

DAILY MCQs COMPILATION

with

EXPLANATIONS

JANUARY 2023

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HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

1. Tulsidas is credited with translating the Sanskrit Ramayana into Avadhi Ramcharitmanas, the life story of Shri Rama. In this context, which of the following are other popular works of Tulsidas?

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Ramagya Prashna | 2. Parvati Mangal |
| 3. Vikramorvasiyam | 4. Janaki Mangal |
| 5. Ramlalla Nahachhu | |

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

2. Consider the following pairs:

Buddhist sites

1. Thiksey Monastery
2. Pemayangtse Monastery
3. Bharatpur Monastery Complex
4. Dhamekh Stupa

Locations in the State/ UT of

- Arunachal Pradesh
Ladakh
West Bengal
Uttar Pradesh

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

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

3. Consider the following statements:

1. The India National Army (INA) was established by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in 1942.
2. Rashbehari Bose was elected as the president of the Indian Independence league.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

4. A poet and a philosopher, he is regarded as a cultural icon by in Tamil Nadu. In the early 16th century, a temple was built within the Ekambareswarar temple complex in Mylapore and it was dedicated to him.

The above description mentions which of the following personalities?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| (a) Vallabhacharya | (b) Thiruvalluvar |
| (c) Melpathur Narayana Bhattathiri | (d) Bilva Mangala |

5. Recently the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) discovered two 1200-year-old miniature votive stupas at which of the following locations in India?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (a) Nalanda Mahavihara site complex | (b) Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh |
| (c) Kushinagar pilgrimage site | (d) Ladakh |

6. Consider the following statements:
1. It is considered to be the world's largest open-air theatre.
 2. It came into existence in 1947-48 as part of the celebration of the country's Independence
 3. It is held annually in the state of Odisha.
 4. It also finds a mention in the Guinness Book of World Records.
- The statements given above are related to which of the following festivals?
- (a) Dhanu Yatra (b) Bihu
(c) Hemis Festival (d) Hornbill Festival
7. Which of the following Viceroy started the Census in India?
- (a) Lord Lytton (b) Lord Mountbatten
(c) Lord Mayo (d) Lord Curzon
8. With reference to Theatre Forms, consider the following statements:
1. Kuruvanji in Karnataka is characterised by classical Sanskrit poetry and songs.
 2. Pagati Veshalu is a role-playing act of Tamil Nadu.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
9. Which of the following personality was associated with Satyashodhak Samaj?
- (a) Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati (b) Sarojini Naidu
(c) Savitribai Phule (d) Jhalkari Bai
10. With reference to Battle of Bhima Koregaon, consider the following statements:
1. The Battle of Koregaon was fought between Maratha ruler Bajji Rao Peshwa II and the British East India Company.
 2. The Battle of Bhima Koregaon was part of the Third Anglo-Maratha War.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
11. With reference to Chhatrapati Shivaji, which of the following statement(s) is/are correct?
1. His rule was contemporary to the rule of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan.
 2. Asht Pradhan were appointed by him for advice on the matters of the state.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

In News: Recently, Bihar Education Minister Chandra Shekhar said the Ramcharitmanas "spreads hatred in society".

The poem was written in the 16th century in the **Awadhi dialect** which is mainly spoken in the areas that are today's **Lucknow, Prayagraj, and Ayodhya districts of Uttar Pradesh**

Tulsidas is credited with translating the Sanskrit Ramayana into Avadhi Ramcharitmanas, the life story of Shri Rama.

- Besides Ramcharitmanas, **Ramlalla Nahachhu**, Barvai Ramayan, **Ramagya Prashna**, **Parvati Mangal**, and **Janaki Mangal** in the Awadhi language are some of Tulsidas' popular works.

Vikramorvasiyam is the second of the three dramas attributed to **Kalidasa**, the other two being **Abhijnanasakuntalam** and **Malavikagnimitram**.

2. (b)

Pair 1 is not correctly matched: Thiksey Monastery is a gompa affiliated with the Gelug sect of Tibetan Buddhism. It is located on the top of a hill in **Thiksey in the Ladakh Union Territory**.

Pair 2 is not correctly matched: Pemayangtse Monastery is a Buddhist monastery in Sikkim state located 110 km west of Gangtok. Designed and founded by Lama Lhatsun Chempo in 1647. It is one of the oldest and premier monasteries of Sikkim.

Pair 3 is correctly matched: Buddhist monastery complex has been recently excavated at **Bharatpur** in West Bengal alongside early village settlements from the chalcolithic age.

Pair 4 is correctly matched: Dhamek Stupa is a massive stupa located at the archaeological site of Sarnath in the state of UP. It marks the precise location where the **Buddha preached his first discourse** to his first five disciples, and where all five eventually became fully liberated.

3. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Azad Hind Fauj or the India National Army (INA) was first **established by Mohan Singh** in 1942. It was revived by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on October 21, 1943, during the Second World War to secure India's complete independence from British Raj. Hence, every year on 21 October, the anniversary of the formation of Azad Hind Government is celebrated across the country. On this day, India's first independent provisional government named Azad Hind Government was announced.

Statement 2 is correct: The Japanese after defeating the British in South East Asia, persuaded captain Mohan Singh to work in collaboration with the Japanese for India's freedom. In 1942, a conference of Indians was held in Tokyo, and they formed the Indian Independence league. This was followed by a conference in Bangkok (June 1942), where **Rashbehari Bose was elected president of the league and a decision was taken to raise the Indian National Army**. Captain Mohan Singh was appointed the commander of the INA, which had about 40,000 Indian soldiers. This conference invited Bose to lead the movement.

4. (b)

Option b is correct: Union Home and Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah have extended his warm greetings to the people on **Thiruvalluvar day**.

About

- Thiruvalluvar Day was **first celebrated on May 17 and 18 in 1935**.
- In the present time, it is usually observed either on January 15 or 16 in Tamil Nadu and is a part of Pongal celebrations.

Who is Thiruvalluvar?

- He is a poet, and philosopher
- He is regarded as a cultural icon by Tamils.
- Very little is known about his family background, religious affiliation, or birthplace.
 - It is believed that he used to live in the town of Mylapore, which in today's time is a neighbourhood in Chennai.

- ♦ Some accounts say that he lived from the 8th to the 9th century.
- ♦ Tamil orator and writer and father of the Pure Tamil movement, **Maraimalai Adigal** deduced 31 BC as the birth year of Valluvar, while **Czech scholar** in Indian literature and linguistics, Kamil Zvelebil inferred that Thiruvalluvar lived around 500 AD.

Works

- Thiruvalluvar's primary work Thirukkural contains 1330 couplets (kurals) that are divided into 133 sections of 10 couplets each.
 - The text is divided into three parts with teachings on dharma, artha, and kama (virtue, wealth and love).

Social significance

- In the early 16th century, a temple was built within the Ekambareswarar temple complex in Mylapore and it was dedicated to Thiruvalluvar.
- In 1976, a temple memorial called Valluvar Kotam was built in Chennai and houses one of the largest auditoriums in Asia.

5. (a)

Miniature Stupas of Nalanda

- **Location:**
 - Miniature stupas have been discovered near Sarai Tila mound within the premises of 'Nalanda Mahavihara', a world heritage site in Nalanda district in the state.
- **About:**
 - The stupas are carved from stone, depict Buddha figures.
 - Archeologists suggest that the stupas must be around 1200 years old.
- **Miniature stupa building:**
 - Beginning in the 7th century CE in India, small miniature terracotta stupas became popular as votive offerings.
 - Devout pilgrims visiting various holy sites and temples throughout Asia would either purchase small votive offerings or make their own.

6. (a)

Dhanu Yatra

- The 'Dhanu Yatra' festival, considered to be the world's largest open-air theatre, began recently in Odisha's Bargarh.
 - The vibrant Dhanu Yatra is associated with the culture of Odisha.
- **Origin of the festival:**
 - The 'Dhanu Yatra', which marks the victory of good over evil, came into existence in Bargarh in 1947-48 as part of the **celebration of the country's Independence** and **is held annually**.
- **About:**
 - Spread across a 8 km radius area around the Bargarh municipality, it is world's largest open air theater, one that finds a mention in the Guinness Book of World Records.
 - The enactments of the play are being performed in many other places in Western Odisha. The major one of these is the original one at Bargarh.

7. (c)

The decennial census exercise has been **postponed till September**, at least, as the government informed States.

The Census was first started under British **Viceroy Lord Mayo in 1872**. It helped in framing new policies, government programs to uplift areas of improvement in the community.

8. (d)

A five-member Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court (SC) is going to announce its verdict on a **batch of petitions seeking to strike down a 2017 Tamil Nadu law** that protects Jallikattu.

Statement 1 is not correct: Kuruvanji in **Tamil Nadu** is characterised by classical **Tamil poetry** and songs. The first Kuruvanji was composed by Thirukutarajappa Kaviyar. The basic theme revolves around a love-struck heroine. Kuruvanji literally means 'fortune-teller' who predicts the fate of the heroine. It is performed in a dance ballet form with Bharatnatyam being the principal dance form in Tamil Nadu.

Statement 2 is not correct: Pagati Veshalu is performed in **Telangana** and Krishna District of **Andhra Pradesh**. Primarily a role-playing act, it revolves around a principal character known as **vesham (disguise)** and other sub-characters.

9. (c)

About Savitribai Phule

- She was a woman from the **Mali community** and went on to become an educator, a challenger to caste hierarchies and barriers, and a writer.
- Born in Naigaon village of Maharashtra's Satara district on January 3, 1831, to Khandoji Nevse and Lakshmi.

Married off at an early age, her husband **Jyotirao Phule** is said to have educated her at home.

Major Contributions

- **Education:** At a time when it was considered unacceptable for women to even attain education, the couple went on to open a school for girls in Bhide Wada, **Pune, in 1848**.
 - This became the country's first girls' school.
 - The couple opened more such schools for girls, Shudras, and Ati-Shudras (the backward castes and Dalits, respectively) in Pune, leading to discontent among Indian nationalists like Bal Gangadhar Tilak.
- **Social reformer:** Along with Jyotirao, Savitribai started the **Balhatya Pratibandhak Griha** ('Home for the Prevention of Infanticide') for pregnant widows facing discrimination.
 - Savitribai Phule also advocated **inter-caste marriages**, widow remarriage, and eradication of child marriage, sati, and dowry systems, among other social issues.
 - **In 1873, the Phule's set up the Satyashodhak Samaj** ('Truth-seekers' society'), a platform open to all, irrespective of their caste, religion or class hierarchies, with the sole aim of bringing social equity.
 - As an extension, they started '**Satyashodhak Marriage**' – a rejection of Brahmanical rituals where the marrying couple takes a pledge to promote education and equality.
 - ♦ Savitribai became involved in **relief work during the 1896 famine in Maharashtra** and the **1897 Bubonic plague**.

10. (c)

The Battle of Koregaon took place on **1 January 1818** in the village of Koregaon, **Maharashtra** between troops of Maratha ruler **Baji Rao Peshwa II** and **800 troops of the British East India Company**.

- **The soldiers of the East India Company successfully fought** the Peshwa troops, preventing them from advancing into Pune.
 - After a 12-hour-long battle, the loss of 600 men, and fearing reinforcements from Pune, Baji Rao II withdrew his troops from Koregaon and gave up his efforts to attack Pune.
 - The **Battle of Bhima Koregaon** was part of the **Third Anglo-Maratha War**.
 - The third Anglo-Maratha War resulted in the defeat of the Peshwas which led to the rule of the British East India Company in almost all parts of South, Central and Western India.

Why Did The Battle Take Place?

- The Peshwas had established themselves as **overlords of the Deccan till the end of the 18th century**.
- **By 1802, the British East India Company had entered into treaties with Maratha** rulers of the Deccan, which included the Peshwas of Pune, the Scindias of Gwalior, the Holkars of Indore, the Gaekwads of Baroda, and the Bhonsles of Nagpur.
- Under the treaties, **these former rulers ceded a large number of their rights of lordship, revenue, and other privileges**.
- **Peshwa leader Baji Rao II**, the last of the reluctant Maratha leaders, was defeated by the British in the Battle of Khadki in November 1817 and escaped to Satara.
- Baji Rao, cornered after being pursued by **British Colonel Smith** for two months, turned his focus and his 30,000-strong army to Pune at the end of December 1817.

11. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Shivaji was formally crowned as the Chhatrapati (Monarch) of his realm at Raigad in 1674. At that time the Mughal throne was occupied by Aurangzeb (Alamgir) (1658-1707).

Statement 2 is correct: He had a Council of Ministers (Asht Pradhan) to advise him on the matters of the state, however, he was not bound by its suggestions and he could appoint or dismiss the members. Asht Pradhan is one of the unique features of the Maratha empire.

■■■■

ECONOMY

1. With reference to Short selling, consider the following statements:

1. It is a trading strategy that speculates on the decline in a stock or other security's price.
2. It has a high risk and reward ratio.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. With reference to India's Tourism sector, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is allowed under the automatic route in the tourism and hospitality industry in India.
2. In the Union Budget 2022-23, Rs. 2,400 crore has been allocated to the Ministry of Tourism which is 18.42% lower than the allocation for FY 2021-22.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

3. Consider the following statements:

1. A trademark is a sign capable of distinguishing the goods or services of one enterprise from those of other enterprises.
2. The Trademark Law Treaty (TLT) is administered by the World Trade Organization(WTO).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

4. Consider the following statements:

1. Compared to the stock market investment, bonds are considered to be a safer investment.
2. The bond market is much larger than the stock market, in terms of aggregate market value.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

5. Consider the following statements:

1. Microfinance Institutions are financial companies that provide small loans to people who do not have any access to banking facilities.
2. In India, all loans that are below Rs.2 lakh can be considered as microloans.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

6. Consider the following statements:

1. Current Account Deficit (CAD) is the shortfall between the money flowing in on imports and the money flowing out on exports.
2. Balance of Trade measures only the gap in earnings and expenditure on exports and imports of goods and services.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

7. It is a service offered by NPCI to banks which aims at facilitating interbank high volume, low value debit/credit transactions, which are repetitive and electronic in nature. What is it?

- (a) Immediate Payment Service (IMPS)
(b) National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT)
(c) USSD (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data)
(d) National Automated Clearing House (NACH)

8. "Global Economic Prospects" is released by which of the following?

- (a) International Monetary Fund
(b) World Trade Organization
(c) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
(d) World Bank

9. Consider the following statements:

1. Banks whose assets cross 10% of the GDP are considered as Domestically Systemic Important Banks (DSIBs).
2. At present only State Bank of India and ICICI banks are categorized as DSIBs by the RBI.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

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

1. India accounts for a fifth of the world's millet production.
2. The year 2018 was declared the National Year of Millets in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

11. With reference to Fiat Money, consider the following statements:

1. It is a government-issued currency.
2. It is not backed by a commodity such as gold.
3. To curb inflation, the printing of Fiat money is increased.

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

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

In News: Short seller Hindenburg Research disclosed short positions in Adani Group, alleging stock manipulation and accounting fraud in its latest investigative report.

