larger than that of the P-waves. The shadow zone of P-waves appears as a band around the earth between 105° and 145° away from the epicentre. The shadow zone of S-waves is not only larger in extent but it is also a little over 40 per cent of the earth surface.



Q.21 Consider the following statements:

1. Across the world, India is the second largest producer of milk after the United State of America.
2. Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog was constituted to organize animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines.
3. Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog functions as an integral part of Rashtriya Gokul Mission.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **In News-** The government is planning to conduct a nationwide voluntary online examination, Kamdhenu Gau-Vigyan Prachar-Prasar Pareeksha, the exam will be conducted by Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog (RKA).

Option B is correct: India is the largest producer of milk, but the average milk yield in India is only 50% of the world average. And, Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog is an agency under the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying) established for the protection of cows. It has been constituted to organize animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and to take steps for preserving and improving breeds, and prohibiting the slaughter of cows and calves and other milch and draught cattle. The body will function as an integral part of Rashtriya Gokul Mission. Rashtriya Gokul Mission was initiated by Government of India in December 2014 with the aim of development and conservation of indigenous bovine breeds, genetic upgradation of bovine population and enhancing milk production and productivity of bovines thereby making milk production more remunerative to the farmers.

Q.22 With reference to the Avian influenza or Bird flu, consider the following statements:

1. It is a highly infectious and severe respiratory disease in birds caused by the Type A strain of influenza virus.
2. The H5N1 strain is considered the deadliest among the rest of the strains.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** Recently, samples of dead migratory waterbirds found at the **Pong Dam Lake** in **Himachal Pradesh** have tested positive for **avian influenza** or **bird flu**.

Option C is correct: Avian Influenza is a **highly infectious and severe respiratory disease in birds** caused by the **H5N1 influenza virus**, **Type A strain** of influenza virus. In total, **16 types of bird flu** are there, of which **H5N1 strain is considered the deadliest**.

○ H5N1 consists of two types of proteins:

■ H5 stands for the fifth of several known types of the protein hemagglutinin.

■ N1 stands for the first of several known types of the protein neuraminidase.

● It is carried by and infects birds including farmed poultry such as chicken, ducks, turkey, etc.

○ Mostly via bodily secretions, faeces, same feed or water bowl of birds.

● Human cases of Avian influenza occur occasionally with close contact with infected live or dead birds, or H5N1-contaminated environments.

Q.23 With reference to the Gulf Cooperation Council, consider the following statements:

1. It is an economic and political union comprising all the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf with the exception of Iraq.
2. Its Secretariat is located in Kuwait.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** At the recent annual summit of the **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** at **Al-Ula** (city in Saudi Arabia), **Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia** and the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** have signed a “**solidarity and stability**” agreement with **Qatar**.

Option A is correct: The GCC was formed in 1981 by an agreement among Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), that was concluded in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. It is an economic and political union comprising all the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf except Iraq. The structure of the GCC consists of the Supreme Council (the highest authority), the Ministerial Council and the Secretariat General. The Secretariat is located in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. It is a political, economic, social, and regional organisation according

Q.24 With reference to the Shola forests, consider the following statements:

1. These are Montane Wet Temperate Forests.
2. Trees are mostly tall with a red-coloured young medium to large size leaves.
3. Sticky Snakeroot, Gorse and Scotch Broom are the native species of Shola forests and are facing threats from alien species.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct:** The Shola forests of South India derive their name from the Tamil word solai, which means a ‘tropical rainforest’. These are classified as ‘Southern Montane Wet Temperate Forest’ and are found in the upper reaches of the Nilgiris, Anmalais, kalakdu, Mundanthurai, Palni hills and Kanyakumari in the states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Statement 2 is not correct: The vegetation that grows in Shola forests is evergreen. The trees are stunted and have many branches. Their rounded and dense canopies appear in different colours. Generally, the leaves are small in size and leathery. Red-coloured young leaves turning into different colours on maturity is a prominent characteristic of the Shola forests.

Statement 3 is not correct: Sticky Snakeroot, Gorse and Scotch Broom species are the alien plant species, they don’t help in tolerating forest fire, instead Sholas have begun to gradually shrink due to the introduction of these alien plant species and annual fire occurrences. Alien species like Sticky Snakeroot, Gorse and Scotch Broom introduced during British rule, have encroached upon the grasslands. **Rhododendron nilagiricum** is the only Shola tree that can tolerate fire.

Q.25 Consider the following statements:

1. Article 311 provides for the creation of All India Services.
2. It is created only if the resolution is passed by the Council of States not less than a two-thirds majority.
3. The principle of neutrality of civil services was established by the Nolan Committee.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct: Article 312 provides the creation or abolishment of All India Service but the article 311 acts as a safeguard to civil servants like (1) No person who is a member of a civil service of the Union or an all-India service or a civil service of a State or holds a civil post under the Union or a State shall be dismissed or removed by an authority subordinate to that by which he was appointed.

Statement 2 is correct: Under the Article 312, the Council of States can declare by resolution supported by not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting that it is necessary or expedient in the national interest so to do, Parliament may by law provide for the creation of one or more all India services (including an all India judicial service) common to the Union and the States.

Statement 3 is not correct: The concept of Civil Service Neutrality was established by the Masterman committee in the UK, not by the Nolan committee, Nolan committee was set up in the UK to advise on the ethical standards in public life in the year 1994.

Q.26 With reference to the Caracal species, seen in the news, which of the following statements is/are correct in this regard?

1. These are the medium-sized wild cat species having black tufted ears as one of its most distinguishing features.
2. These are endemic to North-Eastern region of India.
3. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists caracals as a species of 'least concern' in India.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- The Standing Committee of National Board of Wildlife(SC-NBWL) in its 60th meeting has approved the advisory for **management of Human-Wildlife Conflict(HWC)** in the country.

Option A is correct: In the meeting, the National Board for Wildlife approved a recovery program for the caracal, which is now a critically endangered species. The caracal is found only in Gujarat and Rajasthan. They are slender, medium-sized cats with long powerful legs and tufted ears. The black tufted ears of this cat are one of its most distinguishing features.

It is shy, nocturnal, elusive and difficult to spot in the wild. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists caracals as a species of 'least concern', mainly due to their large numbers in Africa. But in India, they are 'endangered'.

Q.27 Consider the following statements:

1. Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) food price index is a measure of the quarterly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities.
2. The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) is the flagship publication of the FAO.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- The Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) food price index averaged 107.5 points in December 2020, up 2.3 points from November 2020.

Option B is correct: The FAO Food Price Index (FFPI) is a measure of the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities. It consists of the average of five commodity group price indices weighted by the average export shares of each of the groups over 2014-2016. It measures changes for a basket of cereals, oilseeds, dairy products, meat and sugar. The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) is the flagship publication of the FAO. It is published every two years to provide policy-makers, civil society and those whose livelihoods depend on the sector a comprehensive, objective and global view of capture fisheries and aquaculture, including associated policy issue.

Q.28 With reference to the Sudden Stratospheric Warming, a meteorological event, consider the following statements:

1. Under this, the polar stratospheric temperature can increase by up to 50 degrees Celsius over the course of a few days.
2. It is followed by very cold weather, especially heavy snowstorms.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- According to weather forecasting models, the sudden stratospheric warming (SSW) event took place on January 5, 2021.

Option C is correct: During an SSW, the polar stratospheric temperature can increase by up to 50 degrees Celsius over the course of a few days. The stratosphere is the layer of the atmosphere from around 10-50 kilometres above the earth's surface. Such events are often followed by very cold weather, especially heavy snowstorms.

Q.29 With reference to Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in India, consider the following statements:

1. It has been borrowed from the British jurisprudence.
2. Justice PN Bhagwati and Krishna Iyer revolutionised this juristic approach in India.
3. This approach allowed the courts to take up cases suo motto.

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) 2 only

[ANS] b

[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct: The concept of Public Interest Litigation (PIL) originated and developed in the USA in the 1960s. In the USA, it was designed to provide legal representation to previously unrepresented groups and interests.

Statement 2 is correct: In India, the PIL is a product of the judicial activism of the Supreme Court. It was introduced in the early 1980s. Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer and Justice P.N. Bhagwati were the pioneers of the concept of PIL.

Statement 3 is correct: Public Interest Litigation is the power given to the public by courts through judicial activism. Such cases in which the victim does not have the necessary resources to commence litigation or his freedom to move court has been suppressed or encroached upon. The court can itself take cognisance of the matter and proceed suo motu or cases can commence on the petition of any public-spirited individual.

Q.30 With reference to National Council for Transgender Persons, consider the following statements:

1. It is a statutory body established under Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.
2. It is to be headed by the transgender person having knowledge of, or practical experience in the welfare of transgender's community.