Both the **statements 1 and 2 are correct: Short selling** is a trading strategy based on the expectation that the price of the security will fall.

It is an investment or trading strategy that speculates on the decline in a stock or other security's price.

It occurs when an investor borrows a security and sells it on the open market, planning to buy it back later for less money.

Short sellers bet on, and profit from, a drop in a security's price. This can be contrasted with long investors who want the price to go up.

Short selling has a high risk/reward ratio: It can offer big profits, but losses can mount quickly and infinitely due to margin calls.

2. (a)

In News: National Tourism Day is celebrated across the country on January 25 every year.

Statement 1 is correct : India offers several forms of tourism such as **cultural, nature, heritage, educational, business, sports, rural, medical, cruise and eco-tourism.**

In order to attract foreign investment in the tourism sector, 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is allowed under the automatic route in the tourism and hospitality industry in India, subject to applicable regulations and laws.

Statement 2 is not correct : In the Union Budget 2022-23, Rs. 2,400 crore has been allocated to the Ministry of Tourism which is 18.42% higher than the allocation for FY 2021-22.

3. (a)

Recently, Delhi High Court ruled and dismissed a case of trademark infringement brought by the global fast food chain against Suberb, a Delhi-based restaurant.

Statement 1 is correct: Trademark is a symbol, design, word or phrase that is identified with a business. When a trademark is registered, its owner can claim "exclusive rights" on its use.

A trademark is a sign capable of distinguishing the goods or services of one enterprise from those of other enterprises.

Statement 2 is not correct : Trademark Law Treaty (TLT) is administered by the **World Intellectual Property Organization.**

The aim of the Trademark Law Treaty (TLT) is to standardize and streamline national and regional trademark registration procedures

4. (c)

More about the Bonds

Meaning: A bond is simply a **loan taken out by a company.**

Instead of going to a bank, the **company gets the money from investors** who buy its bonds.

Interest coupon: In exchange for the **capital**, the company pays an **interest coupon**, which is the annual interest rate paid on a bond expressed as a percentage of the face value.

Interest: The company pays the interest at predetermined intervals (usually annually or semiannually) and returns the principal on the maturity date, ending the loan.

Stock vs. Bonds

Safer: When bonds and stocks are compared, bonds are considered to be a safer investment. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

It is important to note that bonds are **not completely risk-free** and only receive preference in case of bankruptcy.

Less volatility: Owning a stock offers more potential for returns, but bonds come with much less downside volatility.

Bond investments play a key role in balancing and reducing the short-term volatility associated with stocks.

Larger market: The bond market is actually much larger than the stock market, in terms of aggregate market value. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

5. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) are financial companies that provide small loans to people who do not have any access to banking facilities. MFI promotes financial inclusion which enables the poor and low-income households to come out of poverty, increase their income levels and improve overall living standards. It can facilitate achievement of national policies that target poverty reduction, women empowerment, assistance to vulnerable groups, and improvement in the standards of living.

Statement 2 is not correct: The definition of “small loans” varies between countries. In India, all loans that are **below Rs. 1 lakh** can be considered as microloans.

6. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Current Account Deficit (CAD) is the shortfall between the **money flowing in on exports**, and the **money flowing out on imports**. It measures the gap between the money received into and sent out of the country on the trade of goods and services and also the transfer of money from domestically-owned factors of production abroad.

Statement 2 is correct: Current Account Deficit (CAD) is slightly different from the Balance of Trade, which measures only the gap in earnings and expenditure on exports and imports of goods and services. Whereas, the current account also factors in the payments from domestic capital deployed overseas. For example, rental income from an Indian owning a house in the UK would be computed in the Current Account, but not in the Balance of Trade.

7. (d)

Option d is correct: National Automated Clearing House (NACH) is a service offered by NPCI to banks which aims at facilitating interbank high volume, low value debit/credit transactions, which are repetitive and electronic in nature. It allows participating banks for centralized posting of inward debit/credit transactions and is run by NPCI.

National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT): NEFT is a nation-wide payment system facilitating one-to-one funds transfer. Under this scheme, individuals, firms and corporates can electronically transfer funds from any bank branch to any individual, firm or corporate having an account with any other bank branch in the country participating in the scheme.

Immediate Payment Service (IMPS): IMPS offers an instant 24X7 interbank electronic fund transfer service through mobile phones. IMPS is an emphatic tool to transfer money instantly within banks across India **through mobile, internet and ATM**. It is offered by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

USSD (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data) is a Global System for Mobile (GSM) communication technology that is used to send text between a mobile phone and an application program in the network.

8. (d)

Global Economic Prospects:

Global Economic Prospects is a World Bank Group flagship report that examines global economic developments and prospects, with a special focus on emerging market and developing economies. It is issued twice a year, in January and June.

The January edition includes in-depth analyses of topical policy challenges while the June edition contains shorter analytical pieces.

9. (d)

What are Domestic- Systematically Important Banks (DSIBs)?

DSIBs are also referred to as “Too Big To Fall” (TBTF) because of their size, cross jurisdictional activities, complexity and lack of substitute and interconnection.

Banks whose assets **cross 2% of the GDP are considered DSIBs**. If these banks fail, they can have a disruptive effect on the economy.

D-SIBs are categorised under five buckets. According to these buckets the banks have to keep aside the **Additional Common Equity Tier 1 as a percentage of Risk Weighted Assets (RWAs)**.

D-SIBs are mandated under special provisions and are closely monitored by the central bank to ensure their better functioning and prevent the indulgence of such banks in any grey areas such as money laundering etc.

The Systematically Important Banks domestically are identified by **Central Banks of a country and globally by BASEL committee** on banking supervision.

At present **State Bank of India is placed under Bucket 3 & HDFC and ICICI are under Bucket 1.**

10. (c)

The United Nations has declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets (IYM).

Statement 1 is correct: India accounts for a fifth of the world's millets production. India accounts for a fifth of the world's millets production. Between 2003-04 and 2021-22, India's millet output has actually fallen from 21.32 million tonnes (mt) to 15.92 mt. Almost 98% of it is just three cereals — bajra (down from 12.11 mt to 9.62 mt), jowar (6.68 mt to 4.23 mt) and ragi (1.97 mt to 1.70 mt) — with small millets accounting for the rest (0.56 mt to 0.37 mt).

Statement 2 is correct: In April 2018, Millets were rebranded as “Nutri Cereals”, followed by the year 2018 being declared as the **National Year of Millets**, aiming at larger promotion and demand generation. The Government of India sponsored the proposal for the International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 which was accepted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

11. (c)

The RBI launched a **limited test of the retail digital rupee** for specific use cases on November 1, 2022.

Statement 1 is correct: Fiat Money is a government-issued currency.

Statement 2 is correct: It is not backed by a commodity such as gold.

Statement 3 is not correct: It gives central banks greater control over the economy because they can control how much money is printed.

Most modern paper currencies such as the US dollar are fiat currencies.

One danger of fiat money is that **governments will print too much of it, resulting in hyperinflation.**



INDIAN POLITY & CONSTITUTION

1. In the context of the Finance Commission, consider the following statements:

1. It is constituted by the President under the Article 270 of the Constitution.
2. First Finance Commission was constituted under the chairmanship of Shri K.C. Neogy.
3. It recommends the sharing of taxes between Union and State Governments.

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 |

2. Consider the following statements:

1. The Usha Thorat Committee was set up in 2017 to examine the sub-categorization of Other Backward Classes.
2. The 103rd Constitutional Amendment gave constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes.
3. Article 342A gives the President the power to notify a class as Socially and Educationally Backward Communities (SEBC).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

3. With reference to the Annual Budget, consider the following statement:

1. The term Union Budget is mentioned under the Article 112 of the Constitution of India.
2. The Budget for the Railways and Union Budget are presented separately.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

4. Consider the following statements

1. In India, there is no specific legislation that protects journalists from being asked to disclose their sources.
2. The Law Commission of India in its 93rd Report in 1983 recommended recognising journalistic privilege by amending the Indian Evidence Act.

Which of the statements given above is /are correct?

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

5. With reference to GST Council, consider the following statements:

1. Any minister can be nominated by each State Government as a member of the GST Council.
2. The Council can make recommendations to the Union and the States on special rates for raising additional resources during natural calamities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

6. Consider the following statements:

1. Judges of the High Courts and the Supreme Court are appointed by the provisions mentioned in Articles 124 and 217 of the Constitution.
2. The High Court Collegium consists of the Chief Justice of the High Court and four senior-most judges of the apex court.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

7. Consider the following statements:

1. Section 8 of the Representation of People's Act 1951, prevents a person convicted of the illegal use of the freedom of speech from contesting an election.
2. Section 295A of the Indian Penal Code deals with deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

8. Consider the following statements:

1. The 9th Schedule was added to the Constitution by the First Amendment in 1951.
2. The Supreme Court has for the first time recognised the phrase 'basic structure' in the historic case of Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala in 1973.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

9. With reference to formation of new States, consider the following statements:

1. The Indian Constitution provides that a State has no say over the formation of new States beyond communicating its views to Parliament.
2. A bill calling for the formation of new States can be introduced in Parliament without the recommendation of the President.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

10. With reference to Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs), consider the following statements:

1. A foreign national is eligible for registration as an OCI if he/she was a citizen of India on or at any time after 15.08.1947.
2. Minor children of OCI persons are also eligible to become OCI.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

11. Which of the following is the State List Subject?
- (a) Delimitation of cantonment areas (b) Local self-government in such areas
(c) Railways (d) Agriculture
12. In which of the following state is the Autonomous Council, under the 6th Schedule is not present?
- (a) Assam (b) Manipur
(c) Meghalaya (d) Tripura
13. Which of the following are Reasonable Restrictions mentioned under the Article 19 of the Constitution of India?
1. Sovereignty and Integrity of India
 2. Security of The State
 3. Public Order, Decency or Morality
 4. Incitement to an Offence

Select the Correct answer using the codes given below.

- (a) 1 and 3 only (b) 2 and 4 only
(c) 1, 2 and 3 (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
14. With reference to Parliamentary Privileges, consider the following statements:
1. The Indian Constitution expressly mentions two privileges, that is, freedom of speech in Parliament and right of publication of its proceedings.
 2. The parliamentary privileges extend to the President who is also an integral part of the Parliament.

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
15. With reference to National Medical Commission (NMC), consider the following statements:
1. The NMC is a statutory body in India.
 2. It objectively assesses medical institutions periodically in a transparent manner.

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
16. With reference to Supreme Court (SC), consider the following statements:
1. The laws declared by the Supreme Court are binding on all Courts within the territory of India.
 2. The SC can reverse a previous decision only when a new legislation is enacted having the effect of abrogating a decision.

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

17. Which of the following was recommended by the landmark Prakash Singh judgment of the Supreme Court?
1. National Data Governance Framework Policy
 2. Details of Model Prison Manual
 3. All states and Union Territories to bring in police reforms
 4. Constitution of Police Establishment Boards (PEB)

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

In News: The government will soon start the process of setting up the Sixteenth Finance Commission, with the Finance Ministry likely to notify the terms of references for the constitutional body.

Statement 1 is not correct: Finance Commission is a Constitutionally mandated body that is at the center of fiscal federalism.

It is constituted by the **President under Article 280 of the Constitution**.

Statements 2 and 3 are correct: The **First Finance Commission** was constituted vide Presidential Order dated 22.11.1951 under the chairmanship of **Shri K.C. Neogy** on 6th April 1952. Fifteenth Finance Commissions have been Constituted so far at intervals of every five years. Its core responsibility is to evaluate the state of finances of the Union and State Governments, **recommend the sharing of taxes between them**, lay down the principles determining the distribution of these taxes among States.

2. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Usha Thorat Committee is an advisory committee formed by SEBI on matters of the development of mutual funds under the leadership of the former deputy governor of RBI on July 10, 2020.

- The Commission for the sub-categorisation of OBCs was formed under the leadership of former justice G. Rohini.

Statement 2 is not correct: Constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes was given by the 102nd Constitutional Amendment Act.

Statement 3 is correct: Article 342A gives the President the power to notify a class as SEBC and the power of Parliament to alter the central SEBC list.

3. (d)

Statement 1 is not correct: According to Article 112 of the Indian Constitution, the **annual financial statement of a year** is a statement of the estimated receipts and expenditure of the government for that particular year. **The term 'Union Budget' is nowhere mentioned in the Indian Constitution.**

Statement 2 is not correct: Till 2017, the Budget for the Railways and Union Budget were presented separately. After being presented separately for 92 years, the **Railway budget was merged in the Union Budget in 2017 and presented together.**

4. (c)

In News: Recently, the Delhi High Court quoted that journalists are not exempted from disclosing sources.

Statement 1 is correct: In India, there is **no specific legislation** that protects journalists from being asked to disclose their sources.

- **Article 19** of the Constitution guarantees the right to freedom of speech and expression to all citizens.
 - **Investigative agencies** can **issue notice** to anyone, including journalists, to provide information.
 - Like any citizen, a journalist can be compelled to give evidence in Court. If she does not comply, the **journalist can face charges of Contempt of Court.**

Statement 2 is correct: The Law Commission of India in its 93rd Report in 1983 recommended recognising journalistic privilege by **amending the Indian Evidence Act.**

- **The report suggested insertion of a new provision which would read:**
 - “No court shall require a person to disclose the sources of information contained in a publication for which he is responsible, where such information has been obtained by him on the express agreement or implied understanding that the source will be kept confidential”

5. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: As per Article 279A (1) of the amended Constitution, the GST Council has to be constituted by the President within 60 days of the commencement of Article 279A. The notification for bringing into force Article 279A with effect from 12th September, 2016 was issued on 10th September, 2016. As per Article 279A of the amended Constitution, the GST Council which will be a joint forum of the Centre and the States, shall consist of the following members: -

- Union Finance Minister - Chairperson
- The Union Minister of State, in-charge of Revenue of finance - Member
- The Minister In-charge of finance or taxation or any other Minister nominated by each State Government - Members

Statement 2 is correct: As per Article 279A (4), the Council will make recommendations to the Union and the States on important issues related to GST, like the goods and services that may be subjected or exempted from GST, model GST Laws, principles that govern Place of Supply, threshold limits, GST rates including the floor rates with bands, special rates for raising additional resources during natural calamities/disasters, special provisions for certain States, etc.

6. (a)

Collegium system

- **About:**
 - Judges of **the High Courts and the Supreme Court** are appointed by the provisions mentioned in Articles 124 and 217 of the Constitution of India. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - ♦ **Articles 124 and 217** state that the President shall appoint judges to the Supreme Court and high courts after consultation with the Chief Justice of India and other judges.
- **Composition:**
 - The Supreme Court Collegium consists of the CJI and four senior-most judges of the apex court.
 - The High Court Collegium consists of the Chief Justice of the High Court and two senior-most judges of that particular court. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**

7. (c)

In India, hate speech is **regulated by several laws and acts**, including the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), and the Indian Information Technology (IT) Act.