3. It will advise the central government regarding the impact of policies, legislation and projects and for redressing the grievances of transgender persons.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Statement 1 is correct: The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 is an act of the Parliament of India with the objective to provide for protection of rights of transgender persons, their welfare, and other related matters. Under the act, the National Council for Transgender persons (NCT) is created, the NCT will consist of: (i) Union Minister for Social Justice (Chairperson); (ii) Minister of State for Social Justice (Vice- Chairperson); (iii) Secretary of the Ministry of Social Justice; (iv) one representative from ministries including Health, Home Affairs, and Human Resources Development.

Statement 2 is not correct: The Union Minister for Social Justice is the chairman of the body.

Statement 3 is correct: The Council will advise the central government as well as monitor the impact of policies, legislation and projects with respect to transgender persons. It will also redress the grievances of transgender persons.

Q.31 The “Special 301” Report is released by which of the following organisations?

- (a) World Trade Organization (WTO)
- (b) Financial Action Task Force (FATF)
- (c) US Trade Representative (USTR)
- (d) World Economic Forum (WEF)

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- The US Trade Representative (USTR) recently released the ‘Special 301’ investigation report, slamming India’s digital services tax (DST).

Option C is correct: The Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) is responsible for developing and coordinating US international trade. Section 301 (US Trade Act) gives the USTR broad authority to investigate and respond to a foreign country’s action which may be unfair or discriminatory as well as negatively affect US commerce. It was adopted through the 1974 Trade act, the Section allows the US President to impose tariffs or other curbs on foreign nations.

Q.32 Consider the following statements:

- 1. Sambalpur is a city in Odisha, located on the banks of Mahanadi river.
- 2. Hirakud Dam, the longest earthen dam in the world is located in the Sambalpur city.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- Recently, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the permanent campus of IIM Sambalpur.

Option C is correct: Sambalpur is the fifth largest city in the Indian State of Odisha. It is located on the banks of river Mahanadi. Sambalpur is one of the ancient places of India, with recorded settlements in the prehistoric age. It is the home of Sambalpuri Saree from which the world famous textile derives its name. Hirakud Dam, the longest earthen dam in the world and the largest artificial lake of Asia, is at Sambalpur. Sambalpur derives its name from the Goddess Samalei who is regarded as the reigning deity of the region.

Q.33 According to the recently released 'State of the Climate Report 2020' by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), consider the following statements:

1. The year 2020 was the second warmest year on record since 1901.
2. The Northeast monsoon in 2020 over the country as a whole was less than normal, that is 90 % of (Long Period Average).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- A statement on Climate of India during 2020 was recently released by India Meteorological Department (IMD).

Option B is correct: A Statement on Climate of India during 2020 has been issued by the Climate Research and Services (CRS) of the India Meteorological Department (IMD). It is mentioned that the year 2020 was the eighth warmest year on record since 1901. The five warmest years on record in order were: 2016 (+0.710C), 2009 (+0.550C), 2017 (+0.5410C), 2010 (+0.5390C), and 2015 (+0.420C). During the recent fifteen years (2006-2020), it may be mentioned that 12 out of 15 were the warmest years. During the SW monsoon season (June-September), rainfall over the country as a whole was above normal that is 109% of LPA (Long Period Average).

During the Northeast monsoon season in 2020 (October-December) rainfall over the country as a whole was normal that is 101% of LPA.

Q.34 The gain of an almost free resource should have aided firm productivity and business fundamentals but instead of that, the market share has fallen over the years, suggesting a case of which phenomenon of the economy?

- (a) Korean disease
- (b) Dutch disease
- (c) Cronyism disease
- (d) English disease

[ANS] b

[SOL] Option B is correct: Dutch disease refers to the phenomenon wherein countries that are rich in natural resources witness uneven growth across sectors. According to the thesis, when resource-rich countries export their resources to the rest of the world, it causes the exchange rate of their currency to appreciate significantly; this, in turn, affects other sectors in the country by discouraging their exports while encouraging the import of cheaper alternatives. The term was coined by The Economist in 1977 to describe the decline of the manufacturing industry in the Netherlands. The idea, however, was first proposed by economists Peter Neary and Max Corden in a paper published in 1982.

Q.35 Consider the following statements with reference to the Black soils of India:

1. Black soils are a predominant feature of the Deccan plateau.
2. These are known for their self-ploughing nature.
3. Due to its water holding capacity, black soils are best suited for cotton crops.
4. It is rich in organic matter and poor in minerals due to the presence of humus.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Statement 1 is correct: The raw material for most of the black soil is the volcanic rocks that were formed in the Deccan Plateau. The black colour is due to the presence of a small proportion of titaniferous magnetite or iron and black constituents of the parent rock.

Statement 2 is correct: The black soil is highly retentive of moisture. In summer, the moisture evaporates and the soil shrinks and is seamed with broad and deep cracks. During the rainy season, It swells greatly on accumulating moisture leading to a self-ploughing feature unique in Black soils. Strenuous effort is required to work on such soil in the rainy season as it gets very sticky.

Statement 3 is correct: These soils are best suited for cotton crops. Hence these soils are called as **regur and black cotton soils**.

Statement 4 is not correct: The black soils are rich in lime, iron, magnesia, alumina and potash but they lack in phosphorus, nitrogen and organic matter.

[Q.36] With reference to 'Warehouse receipts' in India, consider the following statements:

1. These are negotiable instruments in India.
2. They are utilized in Future markets.
3. They are regulated by RBI.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Option A is correct: Warehouse Receipts (WRs) are issued by warehouses on deposit of goods with them. These receipts allow for transferring the title of goods without physically moving them. Warehouse receipts may be negotiable or non-negotiable. Warehouse receipts are made negotiable under the Warehouse (Development and Regulation) Act, 2007. The receipts are used in the futures markets to guarantee the quantity and quality of a particular commodity being stored within an approved facility. They are regulated by the Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA).

Q.37 Consider the following statements:

1. Black Hole is a region in space where the pulling force of gravity is so strong that neither matter nor light can escape.
2. This phenomenon occurs when a star is dying.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- Scientists have been looking for a **black hole in Abell 2261** using NASA's **Chandra X-ray Observatory** and **Hubble Space Telescope**, and have so far found no evidence that it is anywhere to be found.

Option C is correct: Black Hole is a region in space where the **pulling force of gravity is so strong that neither matter nor light can escape**. This phenomenon **occurs when a star is dying**. For anything approaching a black hole, the **point of no return** is called the "**event horizon**" and anything that comes within the event horizon will be **consumed forever**. Since **no light can escape** from it, a black hole is **invisible**. However, advanced space telescopes can **identify black holes by observing the behaviour of material and stars that are very close to black holes**.

Q.38 With reference to the Food Corporation of India (FCI), consider the following statements:

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

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Option C is correct: The food corporation of India (FCI), the nodal central agency of the Government of India, along with other state agencies undertake procurement of wheat and paddy under the price support scheme. Coarse grains are procured by the state government agencies for the central pool, as per the directions issued by the Government of India, from time to time. It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India. Its top official is designated as Chairman. It was set up in 1965 with its Initial headquarters at Chennai.

Q.39 Consider the following pairs:

Reports — Releasing Organisation

1. Global Risk Report — FATF
2. Global Financial Stability Report — World Bank
3. World Economic Outlook — World Economic Forum

Which of the pairs given above are not correctly matched?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] Option D is correct:

Global Risk Report is released by the World Economic Forum (WEF)

Global Financial Stability Report is released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

World Economic Outlook is released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Q.40 With reference to the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) related to the economy, consider the following statements:

1. It is a 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions across the nation.
2. In India, LEI can be obtained from Legal Entity Identifier India Ltd. (LEIL), which is also recognised as an issuer of LEI by the Reserve Bank of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- The RBI has introduced the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) for Large Value Transactions in Centralised Payment Systems.

Option B is correct: The LEI is a 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions worldwide. The objective is to improve the quality and accuracy of financial data systems for better risk management post the Global Financial Crisis. The RBI has now decided to introduce the LEI system for all payment transactions of value Rs.50 crore and above undertaken by entities (non-individuals) using RBI-run Centralised Payment Systems viz. Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) and National Electronic Funds

Transfer (NEFT). In India, LEI can be obtained from Legal Entity Identifier India Ltd. (LEIL), which is also recognised as an issuer of LEI by the Reserve Bank under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.

Q.41 Consider the following with regard to ‘Swami Vivekananda’?

1. He was the chief disciple of the 19th-century Indian mystic Swami Dayananda Saraswati.
2. He was a key figure in the introduction of the Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world.
3. He introduced Hinduism at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893
4. His birthday is celebrated as National Youth Day.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** National Youth Day is held every year on 12th January to observe the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

Option C is correct: Swami Vivekananda was the disciple of Ramakrishna Paramhansa. His teachings were based on the Upanishads, Gita and examples of the Buddha and Jesus.

He was a key figure in the introduction of the Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world and is credited with raising interfaith awareness. He is best known for his speech which began with the words "Sisters and brothers of America ...," in which he introduced Hinduism at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893. His birthday is celebrated as National Youth Day on January 12th every year.

Q.42 Consider the following statements:

1. Contempt of courts with respect to the Indian judicial system was not mentioned in the constitution.
2. The reasonable restriction on freedom of speech and expression under Article 19 includes contempt of court.
3. Civil contempt includes willful disobedience to any judgement, publication of any material which interferes with the administration of justice.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** The High Court ordered notice to the Ministry of Law and Justice in response to a PIL filed challenging the constitutional validity of Section 2(c)(i) of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971.

Option C is correct: Contempt of court is clearly mentioned in constitution Article 129 and Article 215 of the constitution of India empowers the Supreme Court and high court respectively to punish people for their respective contempt. A reasonable restriction on freedom of speech and expression under 19 includes contempt of court along with elements like public order and defamation. The contempts of court act 1971 defines contempt of court in two kinds

Civil contempt: that is willful disobedience of a court order and judgment or willful breach of an undertaking given to the court. Criminal, that is written or spoken words or any act that scandalizes the court or lowers its authority or prejudices or interferes with the due course of a judicial proceeding or interferes/obstructs the administration of justice.

Q.43 With reference to Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), consider the following statements:

1. Enrolments under the scheme are made voluntary for all the farmers who are under Below Poverty Line (BPL).
 2. The Central share in the premium subsidy would be increased to 100 per cent for the north-eastern states.
 3. Farmers have to pay 2% of the sum insured for Kharif crops, 1.5% for rabi crops and 5% for cash crops.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- Recently, the flagship crop insurance scheme of the Government of India - the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) - has completed five years of its launch. PMFBY was launched on 13th January 2016.

Option B is correct: The enrolment in the two schemes has been made voluntary for all farmers, including those with existing crop loans. When the PMFBY was launched in 2016, it was made mandatory for all farmers with crop loans to enrol for insurance cover under the scheme. The Central share in the premium subsidy would be increased to 90 per cent for the north-eastern States. Under the PMFBY, Farmers pay a fixed share of the premium: 2% of the sum insured for Kharif crops, 1.5% for rabi crops and 5% for cash crops.

Q.44 With reference to the Asian Houbara Bustard Bird, consider the following statements:

1. It is a native to West Asia that migrates to the Indian subcontinent during the summer season.
 2. It classified as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News- Recently, the Pakistan government has issued special permits to Dubai royal family members, allowing them to hunt the internationally protected bird houbara bustard during the 2020-21 hunting season.

Option D is correct: The Houbara bustard is a large terrestrial bird found in parts of Asia, the Middle East and Africa is known to migrate in thousands to the Indian subcontinent every winter. In fact, it is similar to the critically endangered Great Indian Bustard, which is native to India. Houbara bustard's IUCN Status is Vulnerable. After breeding during the spring season, the Asian bustards migrate south to spend the winter in Pakistan, the Arabian Peninsula and nearby Southwest Asia. Some Asian Houbara bustards live and breed in the southern part of their ranges including parts of Iran, Pakistan and Turkmenistan. The main reasons for the decline in the species' population are poaching, unregulated hunting and the degradation of its natural habitat, the IFHC website states.

Q.45 'Dzukou valley' was in the news recently, it is located in which of the following states?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- The forest fire in Dzukou valley on Nagaland-Manipur border has been doused and no fresh fire or smoke was visible

Option A is correct: The Dzükou Valley is a valley located at the borders of the states of Nagaland and Manipur in Northeast India. This valley is well known for its natural environment, seasonal flowers and flora & fauna. It is popularly known as the 'valley of flower'. There are no human habitations within the forests, but they are home to rare and 'vulnerable'. The valley is home to the Angami people.

Q.46 Consider the following statements:

1. Deepor Beel is a riverine wetland located in the state of Arunachal Pradesh.
2. It has been designated as a Ramsar Site in the year 2019.

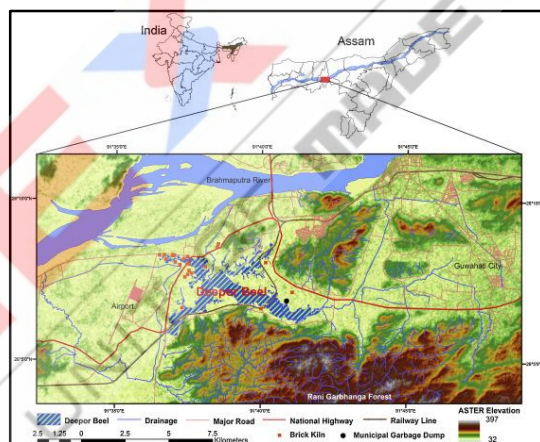
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News- Recently, the **Kamrup (Metropolitan) district** administration has **prohibited community fishing at Deepor Beel**, a **wetland** on the south-western edge of Guwahati and **Assam's only Ramsar site**.

Option D is correct: Deepor Beel (Beel means wetland or large aquatic body in Assamese) is located about 10 km Southwest of Guwahati. It is considered one of the largest and important riverine wetlands in the Brahmaputra Valley of lower Assam, India. It is an open lake basin connected with a set of inflow and outflow channels. It is categorised as a representative of the wetland type under the Burma Monsoon Forest biogeographic region. It was designated a Ramsar site in 2002 for sustaining a range of aquatic life forms besides 219 species of birds. A Ramsar Site is a wetland designated to be of international importance under the Convention on Wetlands, held at the Iranian city of Ramsar in February 1971. Due to the richness of avian fauna it enjoyed, it has been selected as one of the Important Bird Area (IBA) sites by Birdlife International.



Q.47 Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD), recently in the news?

1. It is a viral illness that causes prolonged morbidity in cattle and buffaloes.
2. It is endemic to Africa and parts of West Asia.
3. Till now, India has not reported the case.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

(d) 1, 2 and 3

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** Lumpy skin disease in cattle worries livestock farmers in India.

Option A is correct: The Lumpy skin disease (LSD) is caused by infection of cattle or water buffalo with the poxvirus Lumpy skin disease virus (LSDV). The virus is one of three closely related species within the genus capripoxvirus, the other two species being Sheeppox virus and Goatpox virus. It appears as nodules of two to five-centimetre diameter all over the body, particularly around the head, neck, limbs, udder and genitals. The lumps gradually open up like large and deep wounds. The disease spreads through blood transmission by mosquitoes, flies and lice.

Q.48 Which of the following factors can be responsible for the rise in prices of goods and services in an economy?

1. Increase in the money supply
2. Increase in government expenditure
3. RBI's purchasing government securities from the public.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **Option D is correct:** Whenever there is an increase in money supply in an economy, people will have more money in their hands. This results in an increase in demand for goods and services. Now since the production rate (supply-side factor) is the same but there is an increase in demand for goods and services, this results in a rise in prices of goods and services in an economy.

There are various ways in which the government spends its money which includes: Expenditure in Welfare Schemes, Increase in salaries of government employees,

Capital investments made by the government etc. These factors ultimately lead to more money in the hands of people leading to more demand and thus resulting in rising in prices of goods and services.

Whenever RBI purchases Government Securities from the public, it results in increase in money with people leading to rising in their spending power, resulting in more of demand for available goods and services thus leading to a rise in prices of goods and service.

Q.49 With reference to the NCAVES Project, consider the following statements:

1. The project will advance the knowledge agenda on environmental-economic accounting, in particular ecosystem accounting.
2. In India, the NCAVES project is being implemented by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
3. The Project is funded by the United Nation.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation(MoSPI) is organising the Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of the Ecosystem Services (NCAVES) India Forum-2021.

Option A is correct: The project has been launched by the United Nations Statistics Division, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the European Union. It will assist the five participating partner countries, namely Brazil, China, India, Mexico

and South Africa, to advance the knowledge agenda on environmental-economic accounting, in particular ecosystem accounting. The project is funded by the European Union (EU) and will have a duration until the end of 2021. NCAVES India Forum is being organized by MoSPI in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), European Union and UN Environment.

Q.50 “Kayakalp” initiative was seen in the news, it is related to which one of the following?

- (a) Higher Education
- (b) Related to Public Health
- (c) Consumer Awareness
- (d) Cybersecurity

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- Recently the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has conferred 5th National Kayakalp awards to Public and Private Health Facilities for high standards of Sanitation and Hygiene.

Option B is correct: “Kayakalp” initiative is the award scheme that helps in encouraging every public health facility in the country to work towards standards of excellence to help the facilities stay clean and hygienic. The objectives of the award scheme are to promote cleanliness, hygiene and infection control practices in public health care facilities, to incentivize and recognize such public healthcare facilities that show exemplary performance in adhering to standard protocols of cleanliness and infection control, to inculcate a culture of ongoing assessment and peer review of performance related to hygiene, cleanliness and sanitation, to create and share sustainable practices related to improved cleanliness in public health facilities linked to positive health outcomes.