- **Indian Penal Code (IPC):** It contains provisions that **prohibit hate speech**, such as :
 - ♦ **Section 153A:** It deals with actions promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony.
 - ♦ **Section 295A:** It deals with deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs.
 - ♦ **Section 505:** It pertains to statements creating or promoting enmity, hatred or ill-will between classes
- **Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC):** It provides for the **arrest of individuals** who have committed a cognizable offense, such as hate speech.
- **Indian Information Technology (IT) Act:** It **regulates online speech**, including hate speech. Under the act, intermediaries such as **social media platforms** are required to **remove content** that is in violation of the law within 36 hours of being notified.
- **Court Judgements:** In the past, The Supreme court of India has issued several judgments on hate speech.
 - **Shreya Singhal v. Union of India (2015):** The court struck down Section 66A of the IT Act, which had criminalized online speech, stating that it violated the right to freedom of speech and expression.
 - **Sukumar v. State of Tamil Nadu (2019):** The court held that **hate speech on social media platforms** is not protected by the right to freedom of speech and expression.
- **Representation of People's Act(1951):**
 - **Section 8:** It prevents a person convicted of the illegal use of the freedom of speech from contesting an election.
 - **Sections 123(3A) and 125 of the RPA:** It bars the promotion of animosity on the grounds of race, religion, community, caste, or language in reference to elections and includes it under corrupt electoral practices.

8. (c)

Recently, at the **83rd All-India Presiding Officers Conference** in Jaipur, the Vice President rekindled the debate over the “Basic Structure” doctrine especially in the context of the Supreme **Court striking down the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act of 2015.**

Who was Kesavananda Bharati?

- Born in 1940, Kesavananda Bharati was the head to the **Edneer Mutt**, a Hindu monastery in Kasargod, Kerala who **challenged the Constitution (29th Amendment) Act, 1972**, which placed the **Kerala Land Reforms Act, 1963** and its amending Act **into the 9th Schedule** of the Constitution.
- The **9th Schedule** was added to the Constitution by the **First Amendment in 1951** along with Article 31-B to **provide a “protective umbrella” to land reforms laws** in order to prevent them from being challenged in court.

Kesavananda Bharati Vs. State of Kerala (1973):

- The Supreme Court has for the first time recognised the phrase ‘**basic structure**’ in the historic case of **Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala in 1973.**
- It involved a property dispute which was decided by a special bench of the Supreme Court of India consisting of 13 judges which ruled with a 7–6 majority on 24 April, 1973, that **Article 368 of the constitution did not provide the Parliament the authority to change the basic structure** of the Constitution.

- The Court propounded what has come to be known as the “Basic Structure of the Constitution” which **could not be abrogated even by a constitutional amendment**”.

9. (a)

Recently, TIPRA (Tipraha Indigenous Progressive Regional Alliance) Motha chief announced that they will ally with any political party that gives them **written assurance to support** their demand for **Greater Tipraland**.

Statement 1 is correct: The procedure for the formation of new States laid down in Article 3 of the Constitution provides that a State has no say over the formation of new States beyond communicating its views to Parliament. Article 3 assigns to Parliament the power to enact legislation for the formation of new States. Parliament may create new States in a number of ways, namely by

- Separating territory from any State
- Uniting two or more States
- Uniting parts of States or
- Uniting any territory to a part of any State.

Statement 2 is not correct: A bill calling for the formation of new States can be introduced in either House of Parliament **only on the recommendation of the President**. Such a bill must be referred by the President to the concerned State Legislature for expressing its views to Parliament if it contains provisions that affect the areas, boundaries or name of that State. The basis of reorganisation could be: Linguistic, religious, Ethnic or Administrative. Parliament’s power under Article 3 extends to increasing or diminishing the area of any State and altering the boundaries or name of any State.

10. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: A foreign national, who was eligible to become citizen of India on 26.01.1950 or was a citizen of India on or at anytime after 26.01.1950 or belonged to a territory that became part of India after 15.08.1947 and his/her children and grandchildren, is eligible for registration as an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI).

Statement 2 is correct: Minor children of such persons are also eligible for OCI. However, if the applicant had ever been a citizen of Pakistan or Bangladesh, he/she will not be eligible for OCI.

11. (d)

Recently, **the first** All India Annual State Ministers’ Conference on Water began in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

Union List: Delimitation of cantonment areas, local self-government in such areas, Railways

State List: Agriculture, Water

12. (b)

Recently, the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** constituted a high-powered committee for the Union Territory of Ladakh chaired by the Minister of State for Home Affairs.

6th Schedule:

- It protects tribal populations and provides autonomy to the communities through creation of autonomous development councils that can frame laws on land, public health, agriculture and others.
- As of now, 10 autonomous councils exist in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.

13. (d)

Article 19 which guarantees freedom of speech and expression is a right invoked against the state. There are certain grounds on which the Constitution of India introduces restrictions. Article 19 (2) of Indian Constitution empowers the State to instill reasonable restrictions on the following grounds:

- Security of the State;
- Friendly Relation with Foreign States;
- Public Order;
- Decency and morality;
- Contempt of court;
- Defamation;
- Incitement to offense;
- Integrity and Sovereignty of India.

14. (a)

Recently, the Supreme Court (SC) held that there is no reason to impose “**additional restrictions**” on the **right to free speech of Ministers**.

Statement 1 is correct: All Members of Parliament (MPs) enjoy rights and immunities, individually and collectively, so that they can discharge their duties and functions effectively. Any instance when these rights and immunities are disregarded by any member of Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha is an offence, called ‘breach of privilege’, which is punishable under the Laws of Parliament. **Article 105 of the Indian Constitution** expressly mentions two privileges, that is, freedom of speech in Parliament and right of publication of its proceedings. Apart from the privileges as specified in the Constitution, the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, provides for freedom from arrest and detention of members under civil process during the continuance of the meeting of the House or of a committee thereof and forty days before its commencement and forty days after its conclusion. The Constitution also extends the parliamentary privileges to **those persons who are entitled to speak and take part in the proceedings** of a House of Parliament or any of its committees. These include the Attorney General of India.

Statement 2 is not correct: The parliamentary privileges **do not extend** to the President who is also an integral part of the Parliament. Article 361 of the Constitution provides for privileges for the President.

15. (c)

The draft National Medical Commission bill 2022 seeks to introduce a **fifth autonomous body** under the country’s apex medical education regulator to conduct the National Exit Test (NExT).

Statement 1 is correct: The National Medical Commission (NMC) has been constituted by an act of Parliament known as National Medical Commission Act, 2019 which came into force on 25.9.2020 by gazette notification dated 24.9.2020. The Board of Governors in supersession of Medical Council of India constituted under section 3A of the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 stands dissolved thereafter.

Statement 2 is correct: The Aim of the National Medical Commission are to (i) improve access to quality and affordable medical education, (ii) ensure availability of adequate and high quality medical professionals in all parts of the country; (iii) promote equitable and universal healthcare that encourages community health perspective and makes services of medical professionals accessible to all the citizens; (iv) encourages medical professionals to adopt latest medical research in their work and to contribute to research; (v) objectively assess medical institutions periodically in

a transparent manner; (vi) maintain a medical register for India; (vi) enforce high ethical standards in all aspects of medical services; (vii) have an effective grievance redressal mechanism.

16. (a)

Recently, a majority of four judges on a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court (SC) found **no flaw in the government's process to demonetise ₹500 and ₹1000 banknotes** through a gazette notification issued on November 8, 2016.

Statement 1 is correct: Article 141 of the Constitution of India stipulates that the law declared by the Supreme Court shall be binding on all Courts within the territory of India. Thus, the general principles laid down by the Supreme Court are binding on each individual including those who are not a party to an order.

Statement 2 is not correct: Stare Decisis is a Latin term which signifies To stand by decided cases or to uphold precedents or to maintain former adjudications. In India, the doctrine of stare decisis has been adopted through Article 141 of the Constitution, which declares that decisions of the Apex court are binding on subordinate courts. The doctrine of Stare decisis is not applicable in the Supreme Court. Thus, the **Supreme Court is not bound by its own decisions**. Hence, it may depart from its own previous rulings **in extra ordinary or special cases or in larger public interest**.

17. (c)

Supreme Court's Prakash Singh judgement on police reforms:

- In a landmark judgement, the Supreme Court in September 2006 had directed **all states and Union Territories to bring in police reforms. Hence option 3 is correct.**
 - The ruling issued a series of measures that were to be undertaken by the governments **to ensure the police could do their work without worrying about any political interference.**
- **Fixing the tenure and selection of the DGP:**
 - Fixing the tenure and selection of the DGP to avoid situations where **officers about to retire in a few months are given the post.**
 - In order **to ensure no political interference**, a minimum tenure was sought for the Inspector General of Police so that they are **not transferred mid-term by politicians.**
- **Police Establishment Boards (PEB):**
 - The SC further directed postings of officers being done by Police Establishment Boards (PEB) comprising police officers and senior bureaucrats to insulate powers of postings and transfers from political leaders. **Hence option 4 is correct.**
- **State Police Complaints Authority (SPCA):**
 - There was a recommendation of setting up the State Police Complaints Authority (SPCA) to give a platform where common people aggrieved by police action could approach.
- **State Security Commissions (SSC):**
 - The SC directed separation of investigation and law and order functions to better improve policing, setting up of State Security Commissions (SSC) that would have members from civil society and forming a National Security Commission.

■■■■■

GEOGRAPHY

1. With reference to the Polar vortex, consider the following statements:

1. The term "vortex" refers to the counter-clockwise flow of air that helps keep the colder air near the Poles.
2. Polar vortex always exists near the poles, but weakens in summer and strengthens in winter.
3. The polar vortex is held in place by the Earth's rotation and temperature differences between the Arctic and mid-latitudes.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

2. Consider the following statements:

1. Narmada river flows through Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat only.
2. The Lameta Formation is found in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

3. Arrange the following water bodies from North to South direction.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. Pangong Tso | 2. Hanle |
| 3. Tsokar | 4. Tso Moriri |

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| (a) 1-3-4-2 | (b) 3-2-1-4 |
| (c) 2-4-1-3 | (d) 4-1-2-3 |

4. Consider the following statements:

1. Landslide is a gradual settling or sudden sinking of the Earth's surface.
2. Land subsidence is defined as the movement of a mass of rock, debris, or earth down a slope.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

5. Often heard in news, Bering strait lies between -

- (a) Bering Sea and Beaufort Sea
- (b) Bering Sea and Pacific Ocean
- (c) Pacific Ocean and Atlantic Ocean
- (d) Pacific Ocean and Arctic ocean

6. Which of the following may pose threats to the dams in India?

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. Flooding | 2. Earthquake |
| 3. Sediments | 4. Siltation |
| 5. Fish Habitats | |

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

In News: Chilly weather in Asia is due to the Polar vortex that brought extreme cold to the US last month.

Statements 1,2 and 3 are correct: The term “vortex” refers to the counter-clockwise flow of air that helps keep the colder air near the Poles.

- The polar vortex is a large area of **low pressure** and **cold air** surrounding **both of the Earth’s poles**.
- It always **exists near the poles**, but **weakens in summer** and **strengthens in winter**.
- The polar vortex is held in place by the **Earth’s rotation and temperature differences between the Arctic and mid-latitudes**.
 - When those variations in temperatures grow, the polar vortex can shift south.
 - ♦ This happens naturally, but scientists think that as the planet warms, shifts in the polar vortex are likely to become more frequent and pronounced.

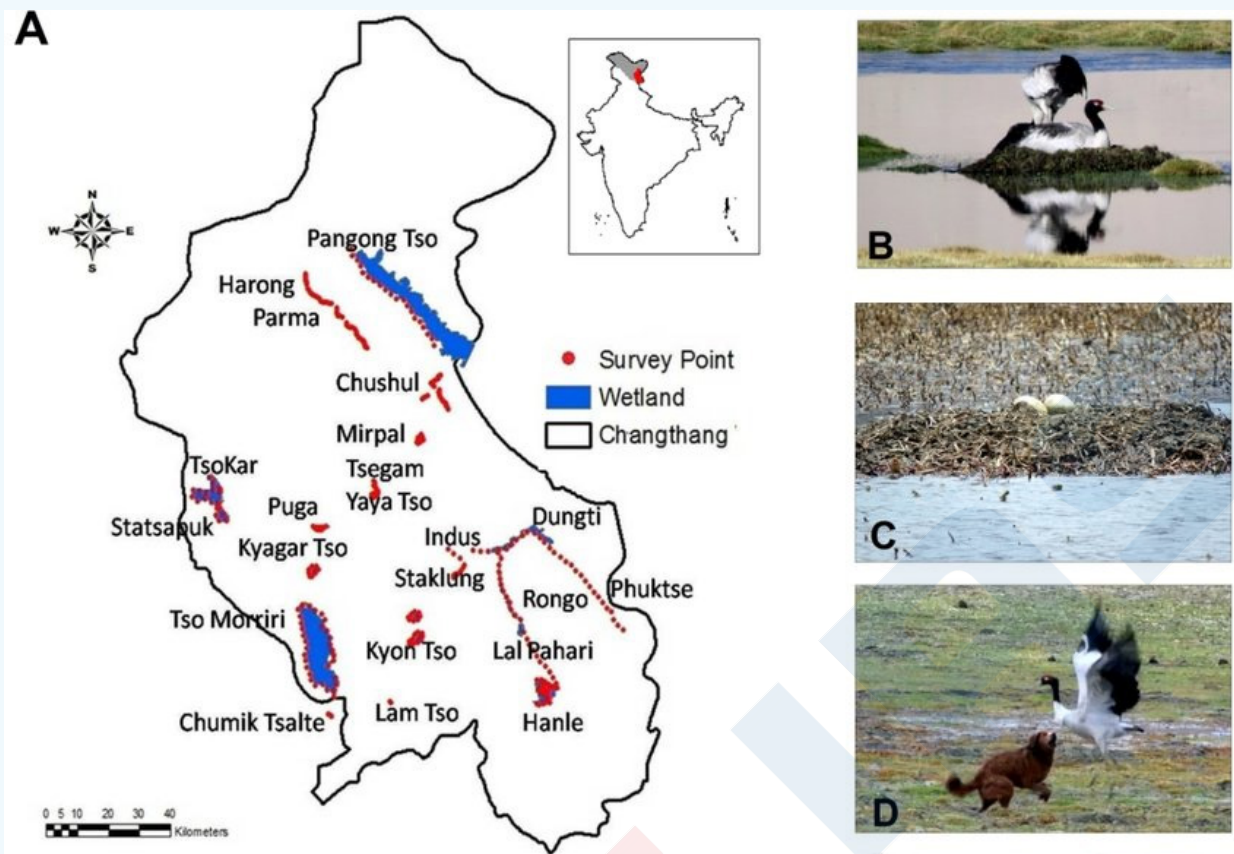
2. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct because Narmada River traverses through Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat and meets the Gulf of Cambay.

Statement 2 is correct: The Lameta Formation, also known as the Infratrappean Beds, is a sedimentary geological formation found in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra associated with the Deccan Traps.

3. (a)

Recently, the district administration of Ladakh designated six hamlets within the Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary as a **dark-sky reserve**.