Q.51 With reference to the Arctic Council, consider the following statements:

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

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- India has recently released the **Draft Arctic Policy** which ensures that the Arctic resources are explored and used sustainably.

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

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

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

Q.52 Consider the following statements:

1. Svalbard Treaty permits member nations to have free access to the Antarctic region.
2. India is a signatory to the Svalbard Treaty.
3. India established a research base called Maitri at Ny Alesund, Svalbard.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** India has recently released the **Draft Arctic Policy** which ensures that the Arctic resources are explored and used sustainably.

Option A is correct: India signed the **Svalbard Treaty** in Paris. The treaty allowed free access to the Arctic region along with the commitment of not militarizing it. India launched its first scientific expedition to the Arctic in 2007. In 2008, India established a research base called **Himadri at Ny Alesund, Svalbard, Norway**. In 2014, India deployed IndArc. It is a multisensory observatory in Kongsfjorden. In 2016, India set up Gruvebadet Atmospheric Laboratory at Ny Alesund, Svalbard.

Q.53 Consider the following statements:

1. BIMSTEC is a regional group of seven members established through the Bangkok Declaration.
2. Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) is a joint initiative of the East Asian countries to develop East Asia.
3. The Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) is an initiative by India and all the ASEAN nations.

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

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct:** BIMSTEC is a regional group of seven members named Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan, and Nepal, established in 1997 through Bangkok Declaration. Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand are the founding members. The main objectives of the group are to strengthen and improve the economic, international trade, and foreign direct investment cooperation.

Statement 2 is not correct: The Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) was established by a decree of the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, in 2015, with the aim of supporting the economic development of Russia's Far East and to expand international cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

Statement 3 is not correct: The Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) is an initiative by six countries – India and five ASEAN countries, namely, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam (Mekong passes through these five countries along with China). It is not an initiative of all ASEAN countries. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.

Q.54 Consider the following statements:

1. "Asmi" is India's first indigenous 9mm Machine Pistol.
2. It is developed by DRDO's Armament Research & Development Establishment (ARDE).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** India's first indigenous 9mm Machine Pistol has been jointly developed by DRDO and Indian Army.

Option C is correct: India's first indigenous 9mm Machine Pistol has been jointly developed by Infantry School, Mhow and DRDO's Armament Research & Development Establishment (ARDE), Pune. The Pistol is named "Asmi" meaning "Pride", "Self-Respect" & "Hard Work". The Machine Pistol fires the in-service 9mm ammunition. With an overall empty weight of less than 2 Kg, it features an 8-inch barrel and 33

rounds high capacity magazine. It has an upper receiver made from Aircraft grade Aluminium and lower receiver from Carbon Fibre. 3D Printing process has been used in designing and prototyping of various parts including trigger components made by metal 3D printing.

Q.55 With reference to the 'Paradox Of Thrift' theory, consider the following statements:

1. It postulates a direct correlation between savings and economic growth during the recession.
2. The theory was popularized by John Maynard Keynes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct: The 'Paradox Of Thrift' theory states that individuals try to save more during an economic recession, which essentially leads to a fall in aggregate demand and hence in economic growth. Such a situation is harmful for everybody as investments give lower returns than normal.

Statement 2 is correct: It was popularized by the renowned economist John Maynard Keynes.

Q.56 Consider the following statements:

1. Great Green Wall (GGW) initiative is associated to address desertification and land degradation in the Sahel region of the African continent.
2. It is an initiative of the World Bank and being funded under the PROGREEN fund.
3. Sustainable Development Goal 10 deals with combating desertification and forest degradation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- The Great Green Wall project is on a slow track due to funds crunch and President of France Emmanuel Macron announces \$14 billion to scale up work under this Project.

Option A is correct: Great Green Wall Project of Africa aims to restore Africa's degraded landscapes and transform millions of lives in one of the world's poorest regions, the Sahel. The Sahel is a semiarid region of western and north-central Africa extending from Senegal eastward to Sudan. It forms a transitional zone between the arid Sahara (desert) to the north and the belt of humid savannas to the south. The project aims to restore 100 million hectares of degraded land by 2030. It is an initiative of the African Union launched in 2007. Recently, the World Bank pledged \$5 billion for greening and development of the degraded lands in the Sahel region under the PROGREEN initiative which is a global fund dedicated to boosting countries' efforts to address landscape degradation. The GGW goals will also contribute to 15 of the 17 UN-mandated Sustainable Development Goals. One of the key objectives of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification is to reach **Land Degradation Neutrality by 2030**, a target also **included in the Sustainable Development Goal 15**.

Q.57 Which of the following statements is correct with respect to the "Treaty on Open Skies", was in the news recently?

- (a) It is a bilateral treaty between the Russian Federation and the European Union for energy security cooperation.
- (b) It is a multilateral cooperation treaty among the G20 nations for the promotion of trade.
- (c) It is an agreement that allows signatories countries to monitor arm development by conducting surveillance flights over each other's territories.

(d) It is a multilateral treaty among five permanent nations of UNSC to regulate the control of nuclear-related technology.

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** Recently, Russia decided to withdraw from the Open Skies Treaty following the US decision to exit the pact in the year 2020.

Option C is correct: The Open Skies Treaty permits each state-party to conduct short-notice, unarmed, reconnaissance flights over the others' entire territories to collect data on military forces and activities. It was signed on March 24, 1992. Kyrgyzstan has signed, but not ratified the treaty. India is not a member of this treaty. Russia has argued that the US withdrawal will erode global security by making it more difficult for governments to interpret the intentions of other nations, particularly amid Russia-West tensions after the Russian annexation of Ukraine's Crimea in 2014.

Q.58 With reference to the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), consider the following statements:

1. The expenditure to fight the pandemic is considered valid under CSR activities.
2. Companies with a net worth of at least Rs 500 crore, or net profit of Rs 5 crore, are required to spend 2% of their average profit of the previous three years on CSR.
3. India is the first country in the world to make corporate social responsibility (CSR) mandatory.
4. According to the CSR trends in India, the health sector received the maximum funding followed by education.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News-** Recently the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has included spending on COVID-19 vaccine campaigns under CSR activities.

Option A is correct: Corporate Social responsibility (CSR) is continuing commitment by businesses to integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations. Amid the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has notified that companies' expenditure to fight the pandemic will be considered valid under CSR activities. On April 1, 2014, India became the first country to legally mandate corporate social responsibility. The new rules in Section 135 of India's Companies Act make it mandatory for companies of a certain turnover and profitability to spend two per cent of their average net profit for the past three years on CSR. According to the 2019 trend, the education sector received the maximum funding (38 percent of the total) followed by hunger, poverty, and healthcare (25 percent), environmental sustainability (12 percent), rural development (11 percent). Programs such as technology incubators, sports, armed forces, reducing inequalities saw negligible spends.

Q.59 The National Innovation Foundation (NIF) is an autonomous organisation under which of the following ministry?

- (a) Ministry of Science and Technology
- (b) Ministry of Education
- (c) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- (d) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Option A is correct:** The Union Minister for Science & Technology dedicated an Innovation Portal, developed by National Innovation Foundation (NIF) – India to the nation. The Innovation Portal in coming days could be one of the significant contributions amongst all of our digital progress so far and would act as a bridge between people who are looking for innovative solutions and those who had been at the helm of their evolution. National Innovation Foundation (NIF) is an autonomous body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India. It was set up in February 2000 at Ahmedabad,

Gujarat to provide institutional support for scouting, spawning, sustaining and scaling up the grassroots innovations across the country. It is India's national initiative to strengthen grassroots technological innovations and outstanding traditional knowledge. Its mission is to help India become a creative and knowledge-based society by expanding policy and institutional space for grassroots technological innovators.

Q.60 "Sulawesi Warty Pig Painting" was seen in the news recently, it is discovered in which of the following?

- (a) Malaysia
- (b) Vietnam
- (c) Indonesia
- (d) Taiwan

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- Recently, the archaeologists have discovered the world's oldest known cave art in the limestone cave of Leang Tedongnge cave in a remote valley on the island of Sulawesi, Indonesia.

Option C is correct: The cave is in a valley that is enclosed by steep limestone cliffs and is only accessible by a narrow cave passage in the dry season, as the valley floor is completely flooded in the wet season. Sulawesi warty pig painting was first discovered in 2017 as part of surveys the team was carrying out with the Indonesian authorities. It is a life-sized picture of a wild pig that was painted at least 45,500 years ago and consists of a figurative depiction of a warty pig, a wild boar that is endemic to this Indonesian island. It shows a pig with a short crest of upright hairs and a pair of horn-like facial warts in front of the eyes, a characteristic feature of adult male Sulawesi warty pigs.

Q.61 With reference to the E-waste generation, consider the following statements:

- 1. The USA is the largest e-waste generator in the world, followed by China and India.
 - 2. As of now, India doesn't have a specific law for e-waste management.
 - 3. The majority of the e-waste collected in India is managed by an unorganized sector.
- Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- A recent report by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), India collected just 10 per cent of the electronic waste (e-waste) estimated to have been generated in the country 2018-19.