4. (d)

The **subsidence (ground sinking) in Joshimath** (at an altitude of over 6,000 feet) in Uttarakhand has **delivered stern warning** for the State's administration.

Statement 1 is not correct: **Land subsidence** is a gradual settling or sudden sinking of the Earth's surface. Subsidence - sinking of the ground because of underground material movement—is most often caused by the removal of water, oil, natural gas, or mineral resources out of the ground by pumping, fracking, or mining activities.

Subsidence can also be caused by natural events such as earthquakes, soil compaction, glacial isostatic adjustment, erosion, sinkhole formation, and adding water to fine soils deposited by wind (a natural process known as loess deposits).

Statement 2 is not correct: A **landslide** is defined as the movement of a mass of rock, debris, or earth down a slope. They are a type of mass wasting, which denotes any downward movement of soil and rock under the direct influence of gravity. The term landslide encompasses five modes of slope movement: falls, topples, slides, spreads, and flows.

5. (d)

Recently, the IndAusECTA Agreement, which was signed last year, has come into force after Ratification and Exchange of Written Instruments.

Option d is correct: The Bering Strait is a strait between the Pacific and Arctic oceans, separating the Chukchi Peninsula of the Russian Far East from the Seward Peninsula of Alaska.

The present Russia-United States maritime boundary is at 168° 58' 37" W longitude, slightly south of the Arctic Circle at about 65° 40' N latitude.

- The Strait is named after Vitus Bering, a Danish explorer in the service of the Russian Empire.



6. (c)

Dams

- Dam is a structure built across a stream, a river, or an estuary to retain water.
- **India has 4,407 large dams**, the third highest number in the world after China (23,841) and the USA (9,263).

Option 1 is correct:

- The country gets **concentrated rainfall every year for a designated time period as opposed to distributed rainfall**, which contributes to the dams' vulnerability.
- In India, the downstream areas are often exposed to flood disasters & flooding has caused 44% of dam failures in India.

Option 2 is correct:

- Some of the Himalayan dam systems, including the Tehri Dam, are in an active seismic area given that the Himalayan mountain system is constantly changing and growing giving rise to several tectonic movements.

Options 3 and 4 are correct:

- Accumulation of **sediments decreases a reservoir's capacity** over the years and determines a reservoir's life expectancy.
- Siltation, which is the accumulation of silt and debris behind the reservoir, also leads to a **reduction in the storage capacity of the dams**.

Option 5 is incorrect:

- Freshwater fish are highly threatened by dams that disrupt the longitudinal connectivity of rivers and may consequently impede fish movements to feeding and spawning grounds.



GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/ INITIATIVES

1. Consider the following statements.

1. The Ministry of Education has been conducting the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) since 2013.
2. According to the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2020-21, the percentage of female enrollment to total enrolment has increased from 45% in 2014-15 to around 75% in 2020-21.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. Which of the following statements is not correct regarding Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 2021?

- (a) The opinion of 2 providers is required for termination of a pregnancy of 20-24 weeks of gestation.
- (b) A state-level medical board is set up to decide if pregnancy may be terminated beyond 20 weeks to 24 weeks.
- (c) The upper gestation limit does not apply in cases of substantial foetal abnormalities diagnosed by the Medical Board.
- (d) None of the above

3. Consider the following statements

1. Sand is classified as a “minor mineral”, under The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulations) Act, of 1957, and administrative control over minor minerals vests with the State Governments.
2. Recently, the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare launched the Manufactured Sand (M-Sand) initiative.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

4. With reference to “Bharat Parv”, consider the following statements:

1. It is being organised by the Ministry of Culture.
2. It will showcase the best Republic Day Parade tableaux and cultural performances by the Zonal Cultural Centres.

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

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

5. Consider the following statements
1. Wrestling in India has been practiced since the 5th millennium B.C.
 2. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports formed an Oversight Committee headed by Sakshi Malik to enquire into allegations against the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI).
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. With reference to SVAMITVA Scheme, consider the following statements:
1. It is a Central Sector scheme implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development (RD).
 2. The scheme aims to provide an integrated property validation solution for rural India only.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
7. The term "Hakku Patra", recently seen in the news, is a
- (a) Indus Valley Civilization Script (b) Edicts of Ashoka
(c) Property ownership document (d) Scheme for Digitization of Post Offices
8. Which of the following is **not** related to Road Safety?
- (a) Brasilia Declaration (b) Geneva Convention
(c) Bhopal Declaration (d) Stockholm Declaration
9. With reference to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), consider the following statements:
1. It is a nationwide citizen-led household survey that provides a snapshot of children's schooling and learning in both rural and urban India.
 2. The survey is conducted by Pratham, a non-governmental organisation.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
10. Which of the following initiatives primarily aim at creating professional, well-trained and future-ready civil service for India?
- (a) iGOTKarmayogi Portal (b) PM-DevINE
(c) SVAMITVA Scheme (d) SETU
11. With reference to National Cancer Grid (NCG), consider the following statements:
1. The NCG was created to form a union of cancer centres in the country which could provide uniform and high standards of cancer care.
 2. The National Cancer Grid (NCG) is an initiative of the Government of India through the Department of Atomic Energy.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

12. Consider the following statements:

1. Atal Bhujal Yojana is a scheme with Asian Development Bank funding for sustainable management of groundwater with community participation.
2. The National Aquifer Mapping and Management programme (NAQUIM) is being implemented by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

13. With reference to the Swadesh Darshan Project, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Central Sector scheme launched in 2014-15.
2. It is envisioned to synergise with other schemes like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Skill India, and Make in India.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

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

14. Which of the following statements is/are not correct regarding One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)?

1. It was rolled out by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
2. Beneficiaries can get their entitled foodgrains from any electronic point of sale (ePoS) enabled Fair Price Shop in the country.

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 |

15. With reference to the Twenty Point Programme (TPP), consider the following statements:

1. The monitoring of the programme at the centre has been assigned to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India.
2. TPP has various items for the benefit of both the rural and urban people.

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 |

16. With reference to Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021, consider the following statements:

1. The rules prescribe certain requirements for online publishers of news and current affairs content as well as online curated content.
2. The rules mandate the creation of a grievance redressal portal as the central repository for receiving and processing all grievances.
3. The rules impose three-tier complaints and adjudication structure on publishers.

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 |

17. With reference to the Census, consider the following statements:

1. The responsibility of conducting the decennial Census rests with the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India.
2. In India, the census was first started under British Viceroy Lord Lawrence.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

18. With reference to University Grants Commission (UGC), consider the following statements:

1. The UGC is the only grant-giving agency in India responsible for coordination, determination and maintenance of standards in institutions of higher education.
2. It determines and maintains standards of teaching, examination and research in universities.

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

In News: The Ministry of Education, Government of India has released the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2020-2021.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct: The Ministry of Education has been conducting the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) since 2011, covering all higher educational institutions located in Indian Territory and imparting higher education in the country.

- The total enrollment in higher education has increased to nearly 4.14 crore in 2020-21 from 3.85 crore in 2019-20.
 - Since 2014-15, there has been an increase of around 72 Lakh in enrolment (21%).
- The Female enrolment has increased to 2.01 crore from 1.88 crores in 2019-20. There has been an increase of around 44 Lakh (28%) since 2014-15.
- The percentage of female enrolment to total enrolment has increased from 45% in 2014-15 to around 49% in 2020-21.

2. (d)

Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 2021:

- **Abortions before 20 weeks of pregnancy:**
 - Terminating a pregnancy up to 20 weeks will only require the medical advice of one doctor.
- **Abortions upto or beyond 24 weeks of pregnancy:**
 - Abortion is legal for women in certain circumstances up to 24 weeks.
 - It would include:
 - ♦ Survivors of rape, victims of incest and other vulnerable women (like differently-abled women, minors) etc.
 - Opinion of 2 providers is required for termination of pregnancy of 20-24 weeks of gestation. **Hence statement (a) is correct.**
 - A state-level medical board will be set up to decide:
 - ♦ If pregnancy may be terminated beyond 20 weeks till 24 weeks. **Hence statement (b) is correct.**
 - ♦ Such a decision can be taken by the medical board only after
 - due consideration and
 - ensuring that the procedure would be safe for the woman.
 - The time frame available to the Medical Board is 3 days.

- **The upper gestation limit does not apply** in cases of **substantial foetal abnormalities** diagnosed by the **Medical Board**. Hence **statement (c) is correct**.

3. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Sand is classified as a “**minor mineral**”, under The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulations) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act), and administrative control over minor minerals vests with the State Governments, accordingly, regulated through State specific rules.

Statement 2 is not correct: Coal India Ltd to Launch M-Sand Projects in a Big Way.

Due to high demand, regulated supply, and a complete ban on **sand mining** during monsoon to protect the river ecosystem, finding alternatives to river sand became necessary.

- Sand Mining Framework (2018) prepared by the Ministry of Mines envisages alternative sources of sand in the **form of Manufactured Sand (M-Sand)** from **crushed rock fines (crusher dust)**, and **sand from Overburden (OB)** of coal mines.
- **Coal India Ltd (CIL)** has envisaged processing the overburden rocks for sand production in mines where **OB material contains** about **60% sandstone** by volume which is harnessed through crushing and processing of Overburden.
 - OB to M-Sand initiative of CIL is facilitating the processing of waste overburden in its OC Mines.

4. (a)

In News: The six-day mega event “Bharat Parv” event is going to be organized by the Government of India in front of Red Fort, Delhi from 26th to 31st January 2023, as part of the Republic Day Celebrations.

Statement 1 is not correct but Statement 2 is correct: **Ministry of Tourism** has been designated as the nodal Ministry for the event, the highlights of which will include showcasing of the **best Republic Day Parade tableaux at the venue, cultural performances by the Zonal Cultural Centres** as well as cultural troupes from States/ UTs, a pan – India Food Court and a pan – India Crafts Bazaar with 65 handicraft stalls.

5. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Wrestling in India has been practiced since **the 5th millennium B.C.** In Ancient India, wrestling was most famously known as MallaYudha. One of the premier characters in Mahabharata Bhima was is considered to be a great wrestler of the time, and some of the other great wrestlers included Jarasandha, Keechaka, and Balrama.

Statement 2 is not correct: Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has formed an Oversight Committee headed by **six-time World champion and Olympic medallist boxer M.C. Mary Kom** to enquire into the allegations of sexual misconduct, harassment, and financial irregularities in the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), levelled by prominent sportspersons.

- The Committee will also undertake the day-to-day administration of the Wrestling Federation of India, during the course of the enquiry.
- The decision has been taken to safeguard the interest of athletes and to promote good governance in the federation.

6. (b)

The Union Government has been planning to launch a **digital crop survey** from the kharif-2023 season **across 10 states**.

Statement 1 is not correct: Survey of Villages Abadi & Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas (SVAMITVA) Scheme is a Central Sector scheme launched by Hon’ble Prime Minister

of India on National Panchayat Day i.e 24th April 2020. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) is the Nodal Ministry for implementation of the scheme. In the States, the Revenue Department / Land Records Department will be the Nodal Department and shall carry out the scheme with support of State Panchayati Raj Department. Survey of India is the technology partner for implementation.

Statement 2 is correct: The scheme aims to provide an integrated property validation solution for rural India. The demarcation of rural abadi areas would be done using Drone Surveying technology. This would provide the 'record of rights' to village household owners possessing houses in inhabited rural areas in villages which, in turn, would enable them to use their property as a financial asset for taking loans and other financial benefits from the Bank.

7. (c)

Recently, the Prime Minister symbolically distributed Hakku Patra (land title deeds) to five families of the Banjara (Lambani) community at an event organised by the state Revenue Department at Malkhed, in the Kalaburagi district of Karnataka.

Hakku patras or title deeds

- A title deed is a property ownership document, and the bearer of the document owns the land.
- The title deeds enable owners to avail of bank loans with the said document.
- They will also be eligible to buy or sell land to which the title deed is granted by the government.

8. (c)

Recently, the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) emphasized that efforts by all are necessary to reduce road accidents by 50 percent before the end of 2025.

- **Brasilia Declaration on Road Safety (2015):** Adopted at the second global high-level conference on road safety held in Brazil. (India signatory to this)
- **Geneva Convention:** India, being a signatory to Convention on International Road Traffic of 1949 (Geneva Convention).
- **Bhopal Declaration:** It emphasises on promoting traditional medicinal systems like AYUSH.
- **The Stockholm Declaration** calls for a new global target for road safety for 2030 and a set of innovative solutions to save lives on the world's roads.
- Therefore, Option (c) is the correct answer.

9. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct - The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2022 is a nationwide citizen-led household survey that provides a snapshot of children's schooling and learning in rural India only, urban areas are not covered in it.

Statement 2 is correct – ASER tools and procedures are designed by ASER Centre, the research and assessment arm of Pratham, which is one of the largest non-governmental organizations in the country created to improve the quality of education in India. Unlike most other large-scale learning assessments, ASER is a household-based rather than school-based survey. This design enables all children to be included – those who have never been to school or have dropped out, as well as those who are in government schools, private schools, religious schools, or anywhere else.

10. (a)

iGoTKarmayogi Portal:

- Launch of Mobile Application of iGoTKarmayogi Portal by Karmayogi Bharat (SPV) will aim at creating professional, well-trained and future-ready civil service for India.

11. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: The National Cancer Grid (NCG) was created to form a union of cancer centres in the country which could provide uniform and high standards of cancer care, follow uniform evidence based guidelines for management of patients, develop human resource adequately trained to fulfill the cancer healthcare needs of the entire nation and conduct collaborative clinical research of a high standard. The union would ensure provision of the same quality of care to patients from any part of the country, without having to travel long distances and regardless of their ability to pay for treatment achieved by following the same evidence-based management guidelines, which are implementable in all cancer centres.

Statement 2 is correct: The National Cancer Grid (NCG) is an initiative of the Government of India through the **Department of Atomic Energy** and its grant-in-aid institution, the Tata Memorial Centre, to create a network of cancer centres, research institutes, patient groups and charitable institutions across India with the objective of developing uniform standards of patient care for prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer; providing specialized training and education in oncology and facilitating collaborative basic, translational and clinical research in cancer. NCG today has over 270 hospitals in its network across India.

12. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABHY) is an Rs.6000 crore scheme with **World Bank funding**, for sustainable management of groundwater with community participation is being taken up in the identified over-exploited and water-stressed areas fall in the States of Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

Statement 2 is correct: National Aquifer Mapping and Management programme (NAQUIM) is being implemented by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) as part of Ground Water Management and Regulation (GSM&R) scheme which is a Central Sector scheme of the Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation.

13. (c)

About Swadesh Darshan project

- It is a **Central Sector scheme** launched in 2014-15 by the **Ministry of Tourism and Culture** for the integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits.
- It aims to promote, develop and harness the potential of tourism in India.
- Under it, the Ministry of Tourism provides **Central Financial Assistance** – CFA to State Governments, and Union Territory Administrations for the infrastructure development of circuits.
- It is envisioned to synergise with other schemes like **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Skill India, Make in India** etc. with the idea of positioning the tourism sector as a major engine for job creation, the driving force for economic growth, building synergy with various sectors to enable tourism to realise its potential.
- The Ministry has now revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme as **Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0)** with the objective to develop sustainable and responsible tourism destinations, following a tourist & destination-centric approach.

14. (d)

One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)

- It was rolled out by the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution** in **2019**. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- **Aim:**
 - To ensure **hassle-free delivery** of **subsidised food grains** to all **migratory beneficiaries** anywhere in the country through **nation-wide portability** under National Food Security Act (NFSA).
- **About:**
 - It empowers all National Food Security Act (NFSA) **migrant beneficiaries** to access foodgrains **from any Fair Price Shop (FPS)** of their choice anywhere in the country by using their same/ existing ration card with biometric authentication.
 - **A card bearing 10 digit number** will be issued to the complaint state's **BPL card holders** which will be **linked** to the **Aadhar database**.
 - **Electronic point of sale:**
 - ♦ Beneficiaries can get their entitled foodgrains from any **electronic point of sale (ePoS)** enabled FPS in the country through portability. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

15. (b)

According to the first advance estimates of national income released by the **National Statistical Office (NSO)**, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to grow 7 percent in the financial year 2022-23.

Statement 1 is not correct: The Twenty Point Programme (TPP) has been in operation since 1975. In view of the changing scenario of the country over the years, the programme has been restructured thrice - in 1982, 1986 and 2006. The present programme now called Twenty Point Programme-2006 (TPP-2006) has been in operation since April 2007. The monitoring of the programme at the centre has been assigned to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India. The management information system relating to Twenty Point developed by the Ministry consists of a monthly Progress Report (MPR) and yearly Review of the Programme, Point-wise, Item-wise and State-wise. The monthly report covers progress on the implementation of the programme for 20 crucial points for which there are pre-set physical targets and the Yearly Review presents an analytical review of the performance of all the items under the programme.

Statement 2 is correct: TPP-2006 has various points/items for the benefit of both the rural and urban people, taking cadre of all the requirements of the deprived and adversely affected population. TPP-2006 has 20 Points covering 65 items. These 65 items coincide with various programmes and schemes of the government which are administered by the Central Nodal Ministries/Departments and by and large are implemented through the State Governments/UT Administrations. The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation has been given the responsibility of monitoring all the 65 items, of which some are reported on quarterly basis, and the others on annual basis.

16. (d)

Recently, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) **proposed an amendment to bring online gaming under the ambit** of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

Statement 1 is correct: The 2021 Rules prescribe certain requirements for online publishers of: (i) news and current affairs content which include online papers, news portals, aggregators and agencies; and (ii) online curated audio-visual content, which is defined as a curated catalogue of audio-visual content (excluding news and current affairs) which is owned by, licensed by, or contracted to be transmitted by publishers and available on demand.

Statement 2 is correct: The rules mandate the creation of a grievance redressal portal as the central repository for receiving and processing all grievances. Intermediaries are required to

acknowledge the complaint within 24 hr and dispose off such complaints within a period of 15 days from the date of its receipt.

Statement 3 is correct: Part III of the rules imposes three-tier complaints and adjudication structure on publishers.

- **Level I:** Self-regulation by the publishers;
- **Level II:** Self-regulation by the self-regulating bodies of the publishers- Industry regulatory body headed by a former judge of the Supreme Court (SC) and High Court (HC) with additional members from a panel approved by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- **Level III:** Oversight mechanism by the Central Government that includes an inter ministerial committee with the authority to block access to content, which can also take suo-motu cognisance of an issue and any grievance flagged by the Ministry.

17. (a)

A population Census is the process of collecting, compiling, analyzing and disseminating demographic, social, cultural and economic data relating to all persons in the country, at a particular time in a ten year interval. The Census was first started under British Viceroy Lord Mayo in 1872. It helped in framing new policies, government programs to uplift areas of improvement in the community. The first synchronous census in India was held in 1881. Every ten years, since then, censuses have been undertaken uninterruptedly once every ten years.

18. (c)

Recently, the University Grants Commission (UGC) released **draft regulations to allow foreign universities** to enter India.

Statement 1 is correct: The University Grants Commission (UGC) is a statutory body set up by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India in accordance to the UGC Act 1956. The UGC has the unique distinction of being the **only grant-giving agency** in the country which has been vested with two responsibilities: that of providing funds and that of coordination, determination and maintenance of standards in institutions of higher education.

Statement 2 is correct: The UGC's mandate includes:

- Promoting and coordinating university education.
- Determining and maintaining standards of teaching, examination and research in universities.
- Framing regulations on minimum standards of education.
- Monitoring developments in the field of collegiate and university education; disbursing grants to the universities and colleges.
- Serving as a vital link between the Union and state governments and institutions of higher learning.
- Advising the Central and State governments on the measures necessary for improvement of university education.

■■■■

DEFENCE/ INTERNAL SECURITY

1. Exercise 'Veer Guardian' is conducted between India and which of the following countries?
(a) UK (b) Sri Lanka
(c) South Africa (d) Japan
2. The Conference of the Directors General of Police is organised every year to discuss various internal security challenges and policing matters.

In this context, which of the following committees are associated with Police Reforms?

1. Padmanabhaiah Committee
2. Malimath Committee on reforms in Criminal Justice System (2002-03)
3. Ribero Committee
4. Rajamannar Committee
5. N.K. Singh committee

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

India and Japan are set to hold a joint air exercise "Veer Guardian 2023". The joint exercise will also include multi-domain air combat missions in a complex environment allowing the air warriors to exchange their best practices. Additionally, experts from both sides will also hold discussions to share their expertise on varied operational aspects.

2. (a)

In News : A conference of the Directors General of Police of all the states and union territories was held in Delhi. "Police" being a State subject in the seventh schedule to the Constitution of India, it is primarily the **State Governments** who have to implement the various police reforms measures. Various Committees/Commissions in the past have made a number of important recommendations regarding police reforms.

- Notable amongst these are those made by
 - the National Police Commission (1978-82);
 - the **Padmanabhaiah Committee** on restructuring of Police (2000); and
 - the **Malimath Committee** on reforms in Criminal Justice System (2002-03).
- Yet another Committee, headed by **Shri Ribero**, was constituted in 1998, on the directions of the Supreme Court of India, to review action taken by the Central Government/State Governments/UT Administrations in this regard, and to suggest ways and means for implementing the pending recommendations of the above Commission.



FOREIGN AFFAIRS

1. Consider the following statements:
 1. There are 15 non-permanent seats of UNSC that are distributed on a population basis.
 2. To be elected to the Council, candidate countries need a two-thirds majority of ballots of the Member States that are present and voting in the Assembly.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
2. With reference to the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution, consider the following statements:
 1. It is an outcome of the Indo-Lanka Accord of July 1987, signed by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and President J.R. Jayawardene.
 2. It proposed the establishment of a provincial council system and devolution of power.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. Consider the following statements with reference to the Wagner Group.
 1. The Wagner Group first surfaced in 2022 during Russia's War on Ukraine.
 2. It has been involved in conflicts in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. Often heard in the news, wolf-warriors diplomacy resembles the foreign policy of-
 - (a) The US Government
 - (b) Russian Government
 - (c) Government of Iran
 - (d) Chinese Government
5. A US designation as a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA) entitles which of the following for the MNNA country?
 1. Benefits in the areas of defense trade
 2. Security cooperation
 3. Security commitment to collective self-defenceSelect the correct answer using the code given below:
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 1 and 2 only
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) None of the above
6. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1267 was seen in the news, it is related to:
 - (a) Impact of war crimes on women and children.
 - (b) Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the nuclear program of Iran.

- (c) Malnutrition in the Central African Region.
 (d) Combating terrorism in relation to Al Qaeda and the Islamic State group.
7. India has given the Mantra of 'respond, recognise, respect, and reform' for which of the following regions?
 (a) South East Asia (b) Far East
 (c) Global South (d) Eurasia
8. Consider the following statements regarding India-UK - Young Professionals Scheme:
 1. Scheme was conceived as part of an India-U.K. Migration and Mobility MoU.
 2. The scheme will permit degree-holding citizens aged between 18 and 30 to live and work in each other's countries for a period of two years.
 3. Applicants need to have a job in hand when he/she applies for the visa under the scheme.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 3 only
 (c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3
9. A series of uprisings of people referred to as 'Arab Spring' originally started in 2010 from
 (a) Egypt (b) Lebanon
 (c) Syria (d) Tunisia
10. With reference to Wassenaar Arrangement, consider the following statements:
 1. It is a voluntary export control regime which monitors transfers of conventional weapons and dual-use goods and technologies.
 2. India joined the Wassenaar Arrangement in 2022 as a participating state.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
 (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
11. With reference to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), consider the following statements:
 1. It is a privacy and security law passed by the European Union (EU).
 2. The GDPR imposes obligations only on the members of the EU.
 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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

About:

- It is **one of the UN's six main organs** and is aimed at maintaining international peace and security.
- It held its first session on 17th January 1946 in Westminster, London.
- **Headquarters: New York City.**
- **Membership:** The Council is composed of 15 Members:

- **Permanent members with veto power:**
 - ♦ China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- More than 50 United Nations Member States have never been Members of the Security Council.

UNSC elections:

- Each year the General Assembly **elects five non-permanent members** (out of 10 in total) **for a two-year term**.
- The **10 non-permanent seats** are distributed **on a regional basis** as follows: **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
 - Five from African and Asian States.
 - One from the Eastern European States.
 - Two from Latin American States;
 - Two from Western European and other States
 - ♦ To be elected to the Council, candidate countries **need a two-thirds majority of ballots of the Member States** that are present and voting in the Assembly. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - ♦ The UNSC elections were traditionally held in the General Assembly hall with each of the 193 member states **casting its vote in a secret ballot.**

2. (b)

Recently, President Ranil Wickremesinghe said that The Sri Lankan government would “fully implement” the **13th Amendment**.

Statement 1 is not correct: 13th Amendment is an **outcome of the Indo-Lanka Accord** of July **1987**, signed by then **Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President J.R. Jayawardene**, in an attempt to **resolve Sri Lanka’s ethnic conflict** that had aggravated into a **full-fledged civil war**, between the **armed forces** and the **Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam**, which led the struggle for Tamils’ self-determination and sought a separate state.

- It was passed in 1987.

Statement 2 is correct: The **13th Amendment** provided for setting up provincial governments across the country — there are nine provincial councils — and made Tamil, too, an official language, and English, a link language.

- It also sought to address the **Tamils’ right to self-determination** which, by the 1980s, had become a raging political call.

3. (b)

The U.S. designated **Russia’s Wagner group** as a “transnational criminal organization,” piling pressure on the private Russian army fighting in Ukraine.

Statement 1 is not correct but statement 2 is correct: According to reports in The Washington Post, it is a network of contractors that supply soldiers for hire.

The Wagner Group first surfaced in 2014, during **Russia’s annexation of Crimea**.

- It has been involved in conflicts in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.
- It is ostensibly private, but according to CSIS, “its management and operations are deeply intertwined with the Russian military and intelligence community” under Vladimir Putin.

4. (d)

In recent weeks, China launched a **personnel reshuffle on the foreign policy front**.

Wolf-warrior Diplomacy

Origin:

- The term that gained popularity, especially after Xi became President,
- A 2015 Chinese action film, titled 'Wolf Warrior', and its sequel have served as the inspiration for the term.

About:

- It is a tactic for the Chinese government to extend its ideology **beyond China and counter the West and defend itself**.
- It is an **unofficial term** for the **more aggressive** and **confrontational style** of communication that Chinese diplomats have taken to in the last decade.
- It **confronts head-on** any criticism of China in the public sphere. They lecture host governments and don't always show up when 'summoned' by foreign offices. Delhi has been at the receiving end for a while — especially during the recent crises of Doklam and Ladakh.

Need for wolf warrior diplomacy:

- The change in strategy has been attributed to many reasons, such as
 - ♦ Xi's more authoritarian tendencies as compared to earlier leaders,
 - ♦ deteriorating US-China relations under former US President,
 - ♦ the coronavirus pandemic-related accusations on China, etc.
- According to Chinese officials, the move is simply about standing up to what they believe is Western interference.
- China's leader stated that the term was rhetorical **"tit-for-tat"**.

5. (b)

US designation as a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA)

- A US Congressman has recently moved a Bill in the House of Representatives to revoke Pakistan's designation as a Major Non-NATO Ally.
- **Major Non-NATO Ally status:**
 - Designation as Major Non-NATO Ally status (MNNA) **entitles a country to some military and economic privileges**.
 - According to the US Department of State website, Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA) status is a **designation under US law that provides foreign partners** with certain benefits in the **areas of defense trade and security cooperation**. Hence options 1 and 2 are correct.
 - While MNNA status provides military and economic privileges, it **does not entail any security commitments** to the designated country. Hence option 3 is not correct.

6. (d)

Pakistan-based deputy chief of terror outfit **Lashkar-e-Taiba Abdul Rehman Makki** has been blacklisted as a global terrorist by the United Nations.

About UNSC Sanctions Committee

- The **1267 committee** that was set up in **1999 (updated in 2011 and 2015)** allows any UN member state to propose adding the name of a terrorist or terror group to a consolidated list, maintained by the Committee, that has affiliations to Al Qaeda and ISIS.

- According to the rules, once a listing is proposed, it will be adopted into the list according to a **“no-objections” procedure**: which means, if any member of the Committee, which comprises all members of the **UN Security Council**, places a hold on the listing or objects outright to it, the listing cannot be adopted.

7. (c)

Voice of the Global South Summit

- India hosted the summit in a bid to articulate the views of the developing countries regarding the effects of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine.
 - The event has planned eight ministerial sessions including finance, energy, education, foreign affairs, and commerce.
- Offering to become the voice of the Global South, India during the event gave a new agenda to the world on behalf of the countries of the South: **‘respond, recognise, respect, and reform’**.
 - **Global North & Global South:**
 - ♦ Global North refers loosely to countries like the US, Canada, Europe, Russia, Australia and New Zealand.
 - ♦ Global South includes countries in Asia, Africa and South America.

8. (a)

The Young Professionals Scheme

- The Young Professionals Scheme was conceived as part of an **India-U.K. The Migration and Mobility MoU** signed in May 2021, was announced in November at the **G20 summit in Bali**. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- **Key highlights of the scheme:**
 - The scheme will permit degree-holding citizens aged between 18 and 30 to live and work in each other’s countries for a period of two years. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
 - ♦ They would be able to either work, study, or visit, for two years.
 - ♦ The scheme will run for a period of three years initially.
 - The scheme allows for **exchange visas for up to 3,000 individuals per year**.
 - It isn’t even necessary for an applicant to have a job in hand when he/she applies for the visa. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
 - ♦ So, the successful candidates could look for a job, educational or cultural opportunity once they arrived in their host country. Or they could just visit.

9. (d)

About Arab Spring

- A wave of uprisings, revolts, protests, and unrest, spread across Arabic nations in the Middle East and North Africa by early 2011.