Option C is correct: Electronic-Waste is the term used to describe old, end-of-life or discarded electronic appliances. Electronic waste (E-waste) is the fastest-growing stream of waste. As per the data provided in Global E-waste Monitor, India ranks third behind USA & China in terms of the total E-waste generated in 2019. China generated over 10.12 Mt of E-waste in 2019, followed by the USA with 6.91 Mt and India with 3.23 Mt. India has passed specified legislations in dealing with E-waste management like E-waste (Management) Rules, 2016, Law on e-waste management 2011, in which The government passed the first law on e-waste management in 2011, based on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). It put the onus on the producer for the management of the final stages of the life of its product by creating certain norms in tandem with state pollution control boards. The majority of the e-waste collected in India is managed by an unorganized sector which is unregulated.

Q.62 Consider the following statements:

- 1. Under Article 61, the President of India can only be impeached from the office for 'violation of the Constitution'.
- 2. The Supreme Court has defined the meaning of the phrase 'violation of the Constitution' under the Kesavananda Bharati vs State of Kerala case, 1973.

3. The impeachment process of the President can start in either the houses of the Parliament.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** Recently, the House of Representatives has impeached President Donald Trump for a second time, so obvious, one has to know the impeachment process of Indian President as well.

Option C is correct: In India, the President can be removed only for 'violation of the Constitution' and the Constitution does not define the meaning of the phrase 'violation of the Constitution'. Under Article 61, the President of India can be removed from office by a process of impeachment for 'violation of the Constitution'. The impeachment charges can be initiated by either House of the Parliament. However, the Constitution does not define the meaning of the phrase 'violation of the Constitution'. The Kesavananda case ruled that the "basic structure" of the Constitution can not be amended but the case doesn't define the "violation of the Constitution". These charges should be signed by one-fourth members of the House and a fourteen days notice should be given to the President. After the resolution is passed by a majority of two-thirds of the total membership of the House, it is sent to the other house, which investigates the charges. If the other House also passes the impeachment resolution by a majority of two-thirds of the total membership, then the President stands impeached from his office from the date on which the resolution is so passed.

Q.63 Dharashiv caves, was seen in the news recently, are located in which of the following states of India?

- (a) Andhra Pradesh
- (b) Maharastra
- (c) Madhya Pradesh
- (d) Odisha

[ANS] b

[SOL] **In News-** Maharashtra archaeology department takes up restoration of Dharashiv cave rains caused damage to the sixth-century structure.

Option B is correct: The caves are located around eight km from Osmanabad city in Balaghat mountains and have artistic carvings which attract tourists to the area. They were carved in the sixth century and are located near Ter, which was a bustling trade centre during the Satavahana period (230 BC to 200 AD). The caves were also mentioned in a book by archaeologist James Burgess. It is believed that these caves were originally Buddhist, but later some caves were converted to Jain caves.

Q.64 Recently, the third phase of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana was launched by which of the following ministries?

- (a) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
- (b) Ministry of Rural Development
- (c) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- (d) Ministry of Education

[ANS] c

[SOL]

In News- The third phase of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) 3.0 began on January 15 in 600 districts of India.

Option C is correct: PMVYK 3.0 is launched by the Minister of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), launched in 2015, is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) that is implemented by National Skill Development Corporation. The government had revamped the scheme in 2016 to impart skills to one crore persons by 2020 at an allocation of Rs 12,000 crore. On the basis of the learning gained from PMKVY 1.0 and PMKVY

2.0, the Ministry has improved the newer version of the scheme to match the current policy doctrine and energize the skilling ecosystem affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q.65 'Mount Semeru' Volcano is situated in which of the following?

- (a) Hawaii
- (b) Italy
- (c) Malaysia
- (d) Indonesia

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News- Mount Semeru has erupted recently in East Java, Indonesia.

Option D is correct: Semeru is also known as "The Great Mountain" - is the highest volcano in Java and one of the most active volcano. Indonesia sits on the Pacific "Ring of Fire" where tectonic plates collide, causing frequent volcanic activity as well as earthquakes.

Q.66 'Khadi Prakritik', India's first cow dung paint is developed by which of the following organisations?

- (a) Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
- (b) Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)
- (c) Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT-D)
- (d) Indian Institute of Science (IISc)

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- Recently, the Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways & MSME launched an innovative new paint named Khadi Prakritik Paint.

Option B is correct: Khadi Prakritik paint is India's first cow dung paint developed by Khadi and Village Industries Commission. It is an eco-friendly, non-toxic paint. It is a first-of-its-kind product, with anti-fungal, anti-bacterial properties. It is based on cow dung as its main ingredient, the paint is cost-effective and odourless, and has been certified by the Bureau of Indian Standards. It will boost local manufacturing and will create sustainable local employment through technology transfer. It will strengthen the rural economy and protect cows (cows will become a source of income even if they are non-milching cows.) It will increase consumption of cow dung as a raw material for eco-friendly products and will generate additional revenue to farmers and gaushalas.

Q.67 Consider the pairs:

Places in News — States/UT

1. Harike wetland — Uttarakhand
2. Depo and Tamang area — Jammu & Kashmir
3. Deepor Beel Wetland — Assam

Which of the pairs given above is/are **not correctly** matched?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] Option B is correct: All these places were in the news recently, Harike and Deepor Beel are the wetlands and Depo and Tamang are the areas of Arunachal Pradesh. Recently, concentrations of vanadium in the palaeo-proterozoic carbonaceous phyllite rocks are founded in the Depo and Tamang areas of Arunachal Pradesh's Papum Pare district. And in the Harike wetland of Punjab, winter migratory water birds using the central Asian flyway have started making a beeline. Recently, the Kamrup (Metropolitan) district administration has prohibited community fishing at Deepor Beel, a wetland on the south-western edge of Guwahati and Assam's only Ramsar site.

Q.68 With reference to the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI), consider the following statements:

1. It is a 20 digit number that will be used to uniquely identify the parties involved in financial transactions worldwide.
2. It is made mandatory by the RBI for all the fund transfers worth Rs. 50 crores and above.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** RBI makes Legal Entity Identifier mandatory for transactions over Rs 50 lakhs in CPS from April 1, 2021.

Option C is correct: The Reserve Bank of India recently introduced the Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) for large value transactions over Rs 50 lakhs in Centralised Payment Systems, which will be effective from April 1, 2021. The 20-digit LEI number is used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions worldwide while improving the quality and accuracy of financial data systems for better risk management post the global financial crisis. In India, LEI can be obtained from Legal Entity Identifier India Ltd., recognised as an issuer of LEI by RBI under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.

Q.69 Consider the following statements.

1. Ed silk is the product of domesticated silkworm, *Philosamia ricini* that feeds mainly on castor leaves.
2. Unlike other kinds of silk, this cannot be reeled and hence it is only spun.
3. India is the only country producing all kinds of silk.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **In News-** Assam government will provide khadi shirt, eri shawl and eri stole to Grade IV employees, as a mark of respect to Mahatma Gandhi.

Option D is correct: Eri silk also known as Endi or Errandi is produced by *Philosamia ricini* which is commonly called as eri silkworm. It primarily feeds on castor leaves and is thus reared on castor plants. The manufacturing process of eri allows the pupae to develop into adults and only the open ended cocoons are used for turning into silk. Thus, it is also popularly known as non-violent silk. Ed yarn is produced in Assam, Bihar, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and West Bengal. India is the only country producing all five kinds of silk namely, Mulberry, Eri, Muga, Tropical Tasar and Temperate Tasar.

Q.70 Which of the following best describes the term “Reverse Repo Rate”, sometimes seen, in the news?

- (a) The rate of the interest that the commercial banks pay to RBI on long-term loans from the RBI.
- (b) The rate of interest that RBI pays to commercial banks that offer long term loans to RBI.
- (c) The rate of interest that RBI pays to commercial banks that offer a short term loan to RBI.
- (d) The rate of interest that commercial banks pay to RBI that borrow short-term loans from RBI.

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Option C is correct:** The Reverse Repo Rate is an important Monetary Policy tool used by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to control liquidity and inflation in the economy. The interest rate at which the RBI borrows money from banks for the short term is defined as Reverse Repo Rate. The Reverse Repo Rate helps the RBI get money from the banks in times of need. In return, the RBI offers attractive interest rates to them. The banks also voluntarily park excess funds with the central bank as it provides them with an opportunity to earn higher interest on surplus money lying idle.

Q.71 Consider the following statements:

1. Kolleru Lake is one of the largest freshwater lakes in the Andhra Pradesh
2. It is located between Krishna and Godavari deltas
3. It is designated a wetland of international importance under Ramsar Convention

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] Statement 1 is correct: Kolleru Lake is one of the largest freshwater lakes in India located in the Andhra Pradesh.