What gave birth to the Arab Spring?

- In December 2010, a Tunisian street vendor Mohammed Bouazizi set himself ablaze in the city of Sidi Bouzid to protest the draconian seizing of his vegetable shop by the police over failure to receive a permit.
- His sacrifice became a catalyst for the Arab Spring revolution in Tunisia.
- The pro-democracy protests that ensued in Tunis, eventually provoked authoritarian president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who ruled for more than 23 years, to resign and flee to Saudi Arabia.

- The regime change in Tunisia inspired activists in other countries and began to protest authoritarian governments in their own nations.
- The street protests triggered a wave of revolts across the Middle East as people began to voice their angst against unemployment, corruption, discrimination, authoritarianism, and poverty.

10. (a)

India **assumed Chairmanship** of Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) Plenary starting from January 1, 2023.

Statement 1 is correct: The Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) is a voluntary export control regime formally established in July 1996. It is an elite club of countries that subscribe to arms export controls, similar to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). The WA monitors transfers of conventional weapons and dual-use goods and technologies through regular exchanges of information among its members. The WA aims to promote “greater responsibility” among its members in exports of weapons and dual-use goods and to prevent “destabilizing accumulations.” To promote transparency, Wassenaar calls on states to make a series of voluntary information exchanges and notifications on their export activities related to weapons and items appearing on the arrangement’s two control lists.

- The Munitions List (Conventional Weapons)
- The Dual-Use Goods and Technologies List

Statement 2 is not correct: The plenary of the Wassenaar Arrangement is the main decision-making body that operates on consensus. It has 42-member including France, Germany, Japan, Russia, the UK and the USA. The European Union and NATO are member states. India joined the Wassenaar Arrangement in 2017 as its 42nd participating state. Its Secretariat is located in Austria’s capital Vienna.

11. (a)

Recently, **Facebook’s parent company Meta** has been imposed with two sets of **finest totalling €390 million**.

Statement 1 is correct: EU’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a law passed by the 28-member (now 27) bloc in 2018. The GDPR is the toughest privacy and security law in the world. As per the GDPR, cross-border cases are to be handled by the data-protection authority in the country where the company is based.

Statement 2 is not correct: European Data Protection Board is the body that oversees regulatory action on data privacy across the 27-nation bloc. Though it was drafted and passed by the European Union (EU), it imposes obligations onto organizations anywhere, so long as they target or collect data related to people in the EU.

■■■■

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1. Consider the following statements:

1. Immune imprinting only occurs in newborn infants as a form of acquired immunity.
2. A newborn baby acquires passive immunity from its mother through the placenta.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

2. In the context of Leprosy, consider the following statements:

1. Leprosy is a chronic infectious disease caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*.
2. In India, Leprosy Day is observed on 30th January every year, coinciding with the death anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
3. Leprosy is curable with Multidrug Therapy (MDT).

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 |

3. Consider the following statements:

1. Gravitational Lensing is the phenomenon in which the light emitted by the source is bent due to the presence of another massive body.
2. Redshift represents the change in the frequency of the signal when an object is moving away depending on the object's location and movement.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

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

4. With reference to Hybrid immunity, consider the following statements:

1. It is gained only if an individual gets a natural infection after a COVID-19 vaccine.
2. It provides better immunity as compared to the immunity gained after the vaccination.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

5. Which of the following benefits are offered by Nano fertilizers over conventional fertilizers?

1. Higher absorption rate
2. Reduction in environmental pollution
3. Ability to provide a slow release of nutrients

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 |

6. Consider the following statements regarding the disease 'Gonorrhoea' that was recently in news:
1. It is an infection caused by a sexually transmitted bacterium.
 2. It infects both males and females.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
7. Consider the following statements:
1. Radar uses mechanical waves for its operations.
 2. Doppler effect is when a material makes the transition from the normal to the superconducting state, it actively excludes magnetic fields from its interior.
- Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. Which of the following activities can potentially be carried through Deep Fakes Technology?
1. Influencing elections
 2. Financial fraud
 3. Espionage
 4. Production of hateful material
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 3 and 4 only
(c) 1, 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
9. With reference to Rare Earth Elements (REE), consider the following statements:
1. Rare earth elements are a set of 17 chemical elements in the periodic table.
 2. Monazite is the primary source of rare earth minerals in India.
 3. These elements are used in drugs to treat cancer.
- 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
10. Consider the following statements Starlink satellite:
1. Unlike traditional internet providers, Starlink doesn't require any ground infrastructure apart from a receiver disc or device.
 2. A Starlink satellite has a lifespan of minimum hundred years and does not require immediate replacement.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
11. When a material makes the transition from the normal to the superconducting state, it actively excludes magnetic fields from its interior, this effect is called?
- (a) Brownian Effect (b) Raman Effect
(c) Doppler Effect (d) Meissner effect

12. The process in which a computer has manipulated an image, video, sound, voice, or GIF to superimpose someone's face, body or voice onto something else is called?
- (a) Phishing (b) Deep Fake
(c) Hate Speech (d) Ransomware
13. Consider the following statements:
1. Kala-azar is a slow progressing indigenous disease caused by a protozoan parasite of genus Leishmania.
 2. In India Leishmania donovani is the only parasite causing this disease.
- 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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Immune imprinting is a tendency of the body to repeat its immune response based on the first variant it encountered through infection or vaccination.

Statement 2 is correct: Passive immunity is provided when a person is given antibodies to a disease rather than producing them through his or her own immune system. For example, A newborn baby acquired passive immunity from its mother through the placenta.

2. (c)

World Leprosy Day is observed on 29 January. World Leprosy Day is observed every year on the last Sunday of January.

Statements 1 and 3 are correct: Leprosy is also known as Hansen's disease and is a chronic infectious disease caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*.

- The disease affects the skin, the peripheral nerves, mucosal surfaces of the upper respiratory tract, and the eyes. It is known to occur at all ages, from early childhood to old age.
- Leprosy is a curable disease. The currently recommended treatment regimen consists of three drugs: dapsone, rifampicin, and clofazimine.
 - The combination is referred to as multi-drug therapy (MDT).

Statement 2 is not correct: In India, it is observed on 30th January every year, coinciding with the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

- He was deeply committed to the cause of leprosy-affected persons.

3. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Gravitational lensing occurs when a massive celestial body — such as a galaxy cluster — causes a sufficient curvature of spacetime for the path of light around it to be visibly bent, as if by a lens. The body causing the light to curve is accordingly called a gravitational lens.

Statement 2 is correct: Redshift and blueshift describe the change in the frequency of a light wave depending on whether an object is moving towards or away. When an object is moving away from us, the light from the object is known as redshift, and when an object is moving towards us, the light from the object is known as blueshift.

4. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct - Hybrid immunity is defined as the immune protection in individuals who have had one or more doses of a COVID-19 vaccine and experienced at least one SARS-CoV-2 infection '**before or after**' the initiation of vaccination.

Statement 2 is correct - Getting a natural infection before or after the vaccination provides better protection than vaccines alone because it prepares the body against the entire virus, rather than just the spike protein.

5. (d)

Nanotechnology in fertilizers:

About:

- Nanotechnology, which utilizes **nanomaterials of less than 100 nm size**, may offer an **unprecedented opportunity** to develop concentrated sources of plant nutrients having **higher-absorption rate, utilization efficacy, and minimum losses**. Hence option 1 is correct.
- Nanofertilizers are being **prepared by encapsulating plant nutrients into nanomaterials** and **delivering nutrients** in the form of **nano-sized emulsions**.
- **In comparison with the existing fertilizers:**
 - **Absorption & Runoff:**
 - Conventional fertilizers **can be dangerous to the environment** because of the **sheer amount of runoff** that stems from their use. Hence option 2 is correct.
 - ♦ Studies have shown that, in most cases, **greater than 50% of the amount of fertilizer applied to soil is lost to the environment**.
 - Nanofertilizers have **higher absorption efficiency** into the targeted plant- which is owed to their remarkably high surface area to volume ratios.
 - ♦ In a study done on the use of phosphorus nano-fertilizers, **absorption efficiencies of up to 90.6%** were achieved, making them a **highly desirable fertilizer material**.
 - **Pattern of release:**
 - ♦ Another beneficial aspect of using nanofertilizers is the **ability to provide slow release of nutrients** into the plant over a **40-50 day time period**, rather than the **4-10 day period of conventional fertilizers**. Hence option 3 is correct.

6. (c)

Gonorrhoea

- Recently, a strand of **antimicrobial-resistant gonorrhoea** outbreak has hit Kenya.

About:

- The outbreak of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* is not just a threat to the citizens of the East African anchor state but the region as a whole, according to experts.
- Gonorrhea is an infection caused by a sexually transmitted bacterium that infects both males and females. **Hence statements 1 and 2 are correct.**
- Gonorrhoea is the second-most common disease to be sexually transmitted across the world after chlamydia, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).
- The medics said the drug-resistant super gonorrhoea was first detected in samples taken from sex workers in the capital city, Nairobi, and other urban areas like Kiambu County.

7. (c)

Statement 1 is not correct: Radar is a device which uses **electromagnetic waves** in the microwaves region to detect location (range & direction), altitude, intensity and movement of moving and non-moving objects. Types of Mechanical Waves:

- Longitudinal (AKA Compression): medium pieces move parallel to wave motion or to the extent of the wave.
- Transverse: medium pieces move perpendicular to wave motion.
- Circular Transverse: medium pieces move in circles around the wave motion direction.

Statement 2 is not correct: When the source and the signal are in relative motion to each other there is a change in the frequency observed by the observer. If they are moving closer, frequency increases and vice versa. This is called the **Doppler Effect**.

When a material makes the transition from the normal to the superconducting state, it actively excludes magnetic fields from its interior; this is called the **Meissner effect**.

8. (d)

Deepfakes

About:

- **Deepfakes (Deep Learning + Fake)** are synthetic media in which a person in an existing image or video is replaced with someone else's likeness.
- Deepfakes leverage powerful techniques from machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) to manipulate or generate **visual and audio content** with a **high potential to deceive**.

Option 1 is correct: Influencing elections:

- Deepfakes can be used to influence elections.
 - Recently, Taiwan's cabinet approved amendments to election laws to punish the sharing of deepfake videos or images.
 - ♦ Taiwan is becoming increasingly concerned that China is spreading false information to influence public opinion and manipulate election outcomes, and this concern has led to these amendments.
- This could also happen in India's elections too.

Option 2 is correct: Financial fraud:

- Deepfakes have been used for financial fraud.
 - In the recent example, scammers used AI-powered software to trick the CEO of a U.K. energy company over the phone into believing he was speaking with the head of the German parent company. As a result, the CEO transferred a large sum of money — €2,20,000 — to what he thought was a supplier.

Option 3 is correct: Espionage:

- Deepfakes can also be used to carry out espionage activities.
- Doctored videos can be used to blackmail government and defence officials into divulging state secrets.

Option 4 is correct: Production of hateful material:

- In India, deepfakes could be used to produce inflammatory material, such as videos purporting to show the armed forces or the police committing 'crimes' in areas with conflict.
- These deepfakes could be used to radicalise populations, recruit terrorists, or incite violence.

9. (d)

Statement 1 is correct: Rare earth elements or rare earth metals are a set of 17 chemical elements in the periodic table — the 15 lanthanides, plus scandium and yttrium, which tend to occur in the same ore deposits as the lanthanides, and have similar chemical properties. The 17 rare earths are cerium (Ce), dysprosium (Dy), erbium (Er), europium (Eu), gadolinium (Gd), holmium (Ho), lanthanum (La), lutetium (Lu), neodymium (Nd), praseodymium (Pr), promethium (Pm), samarium (Sm), scandium (Sc), terbium (Tb), thulium (Tm), ytterbium (Yb), and yttrium (Y). Despite their classification, most of these elements are not really “rare”. One of the rare earths, promethium, is radioactive.

Statement 2 is correct: The production of Monazite, the primary source of rare earth minerals in India, is around 4000 MT per annum. Geological Survey of India (GSI) carries out mapping and exploration activities for various mineral commodities including Rare Earth Element (REE) and Rare Metal (RM) in different parts of the country.

Statement 3 is correct: These elements are important in technologies of consumer electronics, computers and networks, communications, clean energy, advanced transportation, healthcare, environmental mitigation, and national defence, among others. Scandium is used in televisions and fluorescent lamps, and yttrium is used in drugs to treat rheumatoid arthritis and cancer. Rare earth elements are used in space shuttle components, jet engine turbines, and drones. Cerium, the most abundant rare earth element, is essential to NASA’s Space Shuttle Programme.

10. (a)

Starlink Project

- Starlink is a satellite constellation that comprises thousands of small satellites in low-Earth orbit.
 - SpaceX first began sending them into space in 2019.
 - Currently, there are more than 3,000 of these satellites that send internet signals to designated ground receivers.
- **Required infrastructure:**
 - Unlike traditional internet providers, Starlink doesn’t require any ground infrastructure.
 - One just needs to have a small satellite dish or a receiver device to access high-speed internet, much like satellite TV. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **Issues of space debris:**
 - The satellites of Starlink work **only for five years** and once they are dysfunctional, they remain in space and **contribute to space debris.**
 - SpaceX’s ambitious plan of launching 42,000 more satellites in the next few years **might lead to overcrowding in our orbit**, which in turn would impede astronomers from making observations from Earth. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**

11. (d)

Recently, a research group has discovered a clear picture of **superconductivity in Mercury**.

Option d is correct: When a material makes the transition from the normal to the superconducting state, it actively excludes magnetic fields from its interior; this is called the **Meissner effect**. This constraint to zero magnetic fields inside a superconductor is distinct from the perfect diamagnetism which would arise from its zero electrical resistance.

12. (b)

Option b is correct: A **deepfake** is an image, video, sound, voice, or GIF that a computer has manipulated to superimpose someone’s face, body or voice onto something else. This could be done **with or without the subject’s consent**.

- Deepfakes have become popular due to the accessibility of mobile and computer-based apps.
- This means users without sophisticated technological skills can easily access, create, and distribute deep fakes.

13. (c)

About Kala Azar

Kala-Azar or Visceral Leishmaniasis is a slow progressing indigenous disease that is caused by a protozoan parasite of the genus *Leishmania*.

Kala-azar is one of the most lethal and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). In India *Leishmania donovani* is the only parasite causing this disease

The parasite infects the reticuloendothelial system and may be found in abundance in bone marrow, spleen, and liver.

Kala-azar is the second deadliest **parasitic** killer in the world after Malaria.

■■■■

ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

1. Consider the following statements:

1. Coal mining is the largest single source of global anthropogenic methane (CH₄) emissions.
2. India is currently the world's fourth largest methane emitter after China, the United States and Russia.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

2. Which of the following statements are correct regarding the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2021?

1. It banned the manufacture, stocking and use of carry bags made of virgin or recycled plastic less than seventy-five microns.
2. The ban is also extended to commodities made of compostable plastic.