Statement 2 is correct: It is located between Krishna and Godavari deltas.

Statement 3 is correct: The lake was declared as a wildlife sanctuary in November 1999 under India's Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, and designated a wetland of international importance in November 2002 under the international Ramsar Convention.

Q.72 With reference to the Zero-Coupon Bonds, often seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. They are purchased at a discounted price and does not pay any coupons or periodic interests to the fund holders.
2. They are tradable and transferable in nature.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- The RBI has raised concern over the issuance of zero coupon bonds for recapitalisation of public sector banks (PSBs).

Option A is correct: These are non-interest bearing, non-transferable special GOI securities that have a maturity of 10-15 years. These bonds are not tradable; the lender has kept them in the held-to-maturity (HTM) investments bucket, not requiring it to book any mark-to-market gains or losses from these bonds. This will earn no interest for the subscriber; market participants term it both a 'financial illusion' and 'great innovation' by the government.

Q.73 'Bandipur Tiger Reserve' is situated in which of the following states?

- (a) Kerala
- (b) Tamil Nadu
- (c) Madhya Pradesh
- (d) Karnataka

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News- A stranded wild elephant was rescued in Nugu reservoir, close to Bandipur Tiger Reserve in Karnataka.

Option D is correct: Bandipur National Park established in 1974 as a tiger reserve under Project Tiger, is a national park located in the Indian state of Karnataka, which is the state with the second highest tiger population in India. It was once a private hunting reserve for the Maharaja of the Kingdom of Mysore but has now been upgraded to Bandipur Tiger Reserve. Bandipur is known for its wildlife and has many types of biomes, but dry deciduous forest is dominant.

Q.74 India Innovation Index is released by which of the following organisations?

- (a) Ministry of Science and Technology

- (b) Council of Scientific and Industrial Research
- (c) NITI Aayog
- (d) None of the above

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- NITI Aayog has released the second edition of the India Innovation Index-2020.

Option C is correct: The India Innovation Index 2020 ranks the states and union territories based on their relative performance of supporting innovation. The index ranks different states and UTs based on how they support innovation and disruptive technologies. This competitive measure will empower them to improve their innovation policies by highlighting their strengths and weaknesses. The index captures the trends and provides detailed analyses of the various factors that drive innovation at the country, state, and district levels. It is believed that these analyses would enable policymakers in identifying catalysts and inhibitors of innovation at the national and sub-national levels. The states and union territories have been divided into 17 'Major States', 10 'North-East and Hill States', and 9 'City-States and Union Territories', for effectively comparing their performance. The states and union territories have been ranked on two broad categories: outcome and governance. Karnataka has retained its position as the most innovative state in the country followed by Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Kerala.

Q.75 Consider the following pairs:

Wildlife Sanctuary — Location

1. Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary — Meghalaya
2. Tipeswar Wildlife Sanctuary — Maharashtra
3. Sathyamangalam Wildlife Sanctuary — Tamil Nadu

Which of the pairs given above is/are incorrect?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct:** It is located in Assam's Moregaon district. It is famous for one-horned rhinoceros and migratory birds.

Statement 2 correct: It was in news recently, the Tipeswar Wildlife Sanctuary was a hunting ground for the tiger 'Avni', which was declared a man-eater.

Statement 3 correct: Sathyamangalam wildlife sanctuary is located at the confluence of scenic Western and the Eastern Ghats in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve in Erode district of Tamil Nadu.

Q.76 Consider the following statements:

1. Both Ken and Betwa are tributaries of the Ganga river.
2. The Ken river originates from Mamar hills and Betwa river rises in the Vindhya Range of Madhya Pradesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- The governments of both Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh are close to an agreement on **Ken-Betwa interlinking Project**.

Option B is correct: Both Ken and Betwa are tributaries of river Yamuna. Ken originates from Mamar hills of Katni district, MR Betwa rises in the Vindhya Range near Hoshangabad MR. Rajghat, Paricha and Matatila dams are over Betwa river. Ken River passes through Panna tiger reserve.

Q.77 'Kalaripayattu', also known as 'Kalari', is a traditional martial art form of which of the following states?

- (a) Tamil Nadu
- (b) Maharastra
- (c) Kerala
- (d) Odisha

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- Kerala to set up Kalaripayattu Academy to boost traditional martial art form.

Option C is correct: To give a boost to the traditional martial art form of Kerala, the state government is setting up a Kalaripayattu Academy at Vellar Craft Village. Kalaripayattu, also known as 'Kalari', is known for its long-standing history within Indian martial arts culture and is believed to be the oldest surviving martial art in the world.

Q.78 With respect to Finance Bill, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Money Bill that gives effect to taxation proposals contained in the Budget and lays out the government's financial plan.
2. A Finance Bill can be tabled in either House of the Parliament.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Option A is correct: As per Article 110 of the Constitution of India, the Finance Bill is a Money Bill. The Finance Bill is a part of the Union Budget, stipulating all the legal amendments required for the changes in taxation proposed by the Finance Minister. There are different kinds of Finance Bills — the most important of them is the Money Bill. The Money Bill is concretely defined in Article 110. A Money Bill is certified by the Speaker as such — in other words, only those Financial Bills that carry the Speaker's certification are Money Bills. It is introduced by the Speaker only before the consent of the President.

Q.79 Recently, nuclear-capable 'Shaheen-III missile' is test-fired by which of the following countries?

- (a) Iran
- (b) Saudi Arabia
- (c) Iran
- (d) Pakistan

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News- Pakistan tests nuclear-capable Shaheen-III ballistic missile.

Option D is correct: Pakistan has successfully conducted a flight test of Shaheen-III surface-to-surface ballistic missile capable of carrying nuclear and conventional warheads up to 2,750 kilometres.

Q.80 With reference to Border Road Organisation (BRO), consider the following statements:

1. It has the mandate of ensuring connectivity during both Peacetime and Wartime situation.
2. It undertakes projects in India only.
3. It is under the administrative control of Ministry of Defence.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Statement 1 is correct: During the Peacetime, the role of BRO is- To Develop & Maintain the Operational Road Infrastructure of General Staff (GS) in the Border Areas; To Contribute to the Socio-Economic Development of the Border States.

During Wartime- To Develop & Maintain Roads to Keep Line of Control through in Original Sectors and Re-deployed Sectors; To Execute Additional Tasks as laid down by the Govt Contributing to the War Effort.

Statement 2 is not correct: Currently, the organisation maintains operations in twenty-one states, one UT (Andaman and Nicobar Islands), and neighbouring countries such as Afghanistan, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka.

Statement 3 is correct: it is functioning under the control of the Ministry of Defence since 2015. It is staffed by officers and troops drawn from the Indian Army's Corps of Engineers, Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Army Service Corps, Military Police and army personnel on extra regimental employment. Engineering Service and personnel from the General Reserve Engineer Force (GREF) form the parent cadre of the Border Roads Organisation.

Q.81 Consider the following statements:

1. The scope of the pardoning power of the Governor is wider than the pardoning power of the President.
2. The President has to act on the advice of the Council of Ministers while deciding mercy pleas.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- Recently, the Solicitor General told the Supreme Court (SC) that Tamil Nadu Governor will take a decision in the next three or four days on mercy petition of a convict in the 1991 Rajiv Gandhi assassination case.

Option B is correct: Under the Constitution of India (Article 72), the President of India can grant a pardon or reduce the sentence of a convicted person, particularly in cases involving capital punishment. Article 72 says that the president shall have the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment or to suspend, remit or commute the sentence of any person convicted of any offence. Under the Article 161, the Governor of a State has the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment or to suspend, remit or commute the sentence of any person convicted of any offence against any law. Hence pardoning power of President is wider than Governor. The President has to act on the advice of the Council of Ministers while deciding mercy pleas. The President cannot exercise his power of pardon independent of the government.

Q.82 'Ratle hydropower project' was seen in the news, it situated on which of the following rivers?

- (a) Jhelum
- (b) Ravi
- (c) Satluj
- (d) Chenab

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News- The Union Cabinet approved a ₹5281.94 crore investment for 850 megawatts (MW) Ratle hydropower project.

Option D is correct: Ratle Hydro Electric (HE) Project is located on river Chenab, in Kishtwar district of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The Power generated from the project will help in providing the balancing of Grid and will improve the power supply position. According to the Indus Waters Treaty, whoever builds the project first will have the first rights on the river waters. India and Pakistan signed the treaty in 1960 after nine years of negotiations, with the World Bank being a signatory. The treaty sets out a mechanism for cooperation and information exchange between the two countries regarding their use of rivers.

Q.83 Global Risks Report is released by which of the following organisations?

- (a) World Economic Forum
- (b) World Bank
- (c) International Monetary Fund
- (d) United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- The World Economic Forum recently released the sixteenth edition of the Global Risks Report, 2021.