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 |

3. Consider the following statements:

1. Wetlands International is the only global not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the conservation and restoration of wetlands.
2. Bombay Natural History Society is a pan-India wildlife research organization.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

4. Consider the following statements:

1. Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) produces lower carbon emissions than coal and oil.
2. LNG has a higher energy content per unit volume than natural gas in its gaseous form.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

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

5. Consider the following statements:

1. India has the largest number of wild Asian Elephants in the world.
2. Plan Bee is a method by Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) to save elephants.
3. Project Elephant is a Central Sector Scheme by the Government of India.
4. Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) was established by the International Conference on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

6. Ebony, Mahogany, Rosewood, Rubber, trees significant to the economy, are found in which type of forests in India?

- (a) Temperate Forests (b) Evergreen Forests
(c) Semi Deciduous Forests (d) Swamp Forests

7. Consider the following statements

1. Ken-Betwa Link Project is the first project under the National Perspective Plan for the interlinking of rivers.
2. Both Ken and Betwa are the tributaries of the Godavari River.

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

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

8. Consider the following statements:

1. The Ganges river dolphin can only live in freshwater and is essentially blind.
2. In India, their population is present only in the Upper Ganga River.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

9. With reference to the Ozone, consider the following statements:

1. Ozone is produced naturally in the stratosphere.
2. Ozone occurs in two layers of the atmosphere.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

10. Consider the following statements regarding a Fish:

1. It is Native to South Asia where it is found in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan.
2. It is a significant vertebrate model organism in scientific research as their embryo is transparent & their development is incredibly fast.
3. According to a recent study by the Agharkar Research Institute (ARI), a protein found in the backbone of this fish can have potential therapeutic implications for regeneration in degenerated human discs.

The statements given above are related to which of the following?

- (a) Rohu (b) Zebrafish
(c) Swordfish (d) Prawn

11. Consider the following statements:

1. Urea has 46% nitrogen (N), while Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP) contains 46% phosphorus (P) plus 18% N.
2. Prices of other fertilizers compared to Urea & DAP are relatively higher.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

12. Consider the following statements:

1. In India's Energy Mix, the share of solar energy is more than Wind energy.
2. The non-fossil fuel sources account for about 42% of the total generation capacity.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

13. Consider the following statements:

1. The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve was the first biosphere reserve in India established in 1986.
2. It has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

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

14. Carbon dioxide is not the output of the production process of which of the following types of hydrogen?

1. Blue Hydrogen
2. Grey Hydrogen
3. Green Hydrogen
4. Brown Hydrogen

Select the correct answer from the codes given below:

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

15. Consider the following statements:

1. Silent Valley National Park is located in the Nilgiri hills.
2. A perennial river named Kunthipuzha is passing through the western side of the park.

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

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

16. Consider the following statements:

1. Confuciusornis is a genus of extinct raven-billed birds.
2. It represents the earliest known toothless, beaked birds.

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

17. Consider the following statements:

1. "Forests" was added as Entry 17A in the Concurrent List by the 44th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1978.
2. The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes was set up under the Article 338A of the Constitution.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

18. Consider the following statements:

1. Deepor Beel is one of the largest and important riverine wetlands in the Brahmaputra Valley.
2. It was designated as a Ramsar site in 1991.

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 |

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: More than half of global methane emissions stem from human activities in three sectors: **fossil fuels (35%), waste (20%) and agriculture(40%)**. Agriculture is the largest single source of global anthropogenic methane (CH₄) emissions, with ruminants the dominant contributor.

Statement 2 is correct: India is currently the world's fourth largest methane emitter after China, the United States and Russia. India has the world's largest cattle population and is the second largest rice producer, the agriculture sector emits five times as much methane as the energy sector. Agriculture accounts for 61% of total methane emissions, while India's energy sector accounts for 16.4% and waste 19.8%, as per the Global Methane Tracker 2022.

2. (a)

The Plastic Waste Management Rules in India

- **The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016:**

- It clearly stipulates that **urban local bodies (ULBs)** should ban **less than 50 micron** thick plastic bags and not allow the usage of recycled plastics for packing food, beverage or any other eatables.
- It introduced the concept of **EPR(Extended Producer Responsibility)** to manage plastics in India.
 - ♦ EPR means **the responsibility of a producer** for environmentally sound management of the product **until the end of its life**.

- **Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2021:**

- It banned the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of carry bags made of virgin or recycled plastic less than **seventy-five microns**. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **The items that will be banned are:**
 - ♦ Earbuds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice-cream sticks, polystyrene (thermocool) for decoration, plastic plates, cups, glasses, cutlery such as forks, spoons and knives, straw, trays, wrapping films around sweet boxes, invitation cards, and cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100-microns and stirrers.
 - ♦ The ban will **not apply to commodities made of compostable plastic**. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**

3. (c)

Statement 1 is correct - Wetlands International is the only global not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the conservation and restoration of wetlands. It works through a network of offices, partners and experts to achieve goals. Most of the work is financed on a project basis by governments and private donors.

Statement 2 is correct - Bombay Natural History Society is a pan-India wildlife research organization, has been promoting the cause of nature conservation since 1883.

4. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: LNG produces 40% less carbon dioxide (CO₂) than coal and 30% less than oil, which makes it the cleanest of the fossil fuels. It does not emit soot, dust, or particulates and produces insignificant amounts of sulphur dioxide, mercury, and other compounds considered harmful to the earth's atmosphere.

Statement 2 is correct: The volumetric energy density of LNG is approximately 2.4 times that of compressed natural gas (CNG), which makes it economical to transport natural gas by ship in the form of LNG.

- The energy density of LNG is comparable to propane and ethanol but is only 60 percent that of diesel and 70 percent that of gasoline.

5. (a)

Statement 1 is correct - India has the largest number of wild Asian Elephants, estimated at 29,964 according to the 2017 census by Project Elephant, i.e. about 60% of the species' global population.

- **Statement 2 is correct** - Plan Bee is adopted by the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) as a unique method to keep elephants away from railway tracks and plans are afoot to implement it all over the country to save the lives of elephants.
- **Statement 3 is not correct** - Project Elephant was launched by the Government of India in the year 1992 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme not as a Central Sector scheme.
- **Statement 4 is not correct** - Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) was established by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) at the tenth Conference of the Parties in 1997.
 - It measures the levels, trends and causes of elephant mortality, providing an information base to support international decision-making related to conservation of elephants in Asia and Africa.

6. (b)

Option b is correct: Some of the commercially important trees of **tropical evergreen forest** are **ebony, mahogany, rosewood, rubber and cinchona**.

- Teak is the most dominant species of tropical deciduous forests.
- Bamboos, sal, shisham, sandalwood, khair, kusum, arjun, mulberry are other commercially important species.

7. (b)

In News: Statement 1 is correct: The Third Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Ken-Betwa Link Project (SC-KBLP) was held.

Ken-Betwa Link Project is the first project under the National Perspective Plan for the interlinking of rivers. It aims to transfer surplus water from the Ken river in Madhya Pradesh to Betwa in Uttar Pradesh to irrigate the drought-prone Bundelkhand region. **Statement 2 is not correct:** Ken and Betwa are the tributaries of the Yamuna.

8. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Dolphins are among one of the oldest creatures in the world along with some species of turtles, crocodiles and sharks. The Gangetic Dolphins are generally blind and catch their prey in a unique manner. They emit an ultrasonic sound which reaches the prey. The dolphin then registers this image in its mind and subsequently catches hold of its prey.

Statement 2 is not correct: The distributional range of the Ganges river dolphin includes over 10,000 km of the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna, and the Sangu-Karnaphuli River systems in Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

9. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Ozone is produced naturally in the stratosphere. But this “good” ozone is gradually being destroyed by man-made chemicals referred to as ozone-depleting substances (ODS), including chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), halons, methyl bromide, carbon tetrachloride, and methyl chloroform.

Statement 2 is correct: Ozone occurs in two layers of the atmosphere. The layer closest to the Earth’s surface is the troposphere. Here, groundlevel or “bad” ozone is an air pollutant that is harmful to breathe and it damages crops, trees and other vegetation.

10. (b)

Zebrafish

- **Study by Agharkar Research Institute (ARI):**

- A protein found in the backbone of zebrafish plays a positive role in disc maintenance and promotes regeneration in aged discs between vertebrae.
- This protein of zebrafish can have potential therapeutic implications to promote regeneration in degenerated human discs.

- **Habitat:**

- Zebrafish typically inhabit moderately flowing to stagnant clear water of quite shallow depth in streams, canals, ditches, oxbow lakes, ponds and rice paddies.
- Native to South Asia where it is found in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan.

- **Characteristics that make them significant for research:**

- **Transparent Embryo:**

- ♦ Zebrafish are useful because the embryo is transparent, it develops outside of its mother, and its development from eggs to larvae happens in just three days.

- **Faster development:**

- ♦ The other main advantage is that they develop incredibly fast.
- ♦ So from a single cell the day they’re born, they will have a head, and a tail, and a beating heart within 24 hours. By 72 hours their brains are working, and fins and trunk are twitching, and by five days old they are swimming around and they’re hunting and they’re fully viable organisms.
- ♦ This is perfect essentially for both geneticists and developmental biologists.

11. (c)

- **Urea & DAP:**

- Urea has 46% nitrogen (N), while DAP contains 46% phosphorus (P) plus 18% N and MOP has 60% potassium (K). **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- **Urea:**

- Annual consumption of this nitrogenous fertilizer has risen from 30 to 35 million tonnes (mt) in the last five years.

- **DAP:**

- Di-ammonium phosphate or DAP is also seeing a similar phenomenon of over-application.

- **Underpricing of other fertilizers:**

- Government has fixed maximum retail prices of Urea & DAP. It has informally-fixed MRPs for NPKS complexes and muriate of potash (MOP).
- Prices of other fertilizers compared to Urea & DAP **are relatively higher**. So farmers have **little incentive to buy other fertilizers**. Hence statement 2 is correct.

12. (c)

Recently, the Government has started **exploring storage options** as the share of renewables increases in the grid.

Statement 1 is correct: India's power generation mix is rapidly shifting towards a more significant share of renewable energy. Today, India is the world's third largest producer of renewable energy.

Installed capacity of renewable sources of energy in India					
Solar	Wind	Small hydro	Large hydro	Biopower	Nuclear
48.55 GW	40.03 GW	4.83 GW	46.51 GW	10.62 GW	6.78 GW

Statement 2 is correct: The installed electricity-generating capacity in the country at present is 409 GW, including 173 GW from non-fossil fuel sources, which is about 42% of the total.

13. (c)

About Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve

- It is a Biosphere Reserve in the Western Ghats and Nilgiri Hill ranges of Southern India.
- The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve was the **first and Oldest biosphere reserve** in India established **in the year 1986**.
- The reserve encompasses a total of 5,520 km² in the states of Karnataka (1,527 km²), Kerala (1,455 km²), and Tamil Nadu (2,537 km²).
- **Biodiversity:** The NBR is rich in biodiversity and has over 100 species of mammals, 350 species of birds, 80 species of reptiles, 31 species of amphibians, 39 species of fish, 316 species of butterflies, and numerous other invertebrates.
 - It is also home to around 3,300 plants and 175 orchid species of which 1,232 and 8 are endemic, respectively.
- It has been a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** since July 1, 2012.

14. (c)

About:

- Hydrogen is the chemical element with the **symbol H and atomic number 1**.
- Hydrogen is the **lightest element** and the most abundant chemical substance in the universe, constituting **roughly 75% of all normal matter**.
- **It is colourless, odourless, tasteless, non-toxic, and highly combustible**.
- Hydrogen fuel is a **zero-emission fuel burned with oxygen**. It can be used in fuel cells or internal combustion engines and as a fuel for spacecraft propulsion.

Extraction of Hydrogen:

- Hydrogen exists in combination with other elements.
- Hence, for using it as a source of energy, it has to be extracted from naturally occurring compounds like water (which is a combination of two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom).

- The sources and processes by which hydrogen is derived are **categorised by different colours**.

Brown Hydrogen	Grey Hydrogen	Blue Hydrogen	Green Hydrogen
Hydrogen produced when <u>coal</u> is transformed under high pressure conditions, and the resulting <u>carbon dioxide is released</u> back into the air.	Hydrogen produced when <u>natural gas</u> is transformed by burning methane and the resulting <u>carbon dioxide is released</u> back into the air.	Hydrogen produced from <u>natural gas</u> , but the output <u>carbon dioxide is captured and stored</u> thereby avoiding carbon emissions.	Hydrogen <u>extracted from water</u> using a method called electrolysis that is <u>powered by renewable energy</u> such as wind/solar (as per picture below)

15. (d)

About Silent Valley National Park

- Silent Valley National Park is a beautiful representation of the last remaining rainforest of Kerala.
- It was declared as a National Park in 1984 and formally inaugurated in the year 1985.
- It is located in the **Southwestern corner of Nilgiris**. The whole Park is a roughly **rectangular tableland closed on all sides**.
- It has **high and continuous ridges** along its entire **east, north, and northeast borders and a somewhat lower ridge along the entire western** and southern border.
- A **perennial river** named **Kunthipuzha** is passing through the western side of the park, from north to south direction finally merging into Bharathapuzha.
- Birds such as the Crimson-backed sunbird, Yellow-browed bulbul, Black bulbul, Indian white-eye, and Indian swiftlet were found in abundance in Silent Valley.

16. (c)

Recently, palaeontologists announced the **discovery of a fossil beaked bird ancestor** in northeastern China.

Key Points

- **About Discovery:**
 - The **title** of paper: “A new confuciusornithid bird with a secondary epiphyseal ossification reveals phylogenetic changes in confuciusornithid flight mode.”
 - The findings in detail in the prestigious journal **Nature Communications Biology**.
 - The nearly complete fossil is of a beaked bird that lived in what is now China during the **Early Cretaceous epoch**, some 119 million years ago.
- **Significance:**
 - The preserved specimens will collectively provide **rich information** on Confucian ornithid morphology, taxonomy, flight ability, growth, diet and ecology.

- The new **find strikingly exemplifies** the morphological, developmental and functional diversity of the first beaked birds.
- **About Confuciusornis shifan:**
 - Confuciusornis is a genus of **extinct raven-billed** bird in the family Confuciusornithidae.
 - ♦ Confuciusornithidae is a clade of Early Cretaceous pygostylian birds known from the **Jehol Biota** of East Asia,
 - It weighed **less than 200 grams** and was smaller than most other confuciusornithid species.
 - It represents the earliest known **toothless, beaked birds**.
 - It is **different from other Mesozoic birds** due to the presence of an additional cushion-like bone in the first digit of the wing.
 - ♦ This feature is significant as it may have helped the bird meet the **functional demand of flight** at a stage when the skeletal growth was still incomplete.
- **Origin of Name:**
 - The specific name is derived from the Mandarin “shifan”, meaning a **paragon of all teachers**, in honor of Confucius.
 - The name also commemorates the **70th anniversary** of Shenyang Normal University (Shenyang Shifan Daxue).

17. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The subject ‘Forest’ was originally enumerated in the State List. The Forty-second Amendment to the Constitution (1976) transferred the subject from the State List to the Concurrent List. (Entry 17A of List III).