Option A is correct: The report was released based on the Global Risks Perception Survey undertaken by more than 650 members of the World Economic Forum. Among the highest likelihood risks of the next ten years are extreme weather, climate action failure and human-led environmental damage; as well as digital power concentration, digital inequality and cybersecurity failure. Among the highest impact risks of the next decade, infectious diseases are in the top spot, followed by climate action failure and other environmental risks; as well as weapons of mass destruction, livelihood crises, debt crises and IT infrastructure breakdown. The report was released before the upcoming Davos Agenda Summit of World Economic Forum. The main aim of the report is to prepare the Government and other international communities during the times of crisis.

Q.84 With reference to Zero Hour of Parliamentary proceedings, consider the following statements:

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

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

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

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

Q.85 The 'LongOps Project' was seen in the news recently, it is related to which of the following?

- (a) To retrieve radioactive remnants from nuclear plants
- (b) Elimination of hidden hunger
- (c) Genome sequencing project on Tribals across the world
- (d) Scientific research on the Higgs boson particles

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- The LongOps Project is a collaboration between the UK and Japan.

Option A is correct: Under the Project, the scientists from the United Kingdom and Japan have come together to develop new, safer technologies to dismantle old nuclear facilities like the Fukushima Daiichi reactors, which were severely damaged by an earthquake and a tsunami in March 2011. The project is to use long-reach robotic arms and hence is called "LongOps Project". The project will reduce the risks to human health and will speed up decommissioning of nuclear reactors that are non-operational.

Q.86 Which of the following is the nodal agency for implementing “India’s Arctic Policy”?

- (a) Ministry of Earth Sciences
- (b) National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research
- (c) Ministry of Science and Technology
- (d) National Institute of Ocean Technology

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News– India has recently released the Draft Arctic Policy which ensures that the Arctic resources are explored and used sustainably.

Option B is correct: Under the policy, India will make sure that it abides by the rules and regulations of the Arctic Council. The policy envisages connecting the Arctic residents, especially the indigenous communities with those living in the Himalayan regions. India has designated Goa-based National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research to lead scientific research and act as a nodal body to coordinate among various scientific bodies to promote domestic scientific research capacities in the Arctic.

Q.87 A cloth called ‘Risa’ was seen in the news recently, it is famous traditional cultural attire of which of the following states?

- (a) Meghalaya
- (b) Mizoram
- (c) Tripura
- (d) Sikkim

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News– Tripura government have been promoting the traditional attire Risa.

Option C is correct: It is a traditional Tripuri female attire comprises three parts — risa, rignai and rikutu. Risa is a handwoven cloth used as a female upper garment, and also as headgear, a stole, or a present to express respect. It is woven in colourful designs and worn as an upper garment, the risa also has a host of crucial, social and religious utilities. Adolescent Tripuri girls are first given a risa to wear in an event called Risa Sormani, at age 12 to 14.

Q.88 With reference to the Arctic Council, consider the following statements:

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

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

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

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

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

Q.89 With reference to the Inter-State Council, consider the following statements:

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

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

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

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

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

Q.90 With reference to Western disturbances, often seen in the news, consider the following statements:

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

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

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

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

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

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

Q.91 With reference to the North-Eastern Council, consider the following statements:

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

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News- Recently, Home Minister inaugurated 69th Plenary Meeting of North Eastern Council
Statement 1 is not correct: North-Eastern Council (NEC) is the statutory body established after amending the North-Eastern Council Act, 1971 in the year 2002. It is the nodal agency for economic and social development of 8 North Eastern Region States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura including the four states having Schedule six areas. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.

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

Q.92 'The Great Reset' initiative was seen in the news recently; it is launched by which of the following organisations?

- (a) World Bank
- (b) International Monetary Fund
- (c) World Economic Forum
- (d) Food Agriculture Programme

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- Prime Minister will address the World Economic Forum's Davos Dialogue on 28 January via video conferencing. The Davos Dialogues agenda marks the launch of the World Economic Forum's Great Reset Initiative in the post-Covid-19 world.

Option C is correct: The Great Reset is an initiative by the World Economic Forum. It has been conceptualised by the founder and executive chairman of the WEF, Klaus Schwab, and has evolved over the last few years. It is based on the assessment that the world economy is in deep trouble.

Q.93 With reference to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), consider the following statements:

1. It is an intergovernmental organisation established under the aegis of the United Nations.
2. It has more than 80 members.
3. Putting a country in "grey list" involves a direct penal action against the country.

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News- Pakistan might be pushed into the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) 'blacklist' as it is failing to finance and tolerate a terrorist organisation.

Option D is correct: All the statements are not correct. It is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 during the G7 Summit in Paris. It has 37 members currently and India is also a member. Its objectives are to set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system. Putting a country in "grey list" does not involve a direct legal or penal action but involve increased scrutiny from watchdogs, regulators and financial institutions. There are only two countries on the FATF's blacklist - North Korea and Iran.

Q.94 World Economic Outlook (WEF) is released by which of the following organisations?

- (a) World Bank
- (b) International Monetary Fund
- (c) World Economic Forum
- (d) Food Agriculture Programme

[ANS] b

[SOL] Option C is correct: Recently, the latest World Economic Outlook of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has estimated that India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will grow by 11.5% in the Financial Year (FY) 2021-22. In its latest World Economic Outlook Update, the IMF predicted that China would grow 8.1 per cent in 2021, followed by Spain (5.9 per cent) and France (5.5 per cent).

OVERVIEW OF WORLD ECONOMIC OUTLOOK PROJECTIONS		
Nation	YEAR-OVER-YEAR (% CHANGE)	
	PROJECTIONS	
	2021	2022
The United States	5.1	2.5
Germany	3.5	3.1
The UK	4.5	5.0
China	8.1	5.6
India*	11.5	6.8

*For India, data and forecasts are presented on a fiscal year basis and GDP from 2011 onward is based on GDP at market prices with fiscal year 2011/12 as a base year; source: IMF

Q.95 Which of the following recommendation(s) was/were made by the Sarkaria Commission with reference to President Rule?

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

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] B

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

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

Q.96 With reference to the International Energy Agency (IEA), consider the following statements:

1. It is a grouping of major oil-exporting nations which was created by the members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
2. All the OECD member states are the members of the International Energy Agency (IEA).
3. India is an associate member of IEA.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News- Framework for Strategic Partnership** between the International Energy Agency (IEA) members and the Government of India was signed on 27th January 2021.

Option C is correct: The IEA was born with the 1973-1974 oil crisis when industrialised countries found they were not adequately equipped to deal with the oil embargo imposed by major producers that pushed prices to historically high levels. It has 30 member nations and only OECD nations are given membership to the IEA. All the OECD member states except for Chile, Iceland, Israel, Mexico and Slovenia are members of IEA. India became an associate member of the International Energy Agency in 2017. Mexico officially became the International Energy Agency's 30th member country in February 2018, and its first member in Latin America. It is headquartered in Paris, France. World Energy Outlook report is released by IEA annually.

Q.97 Consider the following statements:

1. Sigur plateau connects the Western and the Eastern Ghats.
 2. It has the Nilgiri Hills on its southwestern side and the Moyar River Valley on its north-eastern side.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News-** Recently, the Supreme Court has appointed conservationist as Member of a Technical Committee constituted by it on October 14, 2020, to hear complaints by land owners against the action taken by the Nilgris Collector.

Option C is correct: The Nilgris elephant corridor is situated in the ecologically fragile Sigur plateau, which connects the Western and the Eastern Ghats and sustains elephant populations and their genetic diversity. It is situated near the Mudumalai National Park in the Nilgiris district. It has the Nilgiri Hills on its southwestern side and the Moyar River Valley on its north-eastern side. The elephants mostly cross the plateau in search of food and water.

Q.98 P Umesh committee is sometimes seen in the news, it is related to which of the following?

- (a) Restructuring Small Scale Industries
(b) Working of capital market infrastructure institutions (MIIs)
(c) Disinvestment of PSUs
(d) Cyber Liability Insurance

[ANS] d

[SOL] **In News-** A committee set up by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has recommended the introduction of a cyber insurance policy.

Option D is correct: In October, 2020, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) has set up a committee headed by P Umesh to explore possibility of a basic standard product structure to provide insurance cover for individuals and establishments to manage their cyber risks. As, Aaid the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been rising incidences of cyberattacks and a growing number of high-profile data violations.

Q.99 He played an instrumental role in founding the present-day Punjab National Bank (PNB) in 1894. He had also helped establish the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic school system, popularly known as DAV schools. During World War I, he lived in the United States, where he founded the Indian Home Rule League of America (October 1917) in New York City. He was elected as the President of the Indian National Congress in 1920.

The above given lines best describe which one of the following personalities?

- (a) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
- (b) Lala Lajpat Rai
- (c) Aurbindo Ghosh
- (d) Bipin Chandra Pal

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News -Recently, the Prime Minister of India paid tributes to **Lala Lajpat Rai** on his Jayanti.