Statement 2 is correct: The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) was established by amending Article 338 and inserting a new Article 338A in the Constitution through the Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003. The Commission comprises a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and three full-time Members (including one female Member). The term of all the Members of the Commission is three years from the date of assumption of charge.

18. (a)

About Deepor Beel

- 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.
- Due to the richness of avian fauna, it has been selected as one of the Important Bird Area (IBA) sites by Birdlife International.
- It was designated as 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**.

■■■■

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Which of the following goat species breeds produces Pashmina fibre?
(a) Changthangi (b) Vembur
(c) Keezhakarai Sal (d) Macheri
2. Who was the first Indian architect to receive the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2018?
(a) Charles Correa (b) Raj Rewal
(c) Dr Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi (d) Bijoy Jain
3. Consider the following statements:
 1. The Param Vir Chakra (PVC) is India's highest military decoration, awarded for displaying distinguished acts of valour during wartime.
 2. Parakram Diwas is observed on the death anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. Consider the following statement:
 1. The Padma Awards Committee is constituted by the President of India every year.
 2. The total number of awards to be given in a year should (excluding posthumous awards and to NRI/foreigners/OCIs) not be more than 120.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. Which of the following ministries has initiated National Girl Child Day?
(a) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
(b) Ministry of Rural Development
(c) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
(d) Ministry of Women and Child Development
6. Consider the following statements:
 1. Giving to Amplify Earth Action (GAEA), an initiative launched by the World Economic Forum.
 2. Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) was launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) along with the Government of Norway in 2017.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
7. With reference to the Polycrisis recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:
 1. The term was first used in the 1990s by French theorist of complexity Edgar Morin.
 2. The crises in multiple global systems entangled collectively can lead to a polycrisis.

3. Recently the world bank in its report 'Global Risks Report 2023' highlighted the threats of polycrisis.

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

8. Which of the following sports are included in Saansad Khel Mahakumbh?

1. Wrestling 2. Carrom
3. Table tennis 4. Hockey
5. Kho Kho

Select the correct answer using the code given ' below:

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

9. The term 'Shadow banning' was recently seen in the news, related to

- (a) Economic sanctions imposed by Asian Development Bank
(b) Measure to reduce the impacts of single-use plastic products
(c) Content moderation by Social Media Platforms
(d) Prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons

10. Consider the following statements regarding a festival of Southern India:

1. It is one of the biggest harvest festivals, along with Makar Sankranti.
2. This festival is named after the traditional sweet dish made with rice boiled in milk with jaggery.
3. It is widely observed by the Tamil population around the world.
4. It is celebrated in the Tai month of the Tamil solar calendar.

The statements given above are related to which of the following festivals?

- (a) Thaipusam (b) Pongal
(c) Onam (d) Ugadi

11. Which of the following organisations releases the Global Risks Report?

- (a) World Bank (WB)
(b) World Economic Forum (WEF)
(c) International Monetary Fund (IMF)
(d) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

12. Consider the following statements regarding Human Rights Watch (HRW):

1. It is a United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world.
2. It is headquartered in Geneva in Switzerland.
3. It often works on behalf of refugees, children, migrants, and political prisoners.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

- 13.** Which of the following is the Theme of the National Youth Festival 2023?
- (a) Viksit Yuva Viksit Bharat (b) YUVAAH – Utsah Naye Bharat Ka
(c) It's all in your mind (d) Fit Youth Fit India
- 14.** With reference to UNITE Aware, consider the following statements:
1. It is a situational awareness software programme launched by India in collaboration with the United Nations.
 2. The platform was deployed in UN Peacekeeping Missions.
- 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
- 15.** With reference to Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU), consider the following statements:
1. It is an intergovernmental organisation comprising more than 80 member countries in the Asia-Pacific region.
 2. It is the only restricted union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in the region, which is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
- 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
- 16.** “Report on municipal finances” was recently released by which of the following?
- (a) NITI Aayog
(b) The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
(c) Reserve Bank of India
(d) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- 17.** Consider the following statements:
1. It is celebrated in the state of Assam and marks the end of the harvesting season.
 2. The eve of this festival is called the Uruka, the last day of the lunar month of Pousha.
 3. People make delicious rice cakes known by various names such as Sunga Pitha, Til Pith and coconut ladoos during the festival.
- The statements given above are related to which of the following festivals?
- (a) Ambubachi Festival (b) Majuli Festival
(c) Dhanu Yatra (d) Magh Bihu
- 18.** Consider the following statements regarding the “Global Action Plan on Child Wasting”:
1. The action plan aims to prevent, detect and treat acute malnutrition among children in the worst-affected countries.
 2. Akshaya Patra foundation along with the ministry of women and child development is responsible for the implementation of this action plan in India.
- Which of the statements given above is/are **not correct**?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

Recently, Kashmir's famed pashmina shawls, got a **French touch**.

Option a is correct: The Changthangi goat is found in the cold, arid region surrounding Ladakh, India. It is also known as Pashmina goat or Changra goat. The breed is raised mainly for its ultra-fine cashmere wool production. This cashmere wool is known as Pashmina once woven. The Changthangi goat is usually domesticated and raised by nomadic communities called the Changpa in the Changthang region of Greater Ladakh.

2. (c)

In News: Dr Balkrishna Vithaldas Doshi has died recently, he was an urban planner and educator and was one of the most distinguished Indian minds in the world of architecture. In 2018, he received the Pritzker Architecture Prize, considered one of the most prestigious prizes in the field of architecture, becoming the first Indian architect to receive the honour.

3. (a)

Statement 1 is correct - Paramvir Chakra is India's highest military decoration instituted on 26 Jan 1950, as a Gallantry Medal with retrospective effect from 15 August 1947 by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the then President of India.

- The Param Vir Chakra (PVC) is awarded for displaying distinguished acts of valour during wartime.

Statement 2 is not correct - Parakaram Diwas is celebrated on 23rd of January, on this day in 1897, Neta Ji was born in Cuttack, Odisha. It was first observed in 2021 on the 124th birth anniversary of Netaji.

4. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: All nominations are placed before the Padma Awards Committee, which is constituted by the **Prime Minister every year**. The Committee is headed by the Cabinet Secretary and includes Home Secretary, Secretary to the President and four to six eminent persons as members. The recommendations of the committee are submitted to the Prime Minister and the President of India for approval.

Statement 2 is correct: The total number of awards to be given in a year (excluding posthumous awards and to NRI/foreigners/OCIs) **should not be more than 120**.

5. (d)

Recently, the Government of India celebrated National Girl Child Day.

National Girl Child Day was first initiated in 2008 by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**.

- It is celebrated in the country on January 24 every year with the objective to provide support and opportunities to the girls of India.
- It aims towards promoting awareness about the rights of the girl child and to increase awareness on the importance of girl education, health and nutrition.

6. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Giving to Amplify Earth Action (GAEA): It is a global initiative launched by World Economic Forum (WEF) with support of more than 45 partners to fund new and existing public, private and philanthropic partnerships (PPPPs) to help unlock the \$3 trillion of financing needed each year to reach net zero, reverse nature loss and restore biodiversity by 2050.

Statement 2 is not correct: Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) was launched in 2017 by the governments of Norway and India, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Economic Forum to accelerate the development of vaccines and other biologic countermeasures against pandemic. It is based in Oslo, Norway.

7. (a)

Statement 1 is correct - The term polycrisis was first used in the 1990s by French theorist of complexity Edgar Morin.

- Morin explained it as the “interwoven and overlapping crises” affecting humanity and argued that the most “vital” problem of the day was not any single threat but the “complex inter solidarity of problems, antagonisms, crises, uncontrollable processes, and the general crisis of the planet”.
- **Statement 2 is correct** - When crises in multiple global systems become causally entangled in ways that significantly degrade humanity’s prospects. These interacting crises produce harms greater than the sum of those the crises would produce in isolation, were their host systems not so deeply interconnected.
- **Statement 3 is not correct** - The World Economic Forum in its ‘Global Risks Report 2023’ warned that the world could see a polycrisis centred around natural resource shortages by 2030.

8. (d)

The Prime Minister of India inaugurated the second phase of Saansad Khel Mahakumbh 2022-23.

- Saansad Khel Mahakumbh has been organised in Basti district by Shri Harish Dwivedi, Member of Parliament from Basti since 2021.
- The Khel Mahakumbh organises various competitions in both indoor and outdoor sports like wrestling, kabaddi, kho kho, basketball, football, hockey, volleyball, handball, chess, carrom, badminton, table tennis etc.
 - Apart from these, competitions in essay writing, painting, rangoli making etc. are also organised during the Khel Mahakumbh.

9. (c)

Elon Musk used the term ‘Shadow banning’ in the context of the so-called Twitter Files, internal company documents that were released with Musk’s authorization.

‘Shadow banning’ : The term often refers to stealth actions by social media platforms to limit a post’s visibility.

- The term shadow ban traces to at least 2012 when Reddit users accused the platform’s administrators of banning a link to a Gawker article while publicly championing transparency.
- The meaning of the term has evolved. Now it can describe users’ general discontent about not getting the attention they believe they deserve on social media, even if they don’t necessarily think a platform has engaged in any clandestine moderation.

10. (b)

Pongal:

- **About:**
 - One of India’s most well-known festivals, Pongal is widely observed by the **Tamil population around the world**.
 - It is one of the biggest harvest festivals, along with Makar Sankranti.
- **Significance:**
 - It is celebrated in the Tai month of the Tamil solar calendar.

- The four-day event, dedicated to the Sun God, marks the beginning of Uttarayan, the sun's journey northward.
- Spread over four days, the festival begins with Bhogi Pongal which is followed by **Surya Pongal, then Maattu Pongal, and Kanum Pongal**.
 - ♦ Each of the days has a unique significance with the second day being more most important day.
- **The Sweet dish-Pongal:**
 - This festival is named after the traditional sweet dish **Pongal ("boiling over")** made with rice boiled in milk with jaggery.
 - The origin of the Pongal dish can be traced back to the Chola period; it appears in a lot of texts and inscriptions.
 - Some Hindu temple inscriptions from the Chola to Vijayanagara Empire periods are also known to include detailed recipes.

11. (b)

Recently, the Global Risks Report 2023 was released by the **World Economic Forum (WEF)**.

- The Global Risks Report series tracks global risks perceptions among risk experts and world leaders in business, government, and civil society.
- It examines risks across **five categories**:
 - Economic
 - Environmental
 - Geopolitical
 - Societal
 - Technological.

12. (d)

Human Rights Watch (HRW)

- **About:**
 - Human Rights Watch (HRW) is an **international non-governmental organization**. Hence **option 1 is incorrect**.
 - The group pressures governments, policymakers, companies, and individual human rights abusers to denounce abuse and respect human rights, and often works on behalf of refugees, children, migrants, and political prisoners. Hence **option 3 is correct**.
 - It is headquartered in New York City that conducts research and advocacy on human rights. Hence **option 2 is incorrect**.
- **Basic human rights:**
 - Pursuant to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Human Rights Watch opposes violations of what the UDHR considers basic human rights.
 - ♦ This includes capital punishment and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.
 - **Freedoms:**
 - ♦ HRW advocates freedoms in connection with fundamental human rights, such as freedom of religion and freedom of the press.

13. (a)

Option a is correct: Recently, the President of India and the Prime Minister of India paid **tributes to Swami Vivekananda** on his birth anniversary, January 12.

- This year National Youth festival 2023 has a theme of **Viksit Yuva Viksit Bharat** which means that if the youth of India is leading on a path of development then only India can be developed.
- The National Youth Day theme 2022 was “It’s all in your mind.”
- Theme of 2021 Festival: ‘YUVAAH – Utsah Naye Bharat Ka’.
- Theme of 2020 Festival: ‘Fit Youth Fit India’

14. (c)

India needs to **embrace multi-domain operations (MDO)** amidst the rising Chinese threat.

Statement 1 is correct: UNITE Aware is a situational awareness software programme that will utilise modern surveillance technology for real time threat assessments to peacekeepers. **India, in collaboration with the UN**, launched UNITE AWARE platform, a technology platform to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers who are operating in increasingly complex and risky environments across the world.

Statement 2 is correct: The platform will be deployed initially in four UN Peacekeeping Missions: MINUSMA (Mali), UNMISS (South Sudan), UNFICYP (Cyprus) and AMISOM (Somalia). India has contributed USD 1.64 million for this project.

15. (b)

India will take over the leadership of the **Asian Pacific Postal Union from January 2023.**

Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU)

- Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU) is an **intergovernmental organisation** comprising **32 member countries in the Asia-Pacific region.**
- It is **headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand.**
- It is the **only restricted union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in the region**, which is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
- It is the **Secretary General who leads the activities of the Union.** It is made up of three bodies namely, Congress, Executive Council and APPU Bureau.
- Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU) aims to **extend, facilitate and improve postal relations** between the member countries and promote cooperation in the field of postal services.

16. (c)

Report on municipal finances

- The study titled “Report on municipal finances” was published by the RBI.
 - According to the report, the **combined budget** of all the municipal corporations in India is much smaller than that of the Central and State governments.
 - The report reveals how municipal bodies are **increasingly dependent on fund transfers from the State and the Centre**, while their **revenue earning capacity is limited.**

17. (d)

Magh Bihu:

- **Significance:**
 - A significant **Assamese festival**, Magh Bihu marks the end of the harvesting season in the month of Magh (**between January and February**).
 - Also known as **Maghor Bihu**, it is celebrated to mark a slight shift in the earth’s rotational axis that brings in the end of chilly winters and the beginning of spring.

- **Characteristics:**
 - This is one of the three Bihu celebrated by the community and the term Bhogali Bihu is derived from the word **Bhog**, which refers to eating and enjoyment.
 - The eve of the Bhogali Bihu is called the **Uruka**, the last day of the lunar month of Pousha.
 - The festival is also **marked by bonfires**, made of **green bamboo, firewood, hay, and dried banana leaves**.
- **Traditional games:**
 - People also play traditional Assamese games like tekeli bhonga (pot-breaking) and buffalo fighting. They also pray to ancestral gods for their blessings.
- **Delicacies:**
 - People also make delicious rice cakes known by various names such as **Sunga Pitha, Til Pith and coconut laddoos**.

18. (b)

Global Action Plan on Child Wasting

- **Action Plan:**
 - Five UN agencies are calling for accelerated progress on the Global Action Plan on Child Wasting.
- **Agencies:**
 - **These agencies are**
 - ♦ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO),
 - ♦ UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR),
 - ♦ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF),
 - ♦ World Food Programme (WFP) and
 - ♦ World Health Organization (WHO).
- **Aim:**
 - The action plan aims to prevent, detect and treat acute malnutrition among children in the worst-affected countries:
 - ♦ Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Yemen.
 - **Need of support, action & investment:**
 - The agencies have called for decisive and timely action to **prevent this crisis from becoming a tragedy** for the world's most vulnerable children.
 - All **agencies urged greater investment** in support of a **coordinated UN response** that will meet the unprecedented needs of this growing crisis before it is too late.

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