Option B is correct: He was born in Punjab on January 28 1865. to Munshi Radha Krishna Azad and Gulab Devi. He was influenced by the Hindu reformist movement of Swami Dayanand Saraswati and became a member of existing Arya Samaj Lahore. His ideology of nationalism and zealous patriotism earned him the title, 'Punjab Kesari' and 'Lion of Punjab'. He played an instrumental role in founding the present-day Punjab National Bank (PNB) in 1894. In 1897, he founded the Hindu Orphan Relief Movement to keep Christian missions from securing custody of orphans. He had also helped establish the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic school system, popularly known as DAV schools. Lala Lajpat Rai along with Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal formed the trinity of militant leaders known as 'Lal-Bal-Pal'. During World War I, he lived in the United States, where he founded the Indian Home Rule League of America (October 1917) in New York City. He was elected as the President of the Indian National Congress in 1920. He also founded the 'Servants of the People Society' which was a non-profit welfare organization at Lahore in 1921.

Q.100 With respect to Fog Pass, consider the following statements:

- 1. They are GPS-based devices that will assist pilots in running trains during foggy weather in winters
- 2. This was introduced on the recommendation of Kakodkar Committee

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct:** Fog PASS Device is a Global Positioning System (GPS) based handheld portable device that serves as an aid for the crew during foggy weather through the audiovisual alarm, whenever any landmark comes within the Geo-fence range. It helps drivers to enhance visibility during the foggy winter months. It displays the name and distance of approaching signals and other critical landmarks on the track like Level Crossing Gates. The device weighs less than 1.5 kg and operates on rechargeable Li-ion batteries which can run the device for 18 hours without recharging.

Statement 2 is correct: The introduction of the device is in line with the recommendation of the High-Level Safety Review Committee (Kakodkar Committee) constituted by the Ministry of Railways in 2011.

Q.101 The 'Global Corruption Report (GCR)' is released by which of the following?

- (a) United Nations Development Programme
- (b) World Economic Forum
- (c) Transparency International
- (d) World Bank

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News -The 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) released by Transparency International. Transparency International is a global movement working in over 100 countries to end the injustice of corruption. It is an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit.

Option C is correct: The index highlights the concern of persistent corruption in the health care systems and contributing in weakening of democracy amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Denmark and New Zealand topped the list with scores of 88, followed by Finland, Singapore, Sweden and Switzerland (85 each). India has

slipped six places to 86th among 180 countries in the corruption perception index (CPI) in 2020. India was ranked at 80th position out of 180 countries in 2019. India is still very low on the corruption index.

Q.102 With reference to the Kanha Tiger Reserve, consider the following statements:

1. It spans across Madhya Pradesh and Odisha.
2. It is a part of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves.
3. It is the first in India to get an official mascot named 'Bhoorsingh the Barasingha'.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Option C is correct: Kanha Tiger Reserve also known as Kanha–Kisli National Park situated in Mandla and Balaghat districts of Madhya Pradesh. It is one of the tiger reserves of India situated in the Maikal range of Satpuras in Madhya Pradesh. It is the largest national park of Madhya Pradesh. It was also the source of inspiration for Rudyard Kipling, a famous writer for his outstanding creation- "The Jungle Book". It is not a UNESCO World Heritage. Kanha tiger reserve is the first in India to get an official mascot named 'Bhoorsingh the Barasingha'.

Q.103 With reference to the National Infrastructure Fund (NIF), consider the following statements:

1. It was set up in 2005 for channelizing the proceeds from disinvestment of Central Public Sector Enterprises.
2. The one fourth of the NIF money was used to finance social sector schemes and the remaining for capitalization of PSUs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced an ambitious disinvestment target of Rs 2.1 lakh crore during 2020-21. The National Infrastructure Fund (NIF) is related to this.

Option A is correct: It is a fund outside the Consolidated Fund of India, hosting disinvestment proceeds. The fund is under Public Accounts of India. It will be managed by different fund managers (viz UTI, SBI and LIC at present) to earn profits. 75% of these profits will be used for funding social sector schemes and 25% for reviving and funding sick PSUs.

Q.104 With reference to the Indian economy, 'Open Market Operations' are:

- (a) Borrowing by scheduled banks from the RBI
- (b) Lending by commercial banks to industry and trade
- (c) Purchase and sale of government securities by the RBI
- (d) None of the above

[ANS] c

[SOL] Option C is correct: An open market operation (OMO) is an activity by a central bank to give (or take) liquidity in its currency to (or from) a bank or a group of banks. The OMOs are conducted by the RBI in the form of sale and purchase of Government Securities (G-Secs) to adjust liquidity in the market. If there is excess liquidity, then RBI undertakes sale of G-Secs and if there is liquidity crunch, then RBI conducts purchase of G-Secs.

Q.105 He founded the Independent Labour Party and Mooknayak was one of his publications. Identify the personality by following options?

- (a) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
- (b) B.R Ambedkar
- (c) Lala Lajpat Rai
- (d) MN Roy

[ANS] b

[SOL] Option B is correct: B.R Ambedkar is the correct option. He launched a movement against Dalit discrimination by creating public opinion through his writings in several periodicals such as Mook Nayak, Vahishkrit Bharat, and Equality Janta, which he started for the protection of Dalit rights. He founded the Independent Labour Party in August 1936 against the Brahmanical and capitalist structures in the society. ILP argued for Indian labour class while also stressing on the nature of caste structures and need for its annihilation.

Q.106 ‘The Great Reset’ initiative was seen in the news recently; it is launched by which of the following organisations?

- (a) World Bank
- (b) International Monetary Fund
- (c) World Economic Forum
- (d) Food Agriculture Programme

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News-Recently, the Prime Minister addressed the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) Davos Dialogue via video conferencing. The Davos Dialogues agenda marks the launch of the WEF’s Great Reset Initiative in the post-Covid world.

Option C is correct: The Great Reset is an initiative by the World Economic Forum. It has been conceptualised by the founder and executive chairman of the WEF, Klaus Schwab, and has evolved over the last few years. It is based on the assessment that the world economy is in deep trouble.

Q.107 With reference to the secured overnight financing rate (SOFR), sometimes seen in the news related to the economy, consider the following statements:

1. It is a benchmark interest rate for dollar-denominated derivatives.
2. It is a replacement for USD LIBOR

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- State Bank of India (SBI) has executed two inter-bank short term money market deals with pricing linked to SOFR (Secured Overnight Financing Rate).

Option C is correct: SOFR is a benchmark that financial institutions use to price loans for businesses and consumers. The overnight financing part of its name references how SOFR sets rates for lenders: It’s based on the rates that large financial institutions pay each other for overnight loans. It is an alternative risk-free rate that will serve as the successor to Libor in many U.S. dollar borrowing agreements.

Q.108 With reference to the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, consider the following statements:

1. It is located in the Western Ghats and spans over the parts of Kerala, Karnataka and Telangana.
2. It was the first biosphere reserve established in India.
3. The Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary and the Silent Valley are the protected areas present within this reserve.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News- The Supreme Court-appointed a conservationist as member of a Technical Committee constituted in the October 2020 case to hear complaints by landowners against sealing of their buildings infringing the Nilgiri Elephant Corridor in Tamil Nadu by the state authorities.

Option D is correct: The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve was the first biosphere reserve in India established in the year 1986. It is located in the Western Ghats and includes 2 of the 10 biogeographical provinces of India. It is located in the Western Ghats and encompasses parts of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka. The Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, Wyanaad Wildlife Sanctuary Bandipur National Park, Nagarhole National Park, Mukurthi National Park and Silent Valley are the protected areas present within this reserve.

Q.109 With reference to the Future Investment Initiative Forum (FII), consider the following statements:

1. It is informally called as “Davos in the desert”.
2. It is an annual future investment forum of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- The Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare addressed the 4th edition of the Future Investment Initiative Forum through a video conference.

Option A is correct: Formally the Future Investment Initiative (FII), it is widely being described as “Davos in the desert”. The informal name derives from the World Economic Forum’s annual meeting that is held in Davos, Switzerland, where world leaders discuss and shape agendas for pressing international issues. FII is an initiative that was first undertaken by the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman in 2017 to diversify the kingdom’s economy and reduce its dependence on petroleum products.

Q.110 Consider the following statements:

1. Length of a terrestrial mile is lesser than that of a nautical mile.
2. Harmattan is a dusty land- wind of the East African Coast.
3. Greece and Albania form a part of the Iberian Peninsula.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Statement 1 is correct and Statement 2 is not correct: One terrestrial mile (1609 metres) is lesser than one nautical mile (1852 meters). The Harmattan is a season in the West African subcontinent, which occurs the end of the November and middle of the March. It is characterised by the dry and dusty northeasterly trade wind which blows from the Sahara Desert over West Africa into the Gulf of Guinea.

Statement 3 is not correct: The Iberian peninsula includes Portugal, Spain, Andorra and Gibraltar.